



BATTLE CREEK RESTORATION

October 2011

A Solution that Works for People and Salmon

The Battle Creek watershed is a rich mixture of productive forests, cattle ranches, orchards, vineyards, wildlife habitats, and rural communities. The two forks of Battle Creek physically connect these places, livelihoods, and habitats--and activities in one area can affect lands and waters throughout the watershed. The idea of an interconnected watershed--one inhabited and utilized by people in such a way that native plants and animals are able to maintain healthy populations, while landowners achieve sustainable livelihoods--has been called "a working landscape". A working landscape provides economic prospects for its residents while maintaining the area's ecology.

The partner organizations of the Battle Creek Salmon and Steelhead Restoration Project (Restoration Project)--agencies, nonprofits, and businesses-- recognize the importance of fostering the vision of a working landscape--a solution that works for both people and salmon. In this spirit, the Battle Creek Watershed Working Group was formed to share information and act as a forum for the viewpoints of landowners and other stakeholders. The Group meets six times a year and promotes the idea that a working landscape strikes a balance between our economic, ecological, and social needs.

The restoration of the Battle Creek fish populations adds to the economic, cultural and ecologic value of the watershed. These benefits will be felt regionally, with increased wild salmon available for harvest offshore. They will also be felt locally, where the creek provides residents with clean water, opportunities for recreation and fish related businesses, renewable electric power, education, and spiritual insight. Restoring populations of salmon on Battle Creek takes us one step closer to removing them from the endangered species list, which will mean reduced government regulation for local and statewide water users.

The Restoration Project is a proactive, cooperative effort to restore the anadromous fish populations in the Sacramento River watershed, where restoration potential is uniquely promising. The Restoration Project will restore approximately 42 miles of habitat in Battle Creek, a tributary to the Sacramento River, and an additional 6 miles of habitat in its tributaries. Habitat restoration will enable safe passage for naturally produced salmonids, and would facilitate their population growth and recovery. At the same time, it would minimize the loss of renewable energy produced by the Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project, owned and operated by Pacific Gas and Electric Company.



Below are the Restoration Project objectives which are consistent with recovery plans for listed anadromous fish species:

- restore self-sustaining populations of Chinook salmon and steelhead by restoring their habitat in the Battle Creek watershed--and access to it--through a voluntary partnership with state and federal agencies, a third party donor, and PG&E;
- significantly increase instream flow releases that restore self-sustaining populations of Chinook salmon and steelhead;
- remove selected dams at key locations in the watershed where the hydroelectric values were marginal, as a result of increased instream flow releases;
- dedicate water diversion rights for instream purposes at dam removal sites;
- install failsafe fish screens and fish ladders to allow safe fish passage;
- restore stream function by constructing tailrace connectors that minimize the trans-basin diversion of water from the North to the South Fork, in order to provide a stable habitat and guard against false attraction of anadromous fish away from their migratory destinations;
- avoid Restoration Project impacts on wildlife and native plants, and their habitats, to the extent practicable; minimize impacts that are unavoidable; and compensate for impacts;
- minimize loss of clean and renewable energy produced by the Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project;
- implement restoration activities as soon as is feasible;
- develop and implement a long-term adaptive management plan with dedicated funding sources, to ensure the continued success of restoration efforts; and
- avoid impacts on other established water users/land owners/third parties.

The completion dates for the Restoration Project are 2012 for Phase 1 and 2015 for Phase 2.

For further information, please visit the following websites:

<http://www.usbr.gov/mp/battlecreek/status.html>
www.battle-creek.net