



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Stanislaus Watershed Team

10 a.m.–12 p.m., Stanislaus Watershed Team Notes
<https://www.usbr.gov/mp/bdo/stanislaus-watershed-team.html>

Wednesday, May 18, 2022

1. New Actions
 - a. Erin Foresman – reach out to Peggy regarding the SWRCB’s interpretation of Footnote 12 in the TUCO
 - b. Barb Byrne and Gretchen Murphey – work with SacPas to generate fish monitoring charts with historical patterns to include in the monthly meeting packet
 - c. Melissa Vignau – provide an update on Proposed Action Elements for the June SWT meeting
2. Introductions
 - a. USBR: Luke Davis, Brad Hubbard, Suzanne Manugian, Peggy Manza, Lee Mao, Melissa Vignau, Spencer Marshall
 - b. NMFS: Katrina Poremba, Barb Byrne
 - c. USFWS: JD Wikert, Craig Anderson
 - d. CDFW: Gretchen Murphey, Crystal Rigby, Gabe Singer, Ryan Kok
 - e. SWRCB: Yongxuan Gao, Chris Carr Erin Foresman
 - f. SSJID:
 - g. OID:
 - h. Stockton East:
 - i. Central San Joaquin Water Conservation District:

- j. DWR: Vinh Giang, Matt Meyers
 - k. WAPA: Michael Prowatzke
 - l. FISHBIO:
 - m. PSMFC: Austin Galinat
 - n. Other:
 - o. Kearns & West: Karis Johnston, Mia Schiappi, Rafi Silberblatt
3. Announcements
- a. None.
4. Operations Update and Forecasts/Hydrology
- a. Daily Operation Report:
 - i. Stanislaus River releases out of Goodwin were 500 cfs on 5/16. Releases will increase to either 650 cfs or 700 cfs at the end of the month to meet Vernalis D-1641 flow requirements and for recreational purposes over Memorial Day.
 - ii. Based on the 90% exceedance forecast, the end-of-September storage in New Melones is projected to be 647 TAF. Based on the 50% exceedance forecast the end-of-September storage in New Melones is projected to be 622 TAF. Lower storage projections under the 50% exceedance are based on higher diversion allocations in the wetter hydrology. Current hydrology is trending towards the 90% exceedance.
 - iii. Flows throughout the summer will likely be ~300 cfs (rather than the 150 cfs minimum in the Stepped Release Plan Critical year schedule) to meet Ripon DO requirements.
 - b. New Melones:
 - i. Storage is currently approximately 900 TAF.
 - ii. Inflow to date is 443 TAF. Total water year inflow to New Melones is estimated to be between 520TAF to 575 TAF.
 - iii. Precipitation accumulated to date is 19.31 inches.
 - c. Tulloch:
 - i. USBR is releasing water based on downstream needs for release to the river and diversions.
 - d. Goodwin Reservoir:

- i. The joint main and the south main canal diversions were approximately 1,000 cfs in April.

Questions/Comments:

- CDFW asked how much water will be coming into the San Joaquin River from upstream of the Stanislaus confluence during the summer?
 - USBR responded that there will be little to no water coming into the San Joaquin River from upstream of the Stanislaus come June. There will likely only be 50 cfs to 100 cfs total from the Merced and Tuolumne rivers and no restoration flows.
- CDFW asked if there is a threshold reservoir elevation that is a cause for concern should next year also be dry?
 - USBR responded that there is not.
- SWRCB noted that Footnote 12 of D-1641 requires the 7-day average flow objective to be no less than 20% below the target flow objective.
 - USBR acknowledged that if that 7-day flow limit is incorporated into the TUCO then they will meet those requirements. If it is not in the TUCO they will operate with more flexibility and will meet the required flow on a monthly average.
 - SWRCB noted that the TUCO is silent on Footnote 12, and they will check in to see how silence should be interpreted in this situation.
 - USBR responded that they are currently interpreting silence to mean Footnote 12 is not applicable.
 - A NMFS representative to SWT noted that their personal assumption (not necessarily reflecting the agency position) is that if the TUCO does not explicitly approve a variation, then the operations are as originally stated; therefore, Footnote 12 would be considered in effect. There is concern that if operations are only focused on meeting the 710 cfs as a target, flows could get very low at Vernalis due to the pulse flow in the first half of May that contributes to the overall average monthly flow. This would then allow for flows to decrease during the latter half of May which would then have consequences for fish trying to move out of the system.

5. Water Temperature Updates

- a. NMFS provided an overview of Temperature Updates (see Figure 9).
- b. Water Temperature Updates

- i. Water temperatures are typical for spring, with nothing anomalous occurring. Thus far pulse flows have been buffering temperatures somewhat, but it is anticipated that temperatures will begin increasing now that flows have dropped.
 - ii. Egg incubation temperature threshold runs through the end of May. In mid-May objectives begin to focus on the 68° threshold for over-summering juvenile salmonids.
6. Flow Planning
 - a. The Stepped Release Plan has no flow features to shape until it is time for a fall pulse flow. Planning for the fall pulse flow will begin in either August or September.
7. Stanislaus River Forum (SRF) Call Review
 - a. The Caswell screw trap will begin lifting its cone during the weekends. Sampling will continue through the end of June, or until the temperature offramp for sampling is reached.
8. Fish Monitoring and Studies
 - a. One *O. mykiss* (<16") passed through the weir in the last month.
 - b. The green sturgeon that was identified on the Stanislaus River was moved below the weir. It was not tagged so its current location is unknown.
 - c. The steelhead redd survey did not observe any redds this year.
 - d. The Mossdale Trawl is currently running. One non-adipose fin-clipped Chinook was caught last week.

Questions/Comments:

USFWS asked CDFW about possibly making a graph or spreadsheet that would show comparisons of fish details from year to year?

- NMFS shared with the group the ability to run different chart requests on SacPas which may be a way to fulfill USFWS's request.
 - CDFW will coordinate with USFWS and NMFS offline

9. Restoration Project Updates

- a. Spawning and rearing habitat restoration
 - i. There was a site visit at Riverbank to possibly begin restoration.
- b. Temperature management study
 - i. No update

10. Progress Update on Proposed Action Elements

- a. USFWS requested that USBR provide the SWT with monthly status updates on the proposed action elements.

11. Other Discussion Items

a. Curtailments

- i. SWRCB updated the curtailment list, which can be found at the SWRCB curtailments website:
<https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought/delta/#tableau>

b. Annual reporting check-in

- i. The Final WY 2021 Annual Report was distributed on 2/16/2022.
- ii. Outlines are circulated in June and sections are then assigned. A draft is circulated in September and the final draft is usually complete at the end of the calendar year.

c. Items to elevate to WOMT

- i. There were no items to elevate to WOMT

12. Next Meeting

- a. Wednesday, June 16 2022 (10am-12pm)