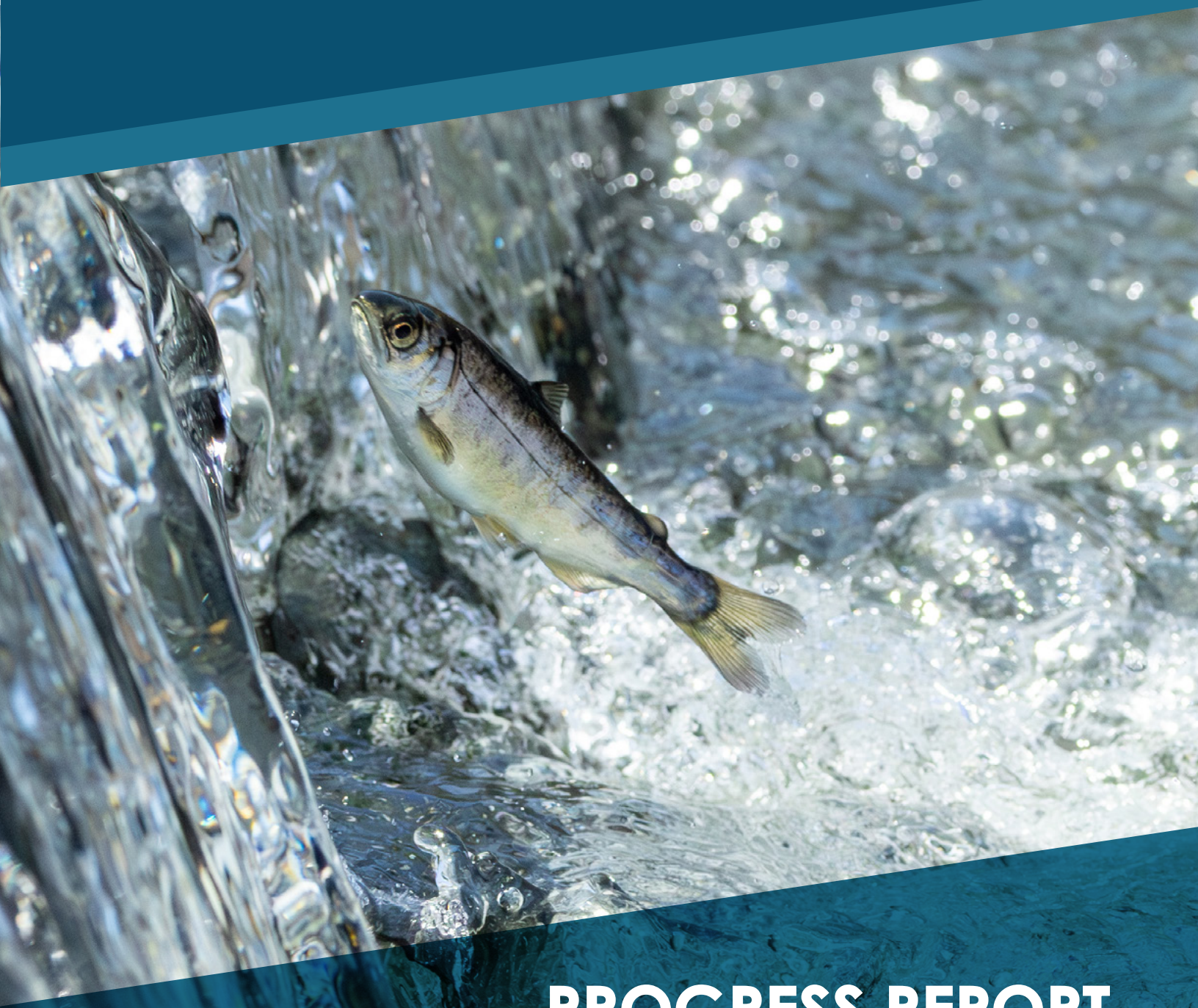
CALIFORNIA SALMON STRATEGY FOR A HOTTER, DRIER FUTURE:

Restoring Aquatic Ecosystems in the Age of Climate Change



PROGRESS REPORT
MARCH 2025 - JUNE 2026

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

California Department of Transportation ..... **Caltrans**

California Department of Water Resources ..... **DWR**

California Native American Tribes ..... **Tribes**

California Natural Resources Agency ..... **CNRA**

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ..... **FERC**

National Marine Fisheries Service ..... **NMFS**

Pacific Gas & Electric Company ..... **PG&E**

State Water Resources Control Board..... **State Water Board** or **Water Boards**

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers..... **USACE**

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation ..... **Reclamation**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service..... **USFWS**

Fall-run Chinook Salmon in the American River just below the Nimbus Fish Hatchery; Credit: CDFW.

INTRODUCTION

California needs thriving salmon runs, and the need to support California's salmon populations remains urgent. Salmon are central to religions, the health and subsistence of California Native American Tribes (Tribes), and a multi-million-dollar fishing industry. Salmon have positive ripple effects across ecosystems and a suite of aquatic species.

Salmon populations started to rebound this year after several wetter years and improved river conditions. California has taken significant and meaningful steps to rebuild salmon stocks across California, but continued, sustained action is needed to recover populations. Tribes, federal agencies, conservation organizations, and

State scientists injecting spring-run Chinook Salmon eggs sourced from the Feather River Hatchery into the gravel as part of the North Yuba River Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Reintroduction Program; Credit: CDFW.

local communities are key leaders and partners in removing fish barriers, restoring habitat, protecting water flows in key rivers, modernizing hatcheries, and transforming technology and management systems.

1. Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration
2. Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing
3. Protect Water Flows and Water Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon
4. Modernize Salmon Hatcheries
5. Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability
6. Strengthen Partnerships

In January 2024, California adopted the *California Salmon Strategy for a Hotter, Drier Future (Salmon Strategy)*, identifying six priorities and 71 actions to restore struggling salmon populations. Since the release of the Salmon Strategy, the state has fully completed 49% of the actions and partially met or advanced progress on 51% of the actions.

This progress report describes progress for the 71 actions across two stages:

IN PROGRESS, meaning work on the action is underway;

COMPLETED, meaning the action is fully completed.

This progress report is paired with an online Story Map to illustrate progress across the 71 actions and highlight key actions taken over the past year to improve resilience within salmon populations and habitats.

Recreational ocean salmon harvest off the coast of California; Credit: CDFW.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS

SALMON FISHING IS BACK!

After an unprecedented three-year closure, the commercial ocean salmon fishery is open in California. More open fishing days also came as welcome news for recreational anglers and businesses after the complete closure of recreational salmon fisheries in 2023 and 2024, and only six open days in 2025. Significant improvements in key California salmon populations — specifically Sacramento River fall-run Chinook and Klamath River fall-run Chinook —allow for more ocean salmon fishing opportunities this year. The rebound of California's salmon populations in 2026 is extremely heartening after the impacts of recent droughts coupled with climate disruption and other environmental and human-made challenges. While the health of salmon populations fluctuates with environmental conditions, their vulnerability to drought and a warming climate underscores the importance of *Salmon Strategy* actions to restore habitat, remove barriers, improve flows, and reconnect rivers to give salmon a better chance of survival in all conditions.

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is implementing in-season management in both commercial and recreational ocean fisheries in 2026 to ensure catch of rebounding salmon stocks does not

exceed seasonal harvest limits (Action 5.3). This is the first year of vessel-based trip limits and seasonal harvest guidelines for California's commercial salmon fishery following the first use of an in-season management framework during California's limited recreational ocean season in 2025. In-season management allows fishery managers to close salmon seasons early should harvest guidelines be reached. The status and progress of each 2026 commercial and recreational ocean salmon fishery is available at Ocean Salmon Fishery Information – In-Season Tracking.

SALMON ARE EVERYWHERE IN THE KLAMATH BASIN!

A little more than a year after the historic removal of four hydroelectric dams on the Klamath River, CDFW scientists are seeing salmon reoccupying just about every corner of their historic habitat. Last year's *Salmon Strategy* Progress Report celebrated the Klamath dam removal as the largest dam removal in the country, the culmination of decades of tribal leadership and unprecedented investment from California, Oregon, and PacifiCorp (Action 1.1). This year we mark the return of salmon throughout their historic landscape for the first time in over a century.

Salmon are repopulating every nook and cranny of suitable habitat upstream of the old dam sites. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Klamath Tribes reported seeing widespread salmon spawning within the Oregon portion of the Klamath River, including within multiple tributaries upstream of Klamath Lake where salmon haven't been seen in more than a century. Fish-counting stations have recorded 211 adult Chinook Salmon in Jenny Creek and 327 adult Chinook Salmon in Shovel Creek. CDFW field crews are surveying regularly for salmon nests and adult fish.

Restoration above the former Iron Gate Dam on the Klamath River; Credit: CDFW.

Spring-run Chinook Salmon from Feather River Fish Hatchery released within the North Yuba River; Credit: CDFW.

After the successful removal of the four Klamath dams, the Klamath River Renewal Corporation is now undertaking large-scale restoration at the former dam sites in partnership with Tribes. CDFW has recently invested approximately $24 million into fish habitat restoration projects within the Klamath Basin with the goal of reestablishing viable, wild, self-sustaining populations of salmon and other anadromous fish species.

Salmon returning to the newly opened habitat will need healthy, long-term flows from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's (Reclamation) Klamath Project. In a report in early 2026, Reclamation described its intent to complete NEPA and ESA consultation on new operating criteria and issue a new Record of Decision for the Klamath Project.

SALMON RETURN TO COLD WATER HABITAT ON THE YUBA RIVER FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 100 YEARS

Returning salmon to cold-water habitat upstream of dams and other barriers is central to the long-term survival of salmon in California as the climate warms. State agencies are piloting creative reintroduction efforts that move salmon around barriers so they can access the cold water during drought and a warming climate. CDFW and its partners launched the North Yuba River Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Reintroduction Program to reestablish a self-sustaining spring-run Chinook population above two dams on the Yuba River, doubling the amount of available habitat on this river system in the mountains of Sierra County. Their multipronged approach includes collecting and fertilizing spring-run Chinook Salmon eggs at the Feather River

Hatchery in Oroville and then injecting the fertilized eggs into North Yuba River's gravel substrate. Detection of juvenile salmon confirmed this method's success and the river's potential to support salmon at early developmental stages. CDFW introduced forty-two spring-run Chinook adults into the North Yuba River in 2025 – the first time that spring-run Chinook Salmon have been reintroduced above a rim dam – a landmark achievement for salmon recovery in the state.

CDFW plans to continue these salmon reintroduction efforts in the coming years, applying adaptive management and scaling up the program until a self sustaining spring run Chinook Salmon population in the North Yuba River is achieved.

FLOODPLAINS RECONNECTED IN THE YOLO BYPASS

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) completed construction and began operation of the largest floodplain salmon-rearing habitat project in California history. The project includes three seasonally operated gates at the Fremont Weir, making it easier for juvenile salmon to move into the Yolo Bypass — a critical floodplain habitat that plays a key role in species recovery. The gated passages, or Big Notch, open when the Sacramento River is high enough to use the Yolo Bypass as a floodplain. Water enters the bypass through the notch at Fremont Weir, creating a shallow water floodplain for fish and providing greater and longer access to food-rich habitat for juvenile salmon.

