

COASTAL CONSERVANCY

Staff Recommendation
May 24, 2007

SAN CLEMENTE DAM REMOVAL PROJECT TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

File No. 07-004-01
Project Manager: Trish Chapman

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Authorization to disburse up to \$500,000 for engineering and technical studies for the San Clemente Dam Removal Project in Monterey County.

LOCATION: Carmel River Watershed, Monterey County

PROGRAM CATEGORY: Integrated Marine and Coastal Resources Protection

EXHIBITS

- Exhibit 1: [Project Location Map](#)
 - Exhibit 2: [January 18, 2007, Executive Officer briefing memo on the San Clemente Dam Removal Project](#)
 - Exhibit 3: [Schematic of Dam Removal/River Re-Route Project](#)
 - Exhibit 4: [Letters of Support](#)
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RESOLUTION AND FINDINGS:

Staff recommends that the State Coastal Conservancy adopt the following resolution pursuant to Sections 31220 of the Public Resources Code:

“The State Coastal Conservancy hereby authorizes the disbursement of an amount not to exceed five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) to prepare engineering studies, environmental impact and risk analyses, and implementation strategies for the removal of San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River in Monterey County. Prior to the disbursement of any funds, the Executive Officer of the Conservancy (Executive Officer) shall approve the work plan, budget, and contractor for that work. The Conservancy further authorizes the Executive Officer to make the findings necessary for Department of Industrial Relations review of a Labor Compliance Program if needed for this project.”

Staff further recommends that the Conservancy adopt the following findings:

“Based on the accompanying staff report and attached exhibits, the State Coastal Conservancy hereby finds that:

SAN CLEMENTE DAM REMOVAL PROJECT – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

1. The proposed project is consistent with Chapter 5.5 of Division 21 of the California Public Resources Code (Section 31220), regarding integrated marine and coastal resource enhancement.
 2. The proposed project is consistent with applicable local watershed management plans and water quality control plans.
 3. The proposed project is consistent with the Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted by the Conservancy on January 24, 2001.”
-

PROJECT SUMMARY:

The proposed authorization would allow the Conservancy to disburse up to \$500,000 for engineering and environmental studies to evaluate the feasibility of and develop a strategy for removing San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River in Monterey County. As discussed in the January 18, 2007 Executive Officer’s report to the Coastal Conservancy (Exhibit 2), San Clemente Dam is an obsolete structure that no longer serves a water supply function and could fail in the event of a maximum flood or earthquake. According to the Department of Water Resources (DWR) Division of the Safety of Dams, it poses a significant threat to downstream lives and property.

San Clemente Dam is also a significant barrier to migration of steelhead trout. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has consistently ranked the Carmel River as the most potentially viable steelhead watershed for recovery of the South-Central California Coast Distinct Population Segment (S-CCC DPS), a federally-threatened subspecies. Between 1999 and 2005, steelhead counts at San Clemente Dam’s fish ladder ranged from approximately 400 to 800 fish per year, whereas historic returns to the river have been estimated to be as high as 12,000 to 20,000 adult fish. NMFS has stated that restoration of the Carmel River steelhead population is critical to the overall recovery of the S-CCC DPS. Removing San Clemente Dam would provide steelhead with unimpaired access to over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat and would reduce the stress on fish traveling further upstream beyond Los Padres Dam where there is over 18 miles of additional spawning and rearing habitat.

Removing the dam would also permanently solve the public safety threat of dam failure, enhance the biological connectivity of the river corridor, and restore the natural sediment supply to the downstream watershed and beach. Through the dam removal project, there is also an opportunity to protect and provide recreation on approximately 2,500 acres of watershed lands.

Conservancy staff have been working with California-American Water Company (CalAm), the owner of the dam, and other entities to develop a feasible approach to removing it. Additional information regarding the project design, environmental impacts, and estimated costs is needed in order to reach agreement on an approach to dam removal and secure a commitment to the project from CalAm and the Department of Water Resources (DWR), which is responsible for ensuring that the dam safety issue is resolved.

The San Clemente Dam Seismic Safety Project 2006 Draft Environmental Impact Report/ Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) prepared for DWR evaluated two alternatives for removing the dam. Under the most economically-feasible approach, a portion of the Carmel River would be permanently bypassed by cutting a 450-foot-long channel connecting the Carmel

SAN CLEMENTE DAM REMOVAL PROJECT – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

River to San Clemente Creek, approximately 2,500 feet upstream of the dam (see Exhibit 3). The bypassed portion of the Carmel River would be used as a disposal site for sediment accumulated behind the dam and along the San Clemente Creek arm of the reservoir. The sediments at the downstream end of the bypassed reservoir arm would be stabilized and protected from erosion. The San Clemente Creek channel would be reconstructed through its historic inundation zone from the exit of the diversion channel to below the dam site. The dam and fish ladder would be demolished and removed from the site.

As part of the EIR/EIS process, conceptual level engineering designs were prepared for all of the alternatives. These designs were used to evaluate potential impacts and estimate costs. The draft EIR/EIS found that the bypass alternative would have only a few long-term unavoidable significant impacts. These are associated with 1) loss of habitat due to the creation of the bypass channel and re-route of one-half mile of the Carmel River; and 2) cultural resource impacts related to altering the historical environment and creating new visual obstructions. Based on the conceptual engineering designs, the project is estimated to cost \$75 million.

Under the proposed authorization, the Conservancy would hire consultants to prepare more detailed engineering designs for the bypass project and, based on the designs, prepare updated costs estimates and a more-detailed environmental impact analysis. Other consultants may be retained to assist with appraisals, assessments, and implementation strategies. One key element will be to evaluate the risks associated with the post-project condition in order to help determine the long-term liability associated with the project.

The Resources Agency has asked the Coastal Conservancy to act as the lead State agency in facilitating the San Clemente Dam Removal Project. The proposed investigations are a critical piece of the State's due diligence in evaluating its involvement in the dam removal effort. The Conservancy will work with DWR, the Department of Fish and Game, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and other interested parties in undertaking this phase of the project.

Site Description: San Clemente Dam is a 106 foot high concrete arch dam located approximately 18.5 miles from the Pacific Ocean on the Carmel River. The dam is located just downstream of the confluence of the Carmel River and San Clemente Creek. When the dam was constructed in 1921, it had a reservoir storage capacity of approximately 1,425 acre-feet. Today the reservoir has been filled by more than 2.5 million cubic yards of sediment, leaving a reservoir storage capacity of approximately 125 acre-feet. At this point, the sole function of the dam is to provide a diversion point for water withdrawals from the river. The dam is owned and operated by CalAm, an investor-owned water utility that is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC). CalAm provides public water service to the Monterey Peninsula. The land adjacent to the dam and reservoir is largely undeveloped, consisting of steep slopes covered with dense chaparral and oak woodland. The nearest residential development, the Sleepy Hollow subdivision, is located approximately one mile downstream from the dam.

Project History: In the early 1990s, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Division of the Safety of Dams (DSOD) determined that San Clemente Dam could potentially fail in the event of either the maximum credible earthquake or probable maximum flood. As a result, DSOD instructed CalAm to develop a project to address this safety issue. CalAm funded multiple studies which evaluated options for strengthening, notching, or removing the dam. In August 2000, the Conservancy authorized a \$50,000 grant to the Institute for Fisheries Resources (IFR) to evaluate additional alternatives for modifying or removing the dam in order to improve

SAN CLEMENTE DAM REMOVAL PROJECT – TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

fish passage and habitat conditions. This grant was later augmented by \$65,300. IFR evaluated several options for removing the sediment accumulated behind the dam. All of these options were eventually deemed infeasible due to downstream flooding, habitat, and/or transportation-related impacts.

Ultimately, CalAm submitted a proposal to buttress the dam in place. This decision was driven primarily by the fact that it was the most economical way to address the safety issues. Over the past few years, Coastal Conservancy staff, in cooperation with the NMFS and the Planning and Conservation League Foundation (PCLF) have been working with CalAm to develop an alternative under which public agencies would collaborate with CalAm to remove the dam. The proposed authorization is a key step in this collaborative effort.

