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14 **THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT**
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

15 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
16 EASTERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

17
18 THE DELTA SMELT CASES,
19 SAN LUIS & DELTA-MENDOTA WATER
AUTHORITY, *et al.* v. SALAZAR, *et al.*
20 (Case No. 1:09-cv-407)

21 STATE WATER CONTRACTORS v. SALAZAR,
et al. (Case No. 1:09-cv-422)

22 COALITION FOR A SUSTAINABLE DELTA,
23 *et al.* v. UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE, *et al.* (Case No. 1:09-cv-480)

24 METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT v.
25 UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE, *et al.* (Case No. 1:09-cv-631)

26 STEWART & JASPER ORCHARDS, *et al.* v.
27 UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE
SERVICE, *et al.* (Case No. 1:09-cv-892)

1:09-cv-407 OWW GSA
1:09-cv-422 OWW GSA
1:09-cv-631 OWW GSA
1:09-cv-892 OWW GSA
PARTIALLY CONSOLIDATED
WITH: 1:09-cv-480 OWW GSA

DECLARATION OF DR.
RICHARD B. DERISO IN
SUPPORT OF
METROPOLITAN'S MOTION
TO ALLOW EXPERT
TESTIMONY

Date: September 28, 2009
Time: 10:00 a.m.
Ctm: 3
Judge: Hon. Oliver W. Wanger

1 I, Dr. Richard B. Deriso, declare:

2 1. My declaration is set forth in the following manner:

3 I. Background and Experience

4 II. The 2008 Delta Smelt Biological Opinion Is Based Upon Complicated
5 Statistical Analyses and the Use of Stock Recruitment Models That
Require Expertise and Training to Understand and Evaluate

6 III. When Expertise in Fish Population Dynamics Is Utilized and Applied, a
7 Number of Errors Are Evident in the Biological Opinion

8 A. Expert Review Has Already Revealed That FWS's Analysis of the
9 Relationship Between Old and Middle River Flows and Adult
Salvage Is Flawed

10 1. Improper Use of Total Adult Salvage Numbers Instead of
Cumulative Salvage Index

11 2. Use of the Cumulative Salvage Index Shows That There Is
12 No Statistically Significant Relationship Between OMR
Flows and Adult Salvage for Flows Less Negative Than
13 -6100 Cubic Feet per Second at the Very Least

14 3. The BiOp Does Not Contain Sufficient Data for Peer
Review

15 B. The Model Used in FWS's Analysis to Compare the Effect of Fall
16 X2 on Population Survival Is Biologically Implausible and
Potentially Misleading – It Is Simply Inappropriate for Fish
17 Population Dynamics Modeling

18 1. FWS Used a Linear Additive Model

19 2. FWS Should Have Used a Multiplicative Stock-Recruit
Model

20 C. FWS's Incidental Take Analysis Is Improperly Influenced by a
21 Data Point That Even FWS Rejected for Other Purposes

22 **I. Background and Experience**

23 2. I am the Chief Scientist of the Tuna-Billfish Program at the Inter-American
24 Tropical Tuna Commission, and I have held this position since 1988. *See* Summary Professional
25 Vitae, attached hereto as Exhibit A. I have a Ph.D. in Biomathematics (Quantitative Ecology)
26 from the University of Washington, a Master's of Science in Mathematics from the University of
27 Florida, and a Bachelor's of Science in Industrial Engineering from Auburn University. I have
28 been teaching courses in fish population dynamics, quantitative ecology, and related areas for

1 over twenty years. I was an Associate Adjunct Professor at the Scripps Institution of
2 Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, from 1990-2006 and an Affiliate Associate
3 Professor of Fisheries at the University of Washington from 1987 – 2006. I have also taught
4 several graduate courses, including Theoretical Models of Exploited Animal Populations at the
5 University of Washington, Decision Analysis for Exploited Populations at the University of
6 Washington, and Quantitative Theory of Populations and Communities at Scripps Institution of
7 Oceanography. I have additional professional experience through a current membership on the
8 Scientific and Statistical Committee of the Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management
9 Council and a past membership on the Ocean Studies Board which governs the U.S. National
10 Research Council, where I served as co-chairman of the Committee on Fish Stock Assessment
11 Methods. I was also formerly a Population Dynamicist for the International Pacific Halibut
12 Commission. I have been a consultant to several agencies and institutions, both public and
13 private.

