

Putah Creek Farmers Workshop

Tuesday, February 20th, 9:30 - 11:30 AM

Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee

MEETING OVERVIEW

Today's Agenda

9:30-9:50 AM <i>20 min</i>	Welcome & Meeting Overview	Juliana Birkhoff, Facilitator
9:50-10:10 AM <i>20 min</i>	Introductions & Putah Creek Water Trends	Max Stevenson, Streamkeeper, LPCCC
10:10-10:20 AM <i>10 min</i>	Putah Creek Water Management Overview	Max Stevenson, Streamkeeper
10:20-11:20 AM <i>60 min</i>	Gathering Input	Participants
11:20-11:30 AM <i>10 min</i>	Next Steps	Juliana Birkhoff, Facilitator

Meeting Purpose

- Shared understanding of Putah Creek challenges
- LPCCC & SCWA roles and responsibilities
- Identify farmers' creek water management issues
- Agree how to increase information
- Identify possible solutions to explore

Ground Rules

- **Electronic Courtesy:** Silence cell phones
- **Be Comfortable:** Help yourself to refreshments and take a break if you need
- **Humor is Welcome:** But not at someone's expense
- **Stay focused on Meeting Purpose:** Lots of related issues, but focus on Putah Creek water management tonight
- **Use Common Courtesy:** No interruptions or judging others motives or actions
- **Treat each other with Respect:** Learn from other perspectives
- **All Ideas have Value**

INTRODUCTIONS

Who are we?



PUTAH CREEK ACCORD

**“Portions of Putah Creek
parched,” *Davis
Enterprise*, July 12, 1989**

Courtesy of Climate Confidential and The Davis
Enterprise, “Putah Creek Legacy” website
(<http://www.putahcreeklegacy.com/chapter-one-drought.html>)



Davis Enterprise 7/12/89 Photo by Todd Hammond
Stream flows are down to a trickle or worse at the Putah Creek Reserve, southwest of Davis, where the Camp Putah summer program is held.

Portions of Putah Creek parched

2000 Putah Creek Accord Established

- 1990's Creek Went Dry - Lawsuit
- Additional Base Flows
- Additional Salmon Flows
- Lower Putah Creek Coordinating Committee
- Streamkeeper Position

Who Serves on the LPCCC?

2023 LPCCC Roster Adopted January 12, 2023		
	5 Members Each County	Alternates
Solano		
SCWA	Chris Lee	John Vasquez
SID	JD Kluge	Cary Keaton
Maine Prairie		
Vacaville	Justen Cole	
Fairfield	Michael Hether	
Vallejo		
Suisun City		Nora Flynn
County of Solano		
Landowner	Herb Wimmer	John Hasbrook
Yolo		
PCC	Turid Reid	Liz Reay
City of Davis	Patrick Huber	John McNerny
UC Davis	Andrew Fulks	JP Marie
City of Winters	Carol Scianna	Bill Biasi
Landowner		
County of Yolo	Tara Thronson	Lucas Frerichs
<i># of members</i>	10	9

The LPCCC represents the Boards of Supervisors of Solano and Yolo Counties; the Cities of Davis, Fairfield, Suisun, Vacaville, Vallejo and Davis; Solano County Water Agency; Solano Irrigation District; Maine Prairie Water District; the University of California, Davis; Putah Creek Council; and riparian landowners.

The background of the slide is a photograph of Davis Putah Creek Nature Park. It features a large, dark metal truss bridge spanning across a lush green area. In the foreground, there are numerous purple lupine flowers in full bloom, some in sharp focus and others blurred. The sky is a clear, bright blue. The overall scene is vibrant and natural.

