

# TRI-DAM PROJECT

Of the South San Joaquin & Oakdale Irrigation Districts

Telephone: (209) 965-3996 / (209) 532-3838

\*

Fax: (209) 965-4235

---

## PRESS RELEASE FOR DRAWDOWN OF TULLOCH RESERVOIR

The Tri-Dam Project has notified landowners, businesses, and governmental agencies that Tulloch Reservoir will be drawn down beginning as early as August 23, 2015. The release of water from Tulloch will be coordinated with releases by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation from their low-level outlet at New Melones Reservoir. The draw-down of Tulloch Reservoir may begin later than August 23, 2015, depending on Reclamation's access to the low-level outlet.

Together, the releases will reduce water temperatures affecting rainbow trout (*O. mykiss*) below Goodwin Dam on the Stanislaus River. Oakdale and South San Joaquin Irrigation Districts, working with Tri-Dam Project, have been meeting and working with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), State Water Board (SWB), and Reclamation to develop an operation plan to meet Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Water Quality Control Plan, and other beneficial uses and regulatory requirements.

Tulloch Reservoir will be drawn down 30,000 acre-feet, approximately 20,000 acre-feet more than normal operations to assist in trying to lower water temperatures below Goodwin. Due to the extended drawdown, Tri-Dam will use this opportunity to operate and test the spill gates at the Dam, as required by its FERC license.

“The Tri-Dam Project Board of Directors thinks it is a good idea since the reservoir has to be drawn down beyond normal winter levels that we test the gates again this year, with hopes that it will not be required again for another five years.”

*Ron Berry, General Manager of Tri-Dam Project*

The Temporary Urgency Change Petition previously approved by the State Water Board only addressed project operations until August. The Tri-Dam Project had maintained water surface elevations at Tulloch as long as it could through the summer of the fourth year of drought.

“The water temperature modeling shows that drawing Tulloch Reservoir down improves water temperatures downstream of Goodwin Dam. The Districts, as major diverters of water from the Stanislaus River, have a responsibility to ensure the health of the river. The Tri-Dam Project biologists working with NMFS, DFW, USFWS, and the State Water Board have come up with an operation plan that works.”

*Jeff Shields, General Manager, South San Joaquin Irrigation District*

Refill of Tulloch Reservoir is expected to commence on March 1, 2016. This is when the lake is normally refilled.

Contact: Ron Berry, General Manager, (209) 965-3996, [rberry@tridamproject.com](mailto:rberry@tridamproject.com)  
Susan Larson, License Compliance, (209) 785-3838, [slarson@tridamproject.com](mailto:slarson@tridamproject.com)

Mail Address: P O Box 1158, Pinecrest, CA 95364 - 0158 / General Office: 31885 Old Strawberry Road, Strawberry, CA 95375