Salmonid Team Ag Subcommittee Meeting Notes

Meeting of July 10, 2004 – Notes

Item 1. **Presentation by Dr. Adina Merenlender, UC Berkeley Cooperative Extension**

The presentation centered on water supply and agriculture needs. The presentation gave rise to several questions:

a) Why are appropriated water rights not being awarded?

b) Problems: maximum allowable is 30-day storage. Can sum of small reservoirs alter winter flows?

What is the capacity of all small reservoirs in the watershed vs. Lake Sonoma?
Most reservoirs in the watershed were built before 1973, and all are large. How does that impact existing water use by the Ag community?

Item 2. **Off-Stream Storage**.

1) Reservoir size restriction, if have more than 50 acre/feet why do people steer away?
   -Permits are the main problem. The reduced likelihood of actually receiving one makes going through the process worthless. A "why bother" mentality has taken over.
   -Also, it is very costly to go through the process: with legal and engineer fees, the cost could be as much as a quarter of a million dollars.

2) Long term irrigation: Most needed for drip, lesser amounts for frost protection.
   - for many winery owners, permits and water rights issues are top priority.

Item 3. **How can the Science perspective help?**

Ultimately, what is the goal from a science perspective?

- Applied Science: land use and erosion responses
- Data and publishing papers on land use/sediment/embeddedness
- Writing grants
- Determining thresholds: stream flows beyond survival of baby salmon.
- Identify when salmon cannot recover from the damage that has been done?

Problems happen because things are not regulated (ex: ground water pumping)
It is possible that collected stored water could be used to force good fish year by releasing a trickle?

Item 4. **Next Steps**

The Ag community needs to work with fish experts to better understand the watershed, and what can be done to protect salmonid populations. Identify where conservation and restoration should occur and craft best management practices for the agriculture and viticulture communities that impact the watershed.

Item 5. **Exchange of Information**

The Ag and Viticulture representatives exchanged ideas: how conservation can occur, how to build trust and how to ensure that stakeholders contribute and receive something from the process.