PROJECT FINANCING:

Coastal Conservancy grant	<u>\$500,000</u>
Total Project Cost	\$500,000

The expected source of Conservancy funds for this project is an appropriation to the Conservancy from the “Water Security, Clean Drinking Water, Coastal and Beach Protection Fund of 2002” (Proposition 50). Proposition 50 authorizes the Conservancy’s use of these funds for the purpose of protecting coastal watersheds through projects undertaken pursuant to the Conservancy’s enabling legislation (Division 21 of the Public Resources Code) to acquire, restore or protect water and land resources (see Water Code Section 79570). California Code of Regulations Section 16423(a)(3) requires that an awarding body using Proposition 50 funds to undertake work considered “public works” initiate and enforce a Labor Compliance Program. This includes certain pre-construction activities such as surveying and materials testing. The proposed authorization will enable the Executive Officer to make the necessary findings, if such work is required as part of this project.

CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S ENABLING LEGISLATION:

This project would be undertaken pursuant to the Conservancy’s enabling legislation, Division 21 of the Public Resources Code; in particular Chapter 5.5 (Public Resources Code Sections 31220), regarding integrated coastal and marine resources protection.

Section 31220(a) of the PRC authorizes the Conservancy to undertake coastal watershed projects that meet one or more criteria of Section 31220(b). Consistent with Section 31220(b), the proposed project will achieve the following objectives: 2) protect and restore fish and wildlife habitat within coastal and marine waters and coastal watersheds; 3) reduce threats to coastal and marine fish and wildlife; 4) reduce unnatural erosion and sedimentation of coastal watersheds or contribute to the reestablishment of natural erosion and sediment cycles; and 6) acquire, protect, and restore coastal wetlands, riparian areas, floodplains, and other sensitive watershed lands, including watershed lands draining to sensitive coastal or marine areas.

As Section 31220(c) requires, the proposed project is consistent with local and state watershed plans. This is discussed in detail below under “Consistency With Local Watershed Management

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Plan/State Water Quality Control Plan.” Section 31220(c) also requires that projects include a monitoring and evaluation component. Extensive monitoring and evaluation will be integrated into the design of the dam removal project.

Section 31111 gives the Conservancy the authority to undertake plans and feasibility studies in order to implement the purposes of Division 21.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S
STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL(S) & OBJECTIVE(S):**

Consistent with **Goal 5 Objectives A and B**, the proposed project will facilitate restoration of watershed processes in the Carmel River and improved access to over 43 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout. Removal of San Clemente Dam will also restore the aquatic and riparian habitat corridor along the river.

Consistent with **Goal 6 Objectives A and C**, the proposed project will develop a plan for restoring a coastal watershed. Removing the dam will provide increased access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout, restore the natural sediment supply to downstream reaches, and increase the biological connectivity of the river.

**CONSISTENCY WITH CONSERVANCY’S
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA & GUIDELINES:**

The proposed project is consistent with the Conservancy’s Project Selection Criteria and Guidelines adopted January 24, 2001, in the following respects:

Required Criteria

1. **Promotion of the Conservancy’s statutory programs and purposes:** See the “Consistency with Conservancy’s Enabling Legislation” section, above.
2. **Consistency with purposes of the funding source:** See the “Project Financing” section, above.
3. **Support of the public:** Removal of San Clemente Dam has broad support from federal, state and local agencies, environmental and community groups, including NMFS, PCLF and American Rivers. Support letters are provided in Exhibit 4.
4. **Location:** The project area is located on the Carmel River approximately 18.5 miles from the ocean. The San Clemente Dam Removal Project will benefit coastal resources by improving access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout, an anadromous fish that spends part of its life in the ocean.
5. **Need:** The Coastal Conservancy has been designated as the lead agency in the State’s effort to facilitate removal of the dam. There is no local agency with the capacity to take the lead on a project of this size and complexity. Therefore, the Conservancy’s involvement is necessary to removing the dam.
6. **Greater-than-local interest:** Restoration of the Carmel River watershed is critical to the recovery of the federally-threatened South-Central California Coast steelhead population.

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Removal of San Clemente Dam will significantly increase access to spawning and rearing habitat and thus is an important step in the recovery process.

Additional Criteria

7. **Urgency:** DWR is now requiring action soon to address the unsafe condition of San Clemente Dam. If an agreement cannot be reached soon on dam removal, CalAm will proceed with buttressing the dam. The proposed studies are needed to advance a plan for removal instead.
8. **Resolution of more than one issue:** Removal of San Clemente Dam will permanently resolve the public safety issue posed by the dam and will also improve access to habitat for steelhead trout and restore the natural sediment supply to the lower Carmel River and Carmel beach.
9. **Conflict resolution:** Efforts to address the safety issues at San Clemente Dam have been stalled for several years due to concerns that buttressing the dam would perpetuate significant impacts to the Carmel River ecosystem and specifically steelhead trout, but that removing the dam would be unfairly costly to CalAm's ratepayers. Developing a cooperative approach to removing the dam would resolve this conflict.
10. **Readiness:** The Conservancy is ready to move forward with the additional studies as soon as the funding is available.
11. **Cooperation:** The San Clemente Dam Removal Project is a cooperative effort of a private company, state and federal agencies, and several nonprofit organizations. It has the potential to demonstrate how cooperation between the public and private sectors can lead to an outcome that is fair and cost-effective for all involved and achieve greater public benefits than would result from any of the participants working alone through a regulatory solution.

CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL COASTAL PROGRAM POLICIES:

In the Carmel Area Land Use Plan of Monterey County's certified Local Coastal Program, policy 2.3.2 for Environmentally Sensitive Habitat states that "the environmentally sensitive habitats of the Carmel Coastal Segment are unique, limited and fragile resources of statewide significance, important to the enrichment of present and future generations of County residents and visitors; accordingly, they shall be protected, maintained and, where possible, enhanced and restored." The definition in the LCP of environmentally sensitive habitats includes habitat for rare and endangered species. The proposed project will facilitate improved access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout, a federally-listed species.

**CONSISTENCY WITH LOCAL WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLAN/
STATE WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN:**

Projects undertaken pursuant to Chapter 5.5 of Public Resources Code Division 21 (Section 31220) must be consistent with the following if available and relevant: Integrated Watershed Resource Management Programs (IWRMP); local watershed management plans; and with water quality control plans, adopted by the state and regional water boards. A draft of the Monterey Peninsula IWRMP was completed in November 2006 and includes the Carmel River. Removal of San Clemente Dam is consistent with IWRMP Section 4.1 Environmental Enhancement goal

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to “preserve the environmental wealth and wellbeing of the Region’s watersheds by taking advantage of opportunities to assess, restore and enhance natural resources of streams and watershed areas when developing water supply, water quality, and flood protection strategies.” The project is also consistent with specific Environmental Enhancement objectives cited in Section 4.3 of the IWRMP that call for protecting and enhancing “sensitive species and their habitats in the Carmel River watershed” and identifying “opportunities to protect, enhance, or restore habitat in conjunction with water supply, water quality, or flood protection projects.”

The Water Quality Control Plan for the Central Coastal Basin adopted by the Regional Water Quality Control Board in 1994 designates several beneficial use objectives for the Carmel River. The removal of San Clemente Dam will facilitate the restoration of fish and wildlife habitat thereby furthering the following designated beneficial uses for the Carmel River: cold fresh water habitat, wildlife habitat; rare, threatened or endangered species; migration of aquatic organisms; and spawning habitat (Table 2.1 of Basin Plan).

COMPLIANCE WITH CEQA:

The proposed project is statutorily exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), pursuant to 14 Cal. Code of Regulations Section 15262. Consistent with §15262, the project will only involve preparation of planning studies and feasibility studies and will consider environmental factors. Upon approval, staff will file a Notice of Exemption for this project.

Exhibit 1: Project Location Map





January 18, 2007

TO: Conservancy Members

FROM: Sam Schuchat, Executive Officer
Trish Chapman, Project Manager

RE: **San Clemente Dam Removal Project**

As discussed on the November 8, 2006, Board tour, the Coastal Conservancy is serving as the lead State agency to help develop a project to remove San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River. This memo provides a general overview of the project, objectives, partners, key issues, and a summary of the Conservancy's current activities.