The construction of the Big Notch Project included the installation of three gates within the existing Fremont Weir, the excavation of 180,000 cubic yards of material to carve new channels for salmon, and the construction of a control building and a pedestrian bridge. DWR designed the project with cutting edge science and through a highly public process that incorporated decades of fisheries research and land-use knowledge. Big Notch operates in a way that benefits fish while protecting existing land-uses like agriculture, recreation, and flood protection.

Sacramento River inundation through the Yolo Bypass Salmonid Habitat Restoration and Fish Passage Facility at Fremont Weir; Credit: DWR.

Daguerre Point Dam slated for fish passage improvements under the Yuba River Resilience Initiative, with construction anticipated to begin fall 2026; Credit: DWR.

1. Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration

Lead Agency:
CDFW

Primary Partners:
Tribes, Water Boards, DWR, Caltrans, Wildlife Conservation Board

California's aging infrastructure limits salmon migration, with some dams far beyond their useful life. In the Central Valley, large dams constructed in the early 1900s now block salmon from over 90% of their historical spawning and rearing habitat in higher-elevation streams. As climate change intensifies and makes valley floor waters unsuitable, these cold-water habitats are increasingly important to salmon survival. While some dams still provide benefits and can be modernized to reduce harm to salmon, others are obsolete and should be decommissioned.

1 REMOVE BARRIERS AND MODERNIZE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR SALMON MIGRATION

13 ACTIONS

8 IN PROGRESS

5 COMPLETE

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.1 By the end of 2023, remove the first of four dams on the Klamath River, and complete the removal of the remaining three in 2024.	**COMPLETE** All four dams on the Klamath River were removed between fall 2023 and fall 2024, returning the Klamath River to free flowing for the first time in over a century. Fall-run Chinook Salmon returned to newly accessible habitat immediately following dam removal, migrating to spawn in Oregon's Spencer Creek for the first time in 112 years. Pacific Lamprey and Coho Salmon also quickly migrated through the former dam sites. In 2025, more than 10,000 fall run Chinook Salmon returned to spawn in areas previously blocked by dams. Returning Chinook Salmon dispersed throughout newly available habitats, reaching the mid and upper sub-watersheds including the Sprague and Williamson rivers in Oregon, as well as Upper Klamath Lake. Coho Salmon and steelhead were observed for the second consecutive year utilizing the newly available habitats in California. Water temperature monitoring indicated a shift to a more natural thermic regime, with warmer water temperatures in the spring and cooler temperatures in the fall which are beneficial to salmon. Revegetation efforts occurred in over 2,200 acres of the former reservoir footprint with additional restoration efforts on major tributaries. Tributary restoration efforts in California were completed on Scotch, Camp, Jenny, and Beaver creeks, restoring more than 25 miles of high-quality salmonid habitat. Restoration by the Klamath River Renewal Corporation included re-grading, re-connection of floodplains, installation

