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For Immediate Release

### **US Fish and Wildlife Service Issues Report Opposing the Enlargement of Shasta Dam**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has issued a revised draft report on the proposed enlargement of Shasta Dam, stating that it will harm salmon populations. The agency concluded that it cannot support any of the proposed action alternatives presented by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which controls and operates the dam.

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) issued a draft Environmental Impact Statement on dam enlargement in 2013. The project must be approved by Congress, and justified by both economic and environmental rationales. Taxpayers would pay for two-thirds of the \$1.1 billion project.

In an earlier cost/benefit analysis, BOR determined that payments by Central Valley Project water and power customers alone would provide minimal justification for the project economically. Consequently, 61% of the "economic justification" now touted by the agency is a larger cold water pool behind the dam to improve Sacramento River salmon survival during critically dry years.

In response, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) stated in its recent draft report that the project is *not* justifiable because it provides no net benefits to salmon, and will result in negative environmental impacts that cannot be mitigated.

"This report documents the Bureau of Reclamation's own data that shows the project will not benefit salmon in the Sacramento River," said Tom Stokely, water policy analyst for the California Water Impact Network. "We knew all along that the Bureau of Reclamation had a phony economic justification to enlarge Shasta Dam. Now we have another federal agency agreeing with us."

Stokely said it is clear that any water that would result from the enlargement of the dam "is intended for the poisoned lands of the Westlands Water District south of the Delta. This is just another deception by BOR to provide more subsidized water under the guise of a public benefit."

The USFWS report further stated that the Bureau of Reclamation would have considered several options that were removed early in the consideration process if salmon restoration had been a true priority.

Those actions include repairing the multi-million dollar Shasta Dam temperature control device; restoring the riparian corridor along the Sacramento River; operational changes to Shasta Dam to increase cold water storage and increase minimum flows; increasing water use efficiency in local canals; and considering conjunctive use of other existing and planned water storage facilities in the Central Valley.

"It's instructive to note that all these actions would cost a fraction of dam enlargement," said Bill Jennings of

the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance. “This isn’t just an environmental and fisheries issue. It’s about the squandering of taxpayer dollars. It’s about pork barrel politics, about public money flowing from the public coffers to the handful of corporate farmers in the San Joaquin Valley who control water in California.”

Jennings noted that the report is only a revised draft, and that it could be steamrolled by BOR and politicians controlled by corporate agriculture.

“Given the political implications of the report, CSPA is very concerned that it may be rewritten by Obama Administration political appointees who support enlargement of Shasta Dam,” he said.

The Bureau of Reclamation’s egregious dishonesty in spinning the “benefits” of enlarging Shasta Dam also calls into question the economic justification for other new or enlarged dams planned for California, including Sites Reservoir and Temperance Flat. Both these projects may be eligible for funding under Proposition 1. But the evidence is increasing that they’re economic and environmental boondoggles, and will provide little if any benefit in mitigating the state’s water crisis.

“The Stanford Woods Institute recently came out with a study stating that underground storage is six times more cost effective than surface storage,” Stokely said. “Obviously, destructive and expensive infrastructure projects are the wrong track. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had the guts and integrity to say as much. We applaud them for it.”

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*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Revised Draft Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act Report on the Shasta Lake Water Resources Investigation can be found at [http://www.c-win.org/webfm\\_send/466](http://www.c-win.org/webfm_send/466)*

*The San Jose Mercury News article on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Report can be found at [http://www.mercurynews.com/science/ci\\_27406666/plan-raise-shasta-dam-takes-hit-after-federal](http://www.mercurynews.com/science/ci_27406666/plan-raise-shasta-dam-takes-hit-after-federal)*

*The Stanford Woods Institute report on underground storage costs compared to surface storage can be found at [http://waterinthewest.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Storing\\_Water\\_in\\_CA.pdf](http://waterinthewest.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/Storing_Water_in_CA.pdf)*

*The California Water Impact Network (C-WIN, online at [www.c-win.org](http://www.c-win.org)) promotes the just and environmentally sustainable use of California’s water, including instream flows and groundwater reserves, through research, planning, media outreach, and litigation.*

*The California Sportfishing Protection Alliance is a non-profit conservation and research organization established in 1983 for the purpose of conserving, restoring, and enhancing the state’s water quality and fishery resources and their aquatic and riparian ecosystems. [www.calsport.org](http://www.calsport.org)*