

Restoration Administrator Flow Recommendation

To: Don Portz, Chad Moore, Emily Thomas
CC: Michael Jackson, Rufino Gonzalez, Doug Obegi, Steve Ottemoeller, Ian Buck-Macleod, TAC
Date: April 5, 2022
From: Tom Johnson, Restoration Administrator
Subject: Updated Recommendation for 2022 Restoration Flows

The following is a Restoration Flow Recommendation (Recommendation) by the Restoration Administrator (RA) for the 2022 Restoration Year Flows pursuant to the Restoration Flow Guidelines (RFG) Ver. 2.1, as amended, and Exhibit B of the Settlement.

Background

The SJRRP has issued a Restoration Allocation Update (Allocation) dated March 25, 2022, which designates 2022 as a **Normal-Dry** Water Year Type with an Unimpaired Inflow hybrid forecast of 1,109 thousand acre-feet (TAF) and provides an allocation of Restoration Flows of 237.451 TAF as measured at Gravelly Ford (GRF) based on the 75% exceedance forecast. The Allocation also specified certain contractual and operational constraints on Restoration Flow releases for 2022. In particular, the Allocation describes in general terms the operational constraints that will be placed on the river in anticipation of an Exchange Contractor “call” on Friant, which will necessitate releases of water from Friant Dam to meet contractual demands in Mendota Pool.

The SJRRP posted general parameters of the Exchange Contractor releases on the SJRRP web site on April 4th (see Attachment to this Recommendation). Exchange Contractor releases commenced on April 1 and are projected to use all of the capacity of the river channel up to seepage limits by April 10th (meaning that the river will have no capacity for Restoration Flows in addition to deliveries). Restoration flows may be able to resume sometime between mid-August and mid-October.

Given the huge uncertainty in the availability of river capacity for Restoration releases, this Recommendation makes several assumptions. This Recommendation provides discretion to SCCAO and Program staff to manage decreases in Restoration Flows in early April to match actual channel and seepage conditions. Further, it assumes resumption of Restoration Flows beginning in September, and resuming full Restoration Flows by mid- September. Finally, the Recommendation assumes that reservoir operations will support holding Restoration Flow volumes until the fall and winter to release after the Exchange Contractor deliveries are completed. If any aspect of this Recommendation does not pass a water supply test, a revised Recommendation will be developed. In addition, modifications to this Recommendation are likely after the next Allocation, due on or around April 20th, 2022.

Additional Considerations

As specified in the RFG’s, the current Allocation utilizes the 75% exceedance forecast to determine the Allocation volume. Due to the continued dry conditions, it is anticipated that the next Allocation

(anticipated on or around April 20th, 2022) will be lower at the 75% exceedance, but that Allocation will use the 50% exceedance, so an April allocation volume similar to this March allocation is likely.

Recommendation for Restoration Year 2022

At this time, I am recommending a flow schedule for the 2022 Restoration Year as shown in Table 1.

This Recommendation assumes resumption of Restoration Flows in September, and resumption of full Restoration Flows by mid-September with a target of 275 cfs below Sack Dam.

Table 1. Summary of Restoration Flow Recommendations for April 1, 2022, through February 28, 2023.

<i>Date Range</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>				
April 1 –April 8 (approx.), 2022	Restoration Flows as of March 31, 2022 are scheduled at 425 cfs (430 cfs total flow) at GRF. As releases for the Exchange Contractor delivery increase, SCCAO operators and Program staff have discretion to ramp down Restoration Flows as needed to 100 cfs. When Restoration Flows reach 100 cfs at GRF, Restoration Flows cease.				
April 9 (approx.) – August 31 (approx..)	No Restoration Flows due to lack of channel capacity				
Sept 1 – Sept 15 (approx.)	When channel capacity in Reach 2A reaches 100 cfs, commence Restoration Flows and reconnect the river downstream of Sack Dam, and increase Restoration Flows as channel capacity comes available to the levels specified below.				
<i>Date Range</i>	<i>Friant Release</i>	<i>Buffer Flow Release</i>	<i>Restoration Flows at Gravelly Ford</i>	<i>Total Flow at Gravelly Ford*</i>	<i>Target Flow at Sack Dam (est.)**</i>
September 16 – September 30	As necessary	0 cfs	385 cfs	390 cfs	275 cfs
October 1 – November 30, 2022	As necessary	0 cfs	385 cfs	390 cfs	275 cfs
December 1, 2022 – December 31, 2022	As necessary	0 cfs	385 cfs	390 cfs	275 cfs
January 1, 2023 – February 28, 2023	As necessary	0 cfs	385 cfs	390 cfs	275 cfs

