



— BUREAU OF —  
RECLAMATION

## American River Group Notes

Conference Line: +1 (321) 209-6143; Access Code: 985 598 947#

Webinar: Join Microsoft Teams Meeting

Thursday, July 17, 2025

### Action Items

1. USBR and Kearns & West – Discuss potentially scheduling a make-up meeting for SDM Session #3 (for those who cannot attend on 7/30/2025).

### Introductions

1. USBR: Alex Vaisvil, Brian Mahardja, Drew Loney, Kevin Thielen, Mechele Pacheco, Myrna Giraldo-Perez, Randi Field, Ryan Lucas, Spencer Marshall
2. NMFS: Paula Higginson, Rachael Alcala
3. USFWS: Erika Holcombe,
4. CDFW: Crystal Rigby, Elaine Jeu, Emily Fisher, Erica Meyers, Gary Novak, Nick Bauer,
5. DWR: Mike Ford
6. SWRCB: Claudia Bucheli, Natalie Niepagen
7. California State Parks: N/A
8. EBMUD: I-Pei Hsiu
9. City of Sacramento: Anne Sanger,
10. Sacramento County: N/A
11. Environmental Council of Sacramento: N/A
12. City of Folsom: N/A
13. City of Roseville: Sean Bigley
14. Cramer Fish Sciences: Jamie Sweeney, Mollie Ogaz
15. PCWA: N/A
16. PSMFC: Hunter Morris, Logan Day
17. SMUD: Megan Peers

18. USACE: N/A
19. cbec Eco Engineering: Chris Hammersmark
20. Watercourse Engineering: Mike Deas
21. Water Forum: Erica Bishop
22. Water Districts: Greg Zlotnick, Paul Helliker
23. Regional Water Authority (RWA): N/A
24. Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians: N/A
25. CSUS: Dede Birch
26. Kleinschmidt Group: Vanessa Martinez
27. WAPA: Jeffrey Trow
28. BKS Law Firm: N/A
29. Sunzi Consulting: Yung-Hsin Sun
30. Other: Rod Hall

## **Announcements**

1. N/A

## **Housekeeping**

1. N/A

## **Fisheries Update**

### **CDFW Updates**

1. N/A

### **Cramer Fish Sciences (Cramer) Updates**

1. Dissolved Oxygen (DO)
  - a. A logger was installed in Lake Natoma just under Folsom Dam at the end of June. The data presented is through 7/14/2025.
    - i. All loggers are showing a downward trend in DO. Levels are at 7 mg/L but are decreasing.
    - ii. Upticks in DO levels are seen when the water is spilled.
    - iii. Cramer will continue to monitor the loggers.

- iv. Additional detailed information is available in the meeting handout.
- 2. Questions and Comments
  - b. N/A

#### PSMFC Updates

- 1. Rotary screw traps were removed the week of 6/23/2025.
- 2. PSMFC is working on their data analysis and report.
- 3. Questions and Comments
  - a. N/A

## Operations Forecast

#### SMUD

- 1. Storage is above average and is closely tracking last year's level.
- 2. Snow pack has completely melted.
- 3. Near-normal releases into the South Fork American River are expected for the summer months.
- 4. Additional detailed information is available in the meeting handout.
- 5. Questions and Comments
  - a. N/A

#### PCWA

No representatives from PCWA were able to attend. Please refer to the meeting handout for detailed information.

## Central Valley Operations

#### USBR

- 1. Precipitation at Blue Canyon is above the 15-year average.
- 2. The region above the Sacramento River Basin has received above-average precipitation for July.
- 3. Releases increased from June to July with the increased export capability within the Delta.
- 4. Folsom Dam releases were decreased to meet the end-of-year storage target of 300 TAF.

5. Folsom Dam storage is currently close to the 15-year average and is expected to reach its minimum level for the year in September.
6. One of the hydropower units has been out of service. This resulted in USBR conducting blending of water temperatures as well as changes in releases.
7. There was some spill conducted due to negative power pricing on 7/4/2025.
8. Watt Ave. hit a water temperature peak of 66.7°F on 7/11/2025. It is now back down to 63°F.
9. Air temperatures in the Central Valley are expected to be under 100°F in the short term.
10. Additional detailed information can be found in the meeting handout.
11. Questions and Comments
  - a. N/A

