

CALIFORNIA TROUT



KEEPER OF THE STREAMS

# Jim Edmondson, California Trout Inc. Testimony SWRCB Santa Ynez River Hearing

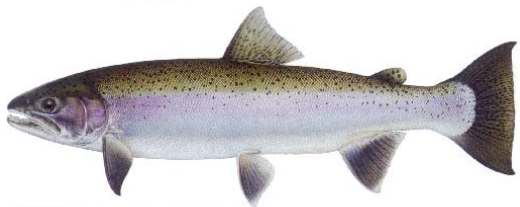


**Exterior mural from City of Lompoc, 1940's**



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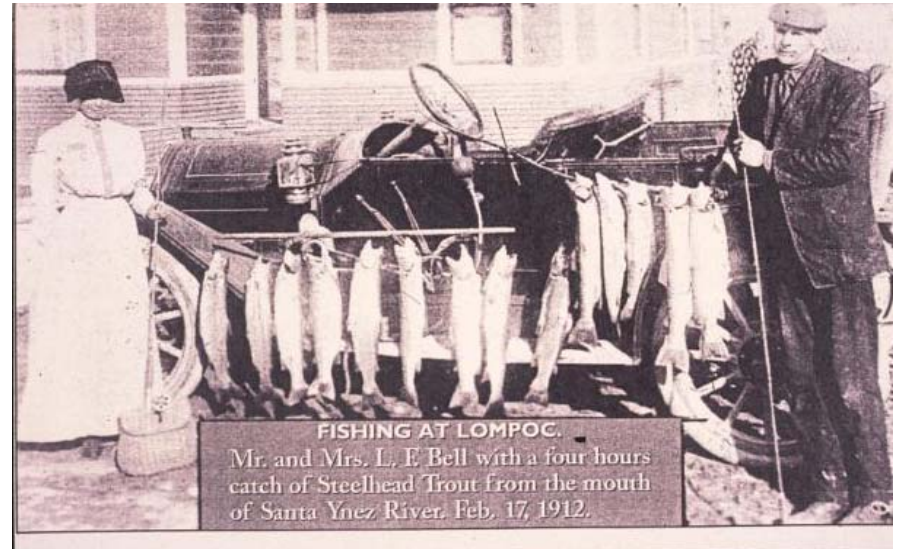
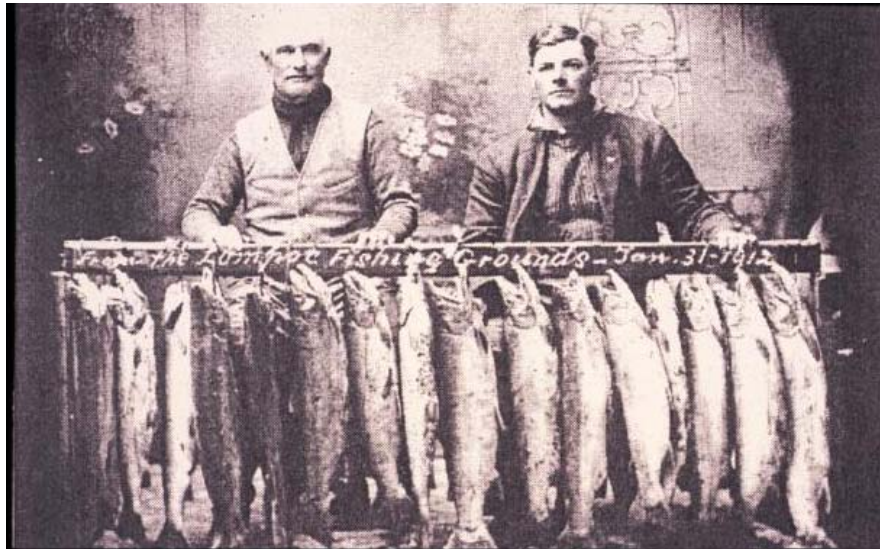
- Pre-Cachuma Project Perspective
- Cachuma Project Planning
- Public Trust Balancing
- Recommendations