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.1 ***continued***	of beaver dam analogs, and placement of large boulders and/or wood. Restoration will continue through 2030 to complete all requirements of the FERC relicensing held by co-licensees, Klamath River Renewal Corporation, State of California, and State of Oregon.
1.2 By the end of 2023, reach an initial agreement with Tribes, counties, and conservation organizations to decommission and remove the seismically unfit Scott Dam on the Eel River and replace the Cape Horn Dam with a fish-friendly water diversion for Russian River communities. These dams that are owned by Pacific Gas & Electric Company block salmon access to 288 miles of pristine upper watershed habitat in the Eel River. Removal would likely make the Eel the longest free-flowing river in California and could contribute to water supply reliability for communities along the Russian River. The company has decided to decommission its facilities. By the end of 2024, complete negotiations with Pacific Gas & Electric Company and finalize this agreement and secure submission to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in Pacific Gas & Electric Company's license surrender and decommissioning plan.	**COMPLETE** On July 28, 2025, a Water Diversion Agreement for the New Eel Russian Facility was executed by CDFW, California Trout, Eel-Russian Project Authority, County of Humboldt, Mendocino County Inland Water and Power Commission, Round Valley Indian Tribes, County of Sonoma, Sonoma County Water Agency, and Trout Unlimited. The New Eel- Russian Facility will allow water diversions to Potter Valley and the East Branch Russian River while allowing free-flowing water in the Eel River. Grant funding from DWR to Sonoma County Water Agency between 2021 and 2025 assisted with the facilitation of this water agreement. In July 2025, Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) submitted their Final Application for Surrender of License and Application for Non-Project Use of Project Lands to FERC to decommission Scott Dam and Cape Horn Dam located in Lake and Mendocino counties. If approved by FERC, the Non-Project Use of Project Lands will allow for the modification of existing diversion facilities and construction of the New Eel-Russian Facility to continue water diversions to Potter Valley and the East Branch Russian River. On September 30, 2025, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board, Water Board) released a *Notice of Preparation and Scoping Meetings for an Environmental Impact Report for the Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project License Surrender and Decommissioning Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Project no. 77*. The purpose of the Notice of Preparation was to solicit early feedback for development of a CEQA document. The comment period closed on November 3, 2025.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.2 *continued*	In October 2025, FERC released their *Notice of Application for Surrender of License and Non-Project Use of Project Lands, Accepted for Filing, Soliciting Comments, Motions to Intervene, and Protests re Pacific Gas & Electric Company's Potter Valley Hydroelectric Project under P-77*. In November 2025, CDFW submitted both Notice of Intervention and Comments to FERC and Notice of Preparation comments to the State Water Board. CDFW will continue to participate in the surrender process by commenting when appropriate and working with PG&E on management plans. In April 2026, CDFW issued grant award letters for $18 million previously committed by the Department to the Round Valley Indian Tribes, California Trout, Trout Unlimited, Sonoma County Water Agency, Eel-Russian Project Authority, and Humboldt County Resource Conservation District that will ensure water reliability for 600,000 or more of coastal Californians, farmers and ranchers while allowing the Eel River to again flow free to benefit salmon, environmental health, tribal and local communities. The California State Coastal Conservancy advanced funding to protect and restore estuary habitat vital to the biological success and sediment delivery of any proposed removal of the dams by PG&E. The Conservancy funded the Lower Eel River Acquisition of 237 acres of wetland and riparian habitat which will transfer to the Wiyot Tribe for stewardship. The Conservancy also funded the Eel River Native Plant Network project, intended to facilitate the development of local nursery capacity capable of providing sufficient native plants for restoring a potential post dam environment.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.3 By the end of 2024, seek FERC approval to complete design of an engineering solution for maintaining temperatures ideal for salmon on the Feather River high-flow channel downstream of Thermalito Afterbay and to construct a fish segregation weir to secure the low-flow section of the Feather River below Oroville Dam.	**COMPLETE** DWR, CDFW, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and the State Water Contractors sent letters to FERC in late 2024 requesting approval and urging prompt issuance. Agencies are awaiting a new license to advance projects identified in Action 1.3.
1.4 By the end of 2024, finalize agreements with Yuba Water Agency, National Marine Fisheries Service, and others to construct a new fishway, modernize old diversions, and initiate a salmon reintroduction program on the Yuba River.	**COMPLETE** In April 2025, the Yuba River Resilience Initiative was signed by CDFW, NMFS, and Yuba County Water Agency to help return spring-run Chinook Salmon and other native fish species to this historic habitat in the Yuba River. California is investing $30 million into the Initiative, which will help facilitate the construction of a new nature-like fishway and modernization of water diversion at Daguerre Point Dam, as well as the ongoing spring-run Chinook Salmon reintroduction program in North Yuba River (for more information, see Actions 1.5 and 1.7). This investment is part of an initial funding plan that includes $60 million between the partners. CDFW previously awarded a multiyear grant to Yuba Water Agency to carry out foundational pilot studies to explore approaches to salmon reintroduction on the North Yuba River. The pilot studies included injecting spring-run Chinook Salmon eggs from Feather River Hatchery into river gravel above Bullards Bar Dam, reintroducing salmon into the upper watershed for the first time since Englebright Dam was constructed in 1941.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.5 By 2025, take the first steps to reestablish spring-run Chinook Salmon populations in the North Fork Feather River and the North Yuba River.	**COMPLETE** DWR completed the North Fork Feather Above Almanor Fish Passage Feasibility Study in December 2025. The study explores different methods for trapping and hauling salmon to inform a future reintroduction program. DWR will issue a report on this work in summer 2026. From 2023–2025, DWR completed the following work as steps towards reestablishing spring-run Chinook Salmon in the North Fork Feather River: • tested a novel egg injection method to create artificial redds, • evaluated various fish traps to test the efficacy of collecting juvenile salmon during their outmigration, • assessed habitat in the upper watershed to understand suitability for salmon, • preformed extensive local and regional outreach, and • partnered with the Maidu Summit Consortium to fund tribal participation, including the operation of fish traps below the Chester Diversion Dam. DWR has initiated assessments for water treatment upgrades at the Feather River Hatchery to support a broodstock program (see Action 4.8). CDFW completed initial pilot studies in 2024–2025 to support the reintroduction of spring run Chinook Salmon into the North Yuba River. The pilot studies included injecting spring-run Chinook Salmon eggs from Feather River Hatchery into river gravel above Bullards Bar Dam, reintroducing salmon into the upper watershed for the first time since Englebright Dam was constructed in 1941. In the 2025–2026 season, CDFW expanded this work by continuing studies focused on gravel egg injection and juvenile collection, while also adding a new study evaluating habitat use by adult spring run Chinook Salmon in the North Yuba River.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.5 ***continued***	This marked the first time in California that adult spring run Chinook Salmon have been reintroduced above a rim dam—a landmark achievement for salmon recovery efforts in the state. Ongoing juvenile collection efforts in the North Yuba River will soon help determine: • whether adult spring-run Chinook Salmon successfully spawned naturally, • the relative success of spawning across the five locations where eggs were hydraulically injected, and • improved understanding of juvenile outmigration patterns. Pilot studies are planned to continue and expand in the following years.
1.6 By 2025, begin an evaluation of additional watersheds for feasibility of salmon reintroduction above dams.	**IN PROGRESS** Studies by CDFW and partners have been conducted to assess habitat suitability for salmon and steelhead reintroduction above dams around the state including the Feather, Mokelumne, American, and Ventura rivers, as well as Alameda and San Francisquito creeks. Investments from CDFW and Wildlife Conservation Board advanced science and feasibility analyses for salmon reintroduction above Shasta Dam and tested a head of reservoir juvenile salmonid collection system. Pilot introductions and additional studies will be advanced as feasible and as funding becomes available.
1.7 By 2025, complete construction of a natural fishway to improve salmon access to the Yuba River above Daguerre Point Dam and restore access to sturgeon.	**IN PROGRESS** In December 2025, Yuba Water Agency received its water quality certification for the Yuba River and Narrows Hydroelectric Projects. Yuba Water Agency is in the final stages of completing CEQA for the Daguerre Point Nature-Like Fishway under the Statewide Restoration General Order (SRGO) CEQA platform with the State Water Board. Design of the fishway is at the 90% stage, permitting is in progress, and a contractor is currently being onboarded. Construction of the fishway is anticipated to begin in fall 2026.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.8 By 2025, complete at least 10 coastal stream fish passage projects, and by 2026 at least 20 more.	**IN PROGRESS** Local and state partners have removed over 10 barriers to fish passage on coastal streams, utilizing CDFW's permitting and/or grant programs. Five additional fish passage projects will start construction this summer, and six projects have been awarded funding. A new solicitation for projects is planned by CDFW's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP) in 2026 to advance additional projects, with proposals expected for at least five fish passage barriers – including barriers on the Carmel River, Canyon Creek, Stenner Creek, Chorro Creek, and the San Jose Creek. The following coastal stream fish passage projects have been completed: • Little Case Two barrier removal project was completed in 2024 and included the replacement of two culverted barriers with bridges. Monitoring is underway with one redd observed above the first crossing in winter and juvenile Chinook Salmon and Coho Salmon observed above the second crossing. • Lindsey Creek barrier removal project was completed in 2025 with improved passage through two road crossings (Crystal Creek culvert and Lindsay Creek bridge). Coho Salmon have been observed passing through the upgraded Crystal Creek culvert with spawning at the outlet. Coho Salmon have also been observed above the upgraded bridge on Lindsay Creek. • Two barriers on Cooper Mill Creek, a tributary to Yager Creek, were removed in October 2025. In late December 2025, adult Chinook Salmon were observed throughout the newly opened reach with several observed spawning above the former barriers. • Stream gage barrier modification for the Arroyo Grande Stream Gage Fish Passage Improvement Project was completed in October 2024.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.8 *continued*	• Weston-Champagne Cachagua Creek Fish Passage Project on Cachagua Creek, a tributary to the Carmel River, was completed in summer 2023. Post-construction monitoring was completed in 2024. • The Potrero Creek Fish Passage/Lower Culvert Project was constructed in summer 2023. Post-construction monitoring was completed in 2024. • The Bradley-Ringer Cachagua Creek Fish Passage Project was constructed in summer 2024. Post-construction monitoring was completed in 2025. Supported by CDFW's FRGP, the following passage projects are anticipated to begin construction in summer 2026: • Barrier removal on Chamberlain Creek, a tributary to the North Fork Big River. Improving this barrier will restore unimpeded access to an additional 1.46 miles of spawning and rearing habitat for Coho Salmon and steelhead. • Crossing improvements at Duffy Gulch, a tributary to Noyo River. Upgrading this crossing will provide year-round access to 2.6 miles of habitat for Coho Salmon and steelhead trout. • Soda Creek Fish Passage and Habitat Enhancement Project, located within the Navarro River watershed. Upgrading this crossing will provide year-round access to 2.6 miles of habitat for Coho Salmon and steelhead trout. • Elk Creek Fish Passage and Sediment Reduction Project, Crossing 1, located on a tributary to Elk Creek. Upgrading this crossing will restore access to 0.87 miles of stream to Coho Salmon and steelhead trout. • Arroyo Seco River Fish Passage Project - Clark Colony Water Company.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.8 *continued*	The following projects have also been awarded funds through CDFW's FRGP and are at various stages of planning and implementation: • Durphy Creek Fish Passage Design Project, located on a tributary to South Fork Eel River. 100% designs were completed and the project is ready for implementation as of March 31, 2026. Upgrading these three crossings will improve year-round access to 1.4 miles of habitat for Chinook and Coho Salmon and steelhead trout. Funding is still needed for construction • Cider Mill Creek Coho Barrier Removal and Habitat Enhancement Design Project, located on a tributary to Lindsay Creek. 100% designs were completed and the project is ready for implementation as of March 31, 2026. Upgrading these three crossings will improve year-round access to 0.8 miles of habitat for Chinook and Coho Salmon and steelhead trout. Funding is still needed for construction. • Upper Tryon Creek Restoration Project, Phase 1, located on a tributary to the Smith River. Construction is anticipated to begin summer 2027. The project will restore historic meanders in the stream channel, remove one undersized stream crossing, upgrade one partial fish passage barrier, install 36 large wood structures, create off-channel alcoves, and install 1,800 native riparian plants and install 1.13 miles of riparian fencing. • Arroyo Seco River Fish Passage Project at Sycamore Flats. Construction by Trout Unlimited is planned for summer 2027. • Removal or modification of the Marre Weir, a fish passage barrier on San Luis Obispo Creek. A watershed planning project is underway to analyze alternatives for barrier removal or modification. • Cachagua Creek Fish Passage Alternative Plan/ Design Project – Quevedo. Planning and design funding was awarded to Trout Unlimited.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.8 ***continued***	The California State Coastal Conservancy funded the Upper Horse Creek Channel Restoration Project, located on a tributary to the Klamath River. Phase I of the project successfully completed reopening and enhancing significant and heavily utilized Coho Salmon habitat. The project was conducted in partnership with the Mid Klamath Watershed Council and the Karuk Tribe.
1.9 By summer 2025, complete technical investigations, modeling, and at least 35% design of a project to remove defunct, nearly 100-year-old Rindge Dam from Malibu Creek. With remediation or removal of eight other barriers upstream of Rindge Dam, endangered steelhead could regain 15 miles of spawning and rearing habitat. The reservoir behind the dam is filled with sediment, posing a public safety hazard, and the dam blocks steelhead migration. Start deconstruction of Rindge Dam no later than 2028.	**IN PROGRESS** State Parks completed an updated project design outlining methods for Rindge Dam removal in December 2025, followed by completion of 35% design plans in February 2026. For the eight upstream barriers on Las Virgenes and Cold creeks, State Parks completed 65% design plans for removal in January 2026. State Parks anticipate 90% design plans for Rindge Dam removal and the upstream barrier removal by February 2027. The Wildlife Conservation Board extended an original grant awarded in 2022 to State Parks for $12.5 million through December 2027 to support development of 90% designs.
1.10 By 2026, secure an approach with Pacific Gas & Electric Company for its Battle Creek Hydroelectric Project to restore volitional upstream and downstream fish passage at the remaining Battle Creek facilities.	**IN PROGRESS** NMFS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Reclamation, CDFW, and PG&E (Memorandum of Understanding partners) work in coordination to advance infrastructure removal projects on South Fork Battle Creek. Efforts are underway to initiate the removal of four dams on the South Fork Battle Creek that adversely impact river flow, geomorphic processes, fish passage, and limit habitat for aquatic resources. Removal of South Diversion Dam (and South Canal), Soap Creek Feeder Diversion Dam, and Lower Ripley Creek Feeder Diversion Dam are scheduled to begin April 2026 with anticipated construction completed by November 2026. Removal of Coleman Dam is still in planning stages as water supply for Coleman National Fish Hatchery is resolved. In a related action, PG&E completed removal of Inskip Diversion Dam located on the South Fork Battle Creek during summer 2025.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.11 By 2026, complete upgrades to bridges, levees, and infrastructure along Matilija Creek in Ventura County and complete final tasks necessary to ensure removal of Matilija Dam in 2030. This dam-removal project, on a tributary to the Ventura River, will restore steelhead habitat, eliminate a public safety dam risk, enhance riparian and floodplain habitat and property protection, and replenish the Ventura River estuary and Ventura County beaches as a climate adaptation benefit.	**IN PROGRESS** The alternatives analysis and feasibility study are underway for two design alternatives to increase sediment transport at the Robles Diversion Facility. Preliminary design is approaching 10% with hydraulic modeling support provided by Reclamation. Grant funding is in place to reach 30% design by September 2027, with details for fish passage design and future facility operations to follow. Improved flood protection is planned for the communities of Meiners Oaks, Live Oak Acres and Casitas Springs to meet federal safety requirements and to provide sufficient flood protection before, during, and after Matilija Dam removal. A Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Watershed Plan-Environmental Assessment (WP-EA) is in progress that will address both structural and non-structural flood protection needs in all three communities, and potential water supply benefits by the proposed modifications at Robles. Timely completion of the WP-EA process will set the stage for NRCS funding to complete final design plans at Robles, and to implement all four projects once CEQA compliance is complete. Grant funding is currently in place to support the WP-EA and CEQA compliance work, and to complete final design plans for all three flood protection elements. A re-evaluation of alternatives for Camino Cielo Bridge replacement will commence later this year, with CEQA compliance to follow based on a new, anticipated mix of structural, non-structural, and adaptive management options.

TABLE 1 - Remove Barriers and Modernize Infrastructure for Salmon Migration	
1.12 By 2026, implement a strategy to fulfill Senate Bill 857 of 2006, which requires Caltrans to track and remediate all fish passage barriers to salmon and steelhead habitat caused by transportation infrastructure. Such a strategy may identify and bundle the small transportation-related stream barriers along the California coast into one meta-project with the potential to create advanced mitigation credits for state transportation projects.	**IN PROGRESS** Since the passage of Senate Bill 857 in 2006, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has worked with partners in the statewide Fish Passage Advisory Committees (FishPAC) to assess and remediate salmon and steelhead barriers on the State Highway System. FishPACs in each region across California nominate and prioritize barriers to fish passage in the State Highway System for remediation. Each region of the FishPAC meets quarterly to refine and update fish passage priorities, track progress, and support implementation of barrier removal by Caltrans. Per the Caltrans 2025 Report to Legislature, Caltrans is developing 49 fish passage remediation projects to provide access to over 245 miles of high-quality salmon and steelhead habitat and has already implemented 68 remediation projects and opened over 930 stream miles for salmon and steelhead. To date, Caltrans has worked with the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Service and the California Conservation Corps to assess over 6,300 barrier assessments which have been reported to the Passage Assessment Database (PAD).
1.13 By the end of 2026, start construction to modernize Sunset Pumps on the Feather River and remove its associated rock weir thereby reducing entrainment risk and eliminating a barrier that hinders migration of adult and young salmon.	**IN PROGRESS** In January 2026, DWR released a Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Sunset Weir and Pumps Fish Passage Project. Following public input on the project, DWR will continue developing project designs and obtaining environmental permits. The Wildlife Conservation Board granted $29.3 million to DWR, in cooperation with Sutter Extension Water District and CDFW, in May 2026 to complete the removal of Sunset Weir. Construction is planned to begin in summer 2027. The project will restore fish passage to 28.5 miles of upstream habitat for Central Valley Chinook salmon. It will also restore more natural flow patterns, reconnect sediment movement, and improve overall river function. Additional work includes fish screens, diversion upgrades, and bank stabilization.

Sacramento River overtops the Fremont Weir and inundates the Yolo Bypass floodplain through the Big Notch Project; Credit: DWR.

2. Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing

Lead Agency:
CDFW

Primary Partners:
Tribes, DWR, Water Boards, State Conservancies

CDFW has conducted three translocations at Tásmam Koyóm, the initial 2023 pilot project site in Plumas County, releasing a total of 14 beavers. The released beavers, along with the valley's one previously known resident beaver, have now established in at least four sites in the project area, producing at least five litters of kits, constructing at least seven dams, and increasing the surface water area by over 30% from November 2023 to November 2025. In 2025, CDFW continued its partnership with the Tule River Tribe to conduct a fourth beaver translocation on the Reservation, coordinate with the neighboring Sequoia National Forest for additional beaver releases in the watershed, and expand planning to additional sites on the Tribe's newly acquired lands.

2 RESTORE AND EXPAND HABITAT FOR SALMON SPAWNING AND REARING

4 IN PROGRESS **8** COMPLETE

TABLE 2 - Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing	
2.1 By the end of 2023, ensure green infrastructure is integrated across and within the Administration's infrastructure priorities as a nature-based solution.	**COMPLETE** Green infrastructure is currently integrated into agency strategies and infrastructure strike teams. On May 19, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Executive Order N-8-23 which directed the Senior Counselor on Infrastructure to convene an Infrastructure Strike Team to work across state agencies to accelerate clean infrastructure and maximize federal and state funding opportunities for California innovation and infrastructure projects. Environmental restoration was identified as a key priority and restoration strike teams were established to support hundreds of projects that are underway to mitigate water, wildfire, and hazardous material issues to ensure cleaner, greener, and safer communities. Learn more at build.ca.gov. California's Nature Based Solutions Targets, published in April 2024, included green infrastructure like Delta wetlands for flood protection. Green infrastructure was also integrated into the Natural and Working Lands Climate Smart Strategy published in 2022

TABLE 2 - Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing	
2.2 By the end of 2023, complete beaver translocation efforts at one sentinel location to evaluate feasibility for watershed restoration and identify a second action for spring of 2024. Beavers can help provide breeding and rearing habitat for aquatic species, sustain cold flows during the summer, and reduce erosion and degradation of spawning habitat. This work will also advance partnerships with Tribes and conservation organizations.	**COMPLETE** CDFW has conducted three translocations at Tásmam Koyóm, the initial 2023 pilot project site in Plumas County, releasing a total of 14 beavers. The released beavers, along with the valley's one previously known resident beaver, have now established in at least four sites in the project area, producing at least five litters of kits, constructing at least seven dams, and increasing the surface water area by over 30% from November 2023 to November 2025. In 2025, CDFW continued its partnership with the Tule River Tribe to conduct a fourth beaver translocation on the Reservation, coordinate with the neighboring Sequoia National Forest for additional beaver releases in the watershed, and expand planning to additional sites on the Tribe's newly acquired lands.
2.3 By spring 2024, begin Tisdale Weir fish passage construction and complete construction by fall 2025.	**IN PROGRESS** DWR began construction on the Tisdale Weir Rehabilitation and Fish Passage Project in spring 2025 with completion anticipated by fall 2026. During the first construction season in 2025, crews completed the gatehouse structure that will house the operable gate, along with a portion of the connection channel linking the Sacramento River to the Tisdale Bypass. The second construction season in 2026 will focus on completing the connection channel, rehabilitate the existing flood portion of the weir, and completing improvements within the downstream energy dissipation basin. Upon completion in 2026, salmon and other native fish will be able to move through the operable gates between the Tisdale Bypass and Sacramento River when river levels are elevated.
2.4 By the end of 2024, complete at least two additional beaver translocation, watershed restoration projects.	**COMPLETE** CDFW's Beaver Restoration Program created a process for landowners and land managers to submit proposals for beaver translocation projects and began beaver translocations in 2023. In addition to the 2023 pilot project, CDFW has now conducted seven translocations within four additional projects, with restoration partners including the Tule River Tribe, an irrigation district, a private landowner, and the U.S. Forest Service. To date, CDFW has received 22 beaver restoration project proposals from Tribes, private and public landowners, and NGOs.

TABLE 2 - Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing	
2.4 ***continued***	CDFW and partners have identified watersheds for proposing beaver translocations into salmonid habitat and are devoting 2026 to developing study designs and obtaining baseline data, while tentatively planning for implementation in 2027.
2.5 By the end of 2024, identify 20,000 acres that are suitable and feasible for targeted set-back levees actions within the mainstem Sacramento River and major tributaries to restore functional riparian ecosystems.	**COMPLETE** Lookout Slough Tidal Habitat Restoration and Flood Improvement Project was completed in September 2024. The project involved nine levee breaches to allow tidal waters to flow into a newly constructed set-back levee, creating connection to over 16,000 acres of contiguous tidal wetland habitat. After the successful implementation of Lookout Slough Tidal Habitat Restoration and Flood Improvement Project in 2024, monitoring now confirms a rapid return of numerous native fish, bird, and wildlife species and extensive re-establishment of wetland vegetation throughout the project stie. These and other monitoring information are informing the design of the next batch of setback levee projects, including the Little Egbert Multi-benefit Project farther downstream in the Yolo Bypass. DWR is working on the identification and conceptual design of additional set-back levees, and other floodplain opportunities in the Sacramento Valley as part of the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes Program, which is expected to be adopted by the State Water Board by the end of 2026.
2.6 By the end of 2024, complete SHaRP documents for coastal Chinook and Coho salmon strongholds in the Lower Eel River, Mendocino coastal watersheds, Lower Russian River, and Lagunitas Creek.	**IN PROGRESS** Significant progress continues in implementing collaborative Salmonid Habitat Restoration Priorities (SHaRP) to identify priority actions for restoring California's salmon and steelhead habitat. The SHaRP process relies on Tribes, government agencies, industry, environmental groups, and local communities to work together to develop stream specific restoration action plans. South Fork Eel River, Lagunitas Creek, and Lower Russian River SHaRP Action Plans are complete, and implementation of restoration actions is underway with project tracking available through the SHaRP Project Tracker. As of spring 2026, the SHaRP Action Plan for Mendocino coastal watersheds

TABLE 2 - Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing	
2.6 ***continued***	(Ten Mile, Noyo, Big, Navarro, and Garcia rivers) is complete and available online. SHaRP workshops addressing tributaries of the lower Eel River were completed in 2025, with additional workshops focusing on the estuary and mainstem Eel River scheduled for 2026–2027. A SHaRP process has also been initiated for the Salmon River, a tributary to the Klamath River, with workshops anticipated to occur in 2027.
2.7 By early 2024, increase awareness of Cutting the Green Tape options for salmon restoration projects. Each year between 2024-26, conduct annual workshops about the options and opportunities for restoration practitioners.	**COMPLETE** A total of 56 Cutting the Green Tape events were held, including 34 public events and 22 agency events with CDFW, State Water Board, Regional Water Boards, Resource Conservation Districts, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), USFWS, CalFIRE, and State Parks. Notable public events included the 2024 Salmonid Restoration Federation Conference, Annual Meeting of the Western Section of The Wildlife Society, State of the Estuary Conference and the 2026 California Process Based Restoration Network Annual Meeting. While this action was completed by the 2024 timeline, annual workshops and communication will continue to ensure that Cutting the Green Tape tools and approaches are known by restoration practitioners.
2.8 By 2025, use Cutting the Green Tape permitting actions to provide reduced timelines for at least 20 salmon restoration projects and another 20 or more projects by 2026.	**COMPLETE** An overview of how Cutting the Green Tape tools are increasing the pace and scale of restoration is summarized in CDFW's Cutting the Green Tape Story Map. By 2026, a total of 63 projects were permitted or cleared for CEQA, including 34 Statutory Exemptions for Restoration Projects (SERP), 23 Restoration Management Permits (RMP), and 15 Restoration Consistency Determinations (CD) issued. Important SERP Projects for salmonids include Los Angeles River, Inskip Dam Removal, Battle Creek Dam Removal, and Basso/La Grange. Important RMPs or CDs that were issued for salmonids include Klamath Dam Removal, Garcia River Estuary, Redwoods Rising, Ventura River Fish Passage, Butano Creek Floodplain, Prairie Creek, Lagunitas Creek, Bolinas Lagoon, Smith River Estuary, and Sunol Valley Fish Passage Project.

TABLE 2 - Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing	
2.9 By 2025, use Cutting the Green Tape permitting actions to address water infrastructure actions to benefit salmon populations.	**COMPLETE** By 2026, 17 permitting actions were completed, seven SERP projects, 10 RMPs, and three restoration CDs. Water infrastructure components included dam removals, relocation of diversion intake and conveyance structures, levee improvements, off-channel storage, and forbearance pond and diversion infrastructure. Cutting the Green Tape tools will continue to be used to address water infrastructure actions to benefit salmon populations.
2.10 By 2026, complete planning and permitting processes and initiate construction for at least 1,000 acres of instream habitat for juvenile Chinook Salmon rearing and spawning in the Sacramento River mainstem and its tributaries.	**IN PROGRESS** DWR completed construction of the Redding Riffle, South Sand Slough, and Rockwads projects. Together these projects add 3 acres of spawning habitat and 13 acres of rearing habitat. For 2026, DWR anticipates completing the Rancho Caleta project, which will add 69 acres of floodplain and riparian habitat in Colusa County. Beyond 2026, the following projects continue to advance in implementation: Battle Creek restoration, located in Tehama County: The removal of PG&E's Inskip Dam in 2025 allows for the reestablishment of 42 miles of instream rearing habitat and up to 1700 acres of floodplain and riparian habitats at Battle Creek Ranch expected in 2027; China Bend, located in Yolo County: Restoration of up to 198 acres of floodplain and riparian habitats expected in 2028; Dos Rios Norte, located at the confluence of the Sacramento and Feather rivers: Restoration of up to 1500 acres of floodplain and riparian habitats expected in 2029; Bonnyview Ranch Island, located in Redding: Creation of 3.7 acres of new perennial side channel rearing habitat and 4.9 acres of mainstream riffle spawning habitat; Market Street spawning gravel project, located in Redding: Ongoing infusions of 12,000 tons of gravel to create 6 acres of spawning riffles.

TABLE 2 - Restore and Expand Habitat for Salmon Spawning and Rearing	
2.11 By 2026, modify or reoperate existing water infrastructure to provide seasonal inundation of at least 10,000 acres of floodplain habitat.	**COMPLETE** DWR launched the operation of the Yolo Bypass Salmonid Fish Passage and Habitat Restoration Project (i.e., Big Notch Project) during the 2025-2026 winter season. This facility is now capable of creating more than 30,000 acres of seasonally inundated floodplain habitat in the Yolo Bypass. This project consists of three seasonally operated gates at the Fremont Weir that are opened when the Sacramento River is high enough to use the Yolo Bypass as a floodplain. This creates a shallow water floodplain for fish to easily migrate through the area and for juvenile salmon to have more and longer access to a food-rich habitat. Construction at Tisdale Weir is anticipated to be complete by fall 2026 (for more information, see Action 2.3). DWR is investigating the feasibility of using the Tisdale Weir notch to increase the frequency and duration of inundation in Tisdale Bypass and Sutter Bypass. Further opportunities to modify or reoperate existing water infrastructure to create floodplain habitat will be identified in the USACE Yolo Bypass Comprehensive Feasibility Study.
2.12 By 2026, create an additional 5,000 acres of floodplain habitat and reconnect salmon to floodplains across the Central Valley.	**IN PROGRESS** DWR completed floodplain restoration projects at McCormack-Williamson Tract project (1,600 acres) and Lower Elkhorn Basin Levee Setback Project (1,000 acres) in 2024. Prospect Island (1,500+ acres) reached substantial completion in late 2025, and is transitioning into functional tidal and freshwater marshes. DWR is currently in construction of the Grizzly Slough Floodplain Enhancement Project, which will add 180 acres of floodplain within the Cosumnes River Watershed. DWR is set to break ground on the final 287-acre phase of Dutch Slough (the Burroughs parcel) in summer 2026, adding critical marsh and upland habitat to the western Delta. The Tide's End project (1,000 acres) is nearing the end of its environmental review with the public comment period and is expected to begin construction in 2027. The Little Egbert Tract is currently in planning as a 3,200-acre multi-benefit project.

