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## State Water Resources Control Board

### **NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF AND A BOARD WORKSHOP TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE SECOND REVISED DRAFT INITIAL BIOLOGICAL GOALS FOR LOWER SAN JOAQUIN RIVER FLOW OBJECTIVES**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is seeking written public comments on the second revised draft initial biological goals for fall-run Chinook salmon in the lower San Joaquin River and its three salmon-bearing tributaries, the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Rivers (collectively “LSJR”). These draft biological goals were developed pursuant to the requirements in the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Estuary (Bay-Delta Plan or Plan), as amended on December 12, 2018. Written comment letters on the Bay-Delta Plan second revised draft initial biological goals report must be received by **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, May 12, 2023**. More detail is described below under “Submission of Written Comments”.

**IN ADDITION, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the State Water Board will hold a Board Workshop to receive oral public comments on the second revised draft initial biological goals. **A quorum of the State Water Board members may attend the workshop, but the State Water Board will take no action.** The workshop is scheduled to be held:

**May 3, 2023**

**Time will be provided with release of Board Agenda**

**Joe Serna Jr. CalEPA Headquarters Building**

**Coastal Hearing Room – Second Floor**

**1001 I Street Sacramento, CA 95814**

**And via Video and Teleconference (For public commenters)**

**Video and Teleconference Option:** This meeting will occur with both a physical meeting location with an option for the public to participate from a remote location.

- For those who only wish to watch the meeting, the webcast remains available at either <https://www.youtube.com/user/BoardWebSupport/> or <https://video.calepa.ca.gov/> (closed captioning available) and should be used **UNLESS** you intend to comment.

- For members of the public who wish to comment on an agenda item or are presenting to the Board, additional information about participating telephonically or via the remote meeting option will be available at least 10 days before the meeting at: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_info/remote\\_meeting/](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/remote_meeting/)

Any person desiring to receive future notices about changes to the date, time, location, or format of the public meeting should sign up for the email distribution list, as described below under “Future Notices”.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Bay-Delta Plan establishes water quality objectives for the reasonable protection of beneficial uses in the Bay-Delta watershed, a program of implementation to achieve those objectives, and monitoring, evaluation, and study provisions. The State Water Board approved updates to the LSJR flow components of the Bay-Delta Plan for the reasonable protection of fish and wildlife in 2018. As part of the update, the State Water Board committed to the development of biological goals for the LSJR. The State Water Board also committed to establishing a Stanislaus, Tuolumne, and Merced Working Group (STM Working Group) to be a watershed group and forum for facilitating coordination among the State Water Board and interested water agencies and other stakeholders who have expertise in LSJR issues. The Bay-Delta Plan requires that the State Water Board seek recommendations from the STM Working Group on the biological goals.

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

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

## **PUBLIC PROCESS TO DATE**

A draft initial biological goals report was released on September 20, 2019, with a comment period extending through October 25, 2019. A revised draft initial biological goals report (2022 revised draft) was released on June 24, 2022, with a comment period extending through August 11, 2022. A workshop on the 2022 revised draft was also held on August 4, 2022, to receive input and recommendations on possible revisions and improvements to the revised draft initial biological goals from members of

the STM Working Group and the public. Two STM Working Group meetings were held on November 21, 2022 and December 7, 2022, to seek additional recommendations and facilitate technical dialogues with STM Working Group members and other interested persons. A third STM Working Group meeting was held on March 9, 2023, to facilitate discussion with STM Working Group members and receive additional public comment. An additional STM meeting is also planned for April 21, 2023, to discuss the second revised draft initial biological goals report. This is the third public draft of proposed biological goals, and addresses public comments received on the 2022 revised draft as well as input and recommendations from the STM Working Group received to date.

### **PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

Parties that would like to make a presentation at the workshop should inform State Water Board staff of their intent to participate and submit their presentation **no later than 12:00 p.m. (noon) on April 26, 2023**. Presentations should be kept to 10 minutes or less. Presentations must be in PowerPoint format and should not include any transitions or external media sources. Please be aware that State Water Board staff will be sharing and advancing all presentation slides during the workshop. If multiple speakers wish to organize as a panel, please identify the number and names of all panelists. For guidance regarding presentations to the Board, please go to: [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_info/meetings/board\\_presentations.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/meetings/board_presentations.html).

Other public comments should be limited to no more than 5 minutes. Depending on the number of speakers, the State Water Board may further limit oral comments in order to provide all speakers with the opportunity to comment.

### **SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN COMMENTS**

The State Water Board will accept both written and oral comments on the second revised draft initial biological goals. To submit written comments, please use the subject line: **“Comment Letter – Second Revised Draft Initial Biological Goals”**. Written comments must be received by **12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, May 12, 2023**, and should be submitted via email to [LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov).

At the Board Workshop, commenters will be given an opportunity to make oral comments to the Board or to summarize and supplement their written materials. If you would like to provide oral comments, please follow the remote participation guidelines available at:

[https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board\\_info/remote\\_meeting/#provide\\_comments](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_info/remote_meeting/#provide_comments).

### **DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY**

The Second Revised Draft Initial Biological Goals Report is available on the [Implementation Activities for Lower San Joaquin River Flows](#) webpage. You may also request a copy of the Second Revised Draft Initial Biological Goals Report by contacting State Water Board staff at: [LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov).

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

For more information regarding LSJR flow objectives, implementation, and biological goals, visit the Bay-Delta Plan Update and Implementation of the [Lower San Joaquin River](#) webpage. For information on other Bay-Delta Plan update and implementation activities, please visit the [San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary Bay-Delta Watershed Efforts](#) webpage.

### **FUTURE NOTIFICATIONS**

Any person desiring to receive future notices concerning the Bay-Delta Plan must sign up for the public information distribution list. To sign up for the public information distribution list, access the [Email Subscription Signup webpage](#). Under “Subscription Topics”, select the box for “Bay Delta Notices” (located within the section entitled “Water Rights”), click “Submit”, and then provide the required information.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

If you have limitations hearing or speaking, you may contact the California Relay Service at (800) 735-2929 (teletypewriter) or (800) 735-2922 (voice).

### **CONTACT**

Individuals who require special accommodations are requested to contact staff at [LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov) prior to the workshop. If you have any questions regarding this notice or related efforts, you may send an email to [LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:LSJR-SD-Comments@waterboards.ca.gov).