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Small Water Applications
Projects

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
INTRAOFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

DATE: June 1, 1961

TO: Harry Anderson, Deputy Director

FROM: Robert D. Montgomery, Regional Manager, Region II

SUBJECT: Report on Water Application #19900 on Weber Creek, Tributary to the South Fork American River, El Dorado County

The applicants, Mr. and Mrs. J. Brown, wish to construct a 40 foot high earthfill dam, elevation 1,100, on Weber Creek, one mile downstream from the mouth of Cold Springs Creek and four miles west of Placerville. The reservoir will impound 498 acre-feet, and is to be used for recreational and fish cultural purposes. The reservoir will flood one-half mile of Weber Creek.

The fishery resources involved in the area inundated are minor. The stream in this area consists of many channels, few of which exceed two feet in width or two inches in depth at a flow of 10 to 12 c.f.s. At present there is no existing summer trout fishery in this portion of stream. In the early spring a few trout descend during high water and remain in the area until mid-May. A minor fishery for warmwater fish (smallmouth bass, bluegill, and green sunfish) exists in Weber Creek below Highway 50, but the major part of this fishing occurs below the proposed damsite.

The potential effects of this reservoir are mostly beneficial. At this elevation (1,100 feet) a lake of the size and depth proposed by Mr. and Mrs. Brown could support a good population of warmwater fish, and provide good fishing under proper management. However, there is a possibility that the stream below the proposed damsite would be dewatered during the periods of diversions for filling the reservoir. This would occur if diversions occurred in November in a dry year. The diversion season named in the application is from November 1 to April 1 of the following year.

It is recommended that the Department of Fish and Game protest Water Application #19900 to prevent loss of the existing warmwater fishery in Weber Creek below the proposed damsite.

On May 18, 1961, Bruce Eliason, Aquatic Biologist I, met with the applicants. The applicants explained the proposed operation of the reservoir and expressed their desire to cooperate with the Department in the preservation of the fishery in Weber Creek.

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After investigating the physical characteristics of the stream and the annual flow pattern, it was determined that a flow of 4 c.f.s. would be sufficient to maintain the existing fishery. Inclusion of a year-round fish release of 4 c.f.s. or the natural flow, whichever is less, as a condition in the water permit, would allow dismissal of the Department's protest.

This release was discussed with the applicants and they stated that this stipulation would not unduly interfere with their operation of the reservoir and they would agree to this inclusion in their water permit.

Robert D. Montgomery
Regional Manager
Region II
BEE:sr