



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit
P.O. Box 731002
South Lake Tahoe, CA 95731-7302
916 573-2600

Reply to: 2670

Date: August 26, 1988

Mr. Chester Gibbs, Chairman
Governing Board
Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
P.O. Box 1038
Zephyr Cove, NV 89448

Dear Mr. Gibbs:

The recent decision by the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA) Governing Board not to approve the restoration project of the Lahontan cutthroat trout (Salmo clarki henshawi) in the Upper Truckee River has presented a difficult situation. The California Department of Fish and Game, the Nevada Department of Wildlife, Region 1 of the USDI Fish and Wildlife Service, and Regions 4 and 5 of the USDA Forest Service have entered into a cooperative agreement for the conservation and survival of the Lahontan cutthroat trout, a threatened species, pursuant to Sections 4 and 6 of the Endangered Species Act. The cooperative agreement is documented in the "Fishery Management Plan for Lahontan cutthroat trout (Salmo clarki henshawi) in California and Western Nevada Waters."

TRPA environmental threshold policy supports our effort to reintroduce the trout. That policy states, "It shall be the policy of the TRPA Governing Board to support, in response to justifiable evidence, State and Federal efforts to reintroduce Lahontan cutthroat trout." We believe the justifiable evidence is the recovery plan.

The action of the TRPA Governing Board on August 24 could adversely affect the survival and recovery of the Lahontan cutthroat trout. The action could also place the Forest Service and the Fish and Wildlife Service in jeopardy of violating the Endangered Species Act.

TRPA Board action on the proposal did not identify any violations of environmental thresholds or violation of conditions of the Regional Plan that would result. Also, the Board did not identify any conditions where the criteria for pesticide use (Code Section 81.6.A) have not been met. Rotenone is the only chemical currently licensed by the Environmental Protection Agency in California for eradication of fish. The Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board has approved the use of Rotenone for the eradication of nonnative trout in the streams and lakes of the project area.





The Forest Service, as mandated by law, must continue to support the Lahontan cutthroat trout restoration project in the Lake Tahoe Basin in accordance with established national policy and standards for the conservation and preservation of threatened and endangered species. Therefore, we will support and encourage the California Department of Fish and Game to proceed with a limited project that is entirely within Alpine County. The treatment activity would be outside the TRPA area of jurisdiction.

We respectfully request the TRPA Board reconsider its decision so that the entire project may be implemented as planned.

If you need clarification of our position, please advise.

Sincerely,

D. WAYNE SHEPHERD
Forest Supervisor

cc:

William A. Morgan, Executive Director, TRPA
Pat O'Brien, CA Dept. of Fish and Game
Jerry Edwards, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service

RECEIVED
MAY 31 1988
Debr. E. J. ...