Introduction

The Carmel River in Monterey County represents one of the best opportunities for river restoration on the Central Coast. Flowing through the Ventana Wilderness and the Los Padres National Forest, the Carmel River provides essential habitat for federally-threatened steelhead trout and California red-legged frog, and other important species.

Since 1921, however, the Carmel River and its wildlife resources have been impacted by San Clemente Dam. As a result of the dam, the Carmel River suffers accelerated erosion, the once vibrant steelhead run has dramatically decreased, and lives and property below the dam are threatened with dam collapse and the potential for inundation by sediment currently trapped behind the dam. Today, there is an extraordinary opportunity to remove the antiquated dam and initiate a watershed restoration process that will bring this river back to life.

Objective and Benefits

The objective of the San Clemente Dam Removal Project is to collaborate with California American Water (CalAm), the owner of the dam, to remove the dam and restore the watershed processes. Key public benefits of the project include:

- *Expedite removal of a significant risk to public safety.* San Clemente Dam, which has been found to be structurally unsafe, threatens 1500 homes and other buildings in the downstream flood plain.

- *Promote recovery of the Carmel River steelhead run and significantly contribute to the recovery of South-Central California Coast steelhead population by removing a barrier to significant upstream spawning and rearing habitat.*
- *Re-establish a natural sediment regime, reducing channel incision, improving habitat for steelhead trout and other aquatic species, and reducing beach erosion that now contributes to destabilization of homes, roads and infrastructure.*

Project Partners

A team of organizations has begun working together to make the dam removal project a reality. These partners include:

- California American Water, and its parent company American Water
- State of California, currently represented by the State Coastal Conservancy
- NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
- Planning and Conservation League Foundation

Project Description

San Clemente Dam is a 106 foot-high dam located approximately 18.5 miles from the Pacific Ocean on the Carmel River in Monterey County. The confluence of the Carmel River and San Clemente Creek is located just upstream of the dam (Figure 1). When the dam was constructed in 1921, it had a reservoir storage capacity of approximately 1,425 acre-feet. Today the reservoir has been filled by more than 2.5 million cubic yards of sediment, leaving a reservoir storage capacity of approximately 125 acre-feet. At this point, the sole function of the dam is to provide a diversion point for water withdrawals from the river. The dam is owned and operated by California American Water, an investor-owned water utility that is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC). CalAm provides public water service to the Monterey Peninsula.

In the early 1990s the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Division of the Safety of Dams (DSOD) determined San Clemente Dam could potentially fail in the event of either the maximum credible earthquake or probable maximum flood. As a result, DSOD instructed CalAm to develop a project to address this safety issue. CalAm funded multiple studies which evaluated options for strengthening, notching, or removing the dam. In addition, the Coastal Conservancy also funded a study to evaluate dam removal options. Ultimately, CalAm submitted a proposal to buttress the dam in place, a decision that was driven by two main facts: 1) CalAm's regulatory responsibility extends only to addressing the public safety issue; and 2) as a public utility, CalAm has an obligation to not burden its ratepayers with undue costs.

Why is a public participation needed?

Removing the San Clemente Dam would permanently solve the public safety issues, while also realizing additional public benefits such as increasing access to significant amounts of spawning and rearing habitat for Federally-listed steelhead trout and restoring the natural sediment supply to the downstream watershed and beach. There is also an opportunity to protect several hundred

acres of watershed lands. In order to achieve these public benefits, several organizations have been working with CalAm with the objective of elevating the project to dam removal.

The concept, in its simplest form, is that CalAm would contribute, at a minimum, an amount equivalent to what it would cost to buttress the dam, and the project partners would work together to secure the additional funding needed to remove the dam. In this way, CalAm would meet its regulatory responsibilities without undue cost to its ratepayers, and the public would achieve the additional benefits of dam removal. The least cost approach to removing the dam involves rerouting a 0.5 mile portion of the Carmel River, stabilizing the accumulated sediment within the abandoned 0.5 mile section of river, and then removing the dam. The river reroute and dam removal project is described in greater detail in Attachment 1. The difference in cost between buttressing the dam and this approach to removing the dam is currently estimated at \$20-30 million.

Getting the Project Done: IRT and the Need for Public Agency/Nonprofit Ownership

One option for reducing the project costs is to use the assistance of the U.S. Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training Program (IRT). Through this program, members of the military reserves achieve their training objectives through participation in civilian projects. Civilian partners must pay for equipment and materials, but the military pays for the labor costs. IRT troops could potentially undertake many elements of the dam removal project including construction of roads, pipelines, and the river diversion dike, blasting of the new river channel, and removal of the dam. IRT staff has expressed significant interest in participating in the project.

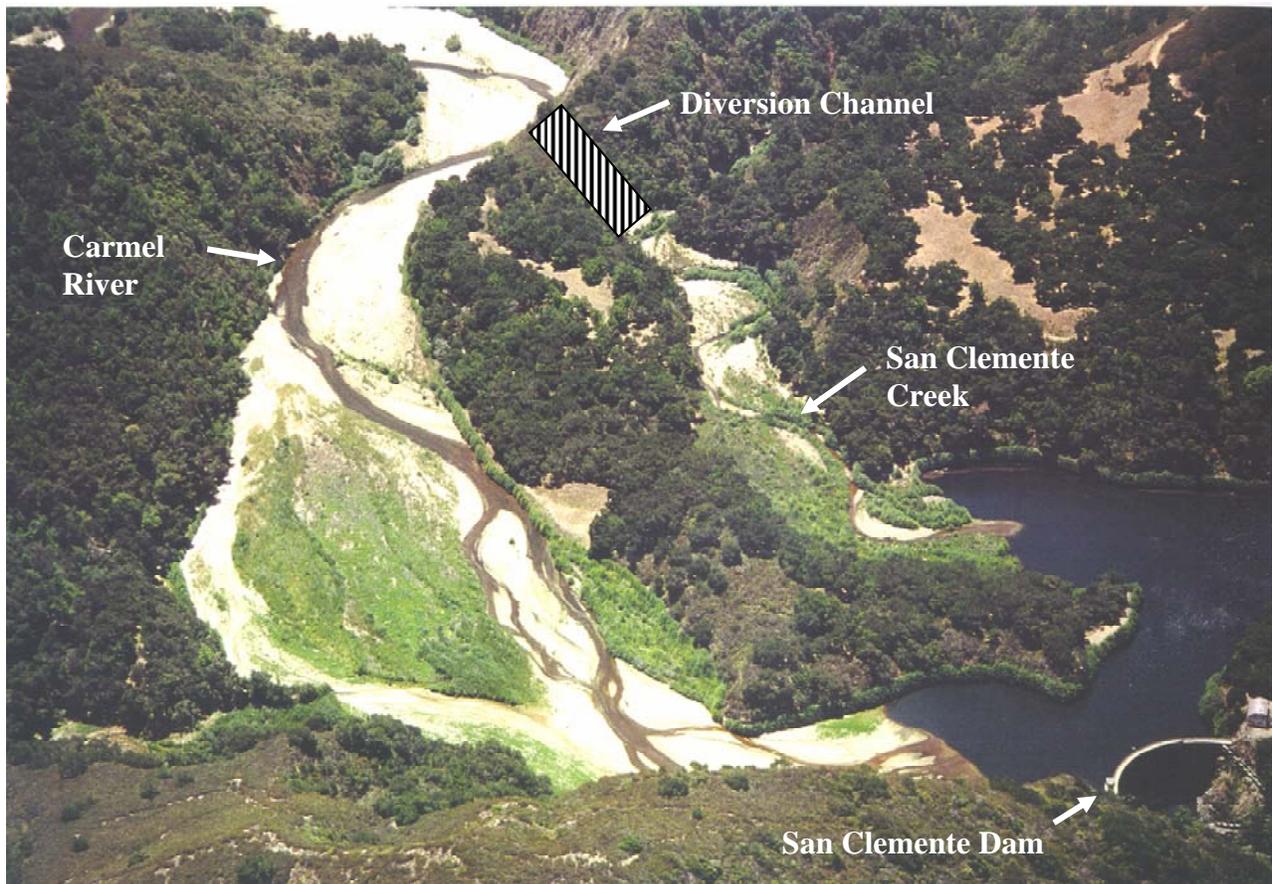
In order to receive IRT assistance, however, the project applicant and landowner must be either a public agency or charitable nonprofit organization. Therefore, in order to achieve the significant cost savings of IRT participation, the property would need to be transferred from CalAm to a suitable entity. The project team has been working to identify either a public agency or charitable nonprofit that would be capable and willing to take on this role. The project team will work with potential partners to identify the key issues and concerns and find appropriate ways to deal with them.