The Smith River in Del Norte County; Credit: CDFW.

3. Protect Water Flows and Water Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon

Lead Agency:
State Water Board

Primary Partners:
Tribes, CDFW, Wildlife Conservation Board, DWR

Adequate flows of cold water are needed to entice returning adult salmon to their natal streams, provide critical habitat for eggs and juvenile salmon to grow, and transport those juveniles to the Pacific Ocean. Habitat restoration is only effective if there is water for that habitat. Restoration and flow protection go hand in hand to optimize investments for salmon. Water quality is also important to support critical habitat and ensure salmon can complete their lifecycle.

3 PROTECT WATER FLOWS AND QUALITY IN KEY RIVERS AT THE RIGHT TIMES TO SUPPORT SALMON

14 ACTIONS

8 IN PROGRESS

6 COMPLETE

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.1 By early 2024, commence work to establish minimum instream flows in the Scott and Shasta rivers, working with local partners on locally driven solutions and coordinating on options for incentivizing the reduction of diversions and groundwater pumping.	**COMPLETE** CDFW continues to work collaboratively on the establishment of Local Cooperative Solutions (LCS), which were authorized in the 2025 Scott-Shasta Emergency Regulation as a tool for curtailment relief to landowners working on creative ways to keep water in stream while continuing some level of irrigation. In September 2025, Assembly Bill 263 was enacted and specified that the current Water Board emergency regulation for the Scott and Shasta rivers remain in effect until January 1, 2031, or until permanent rules establishing and implementing long-term instream flow requirements are adopted, whichever occurs first. On March 13, 2026, State Water Board staff released a Notice of Opportunity for Public Comment and Virtual Meeting on the Shasta River watershed draft range of flows that will be used to inform further scientific and economic analysis. In developing the draft range of flows, Water Board staff considered available scientific information as informed by the Water Board's March 11, 2025 Notice of Opportunity to Provide Input on Scientific, Technical, and Economic Information for Development of Economic Analysis and Scientific Basis Reports for Baseline Minimum Flows in the Scott River and Shasta River Watersheds.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.1 ***continued***	Additionally, CDFW continues to provide data and input to the Water Board on the development of the Scientific Basis Report, associated models, and flow targets for the Scott River and Shasta River watersheds. While this action is complete because work has commenced, there is additional ongoing work by CDFW and the Water Board to establish minimum instream flows in the Scott and Shasta rivers.
3.2 By early 2024, begin review of the Mill, Deer, and Antelope creek instream flow recommendations and use the information to inform a long-term flow-setting process; conduct a scientific basis investigation that compiles the best available science and describes how it relates to flow setting; and develop analysis for a range of flows.	**IN PROGRESS** The State Water Board received flow recommendations for Mill, Deer, and Antelope creeks from CDFW in February 2024. The State Water Board held a public workshop in December 2024 to accept public comments on development of a scientific basis report regarding instream flows for these creeks. CDFW and the State Water Board continue to work together on developing a scientific basis report to support instream flows for Mill, Deer, and Antelope creeks.
3.3 By 2025, continue advancing collaborative work with stakeholder groups to implement flow solutions in Butte Creek.	**IN PROGRESS** The Butte Sutter Bypass Coordinated Operations Group (BSBCOG), a voluntary group of landowners and water rights holders, water and reclamation districts, resource agencies, and local organizations, convened throughout 2025 and into 2026. The group provided the opportunity to learn more about the Butte Creek Sutter-Bypass system, stay updated on the status of spring-run Chinook Salmon, and improved communication with upstream and downstream diverters. CDFW also developed important relationships through the BSBCOG that will contribute to the management and conservation of spring-run Chinook Salmon in Butte Creek and the Sutter Bypass. Continuing these relationships is critical to communication and the potential for balancing water operations and fish passage in the system. Funding is needed for group facilitation to continue this group on a regular and formal basis.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.3 *continued*	CDFW is continuing to work with DWR to establish two gages in the Sutter Bypass at the top of the east and west borrow canals with installation and operation anticipated by fall 2026. Additionally, CDFW is engaged in multiple planning efforts to improve fish passage through the Sutter Bypass. CDFW, through a drought contract with KSN Inc., is working with the diverter and landowner at Giusti Weir to plan and permit a multi-phased project that will screen the unscreened diversion and improve fish passage by restoring the channel while maintaining diversion and water supply needs. CDFW, through a separate drought contract with Ducks Unlimited, is working on a planning/permitting project to improve passage through the lahar formation and over Durham Mutual Dam in Butte Creek through the development of a roughened ramp. This project will incidentally update water infrastructure for Durham Mutual, benefiting both migrating adult salmon and water supply reliability. Ducks Unlimited received a planning grant through the Wildlife Conservation Board to automate White Mallard Dam in Butte Creek within the Butte Sink. Automation of the dam will improve operational adjustments that have temporarily impeded passage or redirected migrating adult salmon in the past. This project also includes debris/vegetation maintenance in Butte Creek to improve fish passage while maintaining water deliveries.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.4 By 2025, adopt an updated Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan, which could include potential Voluntary Agreements to Support Healthy Rivers and Landscapes, to protect beneficial uses including the protection of salmon, steelhead, and other native aquatic species.	**IN PROGRESS** The Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Science Program facilitated an independent peer review of the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (Voluntary Agreements) Science Plan to determine the extent to which the Science Plan supports development of system-specific science plans that produce interoperable datasets and common metrics and meaningfully informs triennial reports. The peer review panel report was completed in July 2025. On December 12, 2025, the State Water Board released for public review and comment proposed updates to the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Watershed (Bay-Delta Plan). The proposed updates are relatively modest revisions of the updates released in July 2025, with overall content and approach remaining largely unchanged. The Water Board also initiated a limited recirculation of the September 2023 draft Staff Report by releasing a new chapter (Chapter 13) with an updated project description with supporting environmental and economic analyses. The Water Board held a multi-day hearing on January 28, 29, and 30, 2026 to hear verbal public comment and accepted written public comments on the revised draft Bay-Delta Plan updates and Chapter 13 of the draft Staff Report through February 2, 2026. Based on these verbal and written comments, Water Board staff are developing the final proposed updates to the Bay-Delta Plan and a final draft Staff Report for Board consideration before the end of 2026.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.5 By 2025, complete development of rapid methodologies to establish regional instream flow metrics through the multi-partner California Environmental Flows Framework, which can be used to inform CDFW recommendations and related State Water Board regulatory actions.	**COMPLETE** As reported in the previous progress report, Resiliency of California fishes: Assessing native fish sensitivity to changes in wet and dry season baseflows analyses were completed in 2023. Dry season baseflow hydrology models developed for California Environmental Flow Framework (CEFF) were also completed. Native fish sensitivity to wet-season and dry-season baseflow alteration analyses were completed. Seven-day moving average minimum and 7-day minimum timing metrics were developed. Two publications were based on this work: Baruch, E.M. et al. 2024. Mimicking functional elements of the natural flow regime promotes native fish recovery in a regulated river. Ecological Applications; Ayers, J. R. et al. 2024. Perennial and non-perennial streamflow regime shifts across California, USA. Water Resources Research.
3.6 By 2025, and thereafter, ensure that groundwater sustainability agencies implement actions consistent with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act that are directed at depletion of interconnected surface waters and poor river conditions in critical salmon habitats resulting from groundwater over pumping.	**IN PROGRESS** The State Water Board, CDFW, and DWR continue to review groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) and provide feedback to the groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) on how to improve their GSPs, including in the management of interconnected surface water depletion. DWR has released technical papers to assist GSAs in identifying and estimating these impacts. DWR is also planning to release updated technical guidance in 2026 that will enable GSAs to develop locally defined streamflow depletion criteria, directly supporting the health of critical salmon habitats. DWR will monitor locally developed standards in basins where excessive groundwater use threatens river conditions through its regulatory process of reviewing future annual reports and periodic evaluations.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.7 By 2025, where appropriate, revise and modernize approaches for Shasta Reservoir management to protect water quality and temperature management for salmon.	**COMPLETE** In November and December 2024, USFWS and NMFS, respectively, issued Biological Opinions for the Long-term Operation of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project. In early 2026, Reclamation released the Water Temperature Modeling Platform (WTMP) developed to modernize the decision support tools for temperature management at Central Valley Project systems including Shasta Reservoir (for more information, see Action 5.11). In early 2025, USFWS, NMFS, Reclamation, DWR, CDFW, and the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors entered into a Memorandum of Understanding for the purpose of recovering winter-run Chinook Salmon through the implementation of the Winter-run Action Plan (WRAP). Agency representatives have met to discuss priorities for implementing the WRAP in 2026.
3.8 By 2025, revise and implement state and federal permits and Biological Opinions governing the State Water Project and federal Central Valley Project.	**COMPLETE** The 2024 Incidental Take Permit and 2024 Biological Opinions governing the State Water Project and federal Central Valley Project are currently in effect. At the request of DWR and Reclamation, an ad hoc committee of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine conducted a biennial review of the monitoring, modeling, and other relevant scientific activities of the State Water Project and Central Valley Project. The biennial review was completed in November 2025 and included reviews of Old and Middle River flow management, salmonid route selection and survival, Delta Smelt entrainment and recruitment, Shasta cold water pool management, and Summer-Fall Delta Smelt habitat. In fall 2025, DWR, CDFW, Reclamation, NMFS, and USFWS initiated an independent peer review of State Water Project and Central Valley Project operations in water years 2024 and 2025 after annual winter-run Chinook Salmon salvage thresholds were exceeded in 2024 and 2025 at the south Delta export facilities.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.8 ***continued***	The independent peer review was facilitated by the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Science Program and culminated in a peer review panel report completed in March 2026 that will be used to guide new evaluations of existing salmon protective actions and investments in science in the coming years. In winter 2025, DWR and CDFW initiated an independent peer review of a draft spring-run Chinook Salmon juvenile production estimate (JPE) framework. The independent peer review was facilitated by the Delta Stewardship Council's Delta Science Program and culminated in a peer review panel report completed in April 2026. Once approved by CDFW, the spring-run JPE will be used to improve spring-run management in the Central Valley and will be the basis for consideration of any updated entrainment minimization measures for south Delta export facilities.
3.9 By 2025, ensure the Unified Cannabis Enforcement Task Force (UCETF) is taking action to incorporate salmon protection and illegal cannabis water-related issues as priorities when implementing enforcement actions.	**COMPLETE** As a member of UCETF, CDFW continues to prioritize environmental impacts to sensitive areas and species, including salmon, during illicit outdoor cultivation site selection for enforcement. The UCETF seized $609 million in illicit cannabis products in 2025, representing an 18-fold increase since UCETF's establishment in 2022. During operations, investigators frequently identified additional violations, including Fish and Game Code and water-related violations.
3.10 By 2026, complete supply-demand assessment pilot projects in three watersheds to better manage water allocations and provide data for local water management decisions. Expand to at least 12 additional watersheds by 2029.	**IN PROGRESS** The State Water Board's Water Supply and Demand Assessment Program continues to develop water supply models, demand datasets, and other tools for 17 watersheds across California. In January 2026, State Water Board staff provided a virtual demonstration of the water supply modeling platform associated with the Water Board's work. The demonstration targeted individuals who may want to use the finalized watershed models to study additional scenarios or projects.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.10 ***continued***	The Navarro River model is complete and both the model files and model development report are available online. As of March 2026, the public review periods are complete for the draft model reports for the Gualala River, Salmon Creek, and Mattole River watersheds. Models are expected to be finalized soon, and review opportunities for additional watershed reports are upcoming.
3.11 By 2026, design and implement an initiative focused on the North Coast – a region well-suited to harmonizing water resiliency, streamflows, and true salmon strongholds – by transitioning communities toward drought-resilient, water-efficient infrastructure such as water tanks, ponds, and off-stream storage and recharge that improve instream flow for salmon.	**IN PROGRESS** The North Coast Salmon Strongholds Initiative is an effort initially proposed by the California Salmon and Steelhead Coalition with support from California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA), CDFW, State Parks, and Caltrans, and is aimed at accelerating the pace and scale of habitat restoration in key watersheds along California's North Coast. In support of the Initiative, the Wildlife Conservation Board has awarded funding to the Navarro River Streamflow Enhancement Implementation Project to advance the implementation of a 120,000-gallon rainwater catchment system which includes irrigation use efficiencies and a forbearance agreement to improve water storage and protect instream flows in the Navarro River. The Wildlife Conservation Board has also awarded a number of projects that support the Salmon Strategy, including a $1.1 million grant to fund the Lagunitas Creek Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Project and a $1.5 million grant to restore habitat in Mark West Creek, both awarded in February 2026. Additional projects awarded grants through the Wildlife Conservation Board can be tracked through the Approved Projects Story Map. The California State Coastal Conservancy has also awarded funding to acquire property along the Mattole River, discontinuing a cannabis grow in a vital salmon stronghold and providing for the transfer of property to the Sinkyone Inter Tribal Wilderness Council.