**Dan Smith's daughter,**  
**winter of 1943-44** (Dan  
Smith's Sporting Goods Store,  
Goleta

# Santa Ynez River Historic Steelhead Abundance

Abundance unknown prior to the construction of Gibraltar Dam in upper watershed



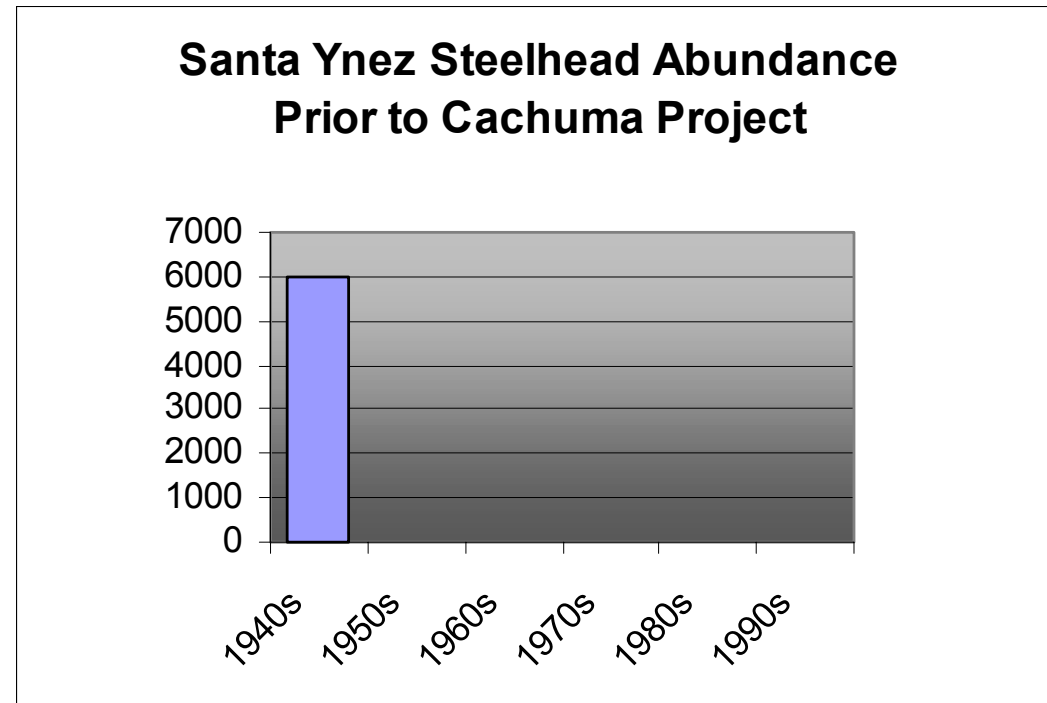
Early Photographs of Santa Ynez River steelhead

Lompoc Valley Historical Society

# Santa Ynez River Historic Steelhead Abundance

1<sup>st</sup> estimates by DFG,  
USFWS, Bureau

- Largest in southern California
- Avg. = 20,000
- Range = 13,000 to 30,000 adults



# **Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Use of the River**

**Lagoon breached  
allowing steelhead  
access to river**

- **Winter run steelhead**
- **December to mid-April  
Spawning**



**Anglers at mouth of the river  
– 1948 Krieder**

# **Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Use of the River**

- **Lower Santa Ynez River below Cachuma Project**
- **Important steelhead migration corridor**

