Bureau of Reclamation
2800 Cottage Way, MP-170
Sacramento, Calif. 95825-1898

Field Activity Advisory
San Joaquin River Juvenile Salmon Trap and Transport Study
February 22 – May 1, 2014

This notice is to inform the public of an upcoming research study to trap and haul juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon downstream of the San Joaquin River Restoration Area.

The effort will evaluate the feasibility of implementing similar rapid response actions in the future, and monitor fish movements in certain areas of the San Joaquin River during a "Critical Low" hydrologic water-year, as defined by the Restoration Settlement, where no flow pulses are available to cue juvenile salmon to downstream migration in low water conditions. The action supports the Restoration Settlement by studying the feasibility of taking adaptive management action to respond to unsuitable environmental conditions.

Who: Bureau of Reclamation and California Department of Wildlife (DFW)

What: In the fall of 2013, more than 360 adult fall run were translocated into Reach 1 of the San Joaquin River and nearly 70 spawning redds (nests where eggs were laid) were documented. The successful outmigration of juvenile salmon is critical for survival to adulthood and to support the goal of the Restoration Program to restore Chinook salmon to the San Joaquin River. Factors determining successful outmigration include suitable water temperatures, adequate and timely flow for downstream movement, and a passable watercourse, none of which are available in some of the reaches of the Restoration Area due to the "Critical Low" hydrologic water year. If the study is successful, similar actions could be used in the future with salmon in critical low hydrologic water years.

To capture fish, temporary fence weirs will be installed at two locations on the San Joaquin River: Within 1 mile downstream of the Highway 41 Bridge, and Scout Island. The fence weirs would be constructed from bank to bank, using wire mesh panels and supporting metal posts leading to a collection box. Fish would enter the collection box through a V-shaped passageway that inhibits exit. Restrictive bars at the collection box entrance would allow smaller fish to enter and block larger fish (i.e., predators). In addition to weirs, temporary fish collection nets will be installed at a location downstream of Highway 99 Bridge and a rotary screw trap temporarily installed at Ledger Island Bridge.

Temporary fish collection structures will include flashing lights and flagging to alert boaters. As appropriate, temporary fence weirs will include a removable panel marked with bright paint and signage to direct boaters for motorboat passage. Reclamation will place signage to alert boaters of the temporary fish collection structures.

Collection boxes will be checked for fish and weirs cleaned of debris daily. Fish will be collected from all sites and transported to the downstream release site daily.

Where: Predetermined sampling locations within Reach 1 of the San Joaquin River Restoration Area from Friant Dam to downstream of Highway 99 Bridge.

When: Juvenile fall-run Chinook salmon trap and haul activities will occur from mid-February through May, 2014, depending on hydrologic conditions. Following completion of the study, fish collection structures will be removed.

Considerations: Access to the locations will occur from the public right-of-way or in areas where private landowners have granted access.

Questions about this activity should be directed to the study's agency points-of-contact using the information provided below.

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Questions about the SJRRP's field activities on public and private land should be directed to the SJRRP Outreach Coordinator or Landowner Coordinator using the information provided below.

Margaret Gidding
Outreach Coordinator
Office (direct line): 916-978-5461
Mobile: 916-335-4770
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Contact the SJRRP Hotline, 916-978-4398, or email RestorationFlows@restoresjr.net if you see any problems or have any concerns.

For more information, please visit the SJRRP web site at www.restoresjr.net.

Field Advisories for activities are available at www.restoresjr.net/activities/field/index.html