TABLE 3 - Protect Water Flows and Quality in Key Rivers at the Right Times to Support Salmon	
3.12 By 2026, complete instream flow analysis for all streams identified in the 2014 California Water Action Plan, which includes the Ventura River, South Fork Eel River, and Mark West Creek, and eight additional streams of Mattole River, West Fork San Gabriel River, Santa Ana River, Santa Margarita River, Mojave River, Dos Pueblos Creek, Carpinteria Creek, and North Fork Navarro River.	**COMPLETE** CDFW completed instream flow analyses and technical reports for the streams identified in the 2014 California Water Action Plan, including the Ventura River, South Fork Eel River, and Mark West Creek, and has completed instream flow analyses and technical reports containing flow criteria for all of the eight additional streams listed in Action 3.12.
3.13 By 2026, submit these instream flow recommendations to the State Water Board for setting regulatory minimum stream flows.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW has posted instream flow analyses and reports online for all tributaries identified in Action 3.12 except Mojave River. CDFW expects to post the Mojave River report online later in 2026. Flow recommendations have not yet been submitted to the State Water Board for the listed streams in Action 3.12. CDFW is reviewing completed instream analysis reports for the streams listed in Action 3.12, along with other available information, and considering development and submittal of instream flow recommendations to the State Water Board by the end of 2026 or thereafter.
3.14 By 2026, secure voluntary – and, ideally, permanent – transactions of water to improve instream flow conditions in salmon strongholds through local, cooperative agreements, instream flow water purchase programs, and state grants.	**IN PROGRESS** The Instream Flow Water Purchase Program launched by CNRA and DWR in June 2023 has transitioned into active operations. Following the 2025 award cycle, DWR and the Wildlife Conservation Board committed approximately $140 million to secure flows for the Sacramento-San Joaquin watershed. Notably, the Wildlife Conservation Board funded the Battle Creek Ranch Water Rights Retirement project in November 2025 which will end all surface water diversions at Battle Creek Ranch and protect water remaining in Lower Battle Creek. Pending projects nearing execution are expected to result in more than 20,000 acre-feet of additional water for instream flows as early as 2027.

Hatchery staff collect fall-run Chinook Salmon from the Feather River Fish Hatchery prior to in-river release; Credit: CDFW.

4. Modernize Salmon Hatcheries

Lead Agency:
CDFW

Primary Partners:
Tribes, Water Boards, DWR, NMFS, USFWS, Reclamation

Hatcheries were constructed to mitigate for the massive loss of habitat on California's rivers. The California salmon and steelhead hatchery system operated or overseen by CDFW is one of the largest in the world and produces millions of spring- and fall-run Chinook Salmon and steelhead every year. Modernization of hatcheries is important as climate-driven changes further stress fish and wildlife.

4 MODERNIZE SALMON HATCHERIES

14 ACTIONS

7 IN PROGRESS

7 COMPLETE

TABLE 4 - Modernize Salmon Hatcheries	
4.1 By early 2024, evaluate further increases of fall-run Chinook Salmon production and prepare a plan for hatchery operations in 2024. This plan will prioritize conservation benefits to fall-run survival; mitigation of ongoing drought and other impacts; testing of Parentage-Based Tagging (PBT) for one year with related monitoring; and identify a series of work streams between federal and state agencies to develop a long-term technology implementation plan for PBT and integration into the Pacific Fishery Management Council.	**COMPLETE** Spawning and Release Plans were completed in 2025 for fall-run Chinook Salmon production at Feather River Hatchery, Nimbus Fish Hatchery, and Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery and included genetic sampling of broodstock and egg tracking to support production wide PBT. This allows for the genetic identification of unmarked and untagged hatchery-origin fish in harvest and escapement monitoring. For more information on PBT, see Actions 4.3, 4.9, and 5.8.
4.2 By early 2024, prepare to use emergency transport of hatchery-raised juvenile fall-run Chinook Salmon to San Pablo Bay, San Francisco Bay, and seaside net pens more frequently.	**COMPLETE** CDFW has maintained emergency preparations for increasing transport of hatchery-raised juvenile fall-run Chinook Salmon to San Pablo Bay, San Francisco Bay, and seaside net pens in the event of unsuitable river conditions. The purchase of additional trailers and newly established releases sites were critical to successful release operations of hatchery-raised fall-run Chinook Salmon in spring 2025. In spring 2026, CDFW will continue releases of fall-run Chinook Salmon produced at CDFW operated hatcheries at new release locations in San Pablo and San Francisco bays.

TABLE 4 - Modernize Salmon Hatcheries	
4.3 By early 2024, use different hatchery production life stages to supplement in-river production.	**COMPLETE** After initial pilot efforts, CDFW and USFWS are implementing fall-run Chinook Salmon fry release projects at state and federal hatcheries across the Central Valley to supplement in-river production. In 2026, CDFW released approximately 2.8 million fall-run fry from Feather River Hatchery and 1.6 million fall-run fry from Nimbus Fish Hatchery. In 2026, USFWS released approximately 5 million fall-run fry from Coleman National Fish Hatchery in-river as well as 2 million fall-run fry in the Yolo Bypass. CDFW and USFWS also expanded tissue collection for all adult fall-run and spring-run broodstock for future PBT analysis. Ocean and inland monitoring and tissue collection are underway, with pilot collection beginning in 2025.
4.4 By summer 2024, complete construction of the San Joaquin Salmon Conservation and Research Facility (SCARF). By 2025, increase spring-run Chinook Salmon production at the SCARF facility to one million fish annually.	**IN PROGRESS** SCARF construction was completed in May 2025. Hatchery operations, including CDFW staff and the captive-bred salmon population were moved into the new facility in June, with the first spring-run spawn occurring in September 2025. With the additional space for egg incubation as well as early rearing and juvenile rearing, fish production for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program was nearly twice that of what the small-scale, temporary "interim" facility was capable of in past years. CDFW are in the process of conducting a full inventory of the spring-run salmon broodstock, and examining the hatchery population's age structure to estimate juvenile fish production for 2026.
4.5a By 2025, have fully transitioned from the Iron Gate Hatchery on the Klamath River to a new, 21st century facility on Fall Creek.	**COMPLETE** CDFW continues to operate the Fall Creek Hatchery with great success after transitioning operations from Iron Gate Hatchery following dam removal. In March 2026, CDFW released 30,000 yearling Coho Salmon. CDFW anticipates releasing 700,000 Chinook Salmon in spring 2026 followed by 275,000 yearling Chinook Salmon in fall 2026.

TABLE 4 - Modernize Salmon Hatcheries	
4.5b Continue advancing Trinity River Hatchery modernization in collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Tribes.	**IN PROGRESS** Reclamation, with support from CDFW, continues to work towards designs to modernize the Trinity River Hatchery, with a target to start construction in November 2026.
4.6 By 2025, complete a first-ever, top-to-bottom, systemwide climate resiliency assessment of hatchery infrastructure and create a public works plan for modernization, relocation, or construction of new facilities.	**COMPLETE** CDFW released 21 trout and salmon hatchery reports intended to provide an external and unbiased review of existing hatchery infrastructure and operations, and provide recommendations that could be taken to prepare these hatcheries for the impacts of climate change in both short-term and 20-year timescale.
4.7 By 2026, advance construction or reconstruction of five new state-of-the-art fish conservation hatcheries.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW is actively managing salmon production at two new conservation hatcheries: Fall Creek Hatchery, which started operations in October 2024 and the SCARF, which started operations in July 2025 (for more information, see Actions 4.4 and 4.5a). The South of Bay Coho Salmon Conservation Hatchery Feasibility Study is complete with the executive summary available online. CDFW is assessing the feasibility of refurbishing the Feather River Hatchery Annex facility to support hatchery expansion, including becoming a long-term facility to support the Central Valley spring-run Chinook Salmon captive broodstock program which is currently located at UC Davis (for more information, see Action 6.6).
4.8 By 2026, install a water treatment system at Feather River Hatchery to facilitate adult salmon movement above Oroville Dam.	**IN PROGRESS** DWR has initiated alternative analyses and a feasibility study for the Feather River Hatchery water treatment system. This work follows up on value engineering planning efforts completed in 2025.