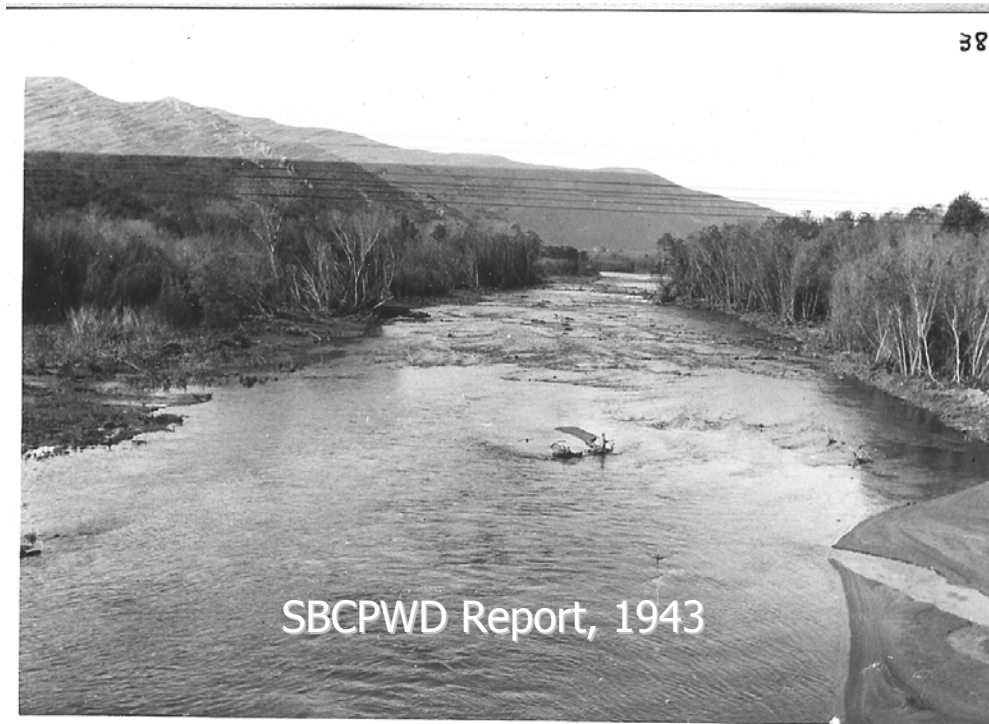


**Santa Ynez Valley  
along river.  
Adams Property**

SBCPW Report, 1943

# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Use of the River

Looking upstream at Santa Ynez River from Buellton  
Bridge site



# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Use of the River

- **What Steelhead Found Above Bradbury Dam Site**