Current Conservancy Activities

1. **Cost Estimates.** As stated above, the estimated cost difference between buttressing the dam and removing it is \$20-30 million. These are rough cost estimates and additional work is needed to determine more precisely both the total cost of the removal project and the differential cost from the buttressing project. The Conservancy has hired a consultant team to help refine these cost estimates.
2. **IRT/Land Ownership.** As discussed above, in order to secure IRT involvement in the project, either a public agency or charitable nonprofit organization must take over ownership of the property. The Conservancy is investigating the feasibility of a State agency taking on this role, while other project partners investigate options for nonprofit ownership.

- Liability.** Because the dam removal project would involve additional funders and perhaps the IRT and a new landowner, there are significant liability concerns that need to be addressed. It is a high priority for the project team to identify the potential liabilities, as well as appropriate approaches to protecting the project partners from those liabilities. The project team is working to identify liabilities associated with dam removal and evaluate liability protections, including insurance, to address these risks.

Figure 1: San Clemente Dam Removal Project



Attachment 1

CARMEL RIVER REROUTE AND DAM REMOVAL¹

The Carmel River Reroute and Dam Removal project would remove San Clemente Dam to resolve the seismic safety issue, improve access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout, and restore the natural sediment supply. A portion of the Carmel River would be permanently bypassed by cutting a 450-foot-long channel connecting the Carmel River to San Clemente Creek, approximately 2500 feet upstream of the dam. The dam and fish ladder would be demolished and removed from the site.

During the first year of construction, access roads will be improved and/or constructed. During the active construction seasons, the flows in the Carmel River and San Clemente Creek would be diverted around the reservoir and dam site, and the reservoir would be dewatered. The dredging spoils from the bypass channel construction would be used for construction of a diversion dike at the upstream end of the bypassed reservoir arm. The bypassed portion of the Carmel River would be used as a sediment disposal site for the accumulated sediment. Sediment would be removed from behind the dam to the bypassed portion of the reservoir over one season by excavation with heavy earthmoving equipment. Approximately 380,000 cubic yards of sediment in the San Clemente Creek arm of the reservoir would be relocated to the Carmel River arm, where the bulk of accumulated sediment already has been deposited. The sediments at the downstream end of the bypassed reservoir arm would be stabilized and protected from erosion. The San Clemente Creek channel would be reconstructed through its historic inundation zone from the exit of the diversion channel to the dam site.

The project would also involve improving fish passage at the Old Carmel River Dam (OCRD), which is about 1800-feet downstream of San Clemente Dam. The dam would either be removed or notched.

This project is expected to take four to five years to complete (three years of actual construction), including environmental review, permitting, design, infrastructure improvements, sediment removal, bypass channel excavation, diversion dike construction, dam demolition, and creek channel reconstruction.

¹ Information excerpted and/or summarized from the San Clemente Dam Seismic Safety Project Draft Environmental Report/Environmental Impact Statement, California Department of Water Resources and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, April 2006.

Exhibit 3: Schematic of Dam Removal/River Re-Route Project





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Region
777 Sonoma Ave., Room 325
Santa Rosa, CA 95404-6528

May 2, 2007

In response refer to:
SWR/F/SWR3:JEA

Doug Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, California 94612
ATTN: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

Dear Mr. Bosco:

This letter is in support of the Coastal Conservancy's Board approving \$500,000 for technical studies for the San Clemente Dam Removal Project. These technical studies the Coastal Conservancy will fund are needed to provide enough detail on project design and its impacts to reach consensus on how to implement the project.

The San Clemente Dam Removal Project is a high priority to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service as we consider the Carmel River one of the most critical watersheds for restoration of the South-Central California Coast steelhead population. The steelhead population of the Carmel River is being viewed as the foundation and source population for recovery of steelhead on the Central coast of California.

The removal of San Clemente Dam offers an historic opportunity to take a major step in the restoration of the Carmel River's ecosystem and its steelhead fishery. Dam removal would restore productive spawning and rearing habitat in the reaches currently occupied by the sediment-filled reservoir and San Clemente Creek's alluvial delta. Three-quarters of the potential steelhead rearing habitat and two-thirds of the potential spawning habitat within the Carmel River watershed occur above San Clemente Dam. These important habitats are within the Los Padres National Forest and the Ventana Wilderness Area. Removing the dam will allow access to these areas where the fish are provided a higher level of protection for spawning, rearing and recovery.

As you know, this project is a cooperative effort among federal and state agencies and the private sector to increase public benefits in the watershed rather than only having California American Water Company merely meeting regulatory requirements. Not only will this project resolve the

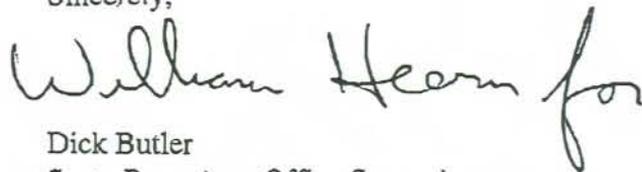


dam safety issue, it will also enhance biological connectivity of the river corridor, restore the natural sediment supply to the river and beach, and protect hundreds of acres of watershed lands.

We believe funding these studies will move this project ahead and answer many outstanding questions to reach the final design. Once again, we encourage the Board to approve \$500,000 to fund these necessary technical studies.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Joyce Ambrosius at (707) 575-6064 or joyce.ambrosius@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,



Dick Butler
Santa Rosa Area Office Supervisor
Protected Resources Division

cc: R. Strach, NMFS, Sacramento
T. Chapman, SCC, Oakland
J. Minton, PCLF, Sacramento
M. Hunter, PCLF, Monterey
J. Range, Baker Donelson, Wash., DC

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California Legislature

JOHN LAIRD
ASSEMBLYMEMBER, TWENTY-SEVENTH DISTRICT



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May 8, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairperson Bosco:

I am writing to support the staff recommendation for two agenda items at your meeting in May. These two projects are the Rancho Calera acquisition in Big Sur and the San Clemente Dam removal project, both of which are located within my assembly district.

As is noted in the Board Report, efforts have been made over the last two years to bridge the communication and outreach gap between resource and conservation agencies and the residents of Big Sur. I applaud the Conservancy for taking an active role in this discussion.

The Rancho Calera acquisition is the first major public land purchase since these efforts began. I believe the stakeholders involved, including the property owners, have made strong efforts to address in a proactive manner many of the concerns raised in the past by residents. While I believe this property will serve many purposes from an ecological and conservation standpoint, I also believe the process of working with the community to achieve this goal is equally important and worthy of your support.

Additionally, the safety of the residents of Carmel Valley as well as the health of the Carmel River has long been a concern for me. As California American Water Company, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Division of the Safety of Dams review the options for the San Clemente Dam, I believe the proposed technical studies will aid all interested parties in finding the best long term solution for both the ratepayers of the Monterey Peninsula and the ecology of the Carmel River.

Because of the importance of these two projects, I am writing to express my support and ask for the Conservancy's approval at your upcoming meeting. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Laird".

JOHN LAIRD, Assemblymember
27th District

JL:co

RECEIVED

MAY 09 2007

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.



California State Senate

ABEL MALDONADO
FIFTEENTH SENATE DISTRICT

May 16, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I am writing in support of the Coastal Conservancy grant of \$500,000 for technical and feasibility studies of the San Clemente Dam Removal Project in Monterey County.

The San Clemente Dam no longer serves a water supply function due to the buildup of silt in its reservoir and therefore has been identified as obsolete. Furthermore, the Department of Water Resources Division of Dam Safety has concluded that the dam is seismically unsafe and poses a threat to homes located in the downstream floodplain. Also, the dam creates a significant barrier to the migration of steelhead trout on the Carmel River.