14 3. I have authored or co-authored over 50 publications and reports, including Deriso,
15 R., Maunder, M., and Pearson, W, *Incorporating covariates into fisheries stock assessment*
16 *models with application to Pacific herring*, Ecol. App. 18(5): 1270-1286 (2008); Deriso, R.,
17 Maunder, M., and Skalski, J., *Variance estimation in integrated assessment models and its*
18 *importance for hypothesis testing*, Can. J. Fish. Aquat. Sci. 64: 187-197 (2007); Deriso, R.,
19 *Bayesian analysis of stock survival and recovery of spring and summer chinook of the Snake*
20 *River basin*, pages 137-56 in J. Berskson, et al. (editors), *Incorporating Uncertainty into Fishery*
21 *Models*, American Fisheries Society, Symposium 27, Bethesda, MD (2002); and Quinn, T. and
22 Deriso, R., *Quantitative Fish Dynamics*, Oxford University Press (1999). See List of
23 Publications, attached hereto as Exhibit B.

24 4. I also have extensive experience evaluating the effects of entrainment on fish
25 populations across the country. For example, I have consulted on the environmental review of
26 once through cooling systems of nuclear power plants on the Hudson and Delaware Rivers,
27 focusing on impingement and entrainment of fish, with a particular emphasis on their impacts to
28 population. This analysis included modeling, and reviewing models of, the impacts of

1 entrainment and impingement on fish populations. I am also a member of the Estuary
2 Enhancement Program Advisory Committee that reviews the mitigation measures for losses of
3 fish through impingement and entrainment at the Salem Nuclear Power Plant on the Delaware
4 River in New Jersey. With respect to the Columbia and Snake Rivers, I have evaluated both the
5 mortality and related impacts of hydroelectric dam operations on Chinook salmon populations.

6 5. I have personal knowledge of the facts set forth in this Declaration and would
7 competently testify to them if called as a witness.

8 **II. The 2008 Delta Smelt Biological Opinion Is Based Upon Complicated Statistical**
9 **Analyses and the Use of Stock Recruitment Models That Require Expertise and**
10 **Training to Understand and Evaluate**

11 6. I have reviewed the 2008 Delta Smelt Biological Opinion (“BiOp”) for the
12 Operations Criteria and Plan for the State Water Project and the Central Valley Project, together
13 with portions of the administrative record and papers and studies upon which the BiOp relies.
14 The conclusions set forth in the BiOp are based on complex statistical relationships between a
15 number of factors affecting the delta smelt population. For example, the United States Fish and
16 Wildlife Service conducted a statistical analysis to evaluate the relationship between OMR flows
17 and salvage—with this analysis used to justify stringent reasonable and prudent alternatives
18 imposed on the projects. Understanding the science behind, and proper use of, the formulas and
19 models employed in the BiOp is essential to evaluating whether the resultant conclusions drawn
20 by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (“FWS”) are scientifically sound or whether they
21 are arbitrary and capricious.

22 7. The BiOp also employed the use of stock recruitment models. A stock recruitment
23 model is a model that quantitatively characterizes the relationship between the parental stock and
24 the progeny it produces—in this case the progeny is measured at the juvenile life stage at the
25 Summer Towntnet Survey and the parental stock is measured at the Fall Midwater Trawl Survey.
26 For example, the BiOp has one analysis purporting to demonstrate a relationship between X2 and
27 adult abundance (as measured in the Fall) and the effect on juveniles produced in the following
28 year.

1 8. There are many different stock recruitment models. In selecting a model, one
2 necessary criterion is that the model must be biologically plausible. In my experience, I would
3 expect a biological opinion to rely upon traditional population dynamic models. In the case of
4 stock recruitment, those models are described in Chapter 3 of my book *Quantitative Fish*
5 *Dynamics*. Two such models are *Beverton-Holt* and *Ricker* models. These models are typically
6 used because they are well-accepted by the scientific peer community. For measuring
7 population-level effects, multiplicative or rate-based models such as these should be used;
8 additive models should not.

9 9. I am able to understand and explain the BiOp and draw conclusions from its
10 analyses using my background and expertise in quantitative fish dynamics and population
11 modeling. I have experience with the types of models a reasonable and qualified scientist would
12 use to evaluate the effects of the projects on the delta smelt. I am also knowledgeable of the
13 limitations of these models and the contexts in which they are appropriately used. I understand
14 that the population response of the delta smelt to a given event is affected by its life cycle,
15 behavioral characteristics, and other biological factors, and that these factors must be accounted
16 for in any statistical analysis of the species.

17 10. I focused my preliminary review on the statistical analyses upon which the RPAs
18 are based, and specifically Actions 1, 2, 3, and 4 contained in Attachment B to the BiOp. I also
19 reviewed the incidental take analysis in Attachment C to the BiOp.