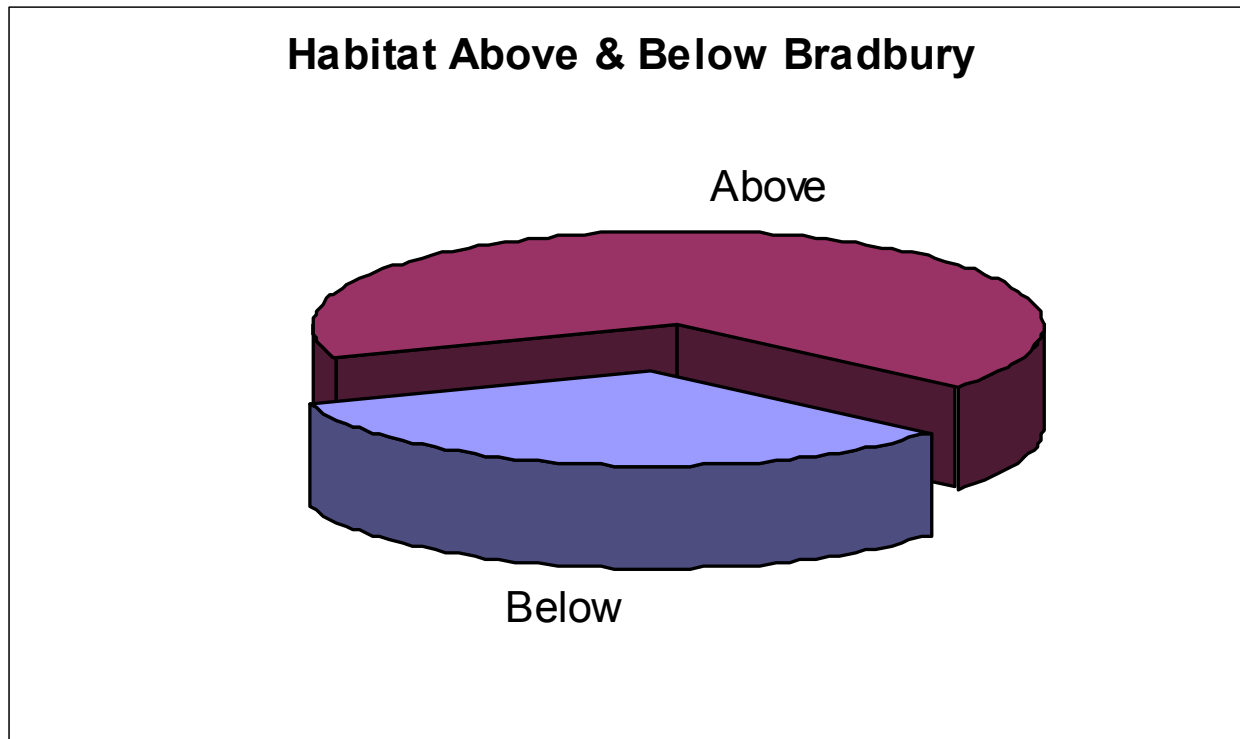


Santa Ynez above Red Rock 5-19-02



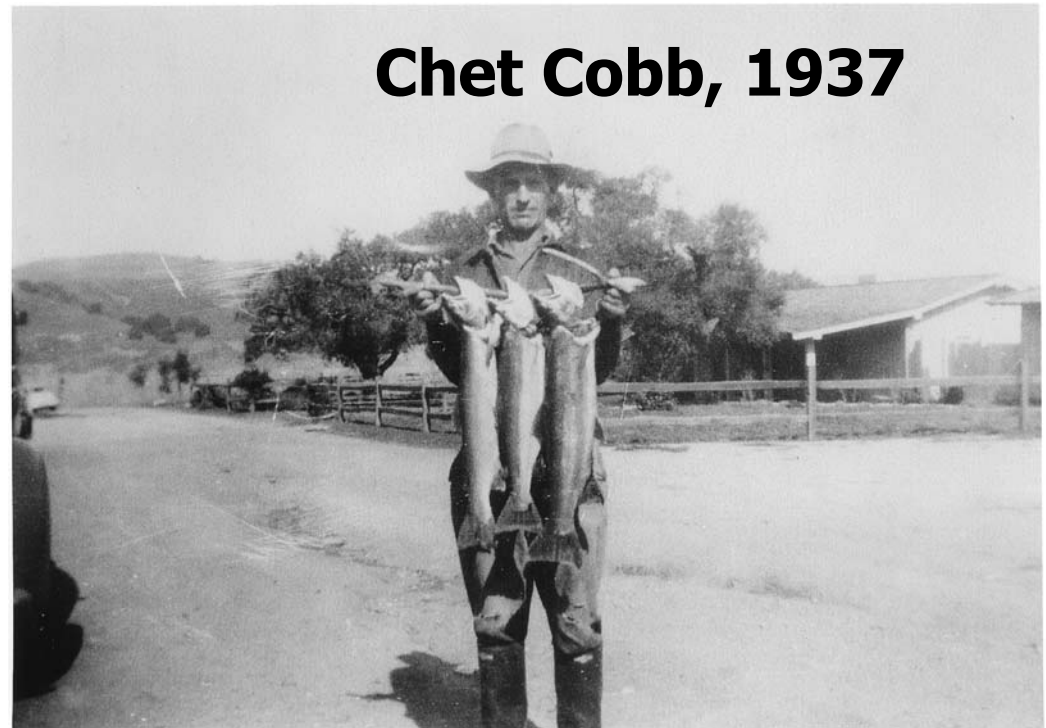
# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Use of the River

- Majority of best steelhead spawning habitat (2/3rds) above Bradbury Dam



# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Angling

- DFG and USFWS called recreational sportfishing "*splendid*" and "*fine fishing*"