Removal of the dam would address the public safety issue, allow unimpeded access to over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout, and allow for natural sediment flow to the downstream watershed and beach.

However, before the dam removal project may proceed, further studies must be completed to determine accurate cost estimates and a detailed analysis of environmental impacts. Approval of this grant will allow that necessary work to be completed so that a full evaluation may be made of the dam removal project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ABEL MALDONADO
Senator, 15th District

RECEIVED

MAY 21 2007

COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

AM/rg

MONTEREY COUNTY

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



MONTEREY COURTHOUSE - 1200 AGUAJITO ROAD, SUITE 001, MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA 93940

DAVE POTTER - CHAIR
SUPERVISOR - DISTRICT FIVE
(831) 847-7755 - FROM MONTEREY
(831) 755-5055 - FROM SALINAS
(831) 667-2770 - FROM BIG SUR
(831) 647-7695 (FAX)
e-mail: district5@co.monterey.ca.us

KATHLEEN LEE
AIDE TO THE SUPERVISOR

May 8, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: Support of San Clemente Dam Removal Project Technical Assistance Grant

Dear Mr. Bosco:

Please accept this letter of support for the Coastal Conservancy's staff recommendation for approval of a \$500,000 grant to provide technical assistance for the San Clemente Dam Project. The San Clemente Dam is located on the Carmel River, within my District, and is a high priority project due to the seismic instability of the structure, the threat to public safety if the dam fails, and the negative impact on both state and federally listed steelhead trout and the California red-legged frog. The California Department of Water Resources Division of the Safety of Dams has declared the San Clemente Dam a significant threat to downstream lives and property. The potential loss of 1500 structures, the displacement of thousands of residents and the environmental impact resulting from a dam failure would have a profound impact on my constituency.

I am fortunate to represent a district that has an active environmental constituency. The Carmel River Watershed Conservancy has led the efforts to restore and enhance the natural resources along the Carmel River, detailing their work in Carmel River Watershed Conservancy's Action Plan of 2005. The Planning and Conservation League Foundation partnered with CRWC in 2006 and identified dam removal as a key restoration action and detailed the many benefits that dam removal would have for the public and to the ecosystem. As a member of the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District Board of Directors, I am proud of the District's work to convene a Technical Advisory Committee comprised of community stakeholders, residents and those active in watershed restoration. The TAC identified goals to restore watershed processes in the Carmel River that will improve fish passage and access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout; improving the aquatic and riparian habitat along the river and to reestablish the natural sediment supply to areas downstream of the San Clemente Dam. The proposed engineering study for a dam removal project will help to meet many of the goals identified by the Technical Advisory Committee.

Supervisor Dave Potter

RE: Support of San Clemente Dam Removal Project Technical Assistance Grant

May 8, 2007, Page 2 of 2

The State Coastal Conservancy has worked collaboratively with NOAA Fisheries, the Planning and Conservation League, several community non-profit organizations and the dam's owner, California American Water, to study the potential of removing the dam and restoring habitat throughout the Carmel River Watershed. I applaud the Coastal Conservancy's leadership role in this collaborative effort and the work that has been done to date. Approving the staff recommendation will further the efforts to develop an alternative where the public agencies would work with California American Water to remove the San Clemente Dam.

I strongly encourage the Coastal Conservancy to approve the staff recommendation of a \$500,000 grant to provide ongoing technical assistance towards the removal of the San Clemente Dam. This project will have tremendous positive impact on improving the safety of the residents who live downstream, improve the quality and quantity of habitat along and within the Carmel River for many species including the steelhead and California red-legged frog, and restore connectivity for the Carmel River with its floodplain, wetland areas and lagoon.

Sincerely,



Dave Potter
Fifth District Supervisor

DLP/kl



Sam Davidson
California Field Director

May 8, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
ATTN: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

**Re: Proposal to allocate funding for feasibility study for
removal of San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River**

Dear Mr. Bosco,

This letter transmits the support of Trout Unlimited for the proposed study to assess the engineering and technical feasibility of removing the San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River in Monterey County.

Trout Unlimited (TU) is America's largest and oldest coldwater conservation group, with more than 150,000 members nationwide and some 14,000 in California. Our mission is to conserve, protect and restore North America's native trout and salmon populations and their watersheds.

TU is working with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on that agency's recovery project to restore to viability populations of the central and southern California coastal steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*), a federal and state listed native fish. We are also closely involved with the grassroots campaigns of local organizations such as the Carmel River Steelhead Association to support steelhead recovery in the Carmel River and other central coast streams. We will continue to be involved with the collaborative effort to bring back consistent and healthy steelhead runs in the Carmel River, and, more broadly, to restore more natural and sustainable hydrological and sediment functions and processes to the river, improve fish and wildlife habitat and riparian resources in a key coastal stream, and reconnect the Carmel River from its headwaters through its floodplain and wetlands to the lagoon at its mouth.

San Clemente Dam is a significant barrier to migration of steelhead trout. NMFS ranks the Carmel River as the most potentially viable watershed for recovery of the

South-Central California Coast Distinct Population Segment (S-CCC DPS) of steelhead, a federally-threatened subspecies, and has stated that restoration of the Carmel River steelhead population is critical to the overall recovery of the S-CCC DPS. Removing San Clemente Dam would restore steelhead access to over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat and would reduce stress on fish traveling further upstream beyond Los Padres Dam, where there are miles of additional spawning and rearing habitat in the upper mainstem Carmel River and its tributaries.

Removing the dam would also permanently address the threat to public safety from dam failure, enhance the biological connectivity of the river corridor, and restore the natural sediment supply to the downstream watershed and beach. Through the dam removal project, there is also an opportunity to protect and provide recreation on hundreds of acres of watershed lands.

As you may be aware, removal of San Clemente Dam also would restore designated beneficial uses for the Carmel River identified in the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (1994); these include cold freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, recovery of rare, threatened or endangered species, migration of aquatic organisms, and spawning habitat.

Technical assessments have determined that San Clemente Dam is functionally obsolete, and likely to fail catastrophically in a major seismic event. Environmental studies have concluded that the dam adversely affects both upstream and downstream habitats for a variety of sensitive species, including the steelhead trout and the California red-legged frog. The dam cannot be restored to its former function as a water supply source.

The proposed engineering study is needed to advance a plan now for dam removal that will build upon the present high level of support for a restoration strategy for the Carmel River in which dam removal is the primary tactic for ecosystem improvement. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is currently reviewing an EIR/EIS that considers dam removal as one option to address the dam's seismic safety issues. However, if agreement cannot be reached by the fall of 2007 on removing San Clemente Dam, California American Water, the dam's owner, will move forward with buttressing the structure.

If Cal-Am proceeds with strengthening the existing structure as a seismic remedy, there will not be another opportunity to remove the dam for at least 75 years. Allowing the dam to remain in place will require extraordinary and expensive measures to protect the ESA-listed steelhead trout. A proper evaluation of project costs for dam removal must describe and calculate the benefits of removal versus

long-term structural management costs as well as the costs that must be borne by future generations of residents and water users.

The proposed technical studies are needed to provide enough detail on the project design and its impacts so that consensus can be reached on how to implement dam removal. The proposed studies will support the ongoing cooperative effort between the public and private sectors to resolve the ecological and public safety problems associated San Clemente Dam, and could lead to greater public benefits than would result from any of the participants working alone or solely through a regulatory solution.

Removing San Clemente Dam will result in myriad public benefits that far outweigh the costs associated with removing the structure. TU urges the Coastal Conservancy board to approve funds to conduct the proposed engineering study, and we salute the Conservancy's efforts to ensure an outcome that enhances our wildlife and water resources while protecting the interests of local area residents.

Sincerely,

Sam Davidson

Sam Davidson



National Wildlife Federation

Western Natural Resource Center.
6 Nickerson Street, Suite 200 ♦ Seattle, Washington, 98109
(206) 285-8707 ♦ Fax: (206) 285-8698 ♦ www.nwf.org

May 8, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The National Wildlife Federation (NWF), on behalf of our four million members and supporters nationwide, and 500,000 in California, submits this letter to support the State Coastal Conservancy's recommendation to conduct technical studies on the San Clemente Dam Removal Project. NWF believes this study is critical to determining a viable plan to restore the Carmel River and the fish and wildlife that depend on a healthy and intact ecosystem.

