Restoration Administrator Flow Recommendation

To: Don Portz, Chad Moore, Regina Story

cc: Rain Emerson, Rufino Gonzalez, Pedro Valverde, Gary Bobker, Steve Ottemoeller, Ian Buck-Macleod, TAC, FWC

Date: June 6, 2025

From: Tom Johnson, Restoration Administrator

Subject: Updated Recommendation for 2025 Restoration Flows

The following is a Restoration Flow Recommendation (Recommendation) by the Restoration Administrator (RA) for the 2025 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 Final 2025 Restoration Allocation (Allocation) dated May 18, 2025, which designates 2025 as a **Normal-Dry** Water Year Type with an Unimpaired Inflow hybrid forecast of 1,346 thousand acre-feet (TAF) and provides an allocation of Restoration Flows of 269.355 TAF as measured at Gravelly Ford (GRF) based on the 50% exceedance forecast. The Allocation also specified certain contractual and operational constraints on Restoration Flow releases for 2025.

The April 28, 2025, Recommendation was provisionally approved by Reclamation, and it appears that Millerton Reservoir management strategies will continue to maintain the reservoir in a controlled state (e.g. no Uncontrolled Season required to manage reservoir volume).

Since April, 448 Spring-Run Chinook salmon returned to the lower reaches of the Restoration Area and were captured in Program fyke nets. 394 of the salmon were successfully transferred to Reach 1 of the Restoration Area, by far the largest observed return. As a result of this large return and the opportunity for observing reproductive success this fall, an emphasis will be placed on preserving cold water pool in Millerton Reservoir through the summer.

Recommendation for the 2025 Restoration Year

At this time, I am recommending a flow schedule for the 2025 Restoration Year as shown in Table 1, and as follows:

1. Reduce Restoration Flows from mid-June through August to preserve cold-water pool in Millerton Reservoir to support adult spring-run Chinook salmon holding, spawning, and egg incubation. Reservoir modeling has demonstrated that this reduction will result in substantially more cold water remaining for release in September, October and November.
2. Restoration Flows are resumed in September; however, depending on forthcoming temperature measurements in the reservoir, low flows may be extended.
3. No exchanges or buffer flows are called upon at this time.

No Restoration Flow recapture other than de-minimus amounts are planned in the Restoration Area. All Restoration Flow releases are to flow through the entirety of the Restoration Area. If there are operational or other constraints that preclude Restoration Flows traveling the entire length of the Restoration Area, the Restoration Recommendation will be adjusted to reduce Restoration Flow releases to the level of the controlling operational constraint.

I have consulted with the TAC and the FMWG on this Recommendation, and this Recommendation reflects the best use of the Allocation of Restoration Flows for the fisheries resources at this time.

Table 1. Summary of Restoration Flow Recommendations for June 6, 2025, through February 28, 2026.

Restoration Flow Period	Date Range	Objective	Friant Release (est., varies due to Holding Contracts)	Restoration Flows at Gravelly Ford	Total Flow at Gravelly Ford[1]	Target Restoration Flow at Sack Dam (est.)
Summer Flow at Exhibit B Flow	Through June 10, 2025	Exhibit B Flow	As Occurs, est. at 375 cfs	Settling at 160 cfs	Settling at 165 cfs	70 cfs
Flow Reduction	June 11. 2025	Starting June 11, reduce Friant Dam by 160 cfs as practical (one or multiple step reduction)				
Summer Low Flow	Through August 31, 2025	Preserve Cold Pool	As Occurs	Settling at 0 cfs	Settling at 5 cfs	0 cfs
September Exhibit B Flow	September 1 – September 30, 2025	Exhibit B Flow + 50 cfs Fall Pulse	As Occurs	Settling at 190 cfs	Settling at 195 cfs	100 cfs, once river reconnects
Base Flow[2]	October 1–15, 2025	Spring run spawning and egg incubation	As necessary, est. 400 cfs	190 cfs	195 cfs	100 cfs
	October 16–31, 2025	Spring run spawning and egg incubation	As necessary, est. 440 cfs	230 cfs	235 cfs	140 cfs
Base Flow[2]	November 1–30, 2025	Connected river, spring run egg incubation.	As necessary, est. 440 cfs	250 cfs	255 cfs	160 cfs
	December 1–31, 2025	Connected river, juvenile rearing	As necessary, est. 440 cfs	255 cfs	250 cfs	160 cfs
Base Flow	January 1– February 28, 2026	Connected river, juvenile rearing	As necessary, est. 400 – 410 cfs	250 cfs	255 cfs	157 cfs

[1] Total Flow includes the minimum Holding Contract flows of 5 cfs required at Gravelly Ford
[2] Fall Pulse Flow may be added during this period

Additional Elements of this Recommendation

This Recommendation anticipates the release of approximately 185 TAF of Restoration Flows to the river, leaving approximately 40.6 TAF of Unreleased Restoration Flows (URFs). **40.6 TAF of URF's are released for disposition by Reclamation.**