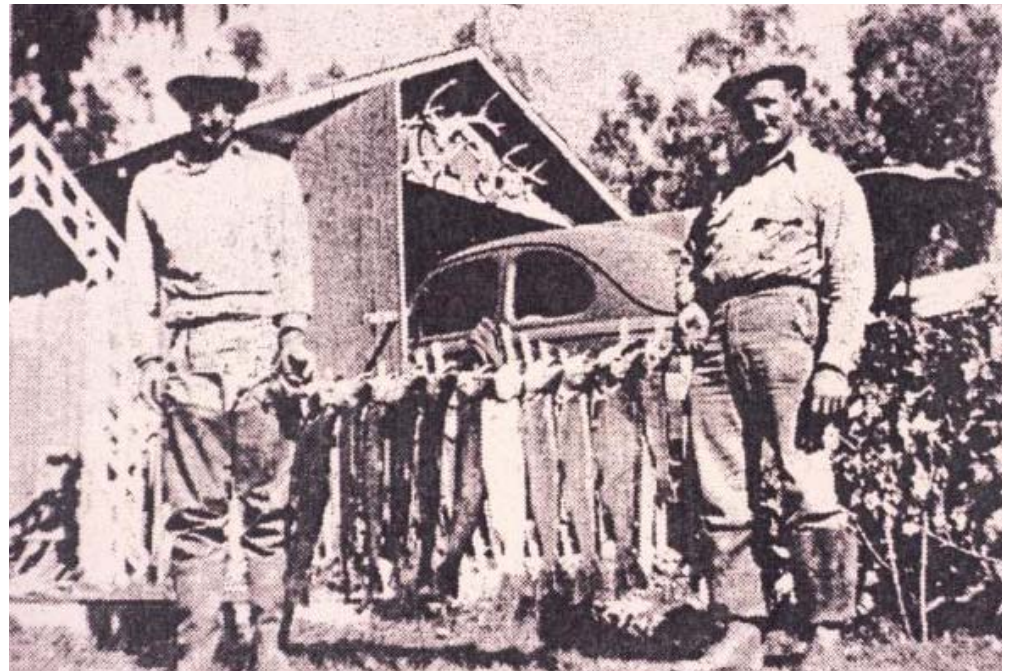


Santa Ynez River success

# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Angling

Harry Paoski & Ben Benedict

- What Bureau of Reclamation said about angling ... steelhead fishing of "*considerable importance*"



Santa Ynez River steelhead - 1941

# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Angler's Perspective

- *"Most productive"* of all local rivers
- *"Great numbers"* of steelhead
- *"Several runs"* from late December to end of February
- *"splendid"* steelhead to 10 pounds in the river



*"My 1<sup>st</sup> steelhead ... Santa Ynez River"*  
*Kreider*

# Pre-Cachuma Steelhead Angler's Perspective

- Boat fishing occurred in the "*mile-long*" Santa Ynez estuary
- Surf fishing at the mouth of the river