TABLE 4 - Modernize Salmon Hatcheries	
4.9 By 2026, continue to implement joint federal-state plans to utilize genetic PBT strategies to facilitate tracking of adaptively released fish.	**IN PROGRESS** In 2026, CDFW and USFWS continued to support PBT-marked fry releases at state and federal hatcheries (for more information, see Action 4.3). In March 2026, CDFW met with USFWS and NMFS to kickoff interagency coordination on PBT implementation to support ocean, inland, and hatchery management. The goal of this coordination is to further enhance PBT monitoring and science for salmon management. Additionally, CDFW has entered a partnership with the United States Geological Survey/Cal Poly Humboldt – California Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, DWR, Reclamation, and USFWS to develop a modeling framework to evaluate different marking and tagging scenarios for California hatchery-produced Chinook Salmon to support PBT implementation and monitoring (for more information, see Action 6.1).
4.10 By 2026, replace aging hatchery equipment, modernize fish-incubation and rearing enclosures, and replace egg incubators and sorting machines.	**COMPLETE** CDFW has incorporated newly purchased equipment into hatchery operations, increasing program efficiencies. This equipment includes sorting machines; automated fish feeders; new fish planting trucks, tanks, and trailers; new carts; fish loaders; and incubation and rearing equipment.
4.11 By 2026, acquire automated fish counters and pumps and install water treatment systems and chillers at state hatcheries.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW operated hatcheries have integrated newly acquired fish counters and pumps into operations. Existing water treatment and chilling systems are being maintained and utilized. CDFW continues to assess needs and funding opportunities to expand on the number of these systems implemented at state hatcheries.

TABLE 4 - Modernize Salmon Hatcheries	
4.12 By 2026, expand state juvenile fish rearing capacity by 10 million fish.	**COMPLETE** In 2024, CDFW Central Valley hatcheries increased production by over 12 million fish, exceeding the original goal of 10 million fish. Since 2024, CDFW Central Valley hatcheries released a combined 28.7 million fall-run Chinook Salmon in 2025 and 22 million are anticipated for release in 2026. Additionally, 3 million spring-run Chinook Salmon were released in both 2025 and 2026. CDFW continues to explore funding opportunities to support increases in fish production.
4.13 By 2026, complete necessary Hatchery Genetic Management Plans to ensure any production capacity increase is pursuant to best management requirements to avoid risks to wild salmon populations.	**IN PROGRESS** DWR and CDFW continue to refine the Feather River Spring-run Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan prior to submittal to NMFS. CDFW and East Bay Municipal Utility District continue to make significant progress on the Mokelumne River Fall-run Hatchery Genetic and Management Plan. CDFW and DWR have initiated development of the Feather River Fall-run Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan.

CDFW scientist processing genetic samples at the Genetic Research Lab; Credit: CDFW.

5. Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability

Lead Agency:
CDFW

Primary Partners:
Tribes, Water Boards, DWR, FERC, USFWS, NMFS, USACE, Counties, Local Agencies

Traditional salmon management relies on historical data, but past trends are no longer reliable predictors. Protecting salmon abundance and harvest now requires 21st-century technology and adaptive management systems that integrate improved forecasting, real-time data on streamflow and temperature, rigorous science, and state-of-the-art monitoring, including genetics. These tools are critical for both salmon survival and reliable management of water supplies for cities and farms. Modernizing abundance forecasts, harvest models, and management strategies to account for climate change is essential.

5 TRANSFORM TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS FOR CLIMATE ADAPTABILITY

11 ACTIONS

6 IN PROGRESS

5 COMPLETE

TABLE 5 - Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability	
5.1 By early 2024, create an executive salmon steering committee within CDFW to coordinate salmon policy and management within and across the department, which would use successful case studies of similar organizational structure for nutria, mountain lion and bear management.	**COMPLETE** CDFW's Salmon Executive Steering Committee was originally convened in 2023 and continues to meet monthly to coordinate salmon policy and management across the state.
5.2 By early 2024, create a salmon strategy implementation team that coordinates salmon projects within CDFW and across state agencies.	**COMPLETE** An interagency coordination team was convened in 2025 and meets regularly to coordinate specific actions in the Salmon Strategy. Significant multiagency coordination takes place around specific actions in the Salmon Strategy.
5.3 By the fishing season of 2024, implement in-season monitoring to actively manage commercial and recreational ocean salmon fisheries to align with preseason harvest forecasts.	**COMPLETE** CDFW actively participates in the Pacific Fishery Management Council process to manage ocean fisheries. During the 2025 ocean recreational season, CDFW implemented a new management framework adopted by the Pacific Fishery Management Council. The framework made use of seasonal harvest guidelines and in-season management in California's ocean salmon recreational fishery. In 2026, fishing opportunities will extend to both the recreational and commercial fishery. The recreational fishery will operate again under seasonal harvest guidelines and also under area-specific harvest limits. The commercial fishery will be authorized for the first time in three years and operate under a management framework of vessel-based trip limits combined with area-specific harvest limits. The vessel-based trip limits apply to each open fishing period of 4-7 days' duration and will be adjusted in-season when total catch approaches the harvest limit.

TABLE 5 - Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability	
5.4 By 2025, begin to use biological indicators, referred to as biological goals, to inform decision making during implementation of the updated Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan.	**IN PROGRESS** The State Water Board approved biological goals to assess effectiveness of 2018 Bay-Delta Plan flow objectives for the Lower San Joaquin River. In addition to the biological goals for the Lower San Joaquin River, the State Water Board is planning to develop biological goals for the Sacramento River and Delta within two years of adoption of those updates to the Bay-Delta Plan – currently anticipated for late 2026 (for more information, see Action 3.4). The State Water Board then plans to commence efforts to implement the updates to the Bay-Delta Plan, including through adoption of a regulation and implementation of the Healthy Rivers and Landscapes flow and habitat commitments. As part of the implementation of the updates to the Bay-Delta Plan, the State Water Board will also conduct annual reviews and periodic reviews every three years to evaluate progress on implementation of the Bay-Delta Plan and any needed changes to the Bay-Delta Plan to provide for the reasonable protection of fish and wildlife and other uses, which will be informed by progress toward meeting the adopted biological goals.
5.5 By 2025, create a new database to store salmon coded wire tag recovery and scale aging data.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW continues efforts to modernize the database used to store data for use in salmon management. CDFW is seeking funding for the next phase of database design and implementation.

TABLE 5 - Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability	
5.6 By 2025, evaluate existing state law and regulations and update where necessary to provide for real-time management actions for salmon populations.	**COMPLETE** CDFW and the Fish and Game Commission update inland salmon regulations annually. On May 6, 2026, the Fish and Game Commission unanimously adopted CDFW recommendations for salmon fishing seasons in the Klamath Basin and Central Valley for 2026. The Commission also adopted a Brown Trout sport fishery on the upper Sacramento River to reduce predation pressure on juvenile Chinook Salmon. For Commission consideration in summer 2026, CDFW is proposing new regulation language to include requiring angler participation in tissue sampling to support PBT for improved fisheries surveys and increasing flexibility to allow for shorter flow based closures when streams recover after falling below a low flow threshold. The package also includes year round closures above Chester Diversion Dam on the North Fork Feather River and above New Bullards Bar Dam on the North Yuba River to protect reintroduced spring-run Chinook Salmon (for more information, see Action 1.5).
5.7 By 2025, work with the Legislature and local entities to establish funding and begin implementing recommendations in the Stream Gaging Prioritization Plan 2022, developed pursuant to Senate Bill 19 of 2019. The goal of the plan is to create a network of new and revamped stream gages to track surface water data on a real-time basis to improve knowledge, increase management efficiencies, and help salmon.	**COMPLETE** In 2025, DWR, in coordination with CDFW, the Department of Conservation, and the State Water Board, completed review of applications submitted to the California Stream Gage Improvement Program (CalSIP) for funding to deploy, upgrade, or reactivate stream gages and publicly share the data. DWR awarded funding to approximately 40 Tribes, water districts, counties, GSAs, resource conservation districts, and federal agencies to add or improve about 160 stream gages statewide. More than $8 million has been allocated to support permitting, equipment installation, and gage calibration through June 30, 2027. The CA Stream Gage Improvement Map shows operational stream gages, approved sites that are in progress, and sites with pending applications.

TABLE 5 - Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability	
5.8 By 2026, create new data assessment tools to improve abundance forecast and harvest models, and evaluate performance of hatchery release strategies.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW and NMFS are participating in the Sacramento River Fall Chinook and Klamath River Technical Teams that are working on model improvements, forecasting approaches, and cohort reconstruction for the Central Valley and Klamath-Trinity River fall Chinook stocks. CDFW has developed an internal technical team tasked with developing a plan for implementing cohort reconstruction for Sacramento River fall Chinook Salmon to be used in-season for fisheries management. The goal is to develop an implementation plan with associated resource and coordination needs from partnering agencies to submit to CDFW's Salmon Executive Steering Committee by fall 2026.
5.9 By 2026, change the status quo approach to tagging and marking fish to increase fine-scale, real-time knowledge and provide database support for tagging and marking methods.	**IN PROGRESS** USFWS began pilot efforts to release fall-run Chinook Salmon fry in winter 2021 from Coleman National Fish Hatchery. CDFW began pilot efforts to release fall-run Chinook Salmon fry in 2023 from Feather River Fish Hatchery and Nimbus Fish Hatchery. Following these initial pilot efforts, CDFW and USFWS are implementing fall-run Chinook Salmon fry release projects at state and federal hatcheries across the Central Valley to supplement in-river production. CDFW, DWR, Reclamation, NMFS, and USFWS are in discussions on PBT implementation in the Central Valley to improve knowledge and inform future planning efforts (for more information, see Actions 4.3, 4.9, and 5.8).
5.10 By 2026, achieve the Pacific Fishery Management Council efforts to improve Sacramento and Klamath fall-run Chinook conservation objectives, harvest modeling, and abundance forecasting.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW and NMFS are participating in the Sacramento River Fall Chinook and Klamath River Technical Teams that are working on model improvements, forecasting approaches and cohort reconstruction for the Central Valley and Klamath-Trinity River Fall Chinook stocks (for more information, see Action 5.8). The Pacific Fishery Management Council continues its focus on revisiting harvest control rules, allowable exploitation rates, conservation objectives and other reference points for Sacramento fall Chinook Salmon. The Council is also working on a focused effort to amend the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan with an updated management framework for this stock expected to begin in 2027.

