



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325
Santa Rosa, California 95404

In response refer to
December 2, 2005 151416SWR2005SR00802:WH

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
Attn: Michael Bowen, Project Manager
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Chairman Bosco:

This letter is to confirm NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) support for the Pine Gulch Creek Watershed In-Stream Flow Enhancement Project being undertaken by landowners Warren Weber, Peter Martinelli and Dennis Dierks of Bolinas, California, in collaboration with Sustainable Conservation, the National Park Service, and other State and Federal resource agencies. This project is designed to significantly reduce water diversions from Pine Gulch Creek during the low flows of summer and early fall, while affording the three land owners with a water supply derived from diversions occurring during winter high flows. Upon implementation, the elimination of the three landowners' commercial diversions during summer should have an immediate benefit to the stream's coho salmon, which are listed as Endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act. We also understand that this project is consistent with the Marin County Local Coastal Plan, and with the California Department of Fish and Game Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon (CDFG 2004), recommendation BM-BO-03, which states: *"Work with landowners and appropriate agencies to manage low summer flows for coho salmon, on a watershed basis. Provide support and incentive to protect both fisheries flows and agriculture, including timing of withdrawals, construction of off-stream storage facilities, water conservation practices, and riparian zone protection. Conduct outreach and education for landowners on these practices."*

The Pine Gulch Creek project will create two off-stream ponds on Star Route Farm, two off-stream ponds on Fresh Run Farm, and a pond on New Land Trust Farm that will be filled, as needed, by diversion from Pine Gulch Creek during the winter. During the spring, specific monthly diversion rates have been established, and no commercial diversions will occur after July 1 until December 15. The project has been designed in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game, NOAA Fisheries, the National Park Service, the County of Marin and the above-noted organic farmers.

The Pine Gulch Creek Project is an important model for achieving water supply to help sustain viable agriculture in West Marin County while protecting and helping to recover threatened and endangered salmonid species listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act.



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COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Point Reyes National Seashore
Point Reyes, California 94956

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L7617

December 5, 2005

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
Attn: Michael Bowen, Project Manager
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Chairman Bosco:

With this letter we would like to reiterate in writing our strong support of the Pine Gulch Creek Watershed Enhancement: In Stream Flow Enhancement Project being undertaken by landowners Warren Weber, Peter Martinelli and Dennis Dierks, of Bolinas, California, in collaboration with Sustainable Conservation, the National Park Service, and other State and Federal resource agencies. This project is consistent with the Marin County Local Coastal Plan, and with the California Department of Fish and Game Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon (CDFG 2004), recommendation BM-BO-03, which states: *"Work with landowners and appropriate agencies to manage low summer flows for coho salmon, on a watershed basis. Provide support and incentive to protect both fisheries flows and agriculture, including timing of withdrawals, construction of off-stream storage facilities, water conservation practices, and riparian zone protection. Conduct outreach and education for landowners on these practices."*

The Pine Gulch Creek project will create two offstream ponds on Star Route Farm, two on Fresh Run Farm, and one on New Land Trust Farm that will be filled, as needed, by diversion from Pine Gulch Creek during the winter. During the spring, specific monthly riparian diversion rates have been established, and no diversion will occur after July 1 until December 15 to effectively manage the low summer flows. The project has been carefully designed with consultation between California Department of Fish and Game, NOAA Fisheries, the National Park Service, the County of Marin and the above-noted organic farmers and demonstrates how thoughtful resource protection can benefit both farming and fish simultaneously.

Approximately 85% of the Pine Gulch Creek watershed occurs within the boundaries of Point Reyes National Seashore. In an effort to protect and enhance watershed habitat for coho salmon and steelhead, staff from Point Reyes National Seashore have worked closely with the project applicants from project inception, including development of initial planning grant applications through the current county permit submittal. This is an important project that is responsive to this watershed and the needs of the private farm lands. Proposed conversion of riparian diversion rights to instream flow is an important step within the State of California towards long-term conservation of salmonid populations.

The Pine Gulch Creek Project is a model both for ensuring the protection of instream flows for the benefit of the steelhead and coho salmon and for supporting and enhancing the organic crop production of these three farms, which contribute to the agricultural sustainability of West Marin in particular and the County of Marin in general.