## Santa Ynez River Estuary

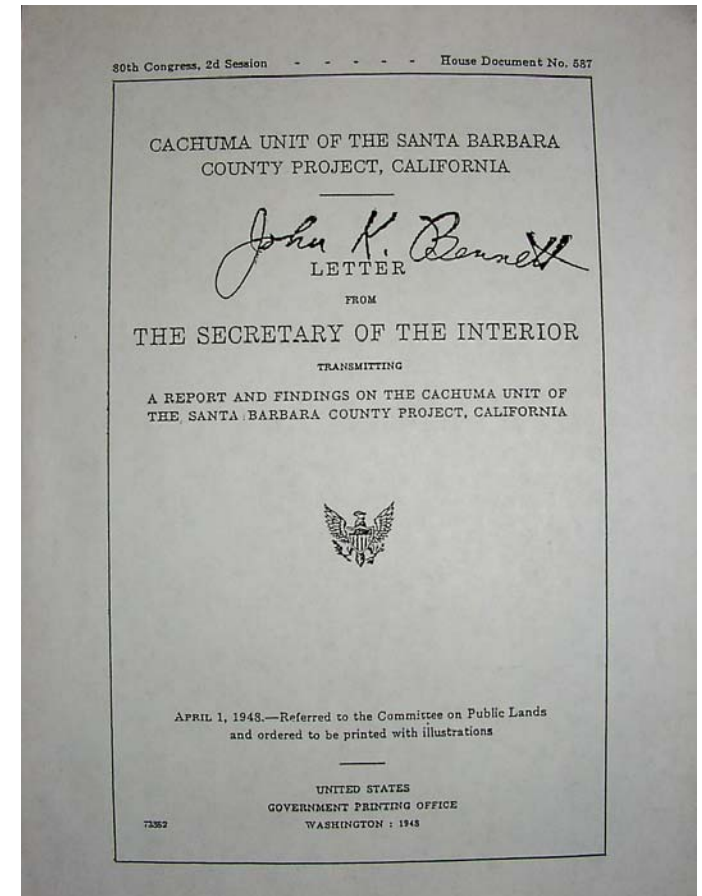


**Mary Miller, 1941** (*Outdoor Life Magazine*)

# Cachuma Project Planning

## USFWS Fish Maintenance Recommendations (1945/48)

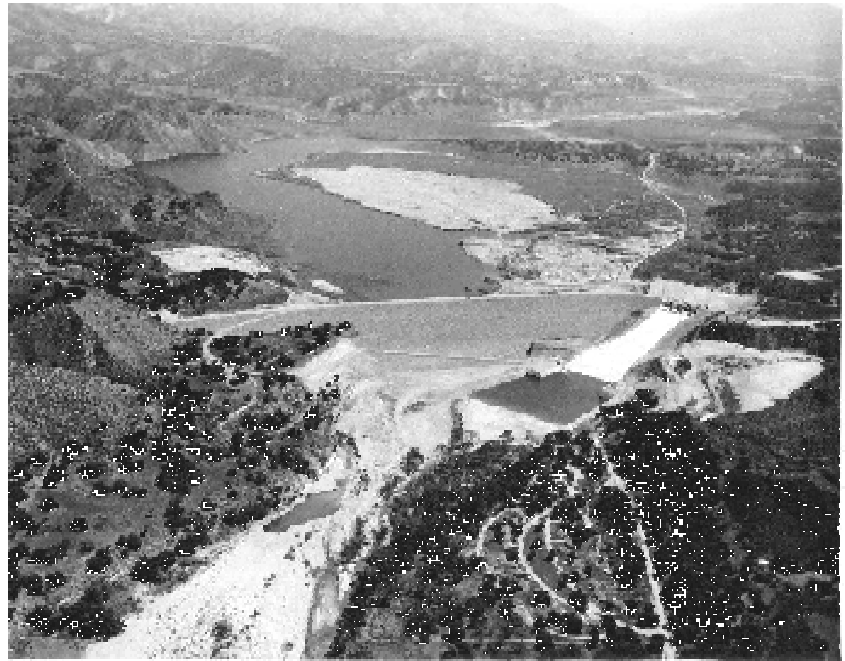
- Instream Flows
- Trap & Transfer Above Dam
- Downstream water rights release to benefit fish where possible
- Steelhead Hatchery
- Screen Tunnel



# Bureau 1948 Balancing Decision

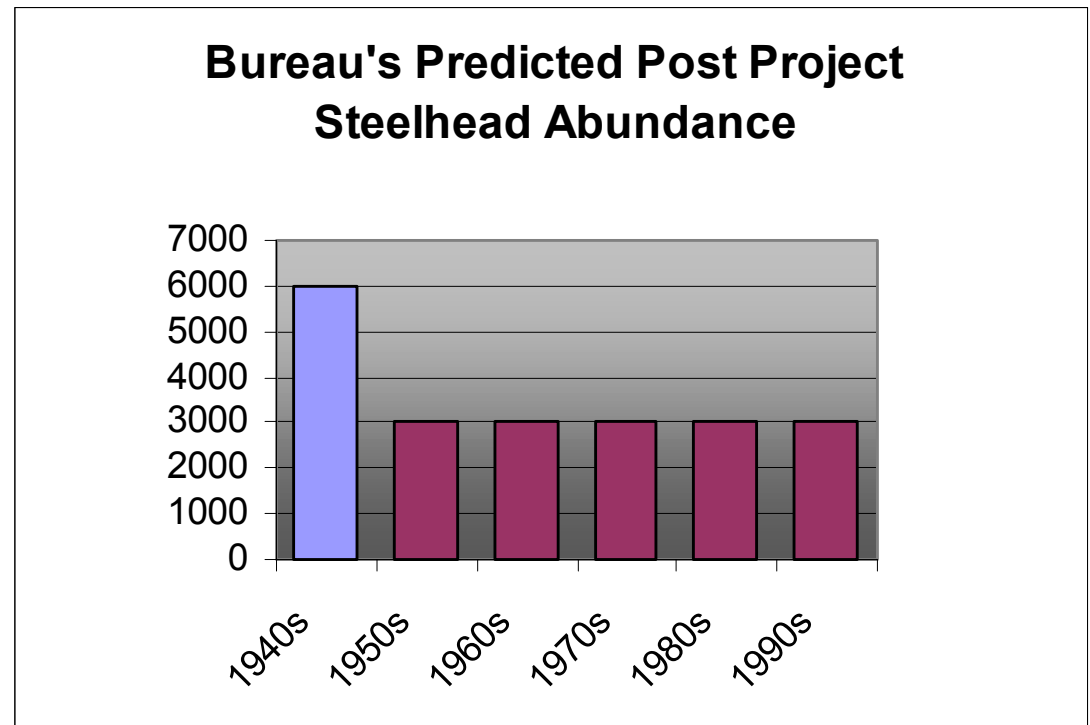
## Bureau Builds Project (1950) - Fishery Maintenance Measures Dismissed