The Carmel River once supported a healthy run of 20,000 steelhead, but with the construction of the San Clemente Dam in 1921, the majority of spawning and rearing habitat for this population was made inaccessible. The population is currently lingering at less than 700 fish and has been listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. Furthermore, while the low abundance of steelhead in the Carmel River is significant, the fact that NOAA Fisheries has identified these fish as an important source population for the recovery of steelhead on the Central Coast makes this population decline even more troublesome. If this population is unable to rebound, the future for steelhead on the Central Coast is further jeopardized.

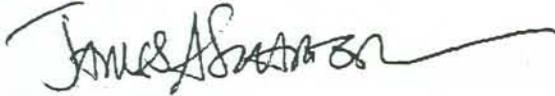
As an organization that represents the interests of these fish and the sportsmen who enjoy them, as well as the other wildlife species that will benefit from restoration of the Carmel River, such as the threatened California red-legged frog, NWF believes restoration of the Carmel River watershed is essential. The San Clemente Dam Removal Project provides the roadmap toward this goal of a healthy and restored Carmel River watershed.

Conducting the study proposed by the Coastal Conservancy is a key step toward identifying a viable project that can provide a remedy for the many problems associated with the San Clemente Dam. Currently, the dam presents significant risk to public safety due to its inability to withstand a serious seismic event. An estimated 2.1 million cubic yards of sediment and over 40 million gallons of water could devastate downstream inhabitants of the dam were to fail during a magnitude 6.5 earthquake. Additionally, the restoration of a natural sediment regime for the entirety of the Carmel River Watershed would result in enhanced habitat for fish and wildlife species, as well as greater stability of the river's banks and bed.

National Wildlife Federation believes that the steps the Coastal Conservancy is taking to thoroughly examine removal of the San Clemente Dam will help find the solution that works best for California's fish, wildlife, and residents of the Carmel River watershed.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment and please include the National Wildlife Federation in your list of groups that believe this project is important and very worthwhile.

Sincerely,



James Schroeder
Senior Environmental Policy Specialist
Western Natural Resource Center
National Wildlife Federation
6 Nickerson Street, Suite 200
Seattle, WA 98109
Phone: 206-285-8707

Chairman
David Hirsch

Vice Chairman
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Armando Rodriguez

May 8, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

Dear Chairman Bosco:

This letter is submitted in support of the proposed study to assess the engineering and technical feasibility of a project to remove the San Clemente Dam, located on the Carmel River in Monterey County. San Clemente Dam is functionally obsolete and seismically unstable. Environmental studies have concluded that the dam negatively impacts both upstream and downstream habitats for a variety of species including the state and federally listed steelhead trout, and California red-legged frog. Technical assessments have further determined that the dam cannot be restored to its former function as a water supply source.

The Planning and Conservation League Foundation (PCLF) has actively participated in developing this opportunity to study the potential for a dam removal project, working collaboratively with NOAA Fisheries, the State Coastal Conservancy and the dam's owner, California American Water. PCLF has taken this action because removing the dam will result in many public benefits that far outweigh the costs associated with removing the dam. These benefits include:

- Eliminating the hazard of dam failure and current threat to over 1500 structures in the lower river basin
- Eliminating long-term management/maintenance of the dam structure and continued impacts to state and federally listed steelhead
- Permitting the recovery of steelhead passage below Los Padres Dam including access to over 45 miles of potential spawning and rearing habitat in the mainstem and major tributaries of the Carmel River
- Permitting recovery of more sustainable hydrological and sediment functions and processes
- Making improvements in fish and wildlife habitat and riparian ecosystems in a coastal watershed

- Restoring connectivity for the Carmel River with its floodplain, wetland areas and lagoon

Failure to remove the dam will require a commitment to maintain an obsolete, damaging and dangerous facility in perpetuity. A proper evaluation of project costs for dam removal must recognize the benefits of removal versus the long-term management costs and implications of burdening all future generations with management of this obsolete facility. Allowing the dam to remain in place will also require extraordinary measures to protect the federally and state listed steelhead trout for the life of dam, adding to the costs that will be borne by current and future rate payers in the Monterey Peninsula region. If buttressing the existing dam structure is implemented as a seismic remedy, there will not be another opportunity to remove the dam for at least 75 to 100 years.

Large dam removal is a relatively new undertaking (but one that is eventually inevitable for virtually all dams). Recent evaluations by the H. John Heinz Center (2001), the Aspen Center (2002), and the World Commission on Dams (2000) have identified dam removal as an effective strategy for restoring a functional river system when carefully designed and managed. The San Clemente Dam can and should be removed in a manner and sequence that supports both ecosystem and human needs.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is currently reviewing an EIR/EIS that considers dam removal as one option to address the dam's seismic safety issues. The current window of opportunity to eliminate the dam safety risk, improve fish passage and restore the Carmel River will end sometime in fall 2007 when DWR will make its determination of the appropriate project. If an agreement cannot be reached soon on dam removal, California American Water will proceed with buttressing the dam. The proposed engineering study is needed to advance a plan now for dam removal that will build upon current interest and support for a restoration strategy for the Carmel River that incorporates dam removal as a central action for ecosystem enhancement.

In support of this approach, PCLF has worked to engage local groups in an effort to build upon previous work initiated by the Carmel River Watershed Conservancy (CRWC) to support implementation of the Carmel River Watershed Action Plan (CRWC 2005). That Action Plan did an excellent job of identifying many of the constraints and opportunities for a healthy river system. In 2006, PCLF and CRWC jointly developed the Supplemental Carmel River Watershed Action Plan to specifically address dam removal as a key restoration action, and identified many of the public benefits that would occur with a dam removal project.

More recently, PCLF participated in a regional effort conducted by the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District to develop an Integrated Regional Water Management Plan that identified goals for ecosystem restoration. This process was supported by a Technical Advisory Committee whose members include local residents and other stakeholders who are actively engaged in watershed restoration activities, including planning and project implementation.

The proposed engineering study for a dam removal project would help to meet many of the goals identified by Technical Advisory Committee. These goals include restoring watershed processes in the Carmel River that will also improve fish passage and access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout; improving the aquatic and riparian habitat corridor

along the river; and, reestablishing the natural sediment supply to downstream reaches increasing the biological connectivity of the river.

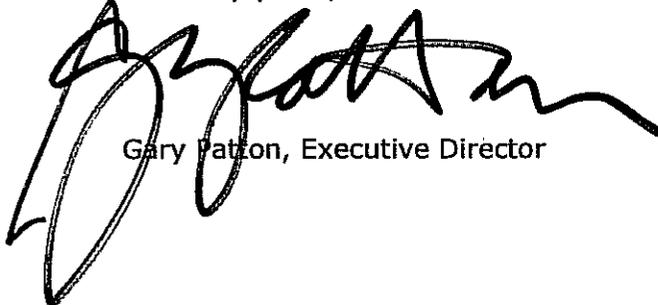
Furthermore, the removal of San Clemente Dam will restore designated beneficial uses for the Carmel River identified in the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (1994) that include cold fresh water habitat, wildlife habitat; rare, threatened or endangered species; migration of aquatic organisms; and spawning habitat.

PCLF will continue to remain a strong advocate for dam removal working collaboratively with California American Water, the State Coastal Conservancy, NOAA Fisheries and local stakeholder and conservation groups. The proposed study will further ensure a technically feasible project is developed by providing necessary and critical information in a timely manner that will support informed decisions on the viability of a dam removal project that can be implemented through cooperative action among private and public entities.

We urge the Board to approve funds to conduct the proposed engineering study and applaud the Coastal Conservancy's leadership and efforts to ensure the best outcome for the residents of the state of California in protecting its valued wildlife and water resources.

Thank you for taking our views into consideration.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Patton", written over a large, stylized, looped graphic element.