20 11. In my review of the BiOp and relevant portions of the administrative record,
21 including the studies upon which the BiOp's conclusions are based, I discovered several basic
22 flaws in FWS's methodology and reasoning which cannot be understood or appreciated without
23 explanation by an expert with qualifications similar to mine. I was able to confirm these flaws by
24 interpreting the limited graphs and tables provided in the BiOp, reviewing similar information
25 and studies in the administrative record relied upon by the BiOp, and deciphering the models that
26 FWS used.

27 12. I have also compared FWS's models against well-accepted models employed by
28 the scientific community, and particularly those models that are used as the standard in fish

1 population modeling. My review and comparison revealed that the BiOp does not use the well-
2 accepted models in more than one place, but rather relies on models that are not biologically
3 sound and lead to erroneous results.

4 13. I evaluated the same data presented in the BiOp and input it into the well-accepted
5 models to determine whether the end result would be different. The results are fundamentally
6 different from the results reached in the BiOp.

7 14. Based on the material I reviewed, the fundamental flaws I have identified
8 undermine the jeopardy and adverse modification conclusions in the BiOp and reveal that FWS
9 had no scientific basis for imposing the reasonable and prudent alternatives (“RPAs”) adopted,
10 which are not supported by the best science available.

11 15. Several of these flaws are listed below as examples of the many areas where FWS
12 failed to utilize the best scientific data available in its preparation of the BiOp and RPAs. These
13 examples demonstrate why experts are necessary to clarify and explain the BiOp in order for it to
14 be understood and evaluated by the Court. Additional aspects of the BiOp, which I have not yet
15 reviewed, fall within my area of expertise and I expect would require explanation to assist judicial
16 review.

17 **III. When Expertise in Fish Population Dynamics Is Utilized and Applied, a Number of**
18 **Errors Are Evident in the Biological Opinion**

19 **A. Expert Review Has Already Revealed That FWS’s Analysis of the**
20 **Relationship Between Old and Middle River Flows and Adult Salvage Is**
21 **Flawed**

22 16. The BiOp’s analysis of the effects of the projects on adult delta smelt and its
23 conclusion that winter flow restrictions are necessary are based on a statistical model of the
24 alleged relationship between Old and Middle River (“OMR”) flows and adult salvage. The
25 modeling and analysis are contained in the Effects of the Proposed Action section of the BiOp,
26 pages 202-279 (Administrative Record “AR” at 000217-000294), and RPA Actions 1 and 2 in
27 Attachment B to the BiOp, pages 329-356 (AR at 000344-000371). Actions 1 and 2 rely on
28 Figure B-13 on page 348 (AR at 000363) and on various studies, including a 2008 article by Wim
Kimmerer entitled *Losses of Sacramento River Chinook Salmon and Delta Smelt to Entrainment*

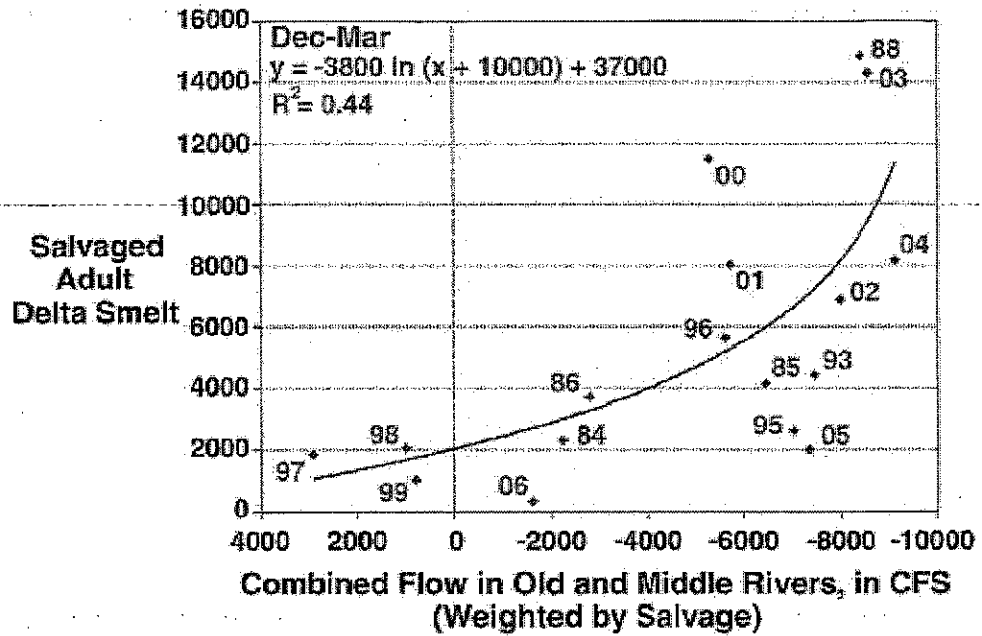
1 *in Water Diversions in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta* (“Kimmerer 2008”), attached hereto as
2 Exhibit C, and the work of Pete Smith, which is cited by Kimmerer.

