

CALFED: Scientific Review 2001-K210-1

Health Monitoring of Hatchery and Natural Fall-run Chinook Juveniles in the San Joaquin River System and Delta, April – June 2001
J Scott Foott, PhD

This is an excellent proposal which addresses several current key issues: 1) interactions and pathogen spread between hatchery and wild fish, 2) health of fish after release from the hatchery, 3) pathogens (diseases) acquired by hatchery fish after release which may have detrimental effects on survival, 4) sufficiency of energy reserves at the time of release/out-migration, 5) readiness for out-migration or degree of smoltification.

Interactions between domestic/hatchery and wild/natural fish, and disease spreading was identified as a top research priority item by the WRAC (Western Regional Aquaculture Consortium) meeting in October 1999 at Desert Hot Springs, California. The same subject was addressed in a symposium sponsored by the PNFHPC (Pacific Northwest Fish Health Committee) in 1997 entitled “Pathogens and Diseases of Fish in Aquatic Ecosystems: Implications in Fisheries Management.” Our lack of knowledge on wild fish diseases is acknowledged by the recently implemented program by the USFWS on National Wild Fish Health survey, implemented in 1996-97. The Cal-Neva Lab is one of only nine labs participating in this important program.

Dr. Foott and staff at the California-Nevada Fish Health Center have conducted similar studies recently on the Sacramento River (evaluation of IHNV transmission from hatchery to wild fishes) and Trinity and Klamath Rivers (health status and diseases acquired during out migration of smolts). Results of these studies are very valuable to managers in the fish health specialty.

Dr. Foott’s qualifications and supportive staff are excellent. The study design, data acquisition and reporting are well conceived.

Overall rating: excellent