



Meeting Notes

Water Management Goal Technical Feedback Meeting

Wednesday, January 28, 2026

Silver Legacy, Silver Baron Room E, Reno, Nevada. 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm.
Microsoft Teams

Attendees

Regina Bricka, Reclamation
Ian Buck-Macleod, FWA
Christian Buenrostro, Reclamation
Kiti Campbell, WWD
Steve Chedester, SJRECWA
Adam Claes, FID
Katie Duncan, FWA
Rain Emerson, Reclamation
Mike George, LSID
Rufino Gonzalez, Reclamation
Skye Grass, KTWD
Kelly Hampton, DEID
Annie Holt, FWA
Anusha Kashyap, CDM Smith
Nick Keller, HVID, LCWD, TVWD
Gene Kilgore, EID, IID

Kris Lawrence, KTWD
Eric Limas, LTRID, Pixley ID, TPDWD
Chad Moore, Reclamation
Chris Park, CDM Smith
Evan Perez, Stantec
Don Portz, Reclamation
Eric Quinley, DEID
Sam Schaefer, GEI
Scott Spitzer, AEWSD
Bill Stretch, FID
Mark Tompkins, FlowWest
Craig Wallace, LSID

Online

Jon Ambrose, NMFS
Chris Ellyn Austin, Mavens Notebook
Lauren Bernadett, Trout Unlimited
Sam Blue, AEWSD
Annie Booth, River Partners
Towns Burgess, Reclamation
Katarina Campbell, WWD
Marco Crenshaw, TID
Joel Crowther, Land IQ
Sam Cunningham, Provost and Pritchard
Patrick Ferguson, CDFW
Hillary Glenn, NMFS
Joe Gonzalez, Friant Power
Rick Iger, Provost and Pritchard

Tom Johnson, RA
Erika Kegel, Reclamation
Dana Lee, FishBio
Bill Luce, Luce Consulting
Scott McBain, Applied River Sciences
Steve Ottemoeller, FWA
Greg Reis, FOR
Alan Rosenthal, WWD
Andy Shriver, CDFW
Becky Victorine, Reclamation
Chris White, SJRECWA
Jeremy Yager, SCE

Note: Attendance list may be incomplete.

Introductions

Regina Bricka opened the meeting, welcomed attendees, and provided an overview of the agenda. The in-person attendees provided brief introductions.

State of the Program

Regina presented a brief overview of the Restoration and Water Management Goals, and an update of specific Restoration Goal activities and accomplishments. Channel capacity improvements in 2025 included obtaining a Reach 3 seepage easement allowing for increased Restoration Flows. The 2026 Channel Capacity Report has been updated for 2026 and is available on the SJRRP Website here: [Channel Capacity - San Joaquin River Restoration Program](#). Construction broke ground on the Arroyo Canal Fish Screen & Sack Dam Fish Passage Facility that is designed for up to 4,500 cfs capacity. Reintroduction of Spring-run began with hatchery releases in 2014, with first evidence (i.e. DNA) of return in 2017, and the first captured in 2019. There has been return of adult Spring-run every year since 2019. A record high of 448 Spring-run returned to the Restoration Area in 2025, peaking in mid-May. It was noted that some were returning to other tributaries to the San Joaquin River. The Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Improvements Project is being developed in multiple phases (Phase 1A, Phase 1B, and Phase 2). Phase 1A, the Mendota Pool Bypass, is progressing toward the 90 percent design milestone, with construction estimated to begin in 2028. Phase 1B, Columbia Canal Company Mendota Pool connection, is at a 30 percent design level and is planned to be released as a design build contract with award in the summer of 2026, with construction beginning in 2028. Phase 2 includes the reverse flow facility, Mendota Pool Control Structure, Mendota Pool Fish Screen, and the south wing dam. The 90 percent designs are anticipated in spring of 2026. Regina shared before, after, and current photos of the Arroyo Canal Fish Screen and Sack Dam Fish Passage Facility. Construction is in progress and activities to-date include: clearing and grubbing completed on both side of river; initial cofferdam installation complete; settling ponds on neighboring property; dewatering wells installed; test piles performed; final cylindrical piles being delivered; and excavation of the river bypass channel started the week of January 26th (to 108ft, ultimately going to 101.5ft). PG&E gas line to be relocated this summer (est. July 1). Regina reported that with the activities so far, Reclamation was ahead of the anticipated construction schedule.

Water Management Activities

2025 Accomplishments

Regina shared that the channel capacity was improved to 900 cfs in Reach 3, which includes shared use with deliveries to the Arroyo Canal. In September 2025 the EA/FONSI was completed for the Friant-Kern Canal Pump-Back Project was complete, and a modification was completed to extend the contract that supported that environmental compliance and also funds construction and installation of two seasonal pump-back facilities for the FK. Delta recapture of Restoration Flows was implemented in 2025, and the annual temporary permit to recapture in the Lower San Joaquin River was renewed. A report of Historic Natural River Data was completed, and development of data visualization for flows with SacPAS are in development.

Restoration Year 2025 Operations Wrap-Up

Erika Kegel provided an update on the 2025 Restoration Year Operations. The year ended as a Normal-Dry year type, the May forecast for full natural runoff was about 65 thousand acre-feet (TAF) which resulted in a final allocation about 8.6 TAF higher than perfect hindsight. There was an 80-day period where no Restoration Flows were released to conserve the Millerton cold water pool. In total, about 182 TAF of Restoration Flows are expected to be released in 2025 Restoration Year, with a total of about 88 TAF of Unreleased Restoration Flows (URFs). Estimate a total increase of about 195 TAF in the Recovered Water Account balance. Erika shared a figure of the annual accrued impact and offsets.