3 17. Extensive experience with fish population modeling is necessary to interpret the
4 complicated statistics behind FWS’s analysis of entrainment effects. I have been teaching in the
5 area of fisheries population dynamics for twenty years and have published extensively on
6 population modeling, concepts which are not understandable to a layperson. Expert review is
7 necessary to explain the modeling components and input values and to explain how a reasonable
8 and qualified scientist would apply them to evaluate fish population dynamics.

9 **1. Improper Use of Total Adult Salvage Numbers Instead of Cumulative**
10 **Salvage Index**

11 18. FWS uses total adult salvage numbers to demonstrate an alleged relationship
12 between OMR flows and adult salvage. See BiOp at 163-65; 347-50 (AR at 000178-000180;
13 000362-000365). The alleged relationship is based on a graph in Figure B-13 which compares
14 the number of adults salvaged each year to the corresponding OMR flow rate for that year. BiOp
15 at 164, 348 (AR at 000179; 000363).

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Note: Data shown are for the period 1984-2007, excluding years 1983, 1989-92, 1994, and 2007 that had low (<12ntu) average water turbidity during Jan-Feb at Clifton Court Forebay.

Figure B-13. OMR-Salvage relationship for adult delta smelt. (source, P. Smith). Data from this figure were the raw data used in the piecewise polynomial regression analysis.

19. FWS relied on this graph to conclude that OMR flows correlate to total salvage numbers. In essence, this means that as negative OMR flows increase, more adults are salvaged.

20. This conclusion by FWS is scientifically flawed because raw salvage numbers do not have a directly proportional effect on population, nor do they take into account the overall size of the population as determined by representative survey data. Nonetheless, FWS relied on Figure B-13 and Figure B-14 (which appear to share the same data) to set OMR flow levels in RPA Actions 1 and 2. In other words, FWS set OMR flow levels in Actions 1 and 2 without determining population-level effects.

21. The scientifically appropriate approach would have been for FWS to use the cumulative salvage index to evaluate whether a relationship exists between OMR flows and adult salvage. FWS had already developed that index for other purposes. See BiOp at 386 (AR at 000401) (using the cumulative salvage index in another context, to calculate the incidental take). The cumulative salvage index represents an index of the salvage rate, taking into account data on the size of the population. Since total population data does not exist, the cumulative salvage

1 index uses a survey index which gives a relative increase or decrease in annual survey numbers to
2 monitor population levels. Use of the cumulative salvage index to evaluate the effects of OMR
3 flows is superior to using the raw salvage numbers themselves (as used in Figure B-13), for the
4 following reasons:

5 a. The total number of adults salvaged does not indicate population-level
6 effects. *See* BiOp at 338 (AR at 000353) (“the total number salvaged at the
7 facilities does not necessarily indicate a negative impact upon the overall delta
8 smelt population”). Stated differently, to make sense of total adult salvage
9 numbers, total adult abundance must be taken into account. For example, a
10 salvage of 100 adults has vastly different significance depending on whether the
11 total population is 200 or 50,000.

