



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southwest Region
777 Sonoma Ave., Room 325
Santa Rosa, CA 95404-6528

p-39

November 10, 2004

In Response Refer To:
151416SWR04SR9234:WH

Mr. Thomas McCue
County of Monterey
Planning and Building Inspection Department
2620 First Avenue
Marina, California 93933

Dear Mr. McCue:

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) appreciates having had the opportunity to review the September 2004 Partial Revision of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Pebble Beach Company's Del Monte Forest Preservation and Development Plan (DMF/PDP). It is appropriate that we provide additional comment given our April 13, 2004, comments on an earlier draft of the EIR. That earlier letter expressed substantial concern that the project's additional direct diversions from the Carmel River would significantly degrade stream habitats and likely contribute to additional take of Federally listed steelhead trout. NOAA Fisheries' objective is to help facilitate the reduction of unauthorized and excessive water diversions that adversely affect steelhead in the Carmel River.

We believe that with the addition of the Phase II Wastewater Reclamation Project as an integral part of the DMF/PDP, this project's impacts to steelhead in the Carmel River will be substantially mitigated. Indeed the revised DEIR indicates that with the contingent development of the Phase II Wastewater Reclamation Project with the DMF/PDP, water diversions from the Carmel River would be reduced in normal and dry years. This is plausible given that there would be substantial and permanent reductions in diversion for irrigation. This reduction in irrigation diversions together with the other proposed mitigative actions (e.g., reduced diversions and/or the return of demonstrated environmentally benign treated wastewater to the Carmel River during wet years) is likely to reduce the impacts of the project on steelhead to an insignificant level.

If you have questions concerning this letter, please contact Dr. William Hearn at 707-575-6062.

Sincerely,

Patrick J. Rutten
Santa Rosa Area Office Supervisor
Protected Resources Division

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