Recapture

Erika provided a summary of recapture activities that occurred over the 2025 Restoration Year. The spring Restoration Flows released was the highest to-date of the SJRRP. About 20 TAF to-date was recaptured in the Lower San Joaquin River, and about 12 TAF was recaptured in the Delta. Erika explained that recapture in the Delta is a post-hoc accounting and procedures thus far have only been developed during OMR restricted conditions. This accounting process is a recoloring of permitted exports, not a direct increase in pumping. Ian Buck-Macleod from Friant Water Authority expressed gratitude for the work to get Delta recapture in place for 2025 and would like to see it expand to occur not just under certain OMR conditions. The next steps for recapture include continuing to develop the protocols for other Delta limiting conditions, as well as complete prerequisite plans for the use of the Joint Points of Diversion. For Lower San Joaquin Recapture there is work needed to address Paragraph 16(a)(1) with the Settling Parties to be able to move forward with a long-term plan. There is also the need for continued coordination with the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes development and how this affects recapture.

Water Rights

Erika provided a brief update on ongoing work related to water rights by SJRRP. There are efforts to improve accounting and tracking of Restoration Flows and Reclamation's Friant water rights as part of the temporary recapture permit. There are updates to California water measurement and reporting regulations that are expected to take effect in the 2027 water year. There is also ongoing coordination on updates to the Bay-Delta Plan implementation and the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program.

Healthy Rivers & Landscapes (HRL)

Ian provided an update on the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program, including the overall agreement to reduce recapture by up to 50% and up to 50 TAF between February and May to improve Delta Outflow. There have been ongoing discussions with the State Board about the accounting procedures for this commitment. There is a remaining challenge of how to operationalize while balancing water rights orders, Settlement Act prohibitions against affecting other CVP contractors, and the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes program.

Historic Natural River Data Report

Chad described the development of a report on Historic Natural River Data to document research and compilation of all available Natural River data for Friant/Friant Dam. The report includes the clean up of

daily data back to 1944 and monthly data back to 1873. The report describes how data was collected and how collection has changed over time, as well as identifying errors in CDEC databases. This report is expected to be helpful for hydrological research and water rights. The report is currently going through peer review. Chad also shared some high-level findings that show there is a long-term decline in the fraction of runoff in the period of April – July, as well as a shift in the timing of the runoff to earlier in the year with a trend of 1 day per decade change.

SacPAS Data Visualization

Chad shared an update on the development of the SacPAS data visualization efforts. This is a collaborative effort with the University of Washington Columbia Basin Research. This effort started focused on the Sacramento River for the Prediction and Assessment of Salmon and is now being expanded to the Central Valley fisheries and general water data. A SJRRP page is being developed which allows a wide audience to access Restoration Flow data. There are some overview and data visualizations that are already live. The SJRRP is planning to have a live demo soon.

2026 Operations

Forecasting

Chad provided an update on forecasting efforts for the SJRRP in 2026. Including efforts to revise the method for blending forecasts for 2026 water year and communicating a wider range of probability exceedances from 98th percentile to 2nd percentile. Chad mentioned that 2026 forecasting could pose challenges with more precipitation coming as rain compared to snow so far in 2026. There is also continued support of Friant Water Authority “SNOFO” grant from Reclamation including additional ASO surveys, historical snowpack reanalysis, and new snow water equivalent prediction tool development.

Restoration Allocation

Chad shared the Initial Restoration Allocation was issued on January 16th showing a Normal-Wet year type based on a projected 1,606 TAF of runoff with a 305 TAF Restoration Allocation. The next update to the Restoration Allocation is planned for February 13th and with continued dry conditions will likely drop to Normal-Dry year type. The next allocation will include information from an ASO survey, DWR snow course measurements, and Bulletin 120 runoff forecasts. The April allocation will be used by the SJRRP to set the price of Tier 2 URFs, if available. The final allocation would be issued in May unless there is a chance for Critical Year type, in which case final allocation would be in June.

Unreleased Restoration Flows

Chad shared that during a Normal-Wet or Wet year type to expect URF sales, but during a Normal-Dry URFs will be dependent on Sack Dam construction and the flows that are able to pass. Chad also shared the pricing of Tier 1 URFs at \$25 per acre-foot, and variable scale for Tier 2 depending on unimpaired runoff. There are also 7 districts that have not yet signed the 2023 – 2027 URF master agreement, and these districts will not be able to access URFs until executed agreements are signed.

Channel Capacity

Regina presented a projected timeline for channel capacity estimates. The Arroyo Project construction is technically the current flow constraint as the priority is to not release flows at a rate such that it would cause delays to construction; however, the current phase of construction work is not limiting and Restoration Flows are planned to be released up to seepage limitations for spring 2026. Beyond the Arroyo Project, seepage and future construction projects are anticipated to again become limiting factors for channel capacity.

WMG Priorities for 2026

Regina shared the WMG priorities for 2026 will be operations (including monitoring support), recapture activities, and progress on water rights (including the ongoing coordination with Healthy Rivers and Landscapes). There was some discussion regarding the 2026 operations, and it was noted that cold water pool in Millerton will likely be a challenge in 2026 due to the very unusual rain snow mix.

Adjourn