



COUNTY OF SISKIYOU

Board of Supervisors

P.O. Box 750 □ 1312 Fairlane Rd
Yreka, California 96097
www.co.siskiyou.ca.us

(530) 842-8005
FAX (530) 842-8013
Toll Free: 1-888-854-2000, ext. 8005

August 08, 2017

Charlton H. Bonham, Director
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
1416 9th Street, 12th Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Potential Purchase of Shasta Big Springs Ranch – Siskiyou County Position

Dear Director Bonham:

The Chair and Vice Chair of the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors recently met with local California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff to discuss the Shasta Big Springs Ranch located in the Shasta Valley of Siskiyou County. We were informed during that meeting that CDFW is in the process of obtaining appraisals of the property in anticipation of the agency's purchase of the Shasta Big Springs Ranch. During this meeting, we discussed the County's concerns regarding future management of the property, and the loss of tax base for the County.

We are submitting this letter to state that Siskiyou County will not support CDFW's purchase of the property unless the County's concerns are resolved. CDFW is in arrears in excess of \$500,000 in property taxes to Siskiyou County and will need to make property tax payments on the Shasta Big Springs Ranch and the other properties owned by CDFW throughout the County. The Shasta Big Springs Ranch would no longer be eligible for enrollment under the Williamson Act tax break provisions, and CDFW would be required to pay the full property tax amount, which is approximately \$96,000. Please demonstrate how CDFW will pay the property tax payments that are in arrears, and how payments will be made in the future as well.

We would also require that CDFW initiate a Safe Harbor process for both the Shasta and Scott Valleys, which would establish reasonable out-migrant and in-migrant coho salmon numbers for the Shasta and Scott Rivers, and would provide assurances for our water users. The water rights to the Shasta Big Springs Ranch were purchased by CDFW to be dedicated for in-stream benefits, and it has been outlined by CDFW several times that these in-stream water rights and management of the Shasta Big Springs Ranch is vital to the recovery of salmonids. However, there have been several voluntary actions completed by landowners throughout the Shasta and Scott Valley's with little to no regulatory relief after these projects are completed. The actions of other private landowners

Brandon Criss
District 1

Ed Valenzuela
District 2

Michael N. Kobseff
District 3

Lisa Nixon
District 4

Ray Haupt
District 5

throughout the County coupled with the dedication of in-stream water rights on the Shasta Big Springs Ranch must result in regulatory relief for Siskiyou County's landowners and water users. CDFW must play a proactive role and engage in a solutions based effort to complete a Safe Harbor agreement that would benefit both fish and water users. Part of this effort must also include an accounting of all activities that have been performed throughout Siskiyou County to improve fisheries habitat and numbers, and how these efforts have worked towards recovery goals for coho salmon under its endangered species listing.

If you would like to discuss this further, please feel free to contact our Natural Resource Policy Specialist, Elizabeth Nielsen, at (530) 842-8012 or enielsen@co.siskiyou.ca.us.

This letter was approved by the Siskiyou County Board of Supervisors on August, 08, 2017, by the following vote:

AYES: Supervisors Criss, Haupt, Valenzuela, Nixon and Kobseff

NOES: NONE

ABSENT: NONE

ABSTAIN: NONE

Sincerely,


Michael N. Kobseff, Chair
Board of Supervisors

cc: Assemblyman Brian Dahle

cc: Yreka CDFW office

cc: Water Conservation Board