



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

Southwest Region
777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325
Santa Rosa, California 95404

March 25, 1998 F/SWR3:TKD

California Department of Fish
and Game

PO Box 47
Yountville, CA 95499

Attn: Mr. Ken Aasen

Dear Mr. Aasen:

The purpose of this letter is to provide National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recommendations on the adult steelhead planting program conducted by Bill Townsend (Ukiah Rod and Gun Club), and permitted by the Department of Fish and Game (DFG), in tributaries to the Russian River in Mendocino County.

Allowing adult hatchery steelhead to be relocated in a limited number of tributaries is not, in our opinion, a threat to listed steelhead within the Russian River Basin. Appropriate tributaries for relocation are those with migration barriers to adult fish. We recommend the program continue in Mill Creek, Orr Creek, Forsythe Creek and Gibson Creek. DFG has set limits on the number of adult steelhead for each tributary. The low numbers of adult steelhead set by DFG are acceptable to NMFS, and our understanding is that DFG will monitor and control this program.

I propose that NMFS and DFG work together to develop a monitoring program to assess the success of the program, and to encourage efforts to remove fish passage barriers and undertake habitat restoration projects. Relocation of surplus hatchery fish may provide benefits in the short run, but long term recovery of steelhead in these streams will depend on watershed efforts coordinated at the county and local community levels.

If you have any questions concerning these comments or recommendations, please contact Mr. Dick Butler at (707) 575-6058.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick J. Rutten".

Patrick J. Rutten
Supervisor, Northern CA
Protected Resources Div.

cc: Bill Townsend - Ukiah Rod and Gun Club
Charles Peterson - Mendocino County Supervisor

