



# FRIENDS OF THE SHASTA RIVER

c/o Andy Marx  
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March 26, 2021

Charlton H. Bonham, Director  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
P.O. Box 944209  
Sacramento, CA 94244

via email to: [chuck.bonham@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:chuck.bonham@wildlife.ca.gov) and [director@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:director@wildlife.ca.gov)

## **RE: CDFW Participation in NOAA Fisheries Shasta River Safe Harbor Agreement**

Dear Director Bonham,

I am writing on behalf of a recently formed organization, Friends of the Shasta River, representing concerned stakeholders who live, work, own property and recreate in the Shasta River basin and who are now working together for restoration of the Shasta River and endangered salmon recovery.

We are concerned about what we believe to be the deeply flawed and potentially harmful Shasta River Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA) recently approved by NOAA Fisheries. This agreement will provide large amounts of public money to a handful of wealthy landowners in the Shasta River basin of Siskiyou County in exchange for mostly minimal environmental habitat enhancements on their properties. These improvements will not be sufficient to protect endangered coho salmon but will let these water diverters off the hook for the more substantial reforms that are required. We fear the agreement will impede the comprehensive recovery efforts that are needed in order to restore the river and ensure coho recovery. We have summarized some of the main concerns over the Safe Harbor Agreement in an attached briefing paper.

As a newly-formed organization, Friends of the Shasta River did not submit comments on the draft SHA. However, one of our board members did submit comments as an individual and we believe our concerns are shared by many regional stakeholders. As you are assuredly aware, many groups and individuals, including tribal entities, fishing associations and salmon advocacy organizations, submitted very detailed critical comments on the draft SHA plan. While those groups can speak for themselves, our understanding is that there is broad dissatisfaction with the way that the well-

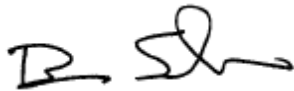
researched, detailed and substantive comments submitted by many of these entities have been addressed in the final NOAA documents.

We understand that CDFW has been requested to sign-on to, and participate in, this potentially disastrous project. We would like to request that the CDFW hold off on any such collaboration with NOAA Fisheries' Shasta River SHA until you have had a chance to hear directly from the concerned organizations as to how they view the incorporation of their comments and concerns into the final Shasta River SHA plan now released.

We recognize that you have established working relationships with many of these entities. We believe it would be very beneficial and timely to organize an opportunity for all of these organizations to provide their input directly to CDFW before any final decision is made as to whether or not CDFW will endorse or participate in NOAA Fisheries' Shasta River SHA. We would welcome the opportunity to be part of that discussion.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter, we hope to hear from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'B. Shoemaker', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bruce Shoemaker  
Board Member  
Friends of the Shasta River  
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