

CSPA Oral Scoping Comments for the licensing of the La Grange Project
Chris Shutes, Modesto CA, June 18, 2014

Good evening. I'm Chris Shutes with the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance.

La Grange Dam is terminal fish passage barrier for anadromous fish in the Tuolumne River.

The Commission has stated in a recent legal brief that licensing the La Grange Project separate from the Don Pedro Project is not adverse to the interests of Conservation Groups, of which CSPA is a member.

It is self-evident that if the La Grange Project and the Don Pedro Project were licensed as one project, study of fish passage would be squarely on the table. By that I mean passage of upstream and downstream fish past La Grange Dam, the La Grange impoundment, Don Pedro Dam, and Don Pedro Reservoir.

We will be asking for such studies. Specifically, this will require evaluation of the habitat for salmon and steelhead upstream of Don Pedro Reservoir in the mainstem Tuolumne and its tributaries. It will also mean preliminary engineering analysis of moving anadromous fish upstream and downstream.

We request that the Commission order such studies.

We are hopeful that we can work with the Districts, the agencies, and the City of San Francisco to develop and implement reasonable and targeted passage studies. We are also hopeful that we will not have arguments about nexus, or parse words about how far upstream the licensing of La Grange should look as regards fish passage.

As far as geographic scope is concerned, the habitat evaluation will need to address habitat in the Tuolumne River from the top of Don Pedro Reservoir upstream as far as the City of San Francisco's Early Intake facility, as well as in the tributaries upstream to the first passage barrier in each.

I respectfully question Mr. Hastreiter's [FERC lead for the licensing] earlier suggestion that passage studies could take only one year, though I believe that if we roll up our sleeves we can get them done in two years.

I suggest that the Commission look at a single NEPA document for the relicensing of the Don Pedro Project and the licensing of the La Grange Project.

I also suggest that the Commission include a fish passage alternative for salmon, for steelhead, and for both salmon and steelhead in the NEPA document.

Thank you very much.