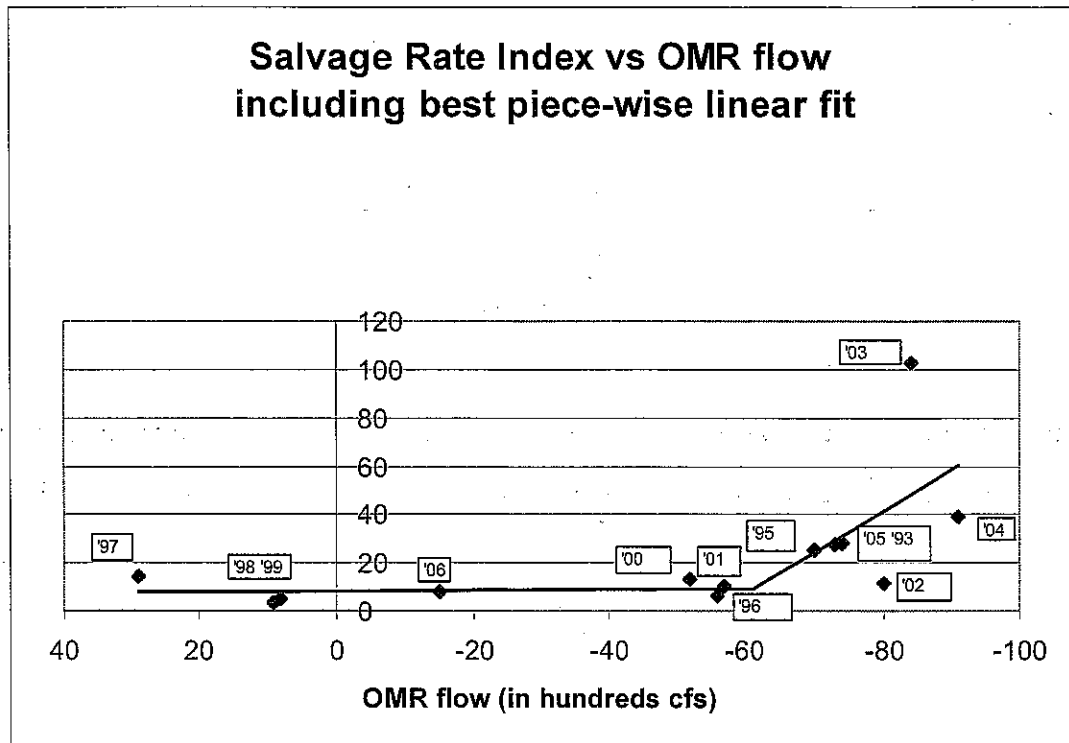
12 b. In contrast, the cumulative salvage index is an index of the *proportion* of
13 adults salvaged from the total population, using the Fall Midwater Trawl Survey
14 (“FMWT”) to relate salvage to population levels. The cumulative salvage index is
15 equal to the number salvaged divided by the prior year FMWT index. *See* BiOp at
16 338 (AR at 000353).

17 c. Use of the cumulative salvage index, rather than total salvage numbers,
18 was recommended by the Peer Review. *See Independent Peer Review of USFWS’s*
19 *Draft Effects Analysis for the Operations Criteria and Plan’s Biological Opinion,*
20 *2008* at 6 (AR at 008818) (“The Panel suggests that the use of predicted salvage of
21 adult smelt should be normalized for population size. . . . Expressing salvage as a
22 normalized index may help remove some of the confounding of the temporal
23 trends during the baseline period.”).

24 **2. Use of the Cumulative Salvage Index Shows That There Is No**
25 **Statistically Significant Relationship Between OMR Flows and Adult**
26 **Salvage for Flows Less Negative Than -6100 Cubic Feet per Second at**
the Very Least

27 22. In reviewing FWS’s methods, I plotted a graph of the relationship between the
28 cumulative salvage index (salvage rate) and the OMR flows for each year that was analyzed in

1 the BiOp. In developing this graph, I used the cumulative salvage index data provided in the
 2 BiOp. *See, e.g.*, BiOp at 386 (AR at 000401). Because OMR flow rates are not listed anywhere
 3 in the BiOp (an omission that was surprising to me), I visually estimated a magnified version of
 4 the OMR flow curve in Figure B-13 and interpolated the data points for each year.



18 The Cumulative Salvage Index (Table B-2 & C-1) and corresponding Dec-Mar salvage weighted
 19 OMR (Figure B-13); note the OMR estimates were visually estimated from Figure B-13. Years
 20 span 1993-2006 but exclude 1994 because that was also excluded in Figure B-13. A piece-wise
 linear model is also shown whose coefficients were obtained by the statistical procedure of
 maximum likelihood estimation.

21 23. The graph of salvage rate versus OMR flow shows that salvage rate remains flat as
 22 OMR flows increase until OMR flows reach -6100 to -7000 cubic feet per second (“cfs”).
 23 At -7000 cfs, salvage rate begins to increase as negative OMR flows increase. The graph
 24 demonstrates that OMR flows do not correlate to the salvage rate at flows less negative than
 25 -6100 cfs at the very least. Based on the data available, and using the appropriate analysis, there
 26 is no scientific basis for FWS’s imposition of OMR flow restrictions at flows less negative than
 27 -6100 cfs (and potentially -7000 cfs).

1 24. If and when FWS provides the underlying data for its statistical analysis on OMR
2 flows and salvage, I would be able to perform this analysis again in short order.