****Total Flow includes the minimum Holding Contract flows of 5 cfs required at Gravelly Ford***

*****Target Flow at Sack Dam uses assumed channel loss rates***

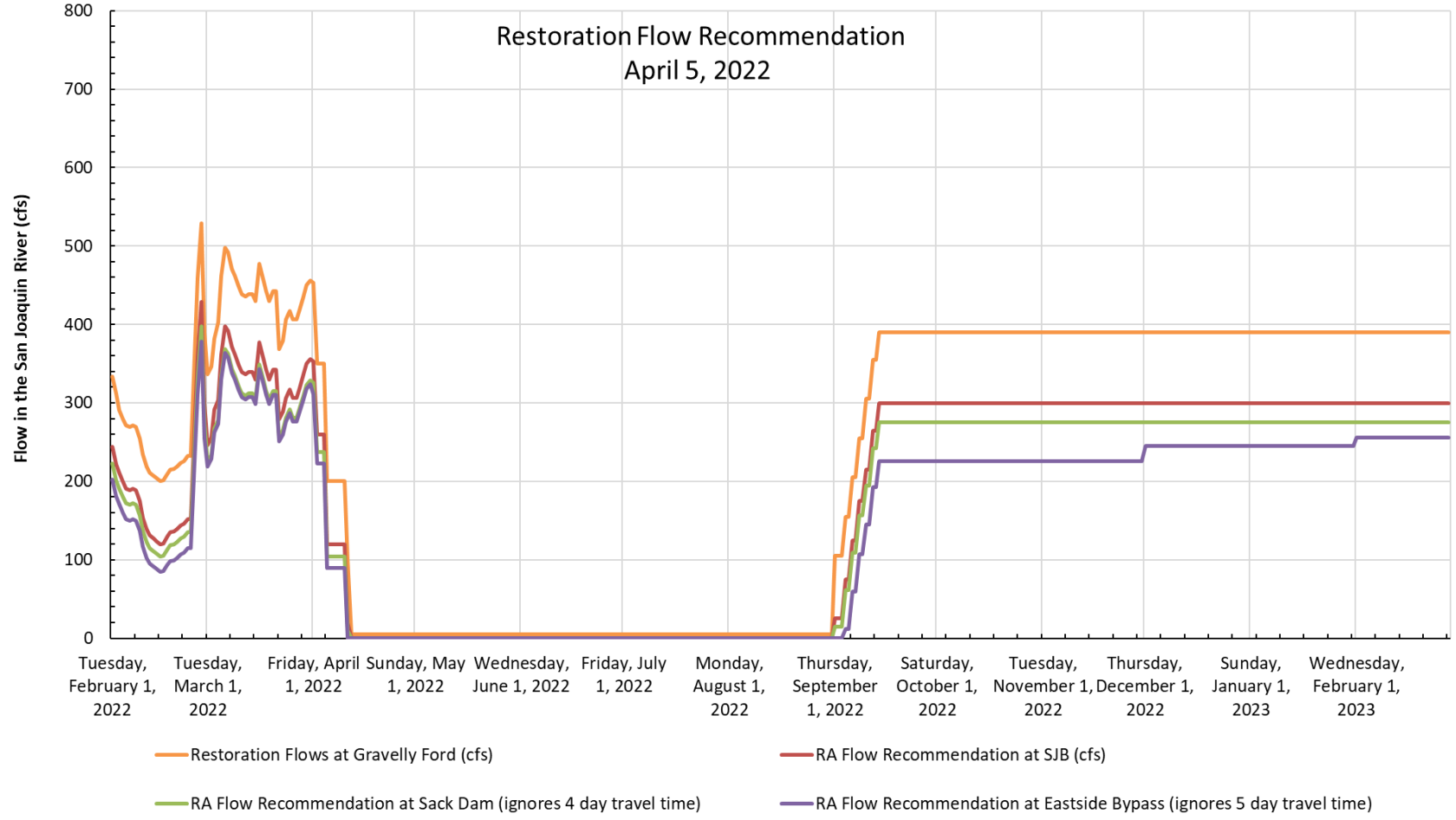
Depending on the actual date of resumption of Restoration Flows, this Recommendation will produce at least 60 TAF of URF’s, and may ultimately produce between 60 and 80 TAF of URF’s depending on Exchange Contractor releases, river capacity and subsequent Allocations.