Sincerely,



Don L. Neubacher
Superintendent

State of California

Memorandum

To : Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Date: December 2, 2005

Attention Michael Bowen, Project Manager

From : Robert W. Floerke, Regional Manager 
Department of Fish and Game - Central Coast Region, Post Office Box 47, Yountville, California 94599

Subject : Pine Gulch Creek Watershed Enhancement: In-Stream Flow Enhancement Project

The Department of Fish and Game (DFG) encourages the California Coastal Conservancy to support the Pine Gulch Creek Watershed Enhancement: In-Stream Flow Enhancement Project being undertaken by landowners Warren Weber, Peter Martinelli and Dennis Dierks of Bolinas, Marin County, in collaboration with Sustainable Conservation, the National Park Service, and other State and Federal resource agencies.

Pine Gulch Creek supports both steelhead and coho salmon. Flow protection measures to support these species originally proposed converting the farming operations for these landowners from direct diversion during the low flow season to the use of small regulatory ponds that could meet farming needs for several days when flows were critically low. Under this original proposal, diversion would have persisted, although at a reduced rate, through the entire low flow season. Although an improvement over current conditions, resource protection could not be ensured in this way.

After additional consultation, the project was modified to offer protective in-stream flow conditions by creating larger off-stream facilities to store available winter water for low flow season use. This will limit and, during critically low flow periods, eliminate the need to divert water from Pine Gulch Creek to meet farming needs.

As currently proposed, the modified project will develop five off-stream ponds filled, as needed, by diversion from Pine Gulch Creek during the winter under the NOAA/DFG Draft Guidelines. Since these ponds will not meet all the farming needs due to construction constraints, additional water will continue to be diverted outside the high flow season. To protect instream resources, site-specific data were used to ensure that protective bypass terms would apply to all low flow season diversions occurring in the spring and early summer. No diversion will

Douglas Bosco

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occur after July 1 until December 15 because, based on the data, the natural flows cannot support both resources and diversions during this period of critically low flows. Water stored in the ponds will be used to ensure that farming needs are met when diversions are restricted. With these modifications in place, the project is designed to support fish in good condition and allow passage at and below the diversion points while still providing the water needed for these farms.

DFG commends the proponents of this project for working diligently to resolve the issues to protect both farming and in-stream flows needs, and hopes that this effort will serve as a model for ensuring the protection of in-stream flows for the benefit of resources while supporting sustainable agriculture in other locations.

If you have questions regarding our comments, please contact Linda Hanson, Staff Environmental Scientist, at (707) 944-5562; Carl Wilcox, Habitat Conservation Manager, at (707) 944-5525; or by writing to DFG at the above address.

cc: Steven Herrera, State Water Resources Control Board
Bill Hearn, National Marine Fisheries Service

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COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.



November 21, 2005

Douglas Bosco, Chairman
California Coastal Conservancy
Attn: Michael Bowen, Project Manager
1330 Broadway, 11th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am pleased to provide my enthusiastic support of the Pine Gulch Creek Watershed Enhancement: In Stream Flow Enhancement Project being undertaken by landowners Warren Weber, Peter Martinelli and Dennis Dierks, of Bolinas, California. This unusual project will provide direct benefit to the coho salmon bearing Pinegulch Creek, in the Bolinas Lagoon Watershed.

The project is highly collaborative, involving Sustainable Conservation, the National Park Service, and other State and Federal resource agencies. This project is consistent with the Marin County Local Coastal Plan, and with the California Department of Fish and Game Recovery Strategy for California Coho Salmon (CDFG 2004), recommendation BM-BO-03, which states: *"Work with landowners and appropriate agencies to manage low summer flows for coho salmon, on a watershed basis. Provide support and incentive to protect both fisheries flows and agriculture, including timing of withdrawals, construction of off-stream storage facilities, water conservation practices, and riparian zone protection. Conduct outreach and education for landowners on these practices."*

The Pine Gulch Creek project will create two offstream ponds on Star Route Farm, two on Fresh Run Farm, and one on New Land Trust Farm that will be filled, as needed, by diversion from Pine Gulch Creek during the winter. During the spring, specific monthly diversion rates have been established, and no diversion will occur after July 1 until December 15 to effectively manage the low summer flows. The project has been carefully designed with consultation between California Department of Fish and Game, NOAA Fisheries, the National Park Service, the County of Marin and the above-noted organic farmers, and demonstrates how thoughtful resource protection can benefit both farming and fish simultaneously.

The Pine Gulch Creek Project will provide a win-win solution, ensuring the protection of instream flows for the benefit of the steelhead and coho salmon and for supporting and enhancing the organic crop production of these three farms, which contribute to the agricultural sustainability of West Marin in particular and the County of Marin in general.

I encourage you to fund this project. You may be certain that the funds will be well invested and will achieve tangible results. Please call me if you have any question.

Sincerely,


Steve Kinsey
Marin County Supervisor

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