3 **3. The BiOp Does Not Contain Sufficient Data for Peer Review**

4 25. My initial review of the BiOp and the administrative record reveals that FWS has
5 not provided all of the underlying data that FWS relied on in performing its work in the BiOp, nor
6 was I able to find it in the administrative record. In my experience, a full scientific analysis is not
7 possible without making the underlying data available so that the work may be checked and
8 evaluated. This omission hinders the ability to conduct a standard peer review of the FWS
9 analysis without estimating data point values from the graphs or searching for data in other
10 sections. FWS's failure to include the data underlying its basic analyses and determinations is, in
11 my opinion, an inexplicable defect given the conclusions FWS reaches. The BiOp should include
12 sufficient data for a qualified scientist to conduct a thorough review of FWS's conclusions.

13 26. In light of the omitted data from the BiOp, I undertook to generate a list of data
14 that would permit me to complete a more thorough review of FWS's conclusions. Attached
15 hereto as Exhibit D is the list that I compiled. I would expect that FWS could produce this data,
16 given the analyses performed and graphs generated by FWS in the BiOp.

17 **B. The Model Used in FWS's Analysis to Compare the Effect of Fall X2 on**
18 **Population Survival Is Biologically Implausible and Potentially Misleading**
19 **It Is Simply Inappropriate for Fish Population Dynamics Modeling**

20 27. FWS used statistical modeling to demonstrate an alleged relationship between Fall
21 X2 and delta smelt abundance. The modeling and analysis are contained in the Effects of the
22 Proposed Action section of the BiOp, pages 233-238 and 265-274 (AR at 000248-000253 and
23 000280-000289), and in RPA Action 4 in Attachment B to the BiOp, pages 369-376 (AR at
24 000384-000391). FWS relied on various studies, particularly the work of Feyrer et al. in a 2007
25 article, *Multidecadal trends for three declining fish species: habitat patterns and mechanisms in*
26 *the San Francisco Estuary, California, USA*, and a draft 2008 manuscript, *Modeling the Effects of*
27 *Water Management Actions on Suitable Habitat and Abundance of a Critically Imperiled*
28 *Estuarine Fish (Delta Smelt Hypomesus transpacificus)*, attached hereto as Exhibits E and F; a

1 2005 article by Bennett, *Critical assessment of the delta smelt population in the San Francisco*
2 *Estuary, California*; a 2008 report by Baxter et al., *Pelagic organism decline progress report:*
3 *2007 synthesis of results*; and a 2008 article by Nobriga et al., *Long-term trends in summertime*
4 *habitat suitability for delta smelt*, *Hypomesus transpacificus*.

5 28. The complex modeling and analysis in the BiOp, as exemplified in Feyrer's work,
6 cannot be interpreted without a background in statistics and applied math. I have a Ph.D in
7 Biomathematics (Quantitative Ecology) and a Master's Degree in Mathematics, and I have
8 extensive experience in this field. Expert review of FWS's work is necessary to explain the
9 underlying methodology and to clarify the technical concepts involved.

10 **1. FWS Used a Linear Additive Model**

11 29. FWS used a linear additive model to demonstrate an alleged relationship between
12 Fall X2 and delta smelt abundance. The model finds that juvenile abundance, as measured by the
13 Summer Towntnet Survey ("TNS"), is equal to the sum of a constant number plus the previous
14 year's FMWT index, less X2. See BiOp at 268 (AR at 000283) (Figure E-22). Essentially, this
15 calculation finds that $A = B + C - D$.

16 a. FWS followed the linear additive model developed by Feyrer et al. in a
17 draft 2008 manuscript, which claims that Fall X2 has a population-level effect.
18 This model does not represent the best science available, and in fact runs counter
19 to well-accepted, basic modeling principles for this type of calculation. When
20 analyzing the effect of Fall X2, FWS also cites to a 2005 article by Bennett.
21 However, Bennett applies a well-established stock-recruit model, namely, the
22 Beverton-Holt model. See BiOp at 236 (AR at 000251).

23 b. The linear additive model produces the result that zero adults in one year
24 could still yield some young in the following year, a result that is biologically
25 implausible. Using the simple translation A (juveniles measured in TNS) = B
26 (constant) + C (adults measured in FMWT) - D (Fall X2), one can see that, if C
27 were set at zero (no adult spawners), $B - D$ could still produce a positive number
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1 for A (juveniles). This model thus has the nonsensical property of generating
2 juveniles from zero adults.