Gary Patton, Executive Director



FRIENDS OF THE RIVER

915 20th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
916/442-3155 • FAX: 916/442-3396 • E-mail: info@friendsoftheriver.org • www.friendsoftheriver.org

CALIFORNIA'S
STATEWIDE RIVER
CONSERVATION
ORGANIZATION

May 7, 2007

The Honorable Doug Bosco
Chair, California Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612

Re: San Clemente Dam Removal Study

Dear Chairman Bosco:

Friends of the River strongly supports the recommendation by California Coastal Conservancy staff to fund a \$500,000 study to determine the best approach to remove the San Clemente Dam on the Carmel River.

The San Clemente Dam no longer stores water and has completely filled with sediment. The dam has one of the highest fish ladders in California and it is estimated that it impedes the migration of as much as 66% of the Carmel River's endangered steelhead. The dam does not meet earthquake safety standards and poses a hazard to public safety.

Removal of the dam would eliminate the public safety hazard, eliminate costly maintenance, remove an impediment to the migration of endangered steelhead, improve habitat for the endangered California red-legged frog, renew the river's natural sediment transport function, and restore connectivity between the river and its upper watershed. The proposed \$500,000 study is an essential step towards achieving all of these positive goals.

Friends of the River urges approval of the funding for this important study.

Sincerely,

Steven L. Evans
Conservation Director



**CARMEL RIVER STEELHEAD ASSOCIATION
P.O. BOX 1183
MONTEREY, CA 93942**

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, Ca. 94612
Attn: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

Dear Doug,

The Carmel River Steelhead Association (CRSA) fully supports the Coastal Conservancy actions to restore the Carmel River and its ESA protected Steelhead Trout. We have worked for over 35 years to maintain this unique species and its genetic diversity within the Carmel River Watershed. As I am sure you can appreciate multiple Dams, and specifically San Clemente, have severely impacted the populations for near a century. This is an historic opportunity to remove a major impediment to Steelhead migration and population recovery. CRSA is adamantly opposed to simply buttressing the Dam for earthquake safety, that option will continue negative impacts on the public trust resource for decades, without providing any water storage or flood control.

We fully support the Coastal Conservancy staff recommendation to conduct technical studies of the Dam Removal with a Grant. This Project is a cooperative effort between many Private, Public and Community Organizations. The Property Owner, California American Water Company is making an impressive offer of Scenic Lands and Cash to realize the full environmental and public resource benefits by Removal of the Dam.

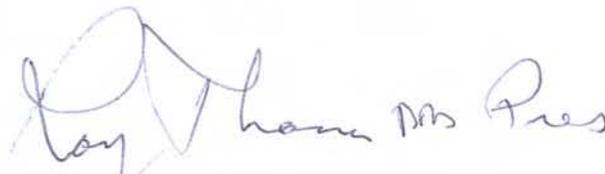
CRSA and CAW have also been working on joint projects in the Carmel Watershed to recover ESA species such as Steelhead. We have submitted a Grant Request to American Rivers to remove the first Dam ever built on the Carmel River, the "Old Carmel or China Dam" which is a short distance below San Clemente. The combined benefit is very significant, over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat restored to unrestricted migratory access.

Thank you for your full involvement with the Historic Restoration of the Carmel River and its Wildlife!

Sincerely,



Frank Emerson, VP
Carmel River Steelhead Association



Dr. Roy Thomas, President
Carmel River Steelhead Association

RECEIVED

MAY 09 2007

**COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.**

**Carmel River Watershed Conservancy**

P.O. Box 223833 Carmel, CA 93922-3833 • 831-375-5376

e-mail: steelheadcrwc@sbcglobal.net • website: www.carmelriverwatershed.org**May 7th 2007**

**Doug Bosco, Chair,
Coastal Conservancy,
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300,
Oakland, CA 94612**

San Clemente Dam Removal Project**Dear Sir,**

On behalf of the board of directors and members of the Carmel River Watershed Conservancy we submit this letter of support of the proposed study to assess the engineering and technical feasibility of a project to remove the San Clemente Dam located on the Carmel River in Monterey County. San Clemente Dam is functionally obsolete, and seismically unstable according to the California Division of Safety of Dams.

Removal of San Clemente Dam would provide unrestricted access to over 25 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout and the Red-Legged frog that remain on the list of threatened species. The project would also resolve the public safety issue posed by the dam, enhance biological connectivity of the river corridor, restore the natural sediment supply to the river and beach, and protect several hundred acres of watershed lands.

The project is a cooperative effort of the public and private sectors and could lead to greater public benefits than would result from any of the participants working alone or solely through a regulatory solution.

Of major concern to us and the other conservation non-profits that support the watershed is the incompleteness of the study of how the migrating steelhead will ascend and descend the 80 plus feet of space from the

existing sedimentation plain above San Clemente dam to the heavily incised river below.

One can hardly visualize a form of fish ladder if one is intent on decommissioning a dam. However the alternative is perhaps a series of man-made pools that enable the steelhead to ascend and descend in a natural manner. This in itself could be a costly project. Some years ago a similar study was made to create a series of connected pools from a mile below the San Clemente dam and to a mile above the dam. This was to be accomplished by removing the dam masonry and using the fill material to create the pools. It died a natural death.

We therefore trust that sufficient funds are available for this specific part of the study and to provide some kind of fall-back program in the event river flows over the next 30 years continue the downward trend. That might include the provision of funds to dredge the Los Padres dam in order to increase the reserves of stored water to maintain flows all year. Continued dewatering of the Carmel River is inevitable even when the excess currently being diverted is replaced with an alternative source. The unrestricted practice of allowing wells to be drilled in the highlands of the watershed is endangering the public trust.

Yours truly,



**Clive R. Sanders,
President.**

**C.C. Mr. David Berger,
General Manager.
Monterey Peninsula Water Management District.**



May 7, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
ATTN: Carmel River/San Clemente Dam Project

Dear Mr. Bosco,

The Big Sur Land Trust is a nonprofit organization committed to conserving significant lands and waters of California's Central Coast. Recently we have been an active partner in projects in the Carmel River, most notably the planning and design of a multi-use Carmel River Parkway linking public lands via a network of trails in the lower river. Additionally we are active in identifying and acquiring significant lands in the watershed with a goal of providing water resource, riparian corridor, and fish and wildlife protection.

The San Clemente Dam has been documented in numerous scientific studies to be detrimental to the ecological viability of the Carmel River and poses a significant safety hazard for the community. The Big Sur Land Trust is supportive of a project that would provide for the long-term restoration of the river and its biological resources including the steelhead trout and California Red-Legged Frog. An opportunity such as that provided by removal of the San Clemente Dam should be viewed in the larger context of watershed restoration so that multiple objectives are accomplished. There is growing recognition of the value that dam removal can bring to restoring ecosystem function within river systems. The Carmel River is an important resource for all Californians and can be an example of creative collaboration for restoring ecosystem function and providing a safer, healthier watershed for current and future residents and visitors to this unique river. The Big Sur Land Trust welcomes the opportunity to be a partner in the restoration of this important watershed.

Sincerely,



William H. Leahy
Executive Director

VENTANA WILDLIFE SOCIETY
Conserving Native Wildlife and their Habitats

19045 Portola Dr, Ste F-1

Salinas CA 93908

May 8, 2007

P: (831) 455-9514

F: (831) 455-2846

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
ATTN: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

Dear Mr. Bosco:



We are writing this letter in support of the proposed study to assess the engineering and technical feasibility of a project to remove the San Clemente Dam. The San Clemente Dam, located on the Carmel River in Monterey County, is nonfunctioning and seismically unstable according to the California Division of Safety of Dams. Environmental studies have concluded that the dam negatively impacts both upstream and downstream habitats for a variety of species including the state and federally listed steelhead trout, and California red-legged frog. Technical assessments have further determined that the dam cannot be restored to its former function as a water supply source.

