

RBS, Sacramento

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<b>ACTION REQUIRED</b>				

March 22, 1963

Regional Director  
Bureau of Reclamation  
P.O. Box 2511  
Sacramento, California

Dear Sir:

We are pleased to reply to your request of January 17, 1963, for preliminary comments on fish and wildlife resources that would be affected by Texas Hill Reservoir, Placerville Ridge Unit, American River Division, Central Valley project, California.

This letter does not constitute our Bureau's report on the project within the meaning of Section 2 of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

As we understand it, the main feature of your plan would be construction of Texas Hill Dam and Reservoir on Weber Creek, 1.5 miles south of the town of Placerville in El Dorado County, California. The dam would be about 150 feet high. Under your operation study No. 10, the reservoir capacity would be 20,000 acre-feet, with a surface area of about 465 acres. Except for minimum flow releases for fish life, the entire reservoir storage would be conveyed to adjacent areas to satisfy municipal and industrial requirements. The range of desirable minimum flow releases from the proposed dam downstream to Weber Creek for conservation and development of fishery resources are undetermined.

We will appreciate your consideration of the following discussion in development and selection of a project plan. These comments are based on preliminary information, so indicated benefits are tentative and subject to revision.

Under proposed operation study No. 10, Texas Hill Reservoir would have a normal fluctuation range of 27 feet during the recreational season extending from May 1 to November 1. The average storage pool during this period would be 11,200 acre-feet with a surface area of 300 acres. Under these conditions, we estimate that the reservoir would initially provide about 15,000 angler-days annually. This annual use would increase to 45,000 angler-days by the end of 50 years. We assume this use would remain constant thereafter for the 100-year project life.

By increasing the minimum pool to 3,000 acre-feet, the reservoir would normally fluctuate only about 22 feet during the recreational season and provide an average pool of 13,800 acre-feet with a surface area of 350 acres. Initially, under these conditions, an estimated annual total of about 21,000 angler-days could be provided. Annual use would increase to 63,000 angler-days at the end of 50 years with use assumed constant thereafter.

We tentatively assign a \$1.50 unit value to each fisherman-day of use that would occur at Texas Hill Reservoir.

We will complete studies this summer to determine the magnitude of fish and wildlife resources that would be affected by the project. These investigations will enable us to recommend to you measures that would be desirable for conservation and development of fish and wildlife resources.

We presently lack dependable information on summer flows and fish abundance and habitat in Weber Creek in the impoundment site and downstream. Our Sacramento Area office, Branch of River Basin Studies, will complete streamflow studies to determine flow regimes which would be desirable to maintain in Weber Creek below the site to improve fish habitat, and increase game fish populations. We believe that provision of additional summer and fall streamflow in Weber Creek by use of reservoir storage might provide substantial fishery benefits in addition to mitigating losses that would accrue to the stream fishery inundated by the reservoir.

We would very much appreciate it if you would keep Field Supervisor Daniel W. Slater, of our Sacramento Area office, informed on the progress and status of project planning. Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments at an early stage in project planning. We will prepare a detailed report on project effects on fish and wildlife when adequate project engineering and operation data are available.

Sincerely yours,

*Black*  
Kenneth E. Black  
Regional Supervisor  
River Basin Studies

cc: RBS, Sacramento  
DJL:nbart; DWS:later; DB:haseltine;mm