TABLE 5 - Transform Technology and Management Systems for Climate Adaptability	
5.11 By 2026, improve temperature modeling and information below important reservoirs, including Shasta Reservoir, and engage and coordinate with state and federal agencies to develop temperature management strategies to protect and enhance these runs.	**IN PROGRESS** The State Water Board continues to improve temperature modeling tools and capabilities to inform its decision-making. The State Water Board is currently considering temperature management actions as part of its efforts to update and implement the Bay-Delta Plan. The State Water Board released a revised draft Sacramento/Delta update to the Bay-Delta Plan in December 2025 and accepted comments until February 2026. State Water Board staff are developing the final proposed updates to the Bay-Delta Plan and a final draft Staff Report for Water Board consideration before the end of 2026 (for more information, see Actions 3.4 and 5.4). The State Water Board is also developing a regulation to implement the Lower San Joaquin River flow updates to the plan (approved in 2018), including considering actions to address temperatures for the protection of salmon. The State Water Board anticipates considering that regulation as early as 2026. In February 2026, Reclamation officially released the Water Temperature Modeling Platform (WTMP) developed to modernize the decision support tools for temperature management throughout the Central Valley Project system. During the rollout event, Reclamation conducted a training workshop, in collaboration with federal, state, and local agencies and professional organizations, to support the adoption of WTMP. WTMP will be used to inform future reservoir operations. The Delta Stewardship Council continues to award funding through the Delta Research Awards to research projects that inform water and environmental decision-making in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Together with Reclamation, the Delta Stewardship Council funded UC Davis and UC Santa Cruz through 2025 to evaluate the effects of climate change on the life history of spring-run Chinook Salmon. This research will inform climate-adapted conservation actions to support salmon in the future.

Mechoopda Tribe Treasurer He-Lo Ramirez speaking with the California Natural Resources Agency Secretary Wade Crowfoot on the importance of regrowth as the Tribe celebrates a land return in the Big Chico Creek watershed, which provides critical habitat for native salmon; Credit: Gita Chandra, CNRA.

6. Strengthen Partnerships

Lead Agency:
CDFW

Primary Partners:
Tribes, Water Boards, DWR, Counties, Local Agencies

Salmon have been a vital part of California's landscapes and cultures for generations, with California Native American Tribes bringing deep knowledge to conservation efforts. Partnerships with Tribes are advancing efforts through co-management agreements, reintroduction projects, and restoration initiatives. Collaborative work with universities further supports salmon conservation by providing essential research into key challenges, informing future management actions to ensure the species' resilience and survival.

6 STRENGTHEN PARTNERSHIPS

8 ACTIONS

4 IN PROGRESS

4 COMPLETE

TABLE 6 - Strengthen Partnerships	
6.1 By early 2024, engage with the United States Geological Survey/ Cal Poly Humboldt, California Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit to conduct critical research on climate change related impacts to salmon.	**COMPLETE** The California Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit (COOP Unit) is a cooperative effort between Cal Poly Humboldt, CDFW, U.S. Geological Survey, USFWS, and the Wildlife Management Institute for the advancement of research, graduate education, in-service training, technical assistance, public relations, and demonstration programs relating to fish and wildlife resources. A contract is in development to extend CDFW funding for basic operational support for the COOP Unit for an additional three years. The COOP Unit met in March 2026 for an annual meeting to discuss current projects and upcoming science priorities with an annual report anticipated in summer 2026. Over the last year, the COOP Unit has engaged in a number of salmon research efforts. Several publications supporting CDFW salmon management have been produced since last year, including work documenting Chinook Salmon returns following dam removal on the Klamath River and management strategies for reducing the intermediate host for *Ceratonova shasta*, a known parasite to salmon: Walden, M.A and N.A. Som 2025. Evaluating alternative methods for modeling trap efficiencies of out-migrating juvenile salmonids. North American Journal of Fisheries Management; Alexander, J.D. et al. 2026. Discharge magnitude drives interannual variation in distribution of the invertebrate host *Manayunkia occidentalis* of the salmon parasite *Ceratonova shasta*. Transactions of the American Fisheries Society.

TABLE 6 - Strengthen Partnerships	
6.2 By early 2024, form a working group with state and federal agencies, salmon industry, water districts, and Tribes to find holistic approaches and strategies to rebuild fall-run Chinook Salmon populations in the mainstem Sacramento River. Also, continue and improve current collaboratives like the Sacramento Valley Recovery Program, Reorienting to Recovery project, and Central Valley Salmon Habitat Partnership.	**COMPLETE** Fish agencies and partners completed the "Fall-run Chinook Salmon Action Plan," which is currently in review by federal partners prior to public release. The Bridge Group, a coalition of rice farmers, fisherman, water suppliers, and researchers, continued to meet in 2025 and 2026 and coordinated with USFWS on diversifying hatchery release strategies for fall-run Chinook Salmon. In 2026, release strategies implemented included 1) releasing fry into winter-flooded rice fields within the Yolo Bypass and 2) releasing juveniles into net pens within the Tehama-Colusa Canal forebay for imprinting prior to release in the San Francisco Bay. The Reorienting to Recovery (R2R) Project is a collaborative, science-driven project evaluating how hydrology, habitat, hatcheries, and harvest can be used in combination to recover winter-run Chinook Salmon. With funding from the Delta Stewardship Council 2021 Delta Research Awards, the R2R team released the final report for the R2R Project in 2024 followed by a presentation in 2025. Pending additional funding, the R2R team is interested in continuing and expanding this work by engaging additional stakeholders and doing additional modeling of scenarios.
6.3 By 2025, develop a regular co-management approach for hatchery operations with Tribes and federal partners consistent with the volitional reintroduction of salmon and steelhead to the upper Klamath River post-dam removal.	**COMPLETE** CDFW continues a regular process to work collaboratively with tribal and federal partners regarding the management approach for hatchery operations at Fall Creek Hatchery.

TABLE 6 - Strengthen Partnerships	
6.4 By 2025, incorporate tribal input into efforts to update and implement the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan for the protection of salmon and other native aquatic species, including consideration of the incorporation of tribal beneficial uses into the plan and traditional ecological knowledge into planning and implementation actions.	**IN PROGRESS** Draft updates to the Bay-Delta Plan include potential new provisions related to Tribal Beneficial Uses (TBUs), engagement and outreach, a tribal advisory group, traditional ecological knowledge, and harmful algal blooms. Final proposed updates to the Bay-Delta Plan are slated for Water Board consideration before the end of 2026 (for more information, see Actions 3.4 and 5.4).
6.5 By 2025, conduct outreach to Tribes in salmon habitat areas for discussions on cooperative management approaches.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW has reached agreements with several Tribes on take of fish for cultural and ceremonial purposes. In February 2025, CDFW entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Round Valley Tribes, Cal Trout, Trout Unlimited, and Humboldt, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties to support the water supply for 600,000 people and the salmon population on the Eel River. CDFW and fish agency partners are regularly discussing co-management, collaboration, and ancestral land return with Tribes that have ancestral ties to the Klamath River, including Tribes that now have anadromous fisheries that flow through their lands following dam removal. California has committed its support for the return of over 2,800 acres of land back to the Shasta Indian Nation as part of the post Klamath Dam removal recovery. In 2025, CDFW entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Karuk Tribe to co-manage the China Point Ecological Reserve, traditionally known as NÔovirukan, on the Klamath River. The Memorandum of Agreement supports the Karuk Tribe's ability to complete tribal stewardship, including implementing habitat restoration activities, conducting cultural resources protection activities, and utilizing traditional ecological knowledge.

TABLE 6 - Strengthen Partnerships	
6.6 By 2025, further strengthen partnership with UC Davis and federal agencies to protect and house juvenile Spring-run Chinook Salmon.	**COMPLETE** In partnership with CDFW, UC Davis continues to house juvenile spring-run Chinook Salmon to support a captive broodstock effort to prevent extirpation of the Mill, Deer, and Butte creek spring-run genetic lineages. CDFW provided grant funding through December 2026 with two years of additional funding provided by DWR through the State Water Project Incidental Take Permit. NMFS secured funding to complete genetics testing. A long-term captive broodstock plan for Core 1 spring-run Chinook Salmon populations is under development.
6.7 By 2026, enter into agreements with Tribes that wish to memorialize salmon management partnerships.	**IN PROGRESS** CDFW is in communication with several Tribes about management partnerships in the Eel, Smith, and Klamath River watersheds. One of the primary examples is in the Klamath River Basin where fish agencies and Tribes have had a long-standing collaborative process in managing the hatchery and reintroduction of salmon and steelhead. With the Klamath Dam Removal Project completed and restoration underway, new opportunities are emerging and tribal partnerships are being developed to support the newly accessible habitat.

TABLE 6 - Strengthen Partnerships	
6.8 By 2026, complete key elements of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program to build on the progress of 2019, when spring-run Chinook Salmon that migrated as juveniles out of the San Joaquin River returned as adults to spawn for the first time in 65 years. Projects include fish screens, passage structures around dams, and other infrastructure efforts in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.	**IN PROGRESS** Important progress for the San Joaquin River Restoration Program includes a comprehensive reintroduction and monitoring program and infrastructure development; including annual production releases of juveniles from the SCARF, trap and haul of returning adults around existing passage impediments, and extensive use of telemetry, rotary screw traps, and spawning surveys to inform population targets and future restoration efforts. Construction of the Arroyo Canal Fish Screen and Sack Dam Fish Passage Project are underway and concepts for passage at the Mendota Pool Bypass and Reach 2B Improvements Project, Eastside Bypass Control Structure Fish Passage Improvement (Rock Ramp), and San Joaquin River Control Structure continue to advance in planning or design. Together the Reclamation led Arroyo Canal Fish Screen and Sack Dam Fish Passage Project and the DWR led Rock Ramp at the Eastside Bypass Control Structure – scheduled for completion in 2028 – will open 46.2 miles of continuous, volitional salmon passage in the San Joaquin River system. While implementation of these projects is advancing, elevated springtime water temperatures and juvenile survival will remain a primary constraint on overall population viability. To address this, further investigation into temperature management strategies, including a variable-level outlet at Friant Dam to optimize use of Millerton Reservoir's cold-water pool, is recommended, along with complementary actions to improve survival and habitat conditions for outmigrating juveniles.

Feather River Fish Hatchery underwater viewing window; Credit: DWR.

CONCLUSION

California continued to make progress this year in furthering the goals outlined in the *Salmon Strategy*. Partners throughout the state are removing barriers, restoring habitat, improving flow, reconnecting rivers, and modernizing hatcheries to give salmon a better chance to survive and thrive. Last year, 7% of the Salmon Strategy's 71 actions were in the planning phase, 67% were in progress, and 26% were complete. This year, 49% are complete and all remaining actions are in progress. California's resource departments will continue to drive progress to advance priority actions and build upon completed actions that are components of long-term initiatives.

Proposition 4, a $10 billion Climate Bond passed by voters in November 2024, presents an opportunity to advance Salmon Strategy priorities in the years to come. The bond includes $50 million for riverine stewardship, $100 million for streamflow enhancement, $50 million for salmon reintroduction to cold water habitat in the Sacramento and San Joaquin River watersheds, $75 million to remove outdated or obsolete dams, and $25 million for conservation hatcheries for Central Valley Chinook Salmon. Hundreds of millions of dollars are included in the bond for habitat restoration across the state, a portion of which could support salmon restoration or connectivity projects.

Salmon populations are a fraction of their historic levels. As climate disruption overlays the land use and water management stressors facing California salmon, urgency is needed to recover salmon populations. California's commitment to salmon is long standing. While the state has made strides towards improving conditions for salmon, there is more work ahead. California's resource departments will continue to work in partnership with local, state, federal, and tribal partners to ensure thriving salmon populations for future generations.