Butte Creek
DeSabra-Centerville Hydro Project - Decommission or Retool? Salmon Want to Know

Allen Harthorn
Friends of Butte Creek
Salmonid Restoration Federation
April 13-14, 2018 Fortuna
Upper West Branch
Feather River
Lower Butte Creek
DeSabra- Centerville Hydro Timeline

1906 Centerville PH operational
Butte Head Dam  2912 feet elevation
Butte Canal: Instream flow release gate
Centerville Head Dam 1150 feet elevation
Centerville Head Dam, Early 1900’s: Tailings of Butte Creek, 1972
Wooden Elevated Flume, Lower Centerville Canal: Tailings of Butte Creek 1972
Centerville Powerhouse 520 feet elevation
Centerville PH Update 2015
Powerhouse originally started in 1906

- Main Turbine offline since early 2010
- Repairs completed 2011
- Start-up attempted Feb. 2011
- Penstock pressure fluctuations indicate failing integrity
- Both units taken offline
- Project decommissioning in near future (hopefully)
On Saturday, January 16, 1909 the Oroville Daily Register ran the headline, “Philbrook Dam Out – Havoc on the West Branch.” The story that followed states that at 1 A.M. that morning, the dam failed releasing 90,000,000 cubic feet (2,066 acre-feet) of water into the West Branch. “The water came down in a solid mass, reaching ten feet above the highest level and carrying everything in the way with it.”
Hendricks Head Dam-West Branch Feather River
Restoration projects

- 1992 - increase flows above Centerville PH
- 1993 - remove McFerrin and McGowan and Point Four dams
- 1995 - new screen and ladder on Parrott/Phelan
- 1997 - remove 4 dams, eliminate 12 unscreened diversions, open up 25 miles of unimpeded flow
- 1998-2000 - new ladders and screens on Adams, Gorrill and Durham Mutual dams
- 1999 - Sanborn Slough, Drumheller Slough dams
- 2002 - Sutter Bypass East/West, and SB Weir #3 and #5
- 2003 - Butte Sink Weir upgrades, drain exclusions
- 2005 - date Sutter Bypass East and West upgrades; Willow Slough ladder, Weir #2 ladder and others
Tunnel Options

Four different tunnel options, 2 with Hydro, 2 water delivery only

Water Tunnels 2.5 & 3.5 miles

Legend
- Canal
- Tunnel

Google Earth

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Salmon Pool July 12, 2003
Salmon Pool August 12, 2003
Fish ladder/irrigation diversion
Parrott/Phelan Diversion
M&T Ranch, Llano Seco

Water Rights to half of the imported water
Butte Creek
Problems and Promise

Mostly promise, but problems will persist……..
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