3 c. A linear additive model also treats the environmental factor X2 as an
4 additive factor, which has the implausible property of reducing the absolute
5 numbers of juveniles by the same quantity for a given value of X2 irrespective of
6 the total population.

7 30. For reasons such as these, a linear additive model is inappropriate for population
8 dynamics modeling, where certain results are biologically impossible.

9 **2. FWS Should Have Used a Multiplicative Stock-Recruit Model**

10 31. In my review of the BiOp, I would not expect a linear additive model to be used to
11 conduct the analysis that FWS was performing. It is well established that multiplicative stock-
12 recruit models better reflect actual biological realities when modeling fish populations. One such
13 very well known multiplicative stock-recruit model is the Ricker model, which any qualified
14 scientist in this field would 1) be familiar with and 2) have no difficulty using to perform the
15 analysis that FWS did.

16 a. Any recognized stock-recruit model, such as the Ricker model or the
17 Beverton-Holt model, is not a linear additive model.

18 b. A multiplicative stock-recruit model produces the biologically appropriate
19 result that zero adults yields zero young. A multiplicative model, as opposed to an
20 additive model, yields a sensible result: multiplying any number by zero will
21 always equal zero. Thus, regardless of the presence of other factors, if there are
22 zero adult spawners, there will be zero juveniles the following year. It is in this
23 way that the model reflects reality.

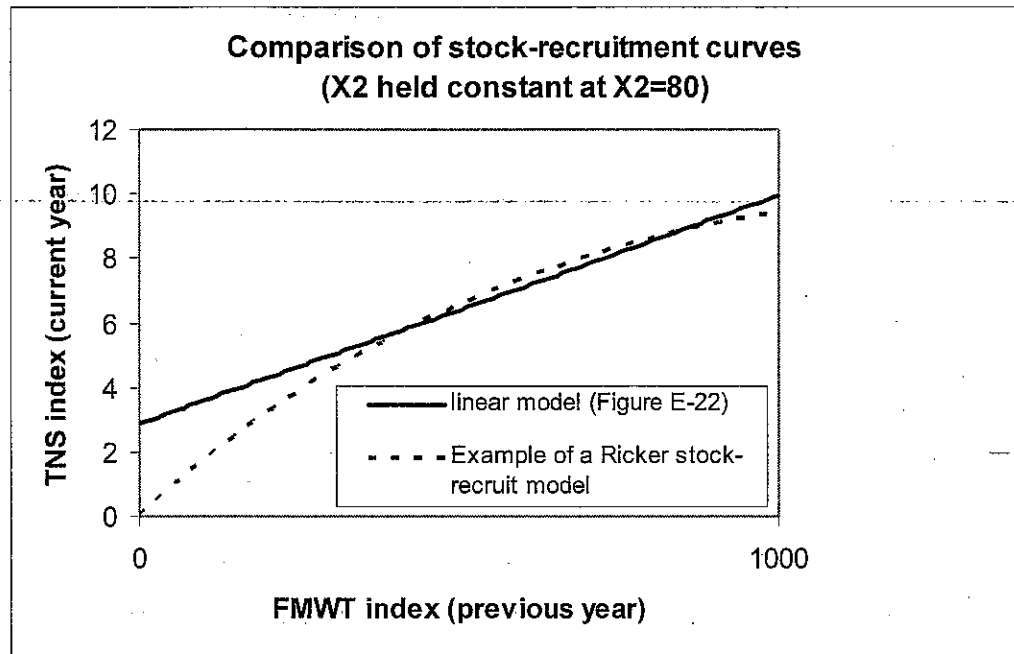
24 c. A multiplicative model, as opposed to an additive model, yields the
25 sensible result that varying an environmental factor such as X2 will elicit a
26 proportional response in population abundance. In contrast, the linear additive
27 model produces an absolute response irrespective of the size of the population.
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1 d. The BiOp itself questions the use of a linear additive model to evaluate the
2 effect of Fall X2, stating that “some type of transformation of the data would help
3 to define a better fitting model,” but declines to correct the situation (such as
4 through the use of a multiplicative model) without further explanation. BiOp at
5 236 (AR at 000251). Any scientist with experience in modeling would have no
6 difficulty applying a multiplicative model, so the failure to do so is unjustified.

7 e. The Peer Review also criticized the linear additive model, finding that
8 “[t]he [Effects Analysis] points out that the residuals from this analysis are not
9 normally distributed and that some transformation might be required. We suspect
10 that a few of the data points may have high influence on the outcome. These
11 results together suggest that the model may be inappropriate for the data being
12 used.” *Independent Peer Review of USFWS’s Draft Effects Analysis for the*
13 *Operations Criteria and Plan’s Biological Opinion, 2008* at 7 (AR at 008819).