**Huge Successes
Since the 2000
Accord**

Davis Putah Creek Nature Park

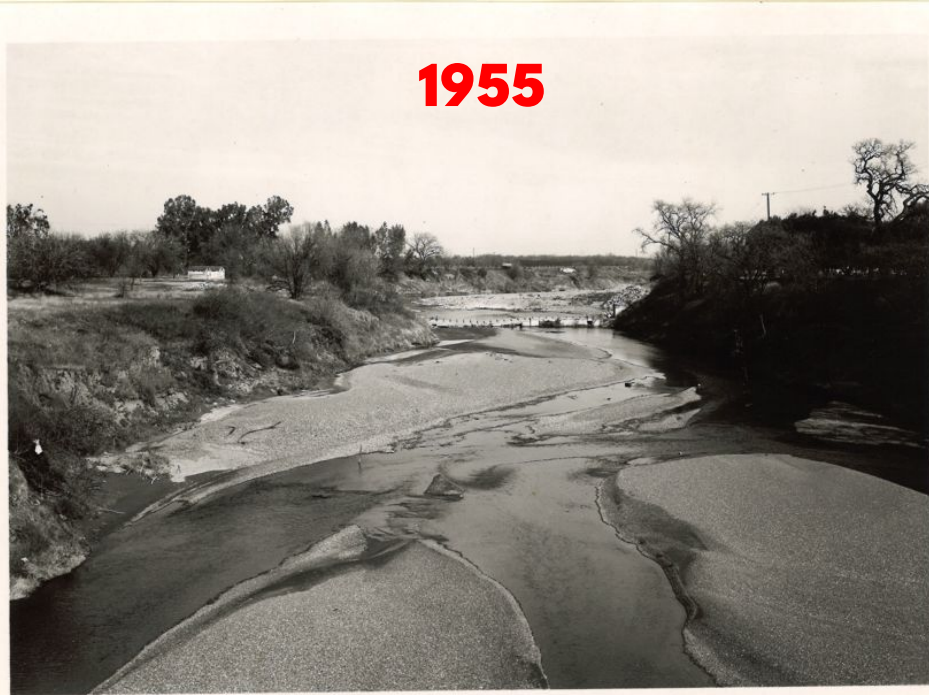
Thousands of Salmon Spawning

\$25 Million in Restoration Projects

A Community that Works Together

Putah Creek Is Different Because of Flow Differences

1955



2022




SO-619-R2 Diversion Dam. Putah Creek downstream.
View from Station 99/25 approximately 260 feet left
of base line looking downstream along Putah Creek.
From Railroad Bridge deck.
Solano Project
E. S. Ensor, Photo.

Region 2
February 15, 1955

Adult Spawning Salmon

YEAR	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
# of Adult Spawning Salmon				8	200-500	500-700	1500-1700	700	483+	48	52*	4	1000

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

An aerial photograph of a winding creek, identified as Putah Creek, flowing through a landscape of dry, brownish grass and scattered rocks. The water is a deep blue-green color. A large white rectangular box is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the text "Why are we focusing on water flows in Putah Creek?".