- **NO** Instream Flows
- **NO** Trap & Transfer Above Dam
- **NO** Hatchery
- **NO** Tunnel Screening



# Cachuma Project Fish Protection Prediction

- USFWS - without fish maintenance measures  
*"~50% loss"*
- Reclamation did not dispute 50% loss





# Bureau 1995 Balancing Decision

- Contract Renewal EIS/EIR (1995)
- 18 Alternatives (3A2 best for steelhead)
- Flows IFIM based
- Sought “Reasonable balance” of water rights, environment and recreation uses



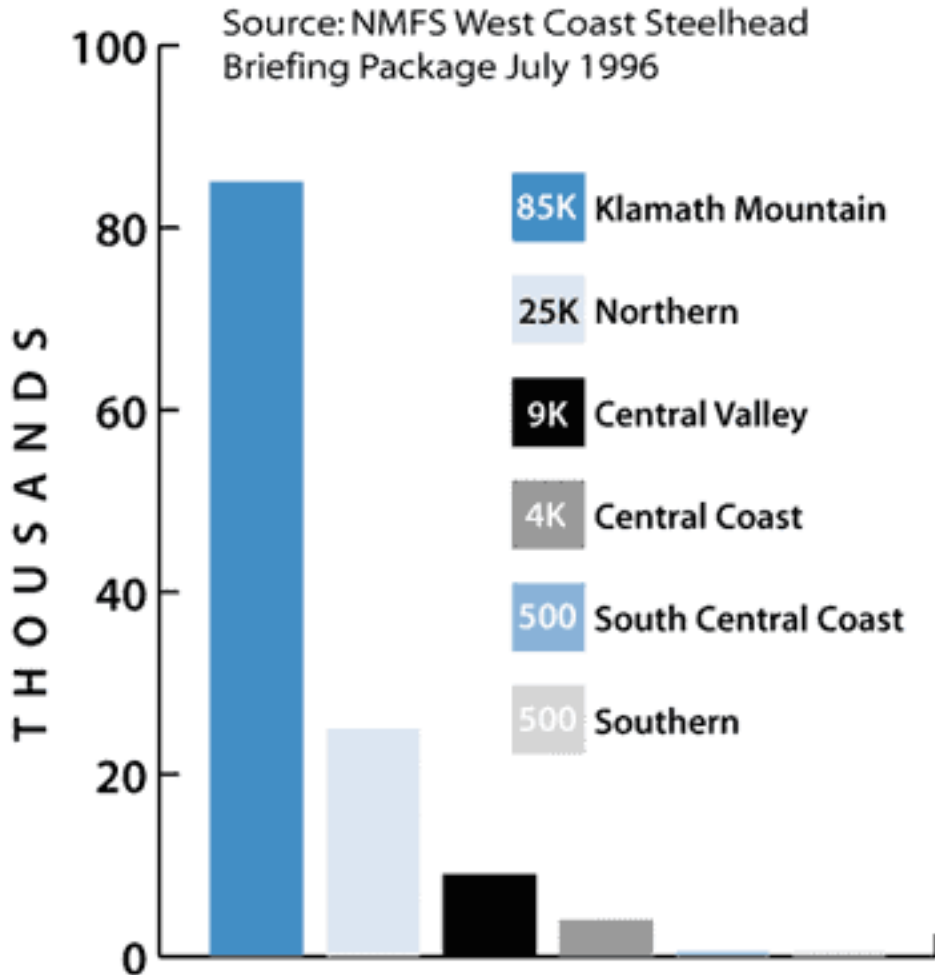
# Bureau Balancing #2 - 1995

- Bureau picks preferred alternative
- Project operations "*would continue unchanged . . .*"



