

**STATE WATER RESOURCES CONTROL BOARD
BOARD MEETING SESSION – DIVISION OF WATER RIGHTS
MAY 3, 2023**

ITEM 9

SUBJECT

WORKSHOP ON THE SECOND REVISED DRAFT INITIAL BIOLOGICAL GOALS REPORT FOR LOWER SAN JOAQUIN RIVER FLOW OBJECTIVES.

DISCUSSION

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is seeking written and oral public comments on the second revised draft initial biological goals report for fall-run Chinook salmon in the lower San Joaquin River and its three salmon-bearing tributaries, the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Rivers (collectively “LSJR”). These draft biological goals were developed pursuant to requirements in the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan or Plan), as amended on December 12, 2018. The Bay-Delta Plan establishes water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of beneficial uses in the Bay-Delta watershed, a program of implementation to achieve those objectives, and monitoring, evaluation, and study provisions. As part of the 2018 update to the LSJR flow components of the Bay-Delta Plan, the State Water Board committed to develop and consider approval of biological goals for the LSJR.

Biological goals for the Bay-Delta Plan are quantitative metrics that describe desired biological outcomes of flow and non-flow management actions to provide for the reasonable protection of fish and wildlife beneficial uses. The biological goals are intended to inform adaptive implementation of the LSJR flows along with other available scientific information, assess effectiveness of its program of implementation, guide development and assessment of the monitoring and evaluation program, and evaluate the need for future changes to the Plan.

The 2018 LSJR update to the Bay-Delta Plan specifies that biological goals will be developed for salmonids including goals for abundance, productivity, diversity, and population spatial extent, distribution, and structure. Fall-run Chinook salmon were selected for the development of initial biological goals due to their more abundant status and ability to serve as an indicator species for conditions protective of native fish species.

The second revised draft initial biological goals report is the third public draft of proposed biological goals and addresses public comments received on the 2022 revised draft report as well as input and recommendations from the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Working Group, a watershed group and forum for facilitating coordination among the State Water Board and interested water agencies and other stakeholders who have expertise in LSJR issues. A notice with additional information regarding the second revised draft initial biological goals report, workshop, and public

comment process is available at [Biological Goals Workshop Notice](#). The second revised draft initial biological goals report is available on the [Implementation Activities for Lower San Joaquin River Flows](#) webpage, as well as additional information regarding LSJR flow objectives, implementation, and biological goals.

POLICY ISSUE

Discuss the proposed second revised draft initial biological goals report.

FISCAL IMPACT

None at this time. Board workshop.

REGIONAL BOARD IMPACT

None at this time. Board workshop.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

None at this time. Board workshop.