



Over the past several months, MID and TID have been proceeding with obtaining a license for the La Grange Hydroelectric Project (La Grange Project). In February 2016, MID and TID issued and filed an Initial Study Report (ISR) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). This milestone was followed by a public meeting in which researchers summarized the status of the various studies MID and TID have begun.

Following the ISR filing, in May 2016, the Districts requested that FERC revise the licensing process schedule to allow for additional time to complete all the FERC-required studies, as well as a number of voluntary studies being conducted by MID and TID and the National Marine Fisheries Service. After the Districts' initial request and letters of support from community partners, FERC agreed with MID and TID's schedule request and extended the licensing schedule to provide additional time to complete the studies. The final license application for the La Grange Project is now due to FERC by September 25, 2017.

Included in this newsletter is an update on the studies that MID and TID are currently implementing. The Districts will report on the results from these studies in the Updated Study Report, which is set to be filed in February 2017.

COLLABORATIVE WORKSHOPS AND TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT

To encourage a collaborative process, MID and TID are hosting a series of public workshops to identify, collect and share information, as well as receive public input on the possibility of fish reintroduction in the Upper Tuolumne River, which would require fish passage facilities. In addition to workshops hosted in 2015, this year, the Districts hosted workshops on January 27 and May 19. During the January workshop, MID, TID and stakeholders agreed to form a Technical Committee to take the lead on the more technical aspects of implementing the Assessment

Framework, such as preparing study plans and reviewing study reports. The Technical Committee is composed of volunteers from MID, TID, government agencies, environmental groups and members of the public. MID and TID would like to thank those who have taken the time out of their busy schedules to attend the collaborative workshops and volunteer on the Technical Committee.

For more information on the workshops or any of the studies mentioned, visit www.lagrange-licensing.com.

LA GRANGE

November 2016

Modesto Irrigation District | Turlock Irrigation District

A newsletter covering the licensing of the La Grange Project

LA GRANGE PROJECT LICENSE STUDY UPDATE

CULTURAL RESOURCES STUDY

This summer, MID and TID began work on the FERC-approved Cultural Resources Study. **This study will (1) identify potential effects of cultural resources within the project area; (2) evaluate whether these resources are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; and (3) identify whether the La Grange Project has effects on those resources.**

MID and TID held a study kick-off meeting on Monday, June 27, 2016, at MID. The goal of the meeting was to provide a description of the La Grange Project, review the licensing schedule, provide a brief overview of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 consultation process and discuss the study. Representatives from MID, TID, FERC and the Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians attended the meeting. Fieldwork for this study began in August 2016.

RECREATION ACCESS AND SAFETY ASSESSMENT

MID and TID are also working on the FERC-approved Recreation Access and Safety Assessment. **The goals of this study are to identify and characterize public use and potential recreation opportunities in the study area and to assess the public safety risk of identified recreation opportunities.**

As part of the study, MID and TID held a site visit on June 30, 2016 to collect information. Representatives from the Districts, as well as California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management, Tuolumne River Trust and Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center participated.

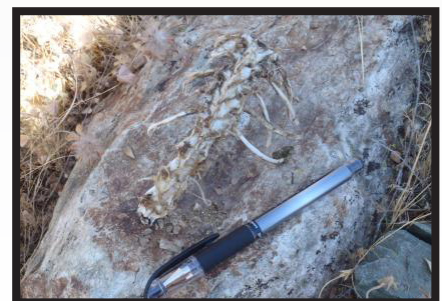
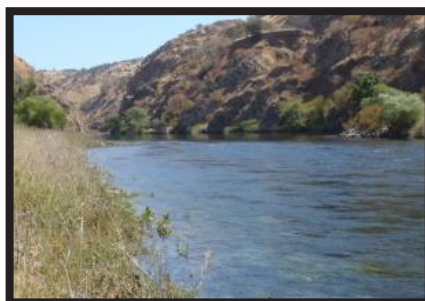
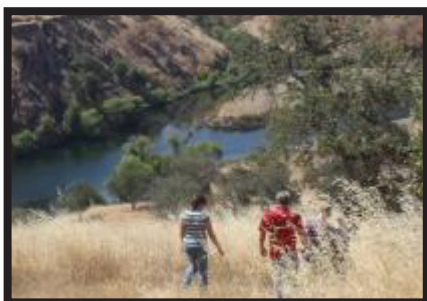
UPPER RIVER STUDIES

MID and TID are voluntarily conducting several new studies in support of the Upper Tuolumne River Reintroduction Assessment Framework. The purpose of the Assessment Framework is to evaluate technical and biological feasibility related to reintroducing anadromous salmonids into the Upper Tuolumne River.

These studies aim to (1) characterize the availability of suitable habitat for Chinook Salmon and Steelhead in the Upper Tuolumne River; (2) assess hatchery stocking practices in the Tuolumne River Basin; (3) describe how recreational activities, such as boating and fishing, may be impacted by the introduction of anadromous fish; and (4) evaluate federal, state and local regulatory issues associated with the introduction of anadromous fish.

Fieldwork is continuing this fall for the Upper Tuolumne River Basin Fish Migration Barriers Study. The goal of this study is to identify barriers to upstream anadromous salmonid migration in the Tuolumne River and its tributaries upstream of the Don Pedro Project boundary.

Fieldwork for the Upper Tuolumne River Basin Water Temperature Monitoring and Modeling Study is also continuing throughout the next few months. The goal of this study is to characterize the thermal regimes of the Upper Tuolumne River and tributaries and to identify locations where temperatures appear to be suitable for salmonids.



Pictures taken during the Recreation Access and Safety site visit held on June 30, 2016.