**Why are we focusing on
water flows in Putah
Creek?**



**Emerging
Putah Creek
Concerns**

Uncertain Water Predictability

Fair Creek Use

Compliance with Regulations

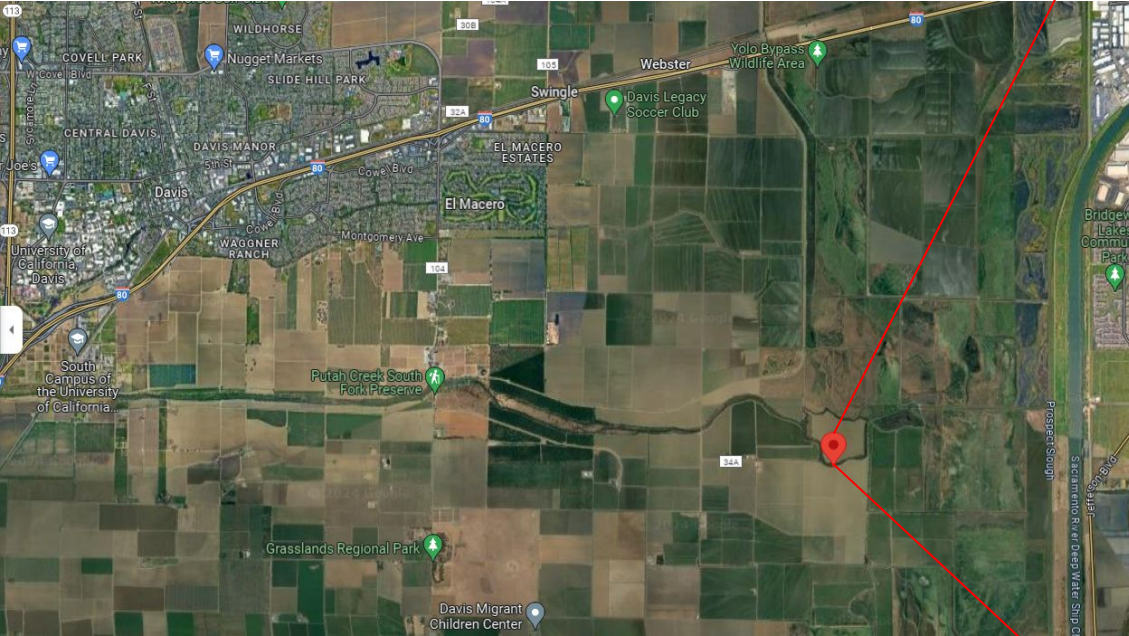
Diminishing Water Quality

Measurement Issues

Flow Compliance Points in Putah Creek near the Toe Drain

- 5/11/2023 no flow over the Boards at Los Rios Check Dam (LRCD) (Hyer)
- 5/15/2023 low flow over boards, estimate maybe 3-5 cfs (Stevenson)
- 5/16/2023 no flow over the boards at LRCD (Cuetara)
- 5/19/2023 low flow over boards, estimate maybe 3-5 cfs (Stevenson)
- 5/31/2023 low flow over boards, estimate maybe 3-5 cfs (Stevenson)

November, 2023 (mid-salmon run)



PUTAH CREEK COMPLEXITY

Yolo County
Bd. Of Supervisors

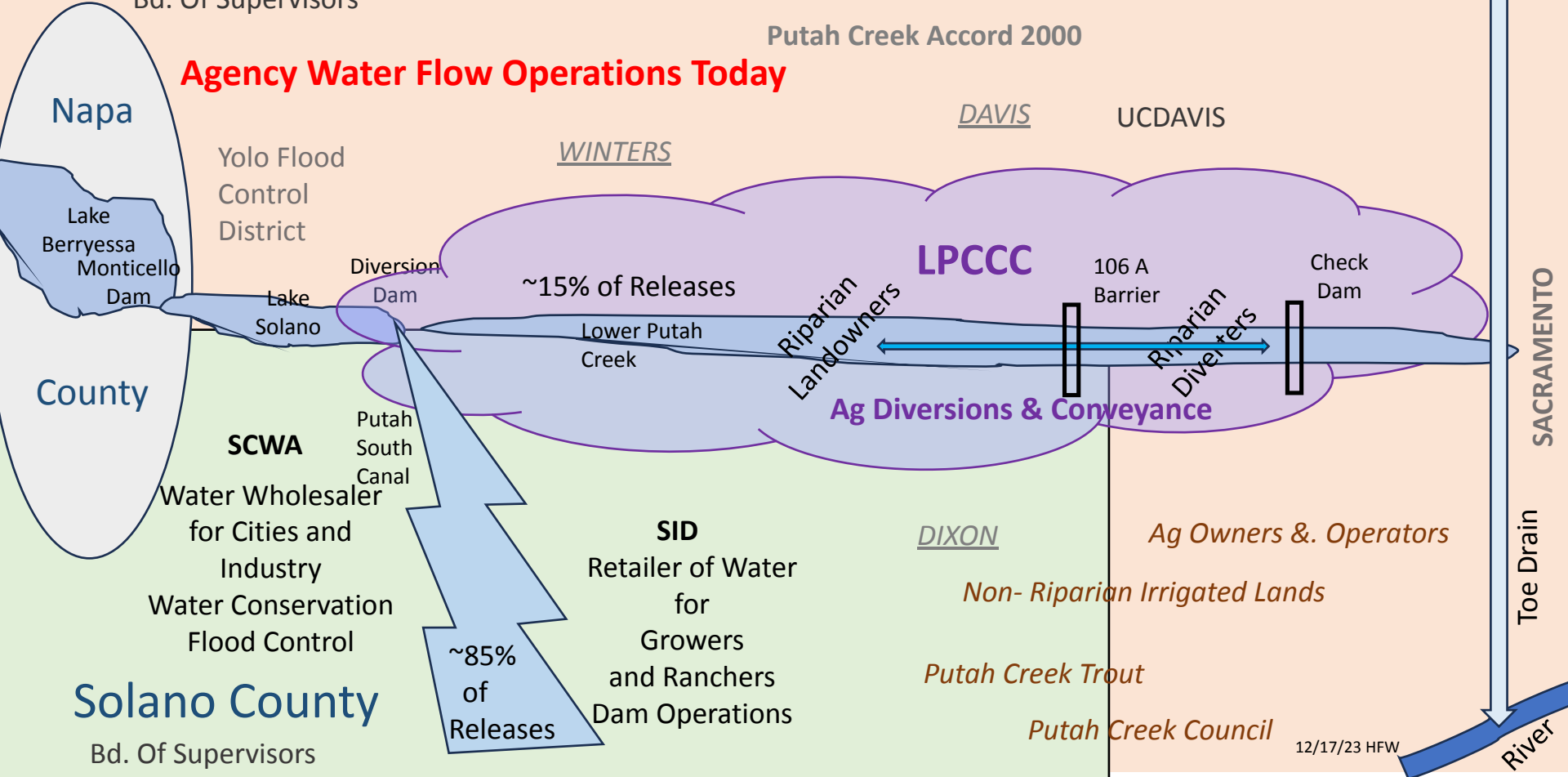
CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

