



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Weekly Assessment of CVP and SWP Delta Operations

December 15, 2025

Executive Summary

- Entrainment management season has not begun.
- No salvage of salmonids has occurred in WY 2026, but winter-run Chinook salmon are abundantly rearing in the Delta.
- Delta Cross Channel gates will remain closed for fishery protection unless opening is warranted per D-1641 criteria.

Operational and Regulatory Conditions

For more information see Weekly Fish and Water Operation Outlook document for December 16 - 22.

Biology, Distribution and Evaluation of Winter run Chinook salmon

Table 1. Average percent presence by October 19 with 95% confidence intervals of annual emigrating population of juvenile Winter-run Chinook salmon. From: [WY2026 Current Conditions for the Salmon Monitoring Team SaMT: SacPAS Sacramento Prediction and Assessment of Salmon and other fishes](#). Last updated 12/15/2025

Species	Red Bluff Diversion Dam	Tisdale RST	Knights Landing RST	Sac Trawl (Sherwood) Catch Index	Chippis Island Trawl Catch Index	Salvage
Chinook, LAD Winter-run, Unclipped	95% (93%,97% BY: 2014 - 2024	43% (20%,66%) BY: 2014 - 2024	49% (25%,72%) BY: 2014 - 2024	31% (6%,56%) BY: 2014 - 2024	1% (-1%,4%) BY: 2014 - 2024	0% (0%,1%) WY: 2016 - 2025

As of December 9, an estimated 2.7 million LAD winter-run fry have passed Red Bluff Diversion Dam (this estimate does not include spring-run size fish that may be true genetic winter-run based on timing). Decreasing catch at RBDD indicates that most winter-run have migrated downstream (Figure 1). Sacramento Valley flow and temperature conditions support juvenile Chinook salmon migration. Mill and Deer creek flows exceeded 95 cfs but has been steady over the past week. Wilkins Slough flow has continued to decrease to below 7500 cfs in the past week.

Survival, Travel Time, and Routing Simulation (STARS) predicts low overall survival (0.26), interior routing (0.13), and interior delta survival (0.07). Delta entry RSTs, Tisdale and Knights Landing, have captured 5 LAD winter-run since December 1. High catch continues during seining surveys with 58 LAD winter-run being captured since December 1, indicating continued rearing of young-of-year winter-run in the Delta (Figure 2).

**Red Bluff Unmarked (not mark-corrected) Juvenile Passage Estimates
BY2025 Winter Chinook
2025-07-01 to 2025-12-09**

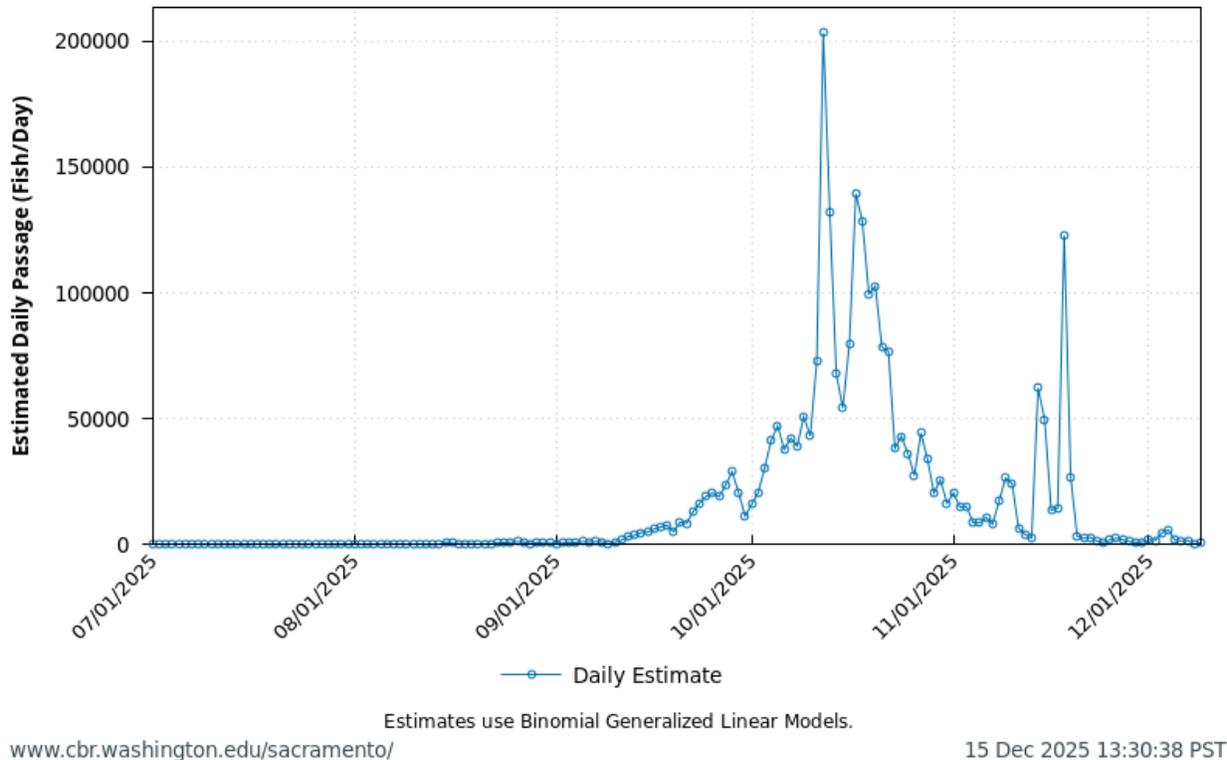


Figure 1. Length-at-date winter-run daily passage estimates at Red Bluff Diversion Dam as of December 15.

Figure 1 is a line graph showing Red Bluff unmarked (not mark-corrected) Juvenile Passage Estimates for BY2025 Winter Chinook. The y-axis shows estimated daily passage in fish per day. The x-axis shows dates from 7/1/2025 through 12/15/2025. Estimated daily passage remains at or near zero fish per day from early July through late August, with a gradual increase beginning in early to mid-September. Daily passage rises to approximately 30,000 fish per day by late September, followed by short-term fluctuations in early October. In mid-October, estimated daily passage increases sharply, with several pronounced peaks, including a maximum exceeding 200,000 fish per day. Following this peak, passage declines to roughly 50,000 fish per day and then rises again briefly to over 100,000 fish per day before decreasing steadily through late October. During November, estimated daily passage generally declines toward low levels, with intermittent spikes in mid-November reaching approximately 120,000 fish per day. By late November and into early December, estimated daily passage returns to near-zero levels.

No loss of natural-origin winter-run Chinook Salmon has occurred in the past week at the State or Federal fish salvage facilities. While STARs predicts low survival and low probability of routing into the interior delta, the increased abundance of winter-

run Chinook in the Delta indicate that salvage may be possible over the next week. However, an OMR more positive than -5000 decreases South Delta entrainment towards the salvage facilities.

See WY 2026 current conditions for the Salmon Monitoring Team: [WY2026 Current Conditions for the Salmon Monitoring Team SaMT: SacPAS Sacramento Prediction and Assessment of Salmon and other fishes](#) for additional historical and current monitoring data.

Evaluation

1. After January 1, has the first winter-run Chinook salvage occurred?
 - a. These criteria for the start of entrainment management for winter-run Chinook salmon have not occurred.