

(916) 445-3531

MAY 12 1977

Mr. Vernon Higgins  
Placer County Water Agency  
P. O. Box 667  
Foresthill, California 95631

Dear Mr. Higgins:

The Department of Fish and Game has reviewed your request to reduce flows by 50 percent below French Meadows, Hell Hole, Middle Fork Interbay and Ralston Afterbay.

A full 50 percent reduction in flows is too severe an impact on the fisheries resources. However, some adjustment in flows as listed below can be made immediately on a temporary basis. We will make a field assessment of the impact of these reduced flows on the aquatic environments. If we find the losses in fisheries values are excessive, we must insist on a return to the flows proscribed under the FPC license.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Release as Required in the FPC License</u>	<u>Release Temporary Agreed</u>
Middle Fork American River below French Meadows Dam	4	3
Middle Fork Interbay	12	8
Rubicon River below Hell Hole Dam	8	6
Ralston Afterbay	75	50

Please be advised approval of FPC and the concurrence of the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are also required.

Sincerely,  
ORIGINAL SIGNED BY  
J. B. MCCORMICK

COPY  
FOR

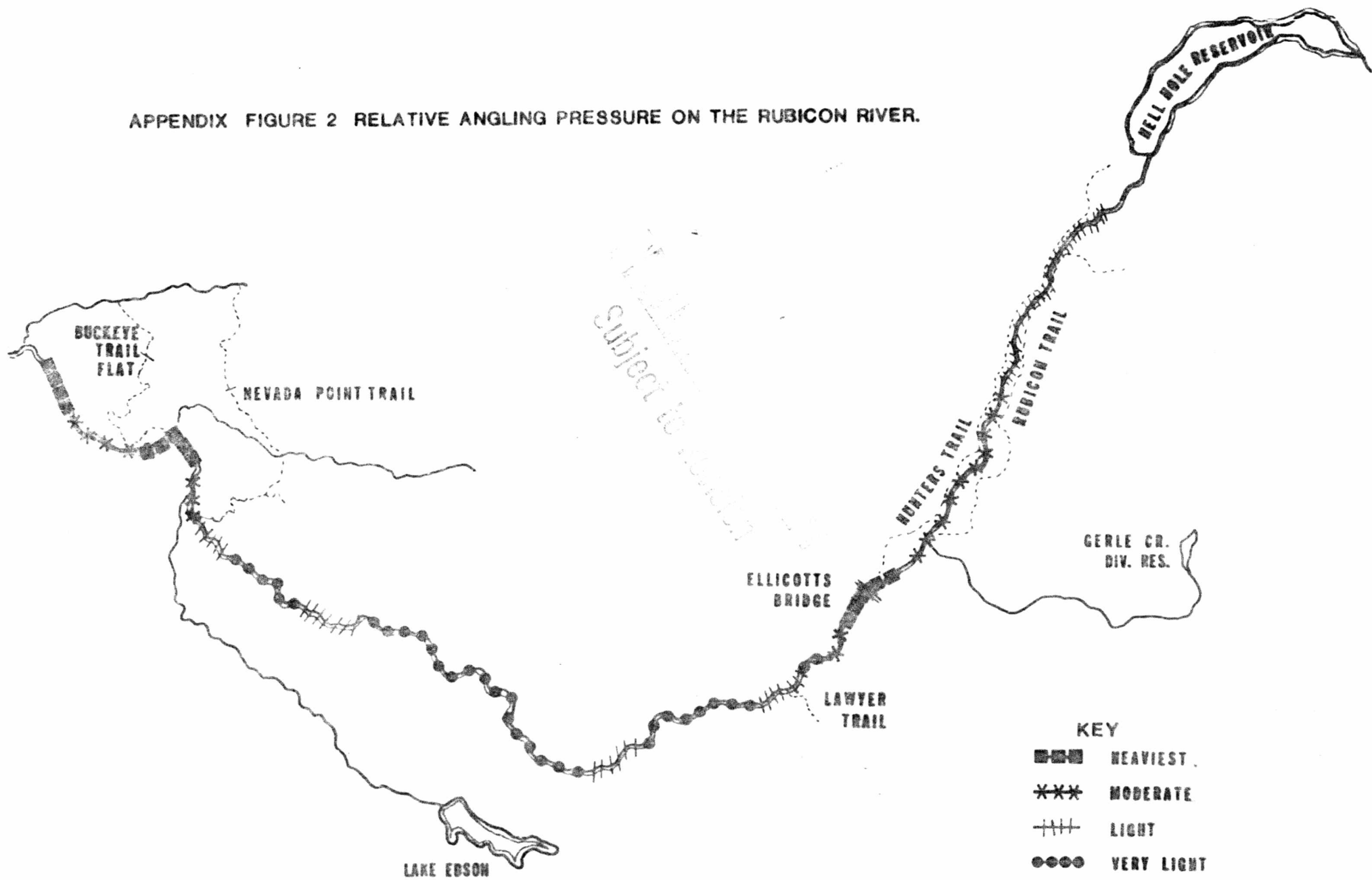
Director

cc: P. Giguere, R-2  
R. Beland, R-2  
J. Ryan, R-2  
J. Richard, R-2

File: D, DD, DRF,  
CO, IFB, Region 2  
RDB:es

cc: FPC  
USFS - Eldorado and Tahoe National Forests  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

APPENDIX FIGURE 2 RELATIVE ANGLING PRESSURE ON THE RUBICON RIVER.



**Memorandum**

To : R. D. Beland

Date: June 6, 1977

From : Department of Fish and Game

Subject: Flow Reductions in Rubicon River below Hellhole Dam and M.F. American River below French Meadows

In regard to the Director's letter of May 12, 1977 to Mr. Vernon Higgins of Placer County Water Agency. The Rubicon River was investigated on May 19, 1977. The flow from the dam outlet valve was estimated at 5 cfs (agreed release 6 cfs). This flows for about 300 yards and then disappears underground at the gauging weir. No fish and few aquatic insects were observed in this section. The stream bottom was covered with sediment and algal growths.

The Rubicon River reappeared about one mile downstream with an estimated flow of 4 cfs. Algal growth is less than in the section below the dam. Again no fish were observed in the vicinity of the water emergence.

At Ellicott Bridge, approximately 8 miles downstream from Hellhole Dam, the flow was estimated at 30 cfs but with a temperature increase of 6 degrees F.

**Recommendations**

1. That the FPC minimum release of 8 cfs be maintained through the required period.

The Rubicon River is a wild trout stream and any reduced flows may jeopardize this fishery and increase the nongame fish species due to higher temperatures.

The M.F. American River below French Meadows was investigated on May 20, 1977 with an estimated flow of 5 cfs (minimum FPC release 4 cfs; emergency release 3 cfs). No fish were observed and aquatic insects were relatively scarce. Algal growth was heavy and the rocks were stained red when not covered by algae.

**Recommendations**

1. The FPC minimum release of 4 cfs should be maintained because one of the major tributaries (Duncan Canyon) also has a diversion. The M.F. American River below French Meadows to Ralston Afterbay is approximately 20 miles in

length and is not criss-crossed with access roads and offers excellent angling opportunity for wild fish. A decrease in the French Meadows release may jeopardize this population.

We can agree with the Interbay and Ralston Afterbay temporary releases of 8 and 50 cfs respectively.



James B. Richard  
Assistant Fishery Biologist  
Region 2

cc: J. Richard  
Warden Bakker  
Warden Fowler

JBR:ers