

Objectives of Water Needs Assessment (Draft)

The following objectives are a starting point for focusing the instream flow needs assessment:

- Characterize/validate stream flow needs and priorities by river reach, organized consistent with reach framework established in RiverWare to support modeling;
- Identify opportunities to optimize existing operations;
- Focus on improving instream flows in average and wet water years (all seasons) (i.e. optimize the good years);
- For dry years, focus on improving winter and spring flow conditions, and characterize flow benefits in summer from improved out of stream supply provided;
- Try to mimic (or move closer to mimicking) the unregulated hydrograph whenever possible;
- Provide for additional flexibility within the system to manage flows and meet water supply needs;
- Identify ways to have more storage available earlier in the spring, to be used to help with outmigration;
- Characterize how proposed habitat improvements links to flow enhancements. Identify where flow improvements will provide side channel reconnection and characterize benefits.

In conducting scenario analysis,

- Use existing conditions as the baseline, without YRBWEP currently funded conservation projects;
- Identify water management projects from the draft IWRMP that provide the most benefits (describe where and when, and expected improvements);
- Verify whether water management projects are adequate to meet the Basin's needs (and for how long.);
- Consider 50% of supply for proratables as trigger for reservoir releases;
- Don't get lock into specific on blocks of water dedicated for instream flows. Build in flexibility;
- Assess expected flow variation/effects from climate change