

NEWSLETTER

August 2012

Shasta Valley RCD

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Forecast for Large Chinook Return to the Klamath Basin

In a few short weeks, the first Chinook salmon spawners will be entering the Shasta River. The projection is that we could see 4,000 - 14,000 fish arriving in September. The Klamath system could see well over 350,000 fish...the largest return of Chinook salmon since 1978.

Because of the extremely large run size and the relatively dry conditions in the upper Klamath Basin, there is a heightened effort to monitor fish in the system for health.

The Shasta Valley RCD, local agency personnel, interested landowners and others will be meeting shortly to strategize on how to protect these fish, if conditions continue to be hot and dry, and river flows are low.

In addition, the Klamath Fish Health Assessment Team (KFHAT), a technical workgroup, was formed during the summer of 2003 for the purpose of providing early warning and a coordinated response effort to avoid, or at least address, a fish kill event. To accomplish this goal, KFHAT created a network through which information about current river and fish health conditions in the Klamath Basin can be quickly shared among participants, the general public, and resource managers. For more information and to access the current, posted readiness level go to <http://www.kbmp.net/collaboration/kfhat>

CURRENT READINESS LEVEL: **YELLOW**



Conditions suggest the need for heightened awareness, due to

- 1) the pre-season prediction of a large salmonid run and
- 2) low snow pack and low rainfall predicted to result in below average river flows.



Defensible Space:

Helping to Make Your Community Firewise

A Rainbow Ridge Forest Stewardship Series Workshop

August 29th, 2012 @ 7:00 p.m.
Mount Shasta Resort

Protecting your property from catastrophic fire begins with your home. Come join us and learn from the Mount Shasta Fire Safe Council about what defensible space is and how it can make the difference whether or not your home survives a fire. For more information call Kara at 530-926-2259.

Development of the North Coast Ag Waiver

Staff of the North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board are developing a Water Quality Compliance Program for Discharges from Agricultural Lands to address water quality impacts associated with irrigated agricultural lands in the North Coast Region.

While the scope of the Program has not been finalized, it will include certain types of agricultural lands in the North Coast Region. Staff expect the Program to address, at a minimum, waste discharges from agricultural lands such as row crops, vineyards, orchards, medicinal marijuana farms, forage crops, and irrigated pasture. Dairies and dryland grazing are not included in the Program as dairies are being addressed through a separate Regional Water Board program and dryland grazing is likely to be addressed through a statewide effort that is currently under development. Additionally, this effort is intended to augment, but not supersede, existing Regional Water Board programs, such as the TMDL programs in the Scott, Shasta, and Garcia watersheds and grazing on US Forest Service allotments.

To develop the Program, Regional Water Board staff is conducting a stakeholder involvement process that will support broad participation of affected people and organizations. The Regional Water Board is committed to working with stakeholders to address concerns, identify opportunities, and uphold State policies and requirements.

In order to do this, the Regional Water Board has formed a Stakeholder Advisory Group made up of representatives of stakeholder interests in the North Coast Region. The purpose of the Advisory Group is to provide input to Regional Water Board staff early in the process of developing the program. The group's input will be used to develop the Program elements and alternatives prior to the formal public review period that precedes consideration of the Program by the Regional Water Board. The Advisory Group will advise and provide comment on Program elements such as scope, discharge control requirements and practices, monitoring, reporting, and enforcement protocols.

Regional Water Board staff will hold both large meetings of the full Advisory Group and smaller sub-regional meetings. The intent is that the sub-regional meetings focus on local issues, while the full Advisory Group meetings provide the opportunity to exchange ideas and ensure consistency regionwide. The Program will be able to accommodate the diversity of locations, types of agriculture and uses, and risks to water quality present in the North Coast Region, while maintaining procedural consistency to the extent practicable. The geographic areas of the sub-regional groups are:

- Sonoma, Mendocino, and Marin counties
- Del Norte, Humboldt, and Trinity counties
- Scott River and Shasta River watersheds, and the Upper Mid-Klamath area, and Tule Lake area and Butte Valley

The 3rd Round of Advisory Sub-Group Meetings will be scheduled in August and September 2012.

For additional information and access to presentations and comments that have been submitted visit:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/northcoast/water_issues/programs/agricultural_lands/

If you have questions about the development of the Agriculture Program, please contact Ben Zabinsky of Regional Water Board staff, at (707) 576-6750, or by email at ben.zabinsky@waterboards.ca.gov

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