



News Release

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Casitas Requests Fishing Prohibition in Ventura River Watershed

The Casitas Municipal Water District plans to ask the California Department of Fish and Game to change its existing policy that permits unrestricted fishing in the Ventura River Watershed due to interagency efforts to protect the endangered Southern California Steelhead. The state currently allows anglers to fish in the Ventura River including critical steelhead habitat above Casitas' Fish Passage Facility. Casitas is requesting the Department of Fish and Game, along with the National Marine Fisheries Service, to restrict fishing in the Ventura River Watershed, which includes the Ventura River and its tributaries such as San Antonio Creek and the North Fork of Matilija Creek.

The Casitas Municipal Water District has committed hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in operational and research costs to help with the recovery of the steelhead population in the Ventura River Watershed. And in recent years, together, the State of California paid \$4.25 million and Casitas contributed approximately \$4 million to build a new fish passage facility at the Robles Diversion Facility to benefit reestablishment of anadromous steelhead.

“Casitas is requesting the state and federal government to adopt policies that complement our mandated local efforts to aid steelhead. In the last month, we identified over a half dozen trout that have used the fish passage facility to swim upstream. It is very possible any one of these trout could be a steelhead that would in part help replenish the species. As instituted in other waterways in the state, we would like to prevent any potential for an angler to inadvertently harm steelhead in the Ventura River or in any one its tributaries,” stated Pete Kaiser, President of the Casitas Municipal Water District. “So, we are specifically asking the California Department of Fish and Game to join us in our efforts to protect steelhead and aid in their restoration by making the Ventura River and its tributaries a restricted fishing area.”
