



**Notice of Availability and Intent to Use
a NEPA environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact in place of a
mitigated negative declaration related to Issuance of up to 11 Lake or Streambed
Alteration Agreements associated with the upper Shasta River**

January 14, 2021

Introduction: The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Northern Region, intends to issue Lake or Streambed Alteration (LSA) agreements for up to 11 ranches and irrigation districts along the upper Shasta River and Parks Creek. CDFW, acting as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), intends to use the Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact (EA/FONSI) dated November 19, 2020, prepared by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for CEQA compliance associated with issuance of the LSAs. CEQA Guidelines section 15221(a) encourages state agencies to use previously approved federal environmental documents prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for CEQA compliance. The 11 ranches and irrigation districts include: Cardoza Ranch, Edson Foulke Yreka Ditch Company, Outpost MR Parks Creek Ranch, Rice Livestock, Grenada Novy Ranch, Nicoletti Ranch, Montague Water Conservation District, Big Springs Creek Ranch and Emmerson Investments Shasta Springs, Hole in the Ground, and Seldom Seen ranches.

CDFW believes that the EA/FONSI meet the requirements of CEQA. CDFW intends to use the EA/FONSI in lieu of preparing a CEQA environmental document when issuing LSA agreements to the ranches and irrigation districts. The EA includes a description of the Proposed Action and evaluates the potential for significant environmental impacts. The FONSI concludes that the Proposed Action will have no significant adverse impacts to public health/safety, historic or cultural resources, park lands, prime farmlands, wetlands, wild and scenic rivers, fisheries resources, marine or coastal ecosystems, ESA-listed species, ecologically critical areas, and would not result in adverse cumulative impacts. Furthermore, NMFS expects a significant benefit to all life stages of Coho Salmon through implementation of the beneficial management activities proposed to improve habitat conditions.

The Proposed Action previously covered by the EA/FONSI is NMFS's issuance of fourteen Endangered Species Act (ESA) section 10(a)(1)(A) Enhancement of Survival Permits (ESPs) authorizing take of Southern Oregon Northern California Coast (SONCC) Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU) of Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) in the Shasta River basin, Siskiyou County, California. NMFS entered into the Template Safe Harbor Agreement for Conservation of Coho Salmon in the Shasta River (TSHA), approved related Site Plan Agreements (SPAs), and issued ESPs pursuant to ESA Section 10(a)(1)(A) in February 2021. The federal [TSHA](#), ESPs, [SPAs](#), and related [Biological Opinion/Incidental Take Statement](#) include terms and conditions, an adaptive management program; and emergency, monitoring, and reporting requirements to benefit Coho Salmon, which is listed

as threatened under both the federal ESA and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA).

Project Description: The Project is the issuance of up to 11 LSAs for ranches and irrigation districts located in the Shasta River and Parks Creek basins, which manage land and water for livestock, hay production, and fisheries and wildlife habitat. The LSA covered activities include land and water management (referred to in the TSHA and SPAs as Routine Agricultural Activities), including operation and maintenance of surface water diversions, maintaining stream crossings and cattle watering lanes, implementing Beneficial Management Activities including instream habitat restoration (large woody debris, oxbow enhancement, spawning gravel), fish passage improvement, riparian enhancement, tailwater control, water efficiency, water dedication, diversion coordination, and implementing avoidance and minimization measures for Routine Agricultural Activities (as described in the TSHA and SPAs). The term of the proposed LSAs are five years from the time of signing, with one potential extension for up to another five years. The TSHA and approved SPAs are available for review on [NMFS's Shasta River TSHA webpage at https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/shasta-river-template-safe-harbor-agreement-and-site-plans](https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/shasta-river-template-safe-harbor-agreement-and-site-plans).

Project Location: Private and state lands consisting of 11 properties and diversions in the Upper Shasta River and Parks Creek in Siskiyou County, California. The project location is depicted in EA Figure 1.

Comment Period: The EA/FONSI prepared by NMFS is available for public review and comment between January 14, 2022, and February 28, 2022. Comments may be provided through **February 28, at 5:00 pm**.

Document Availability: The EA/FONSI is available for review on Department of Fish and Wildlife website at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Notices/CEQA>, and online on CEQAnet. Due to Covid-19, CDFW's Northern Region offices are currently closed to the public – if you would like a hard copy of the EA/FONSI, please contact CDFW at the email or phone below to request.

CDFW Contact Person: Curt Babcock; CDFW; 601 Locust Street; Redding, CA 96001; (530) 604-4046 R1CEQARedding@wildlife.ca.gov