CA Dept. of Water Resources

Putah Creek Accord 2000

Agency Water Flow Operations Today



Napa

County

Yolo Flood Control District

Lake Berryessa
Monticello Dam

Lake Solano

Diversion Dam

WINTERS

~15% of Releases

Lower Putah Creek

Riparian Landowners

LPCCC

DAVIS

UCDAVIS

106 A Barrier

Riparian Diversifiers

Check Dam

Ag Diversions & Conveyance

SCWA

Putah South Canal

Water Wholesaler for Cities and Industry
Water Conservation
Flood Control

SID

Retailer of Water for Growers and Ranchers
Dam Operations

DIXON

Ag Owners &. Operators

Non- Riparian Irrigated Lands

Putah Creek Trout

Putah Creek Council

Solano County

Bd. Of Supervisors

~85% of Releases

12/17/23 HFW

SACRAMENTO

Toe Drain

River

2000 Putah Creek Accord Flow Compliance Locations



Daily Required Flows at the Compliance Points



Daily Required Flows	
Month	Average Flow (cfs)
October	20
November	25
December	25
January	25
February	16
March	26
April	46
May	43
June	43
July	43
August	34
September	20

Daily Required Flows	
Month	Average Flow (cfs)
October	5
November	10
December	10
January	15
February	15
March	25
April	30
May	20
June	15
July	15
August	10
September	5

