

July 17, 2017

Memorandum -- delivered via email

To: Chris Walker, NWP Operations Division Fishery Section
US Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)



From: Lance Kruzic, Sustainable Fisheries Division
West Coast Region, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Subject: NMFS' comments on MOC "17CGR03 Cougar Fish Facility Protocols"

Thank you for this opportunity to review this Memorandum of Coordination (MOC). This memo summarizes comments prepared by NMFS' West Coast Region technical staff.

General Comments

This MOC describes Cougar Fish Facility adult handling and transport protocols for 2017 recommended by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). As downstream passage conditions at Cougar Dam are currently poor, and replacement rates for fish outplanted above the Dam are less than 0.4, this protocol states all natural origin adult spring Chinook salmon collected at the facility will be tagged and released downstream. This will minimize the "mining" of natural origin Chinook salmon from below Cougar Dam. If tagged natural origin adult spring Chinook salmon return to the facility a second time, then they will then be released upstream of Cougar Dam.

NMFS supports this recommended protocol for operating the Cougar Fish Facility in 2017. These actions will maximize the productivity of Chinook salmon in the McKenzie River population. This protocol is also consistent with the draft McKenzie HGMP currently in consultation with NMFS, which states this operation shall minimize the "mining" of Chinook salmon produced below Cougar Dam until pedigree analysis or other data indicate that an alternative protocol would be more beneficial to productivity of the McKenzie spring Chinook salmon population.

Please direct questions or concerns about these comments to Lance Kruzic, lance.kruzic@noaa.gov, or Diana Dishman, diana.dishman@noaa.gov.

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