**Above Hwy 154 Bridge –  
September 2003**

# Steelhead Population Collapse



100 --- Current Santa Ynez steelhead abundance estimate by NOAA Fisheries

# Public Trust Recommendation #1

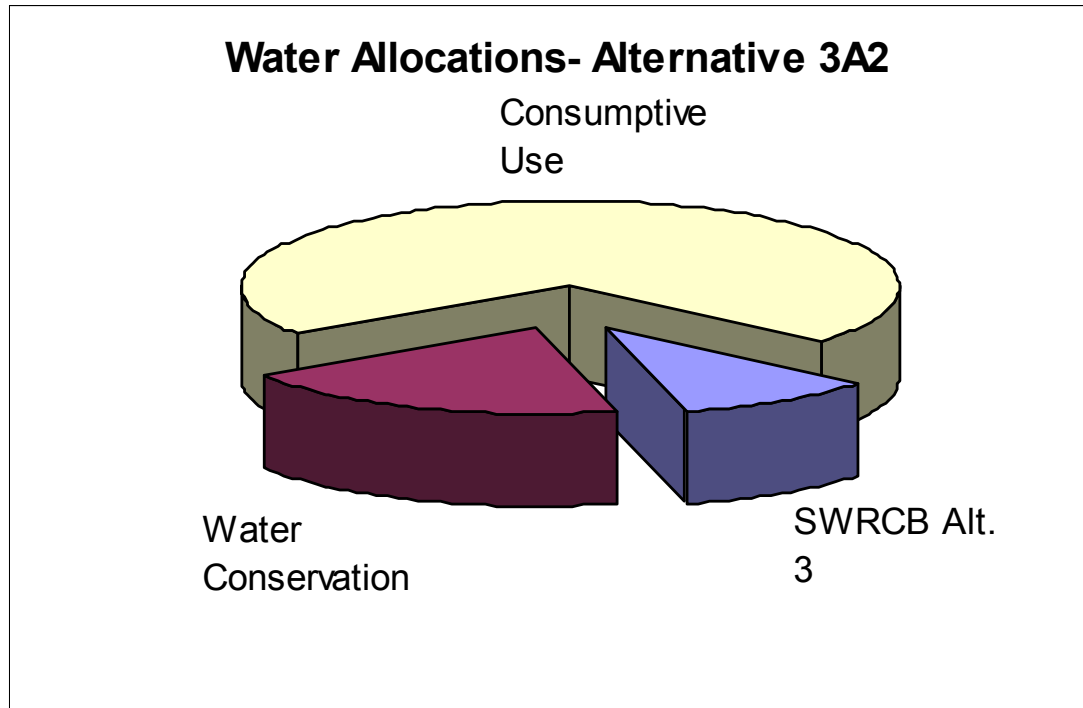
- Bureau's Cachuma Project Water Rights Permits should be modified to: Protect and restore steelhead Public Trust resources



# Public Trust Recommendation #2

**Bureau's Alternative 3A2 Flows should be required now**

- **Water available via conservation**
- **No significant impact on water supplies**



# Public Trust Recommendation #3

More studies and research are necessary

- **Fish passage**
- **Watershed and Habitat Assessments**
- **Instream & Geomorphic Flows**



Upstream view of Bradbury Dam



Santa Cruz Creek, July 2002

# Public Trust Recommendation #4

Adaptive Management is essential with:

- **Measurable criteria and schedule**
- **Milestones to management progress and take corrective actions as/Battle Creek DEIS/EIR**



# Public Trust Recommendation #5

- SWRCB “continuing jurisdiction”
- “Re-opener” at pre-determined milestones such as NOAA Fisheries Recovery Plan, Adaptive Plan, etc.

