

Fish and Water Operations Group Notes

Water Year 2026 – April 29th, 2026

Members Attending

- Reclamation – Randi Field, ~~Levi Johnson~~
- DWR – Tracy Hinojosa, Bryant Giorgi
- USFWS – Matt Nobriga, ~~Leif Goude~~
- NMFS – Darren Howe
- CDFW – ~~Kristal Davis-Fadtke~~
- SWRCB – Matthew Holland, Diane Riddle
- NGO – ~~Ashley Overhouse~~, Devon Pearse
- NOD PWA – Thaddeus Bettner, ~~Jeff Sutton~~
- SOD PWA - Scott Petersen, ~~Deanna Sereno~~
- State PWA - Chandra Chilmakuri

Topics/Actions

Approval of Meeting Notes from last week: Approved

Upcoming Meetings

Delta Action Team (DAT, meets weekly on Tuesdays): 04/28/2026

Drought Response Year (DRY) Team:

American River Group (ARG meets monthly on third Thursday, and as needed):

Clear Creek Technical Team (CCT meets quarterly on third Thursday):

Sacramento River Group (SRG) (meets monthly on the fourth Thursday or more often as needed): 04/30/2026

Stanislaus Watershed Team (SWT meets monthly on third Wednesday): met on 04/15/2026

Annual Report Team

Shasta Operations Team (SHOT): met on 04/13/2026

Relevant Assessments

- 20260427 Combined Salmon and Smelt Assessment

- 20260427 Fish and Water Operations Outlook

Operational Updates

- CVP: Lewiston Dam releases varying between 1,600 cfs to 1,850 cfs (Trinity ROD flows). Whiskeytown Dam releases at 225 cfs. Keswick Dam releases at 6,000 cfs. Nimbus Dam releases at 4,500 cfs (storage management; decrease on 4/30 to 4,000 cfs, decrease to 3,500 cfs to 5/1, and decrease on 5/2 to 3,000 cfs). Goodwin Dam releases varying between 750 cfs to 1,250 cfs (Stepped Release Plan Spring Pulse through early May). Jones Pumping Plant exporting between 900 cfs to 2,700 cfs (D1641, 4/13 to 5/13). Federal share of San Luis Reservoir is 779 TAF. Delta Cross Channel is closed (closed on 10/30/25).
- SWP: Feather River (Oroville-Thermalito Complex) releases at 2,100 cfs (200 cfs reductions daily until 1,050 cfs). Clifton Court Forebay allotment is 1,000 cfs (D1641; expected maintenance activities between May 4th through May 8th with Banks offline over the period). State share of San Luis Reservoir is 962 TAF.
- Hydrology: Continued elevated inflows from previous storm event. Inflows dimming and no additional rain in the forecast.

Upcoming Actions, Updates or Discussion Items

- Reclamation:
 - No upcoming actions or updates.
 - Discussion: Sacramento River Spring Pulse Coordination
 - Discussion: Temperature Management Plan
- DWR:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- USFWS:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- NMFS:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- CDFW:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- SWRCB:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- NGO:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.

- NOD PWA:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- SOD PWA:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- State PWA:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.

Discussion Items

- Discussion: Sacramento River Spring Pulse Coordination

Reclamation appreciates SRG coordination for the discussion and range of participants involved through the Governance process. The previous pulse flow released 50 TAF for the benefit of spring-run Chinook salmon and juveniles.

As of April 28th, Reclamation is not looking to release an additional spring pulse this year. The decision was made due to the End-of-September (EOS) Shasta storage, cold water pool volume, and end of season temperature performance concerns and uncertainties. Reclamation will continue to follow-up based on feedback and discussions in the coming months to better plan pulses in the future.

NGO noted that the early April pulse was targeted to be about 35 TAF and not 50 TAF. In conjunction with the pulse, a small system occurred during that week as well. What kind of processes in the future, like the SRG, would help future planning of pulses in this process?

Reclamation noted the volume of water was accounted from an end to end of the action. The 35 TAF was estimated beforehand; several days of ramp up and ramp down were included in the actual expenditure of volume. The timing did occur with a storm event that might have impacted species, possibly a benefit. For future processes, the Bay-Delta office can set further direction with setting up communication within the requirements of Action 5.

NMFS would like more information on the factors that influenced the decision and that more details might be helpful for participants to understand not having a second pulse this year.

Reclamation based the decision on the projected Shasta EOS storage, currently storage is tight in operations and Reclamation is looking forward to building Shasta storage condition in the Bin 2 category with efforts to improve or to maintain. Additionally, the cold water pool volume – water 48 degrees or cooler is in a volume that is concerning and mirroring a drought year condition which limits flexibility of the system. Currently modeling indicates early use of the side gate. The challenge is once cold water pool volume is exhausted, there are less options at that point to manage downstream temperature. Reclamation is balancing all three of those points and looking at the system as a whole in making this decision for the next five months of temperature management.

- Discussion: Temperature Management Plan

The SRG received the draft Temperature Management Plan (TMP) this afternoon and plan to discuss details at tomorrow's ad hoc SRG meeting. Reclamation anticipates having the final TMP in May. The TMP will discuss expected downstream temperatures and temperature dependent mortality runs.

The American draft TMP is expected to be distributed in early May, with a final available in mid-June identified under Action 5.

Action Items

- No Action Items.

Elevation Items

- No Elevation Items.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, May 6th, 2026, 2-2:50 p.m.