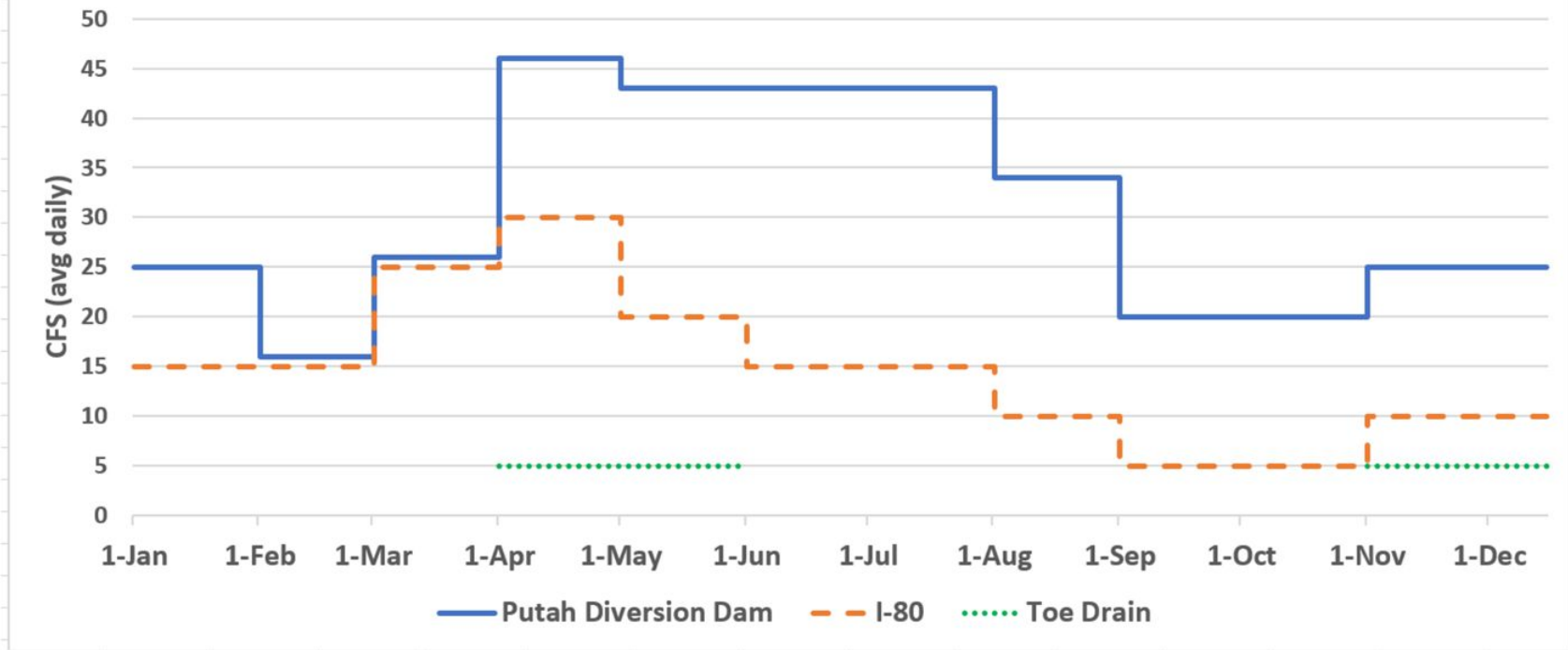
Daily Required Flows	
Month	Average Flow (cfs)
October	> 0 *
November	5
December	5
January	> 0 *
February	> 0 *
March	> 0 *
April	5
May	5
June	> 0 *
July	> 0 *
August	> 0 *
September	> 0 *

*Continuous Flow

Accord Exhibit A - Solano Project Releases and Instream Flows for Lower Putah Creek

