

Summary of Trinity River Salmon and Steelhead Hatchery Authorization and Production Goals

The Trinity River Division (TRD) of the Central Valley Project was authorized by Public Law 84-386 on August 12, 1955. Public Law 84-386 states that, with regard to the TRD, the Secretary of the Interior is authorized and directed to "...adopt appropriate measures to insure the preservation and propagation of fish and wildlife..."

In 1956, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) completed "A Plan for the Protection and Maintenance of Fish and Wildlife Resources Affected by the Trinity River Division, Central Valley Project" (1956 Plan) pursuant to the 1934 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (as amended in 1946). The agencies had then recommended that a fish hatchery would be necessary for maintenance of Chinook salmon, coho salmon, and steelhead populations. Subsequently, Congress provided funding for Reclamation to construct the Trinity River Salmon and Steelhead Hatchery (TRH) via Public Works Appropriations starting in Fiscal Year 1960. Prior to the completion of the hatchery, these appropriations also provided for the necessary handling of fish and transportation upstream of the dam sites.

The mitigation production goals for the TRH are intended to make up for the annual dam-related loss of salmon and steelhead, and the escapement goals are 3,000 adult spring-run Chinook salmon, 9,000 adult fall-run Chinook salmon, 2,100 adult coho salmon, and 10,000 adult steelhead (January 22, 1979, letter from E.C. Fullerton, CDFG, to T. Meehan, VTN). These goals were reiterated in the USFWS's 1983 Trinity River Basin Fish and Wildlife Management Program Final Environmental Impact Statement and in the 2000 Trinity River Mainstem Fishery Restoration Environmental Impact Statement/Report. The goals for Chinook salmon appear to be somewhat based on earlier studies conducted by the USFWS (see Moffett and Smith 1950). The coho salmon and the steelhead goals appear not to be based on the sparse site-specific data available, instead being based upon experience on other rivers (see 1956 Plan).

The current annual production targets intended to meet the above mitigation production goals are:

- 800,000 steelhead yearlings
- 500,000 coho salmon yearlings
- 3,000,000 Chinook salmon smolts (1,000,000 spring-run, 2,000,000 fall-run)
- 1,300,000 Chinook salmon yearlings (400,000 spring-run, 900,000 fall-run)

The origin of these annual production targets is the current operation and maintenance contract for the TRH.