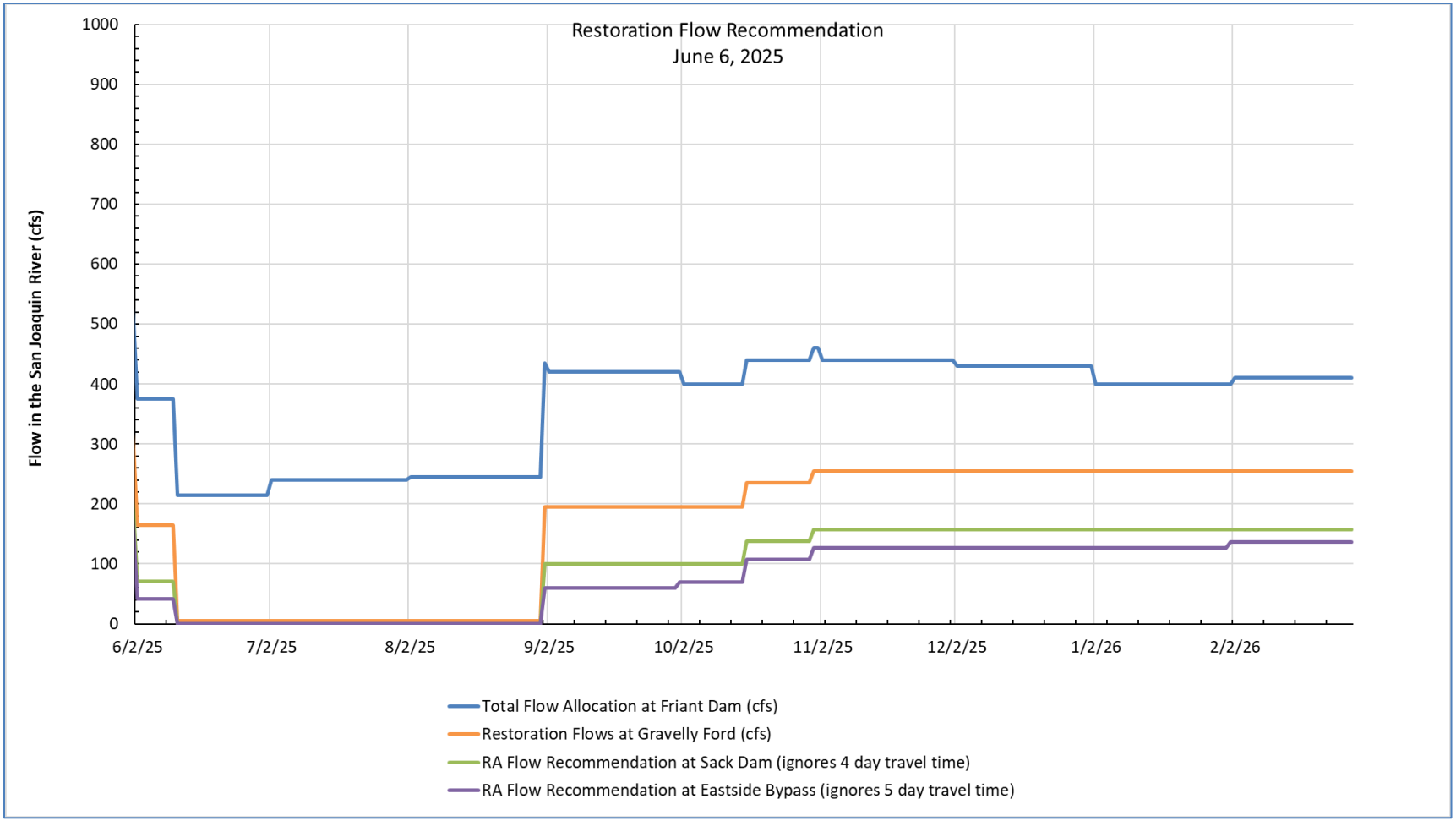
Depending on changing hydrologic and operations conditions, I will adjust or revise this Recommendation as necessary.

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.

Table 2. Summary Volumes

Summary Volumes				
GRAVELLY FORD FLOWS AVAILABLE VERSUS RA RECOMMENDATION				
		Available	**Used**	**Balance**
Total GRF River Flow Target without 5 cfs (March 1, 2025 - Feb 28, 2026):		268.547 TAF	185.784 TAF	82.763 TAF
Restoration Allocation Flow		**268.547 TAF**	**185.784 TAF**	**82.763 TAF**
Exchange Flow		0.000 TAF	0.000 TAF	**0.000 TAF**
Buffer Flows		0.000 TAF	0.000 TAF	**0.000 TAF**
		URF's Disposed of as of	**5/18/2025**	42.100
Use Buffer Flows?	**no**		**Net Alloc Remainder**	**40.663 TAF**


Restoration Flow Recommendation
June 6, 2025
Flow in the San Joaquin River (cfs)
1000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0
6/2/25
7/2/25
8/2/25
9/2/25
10/2/25
11/2/25
12/2/25
1/2/26
2/2/26
Total Flow Allocation at Friant Dam (cfs)
Restoration Flows at Gravelly Ford (cfs)
RA Flow Recommendation at Sack Dam (ignores 4 day travel time)
RA Flow Recommendation at Eastside Bypass (ignores 5 day travel time)