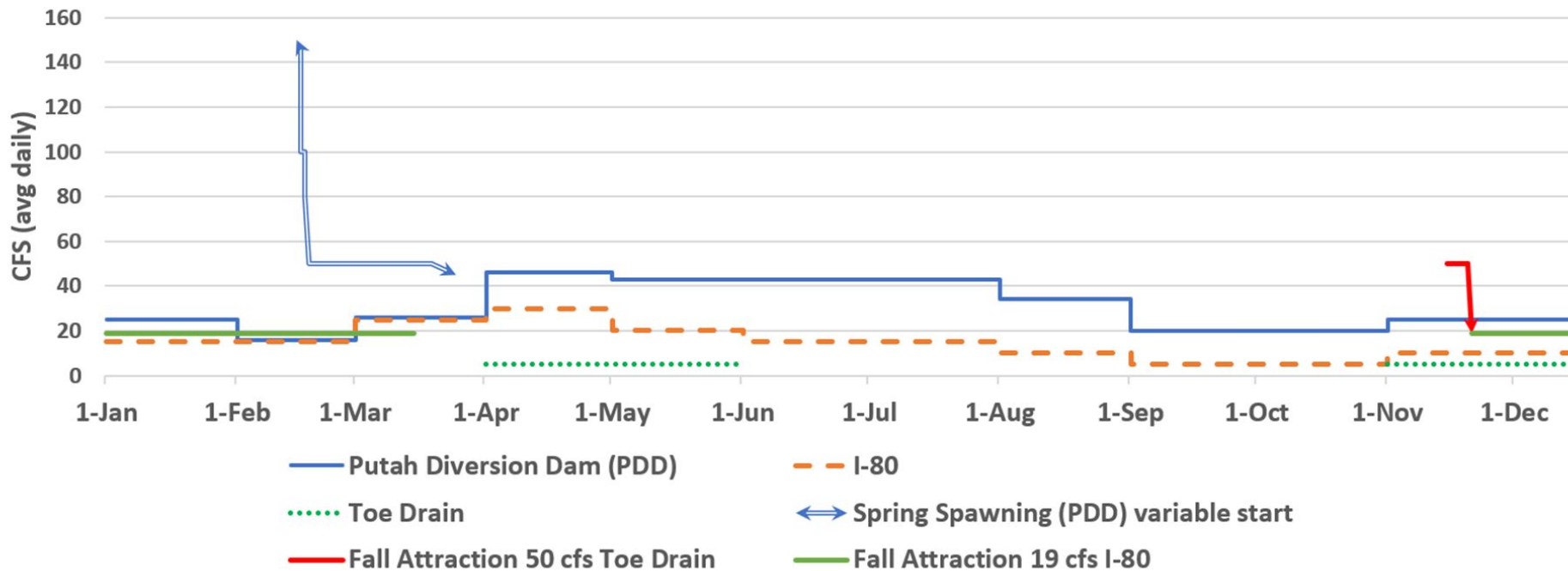
Minimum Flow Requirements in Putah Creek

(not spring spawning flows, not fall attraction, not drought drought rules)



Flow Requirements in Putah Creek

Base flows plus fall and spring pulse flows



Flow Compliance Point in Putah Creek near the Toe Drain

May 8, 2022



May 25, 2023



Putah Creek Conveyance & Wheeling Information

180 - MACE

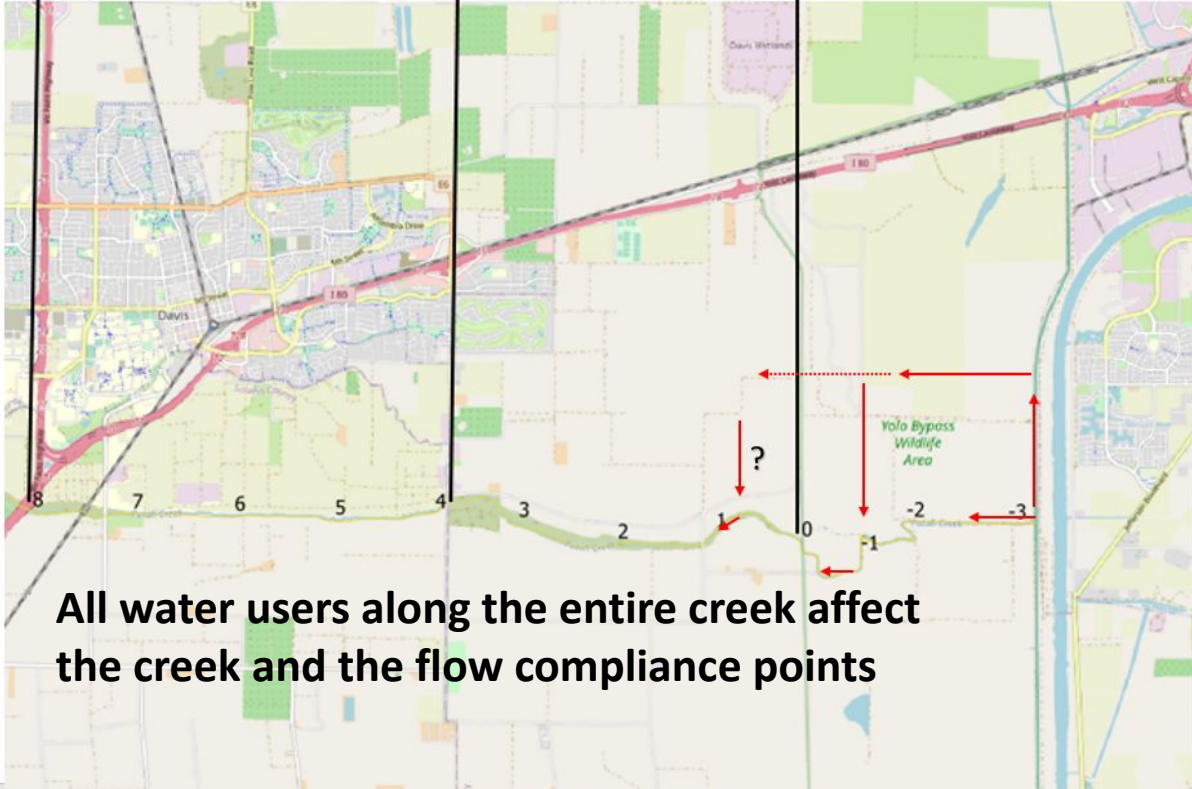
4 miles
I-80 to Mace Blvd.