14 32. A graphical depiction of the difference between a multiplicative model such as the
15 Ricker model and a linear additive model is helpful. During my review of FWS’ analysis, I
16 plotted a stock-recruit curve of the relationship between FMWT (previous year) and TNS (current
17 year) using a standard Ricker stock-recruit model. A visual comparison of FWS’s linear model
18 against the Ricker model is shown below. As shown on the comparison, when FMWT is set at
19 zero in the linear model that FWS used, TNS is above zero. In contrast, when FMWT is set at
20 zero in the standard Ricker model, TNS is also zero.

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33. In order to evaluate whether there is a relationship between Fall X2 and abundance, I used the publicly available FMWT and TNS data in a standard Ricker stock-recruit model.¹ I then visually estimated the Fall X2 values from Figure E-24 on page 270 of the BiOp (AR at 000285) (again, I was hindered by the BiOp’s failure to provide the actual data). After employing the well-established model, it was readily evident that there is no statistically significant relationship between Fall X2 and abundance. The contrary conclusion that FWS reached is due to their unjustifiable use of a biologically implausible linear additive model.

C. FWS’s Incidental Take Analysis Is Improperly Influenced by a Data Point That Even FWS Rejected for Other Purposes

34. FWS’s incidental take analysis can be found in Attachment C to the BiOp, pages 382-396 (AR at 000397-000411). In developing the incidental take limit for adult entrainment, FWS relied on a series of statistical analyses and calculations in the BiOp and in Kimmerer 2008. Expert interpretation of these analyses is necessary to explain how FWS developed the take limit and how it misused the data such that the outcome was materially affected.

¹ FMWT data is available at: <http://www.delta.dfg.ca.gov/data/mwt/charts.asp>. TNS data is available at: <http://www.delta.dfg.ca.gov/data/projects/?ProjectID=TOWNET>.

1 35. The incidental take limit is set at 7.25 times the prior year's Fall Midwater Trawl
2 Index of adult abundance. BiOp at 386 (AR at 000401). The 7.25 figure represents the average
3 salvage rate from only three years—2006, 2007, and 2008. See BiOp at 385-86 (AR at 000400-
4 000401). The BiOp uses the average salvage rate for these three years as a predictor of take
5 levels during each year that the RPAs will be in effect. Although salvage data is analyzed dating
6 back to 1993, the BiOp claims that "these years [2006 through 2008] within the historic dataset
7 best approximate expected salvage under the RPA Component 1," which restricts OMR flows.
8 *Id.*

9 36. The BiOp lists the annual salvage numbers and salvage rates for the years 1993-
10 2008, and shows that the salvage in 2007 was extremely low compared to the other years and to
11 2006 and 2008 in particular. See BiOp at 386 (AR at 000401) (Table C-1). The cumulative
12 salvage index is just 0.88, compared to 8.3 for 2006 and 12.6 for 2008. *Id.*

13 37. In my review, I searched for additional information regarding the conditions that
14 might have contributed to these salvage levels. In another section of the BiOp, I discovered that
15 FWS itself had considered the salvage level in 2007 as *unusable* for purposes of analyzing
16 salvage and OMR flows due to that year's low average water turbidity. See BiOp at 348 (AR at
17 000363) (Figure B-13, Note). The low turbidity explains why salvage in 2007 was extremely
18 low, as turbidity is a strong indicator of presence or absence of delta smelt near the project
19 facilities. Lower turbidity means fewer fish will be present and, accordingly, fewer fish are
20 capable of being entrained. Thus, FWS recognized that the unusual conditions in 2007 made it an
21 unrepresentative year that would skew its analysis. For FWS to then go ahead and use that
22 salvage level in the incidental take equation is scientifically unjustified.

23 38. Without the year 2007 factored into the equation, the take coefficient increases
24 from 7.25 to 10.45, which lies within the range of historical estimates on the figure shown on
25 page 9 herein for flows less negative than -7000 cfs. This figure represents the average of the
26 salvage indices in 2006 and 2008, and would significantly increase the permissible take level.
27 FWS's calculation should be corrected to remove the outlier year of 2007.

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39. My review of the BiOp is not complete. With further review, I may change my opinions or testify on other aspects of the BiOp.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California and the United States that the foregoing is true and correct and that this declaration was executed on July 30, 2009 at San Francisco, California.


DR. RICHARD B. DERISO