Failure to remove the dam, an option under consideration, will require a commitment to maintain an obsolete, damaging and dangerous facility in perpetuity through buttressing and other costly yet temporary and inevitably unstable remedies. Allowing the dam to remain in place will also require extraordinary measures to protect the federally and state listed steelhead trout for the life of the dam and maintain healthy river function, adding to the financial and environmental burden of current and future rate payers in the Monterey Peninsula region. Short and long-term benefits of complete dam removal far outweigh the immediate costs of dam removal. Furthermore, the removal of San Clemente Dam will restore designated beneficial uses for the Carmel River identified in the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (1994) including cold fresh water habitat, terrestrial wildlife habitat; rare, threatened or endangered species habitat; migration of aquatic organisms; and spawning habitat. The San Clemente Dam can and should be removed in a manner and sequence that supports both ecosystem function and human needs and safety.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) is currently reviewing an EIR/EIS that considers dam removal as one option to address the dam's seismic safety issues. The current window of opportunity to eliminate the dam safety risk, improve fish passage

and restore the Carmel River will end sometime in fall 2007 when DWR will make its determination of the appropriate project. If an agreement cannot be reached soon on dam removal, California American Water will proceed with buttressing the dam. The proposed engineering study is needed to advance a plan now for dam removal that will build upon current interest and support for a restoration strategy for the Carmel River that incorporates dam removal as a central action for ecosystem enhancement.

In support of this approach, VWS has worked as part of the Technical Advisory Committee with other stakeholders and conservation groups to implement the Carmel River Watershed Action Plan (CRWC 2005). The Action Plan identified many of the constraints and opportunities for a healthy river system. The proposed engineering study for a dam removal project would help to meet many of the goals identified by the Technical Advisory Committee. These goals include restoring watershed processes in the Carmel River that will also improve fish passage and access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout; improving the aquatic and riparian habitat corridor along the river; and, reestablishing the natural sediment supply to downstream reaches increasing the biological connectivity of the river.

We urge the Board to approve funds to conduct the proposed engineering study and are grateful for the Coastal Conservancy's leadership and efforts to ensure the best outcome for the residents of the state of California in protecting valued wildlife and water resources.

Sincerely,



Kelly Sorenson
Executive Director



Karen Shihadeh
Senior Wildlife Biologist
Conservation Ecology and Habitat
Restoration

Coastal



Watershed Council

May 8, 2007

Doug Bosco, Chair
Coastal Conservancy
1330 Broadway, Suite 1300
Oakland, CA 94612
ATTN: San Clemente Dam Removal Project

Dear Mr. Bosco:

This letter is submitted to support the proposed study to assess the engineering and technical feasibility of a project to remove the San Clemente Dam.

According to the California Division of Safety of Dams, the San Clemente Dam is functionally obsolete and seismically unstable. Environmental studies have concluded that the dam negatively impacts both upstream and downstream habitats for a variety of species including the state and federally listed steelhead trout as well as the California red-legged frog. Technical assessments have further determined that the dam cannot be restored to its former function as a water supply source.

The Coastal Watershed Council (CWC) has collaborated with governmental and nonprofit organizations to develop programs to support community involvement in restoring water quality and habitat in the Carmel River watershed for steelhead trout, the California red-legged frog, and human use.

From the Coastal Watershed Council's perspective, there are several benefits which are persuasive to encourage moving forward on this project:

- Removal of San Clemente Dam would provide unrestricted access to over twenty-five miles of spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout.
- Fish and wildlife habitat and riparian ecosystems would be significantly improved in this coastal watershed.
- The Carmel River would recover sustainable hydrological and sediment functions and processes.
- The connectivity of the Carmel River and its floodplain, wetland areas, and lagoon would be restored.

- The project would resolve the public safety issue posed by the dam, enhance biological connectivity of the river corridor, restore the natural sediment supply to the river and beach, and protect several hundred acres of watershed lands.

These technical studies are needed to provide sufficient detail regarding the project design and its impacts to reach consensus on how best to implement the project. As a result of the history of involvement of a range of organizations in matters regarding the San Clemente Dam, this project offers an exciting opportunity for an effective public/private partnership.

In support of this approach, CWC has worked to engage local groups in an effort to build upon previous work initiated by the Carmel River Watershed Conservancy (CRWC) to support implementation of the Carmel River Watershed Action Plan (CRWC 2005). In 2006, CWC with the Planning and Conservation League Foundation (PCLF) and CRWC jointly developed the Supplemental Carmel River Watershed Action Plan to identify key restoration activities. These activities would take advantage of community involvement and would bring substantial public benefits.

The proposed engineering study for a dam removal project would help to meet many of the goals identified by the 2006 Carmel River Technical Advisory Committee. These goals include: restoring watershed processes in the Carmel River which will improve fish passage and access to spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead trout; improving the aquatic and riparian habitat corridor along the river; and, reestablishing the natural sediment supply to downstream reaches in order to increase the biological connectivity of the river.

Furthermore, the removal of San Clemente Dam will restore designated beneficial uses for the Carmel River identified in the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board Basin Plan (1994). Those benefits include: improved cold fresh water habitat and wildlife habitat; increased protection of rare, threatened or endangered species; restored migration of aquatic organisms; and, improved spawning habitat.

We strongly recommend that the Board approve funds to conduct the proposed engineering study. We believe that the positive benefits of this project along with the avoidance of risks and costs associated with not proceeding with this project make moving forward with the proposed study fully consistent with the mission of the Coastal Conservancy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bill Leland
Executive Director
Coastal Watershed Council



May 17, 2007

MR. SAM SCHUCHAT
EXECUTIVE OFFICER
1330 Broadway
13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612-2530

Re: Removal of San Clemente Dam

Dear Mr. Schuchat:

I must apologize for my tardy official response to your inquiry, I do hope it did not cause you any undo effort. In addition, I hope you received my voice message concerning this subject and our desire to work with the Conservancy to the extent we can with regard to San Clemente Dam.

With regard to your specific data requests in your letter dated March 28, 2007 we offer the following:

1. California-American Water Company [CA-AW] is not opposed to the Conservancy's bypass project as an alternative to our proponent's preferred project, contingent on: (i) the conclusions of the pending EIR; (ii) the State of California or a third party's willingness to fund the additional construction costs of the alternative and assuming all future liability associated with the assets transferred to the State as part of the bypass project; (iii) CA-AW retaining its current rights to appropriate water from the Carmel River; and (iv) CA-AW verifying that as a result of this project CA-AW will not breach the company's existing agreements with wildlife resource agencies to protect listed species, or expose the company to additional future obligations relating to listed species. We are willing to entertain this alternative despite our firm conviction that our proponent's preferred project is an appropriate project to address the Department of Safety of Dam's concerns.
2. Assuming that the above contingencies are met, CA-AW is willing to contribute funds to an alternative project in an amount equal to what the Company has allocated for dam buttressing, dam modifications for proper sedimentation management and appropriate equipment for the purpose of providing effective fish movement up and down stream. CA-AW will also contribute an yet-to-be-determined area of land, including the dam.
3. With regard to the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) concerns for project support, CA-AW is not in a position to make any

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representations. However, based upon our understanding of their position at the March 15, 2007 meeting, we concur that there appears to be support for an alternative if a project can be developed timely.

4. CA-AW is ready and willing to provide the Conservancy and its agents with the data, modeling, analysis, designs and other information related to the seismic safety project, to the extent that CA-AW has access to the information and the right to share it. CA-AW will not be able to provide anything that would be considered proprietary by the consultants employed by CA-AW, but would assist in attempting to gain limited access to such information.
5. CA-AW will provide access as required to the project site.
6. CA-AW will delineate the real property that it is willing to convey as part of any alternative project. CA-AW is in the process of determining the boundaries of the site, and whether or not providing a copy of our appraisal is in our owners' and ratepayers' best interests. Upon a final determination, we will inform the Conservancy of the decision as well as the basis of our decision should it be decided not to share the appraisal.
7. CA-AW would be willing to enter into an option agreement with the Conservancy so that the Conservancy can make Application to the Department of Defense's Innovative Readiness Training Program [IRT]. CA-AW's legal department has reviewed a draft option agreement and has advised me that significant revision would be required. Please note that CA-AW believes that obtaining the cooperation of the IRT rests solely with the Conservancy, and IRT participation is not a material aspect of or condition to a removal alternative. CA-AW's legal department will provide comments on the draft agreement to me shortly, and I will transmit those comments to you.

CA-AW is very optimistic by the recent activities related to the San Clemente Dam and is committed to working with the Conservancy in it's effort to develop an alternative project within the required timeframe given the conditions listed above. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B. Kent Turner".

B. Kent Turner
President