## Discussion

### Temperature Management Plan

1. A final Temperature Management Plan was released on 6/30/2025 and distributed to ARG members.

### Temperature Modeling Results for Folsom Lake and the LAR

1. Kleinschmidt Group presented the results from recent temperature modeling for Folsom Dam and the Lower American River with USBR's July Operations Forecast as a model input.
2. Scenarios were run using four different sets of meta data to portray a variety of meteorological conditions with the understanding that none of the datasets will exactly match the 2025 conditions.
3. Automated Temperature Selection Procedure (ATSP) Schedule 33:
  - a. A target of 67 from July through end of September; 65 for Oct; 59 for November
  - b. Most scenarios are able to meet the Watt Ave. temperature target during the summer months (July/August/September)
  - c. One scenario (2020 data) loses temperature control in October
  - d. The November target of 59 does not occur until the first or second week of November in all scenarios

- e. A target of 68°F in the summer months allows for meeting the October target of 65 and slightly decreases temperatures in November
- 4. June and July modeling were compared.
  - a. June modeling did not account for the current hydropower unit outage. This means that a higher proportion of cold water is being released than is necessary to meet the downstream target temperature.
  - b. Assumptions for shutter removal timelines were adjusted to better reflect how USBR has described their decision-making process for dam operations. Shutter removal was modeled for 7/25/2025.
  - c. All scenarios result in warmer October/November temperatures.
  - d. The 2020 scenario is unable to meet the temperature target.
  - e. According to the modeling, the only way to cool the water temperatures is incorporating a power bypass.
- 5. ATSP Schedules 33 and 38 were compared.
  - a. There is a very short-term temperature benefit in early November if conditions mirror that of 2021.
  - b. 2017 temperature scenarios showed no discernable benefit.
  - c. 2020 conditions show no significant exceedance of the temperature target in October.
- 6. All modeling runs were shown in the absence of a power bypass.
- 7. A sample buzz plot compared temperatures with dam shutter positions.
  - a. Modeling showed warmer November temperatures driven by the need to pull all shutters up across all scenarios earlier than they were previously pulled.
  - b. Kleinschmidt Group cautioned that this modeling may be showing a more conservative result than what will actually occur as far as cold-water usage.
- 8. Questions and Comments
  - a. CDFW asked about the 59°F target for early November. Where did that choice of temperature come from?
    - i. Kleinschmidt Group replied that 59°F is the official November temperature target in the ATSP Schedule 33.
    - ii. CDFW shared that their ideal temperature for adult Chinook salmon and eggs is 56°F. Sometimes they have to wait until

December for the temperature to drop enough for egg mortality to become a less serious issue.

1. Kleinschmidt Group added that unfortunately, a goal of 56°F in early November has not been achievable in recent years.

### **Structured Decision Making (SDM) for Power Bypass Planning**

1. Kearns & West provided a brief summary of the first two Power Bypass SDM Sessions and re-shared the project timeline.
  - a. The group has provided feedback on the draft problem statement for USBR to review, is in the process of developing fundamental objectives and associated performance metrics, and has agreed to use last year's modeled power bypass scenarios as a starting point for developing alternatives.
  - b. A draft meeting summary for Session 1 was distributed to the ARG the week of 7/14/2025. Additional discussion details may be found in that document.
  - c. The third virtual SDM session will be held on 7/30/25 from 1-3pm.
2. Questions and Comments
  - a. N/A

### **CVP Water Temperature Modeling Platform (WTMP) Update**

1. The CVP WTMP Team presented an update on the rollout of the WTMP. Details can be found in the presentation slides shared with the ARG.
2. Questions and Comments
  - a. CDFW asked for clarification on whether the ARG will be switching to ATSP Schedule 31 or staying with Schedule 33.
    - i. USBR indicated that there is no difference in the downstream target temperatures; the main differences between the two occurred before July. At this point in July, the 31/32/33 Schedules are all the same for the rest of the year.

## **Next Meetings**

1. The Power Bypass SDM Session #3 is scheduled for Wednesday, July 30, 1:00-3:00 p.m.
  - a. ARG members unable to attend are encouraged to alert Rafi Silberblatt, Kearns & West, so that a make-up session can be scheduled.

- i. CCAO noted that they are unable to attend on 7/30/2025. Kearns & West will coordinate with the SDM analysts to potentially schedule a make-up session.
- 2. The next regularly scheduled ARG meeting is on Thursday, August 21. The meeting will be virtual.
  - a. There will be another WTMP presentation at the August meeting.