50 TAF of URF's are released immediately for sale. All additional URF's are held for potential exchange until the next Allocation is issued, when there is expected to be additional certainty in how Millerton Reservoir, upstream releases from SCE and PG&E, and Exchange Contractor releases will be coordinated.

Additional Consultation

I will continue to coordinate with the TAC, Program Office, and Implementing Agencies to monitor hydrologic conditions, fish population conditions, uncontrolled season releases, operational conditions, and other factors, and will update the Restoration Flow Recommendation as conditions change.

Restoration Flow Recommendation April 5, 2022



GRAVELLY FORD FLOWS AVAILABLE VERSUS RA RECOMMENDATION				
		Available	Used	Balance
Total GRF River Flow Target without 5 cfs (March 1, 2021 - Feb 28, 2022):		258.653 TAF	171.013 TAF	87.640 TAF
Allocation Flow		237.451 TAF	168.490 TAF	68.961 TAF
Exchange Flow		3.500 TAF	3.499 TAF	0.001 TAF
Buffer Flows		17.702 TAF	0.000 TAF	17.702 TAF



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RESTORATION FLOWS TO BE REDUCED AND HALTED

On April 1, Reclamation will start deliveries to the San Joaquin River Exchange Contractors from Friant Dam. Normally, Exchange Contractor water supply is met from north-of-Delta water delivered through the Delta-Mendota Canal. However, because this is a "Shasta Critical" water year, Exchange Contractors are scheduled to receive 75% of their normal allocation, a total of 650 thousand acre-feet. While some of this supply is being met through normal means, the remainder is being met with supplies from Millerton Lake and released through Friant Dam to the San Joaquin River.

The San Joaquin River Restoration Program (SJRRP) Seepage Management Plan establishes groundwater thresholds to address any material adverse impacts from groundwater seepage as a result of Restoration Flows. While Restoration Flows are constrained to these seepage limitations, other releases, such as the deliveries to the Exchange Contractors, are not. SJRRP anticipates that Friant Dam releases for the Exchange Contract will utilize most or all of the available capacity to operate. Therefore, SJRRP will cede available capacity in the river dynamically based on groundwater conditions.

San Joaquin River releases from Friant Dam will range between 700 cfs and 2000 cfs from April until August or September. Any releases above approximately 800 cfs will not include Restoration Flows (expected in mid-April). Exchange Contractor deliveries will be diverted at Mendota Dam and Sack Dam, with no Restoration Flows planned for release below Sack Dam for the remainder of the summer. This will result in the river being disconnected from below Sack Dam to the confluence with the Merced River. Once Exchange Contractor deliveries via the San Joaquin River diminish and there is capacity for Restoration Flows, the Restoration Administrator will schedule the resumption of Restoration Flows and reconnection of the San Joaquin River.

The public is strongly encouraged to monitor flow conditions if recreating on or near the San Joaquin River. Flows of this planned magnitude have not been seen since 2019 and currents will be strong.

The Restoration Flow schedule will be amended in the coming days and is presented in general terms below for public notification:

Date	Friant Dam Releases	Restoration Flows at Gravelly Ford	Exchange Contractor Flows reaching Mendota Pool
March 1 – March 31	Approximately 700 cfs	420 cfs	0 cfs

April 1 – April 30	700 cfs increasing to approximately 1000 cfs	425 cfs declining to 0 cfs	0 cfs increasing to approximately 700 cfs
May 1 – August 15	1000 cfs varying to approximately 2000 cfs	Likely 0 cfs	700 cfs varying to approximately 1200 cfs
August 16 – September 30	Decreasing to approximately 700 cfs	Variable	Variable, decreasing to 0 cfs
October 1 – February 28, 2023	Approximately 450 to 700 cfs	Likely 200 cfs to 420 cfs	0 cfs

Any questions regarding the Exchange Contractor releases from Friant should be directed to the California Great-Basin Public Affairs Officer, Mary Lee Knecht, at 916-978-5101 or via email at mknecht@usbr.gov.

For Information about Restoration Flows, please visit <http://www.restoresjr.net/restoration-goal/restoration-flows/>.

For the Restoration Administrator recommendations, please visit <http://www.restoresjr.net/documentsreports/ra-recommendations/>

For additional information about the San Joaquin River Restoration Program, please visit <http://www.restoresjr.net> or contact Josh Newcom, Public Affairs Specialist, at 916-978-5508 or snewcom@usbr.gov.

[Restoration Flows resume after dry summer](#)

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