



STANFORD UNIVERSITY  
LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

December 6, 2012

Mr. Gary Stern  
NOAA Fisheries  
777 Sonoma Avenue, Room 325  
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dear Mr. Stern:

Thank you for your recent efforts to finish the Stanford HCP Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Notice of Availability that was published in the Federal Register on November 23, 2012. This was the culmination of many years of constructive conservation planning by both our organizations.

As you know, Stanford has initiated a Searsville Alternatives Study to address the future of Searsville Dam and Reservoir. This is a very complex issue that involves water supply and storage, impacts to downstream and upstream flooding, fish passage, biological resources, and academic resources within the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, etc. This study is being directed by a Steering Committee consisting of six eminent faculty members in related fields and seven senior administrators with operational responsibilities. Stanford recently hired the engineering firm URS, recognized experts with regard to dam issues. As this Study process proceeds and technical studies are underway, it is clear that any future actions involving Searsville Dam and Reservoir will have ramifications for steelhead downstream of the dam. As such, it is important to Stanford that NOAA Fisheries continue to be actively engaged in the Searsville Alternatives Study process.

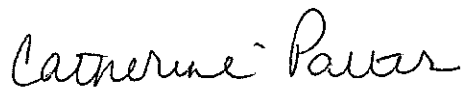
A key component of the conservation program in the San Francisquito/Los Trancos Basin will be a permanent conservation easement that allows only those uses described in the HCP. It has become apparent that constraints in the easement may inadvertently preclude desirable future actions at Searsville Dam and Reservoir, including potential actions intended to enhance steelhead conditions and habitat below the Dam. Therefore, we would like to temporarily suspend processing our Section 10(a) permit application until such time as the Searsville Alternative Study is complete or sufficiently advanced to a point where we better understand the best future for Searsville Dam and Reservoir and how future structural or operational changes to address Searsville may affect the basin.

This has been a very difficult decision for the University, especially when we are so close to completing the HCP and incidental take permit process. However, we believe that this is the best decision for the steelhead, watershed, and the Searsville Alternatives Study.

Stanford will continue to process an incidental take permit application with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for Stanford lands outside of the San Francisquito/Los Trancos Basin. In addition, during the suspension period Stanford remains committed to continued steelhead conservation in San Francisquito Creek, such as steelhead monitoring activities and other interim measures and studies that are being developed through the Searsville Alternatives Study process. Likewise, Stanford will continue to evaluate possible creek enhancement actions, such as removing the non-operating Lagunita diversion dam along with its fish ladder. These actions will help inform future decisions in the San Francisquito/Los Trancos Basin.

Thank you again for your efforts over the past many years.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Catherine Palter".

Catherine Palter  
Associate Director, Land Use and Environmental Planning

cc: Ms. Sheila Larsen, USFWS