MACE - RM0

4 miles
Mace Blvd. to River Mile 0

RM0 - TOE

3.26 miles
River Mile 0 to Toe Drain



All water users along the entire creek affect the creek and the flow compliance points

Flow direction In Summer

Putah Creek is used for Conveyance and Wheeling

Why You Are Here

LPCCC understands that creek water is shared by many, agriculture is not the problem but can help understand why there are flow compliance problems.

- Less agriculture run off reduces flow in creek?
- Higher temperatures lead to more evaporation?
- Less groundwater in creek?

SCWA has to provide water in the creek, including environmental flows.

Riparian farmers have a right to pump water for irrigation from the creek and a responsibility to measure and report their flows.

Need your help to figure out the system and to coordinate better.

GATHERING INPUT


Putah Creek Management Information Gaps

- The Creek is a shared resource that needs to be more effectively managed (water balance). This can only happen with accurate up-to-date flow information (inflows and outflows).
 - We understand ag operations use groundwater, purchased water, etc.
 - Understand that ag operations use Putah Creek to convey water from location to location
- SCWA cannot fulfill its environmental flow requirements and regulatory responsibilities without Pumpers measuring and reporting water inflows and outflows.
- SCWA could measure in more places in the creek, but two challenges:
 - Need agreement to gather flow information
 - Access to places to conduct measurements

Questions for Pumpers

- When do you need water for your operations?
 - Does the timing of this water requirement change from year to year? Crop rotation? Rainfall? Summer temperatures?
 - How do you estimate the amount of water that you need?
- Do you have concerns about having more water measurements?
 - Do you currently measure your flow (in and outflow)?
 - Are there any barriers you face with measuring your flows? Or implementing flow meters?
- Anything SCWA or LPCCC should know about your agricultural operations that would help us share water more effectively for your concern?
- Do you have any ideas to improve fish habitat?

PCWM

An aerial photograph showing a lush green forest with a small stream flowing through it. The forest is bordered by large, open agricultural fields, likely corn or soybean, which appear as a grid of brown and tan patches. The lighting suggests a late afternoon or early morning setting, with long shadows and a warm glow.

PCWM's objective is to identify a suite of strategies to address Putah Creek challenges that are informed by:

- **Stakeholder engagement**
- **Technical and scientific information**
- **Laws and regulations**

Putah Creek Water Management (PCWM) Initiative

The Goals of PCWM



**Support
Agriculture's Need
for Water
Information to Plan
their Operations**



**Fair Creek
Management**



**Comply with
Water
Regulations**

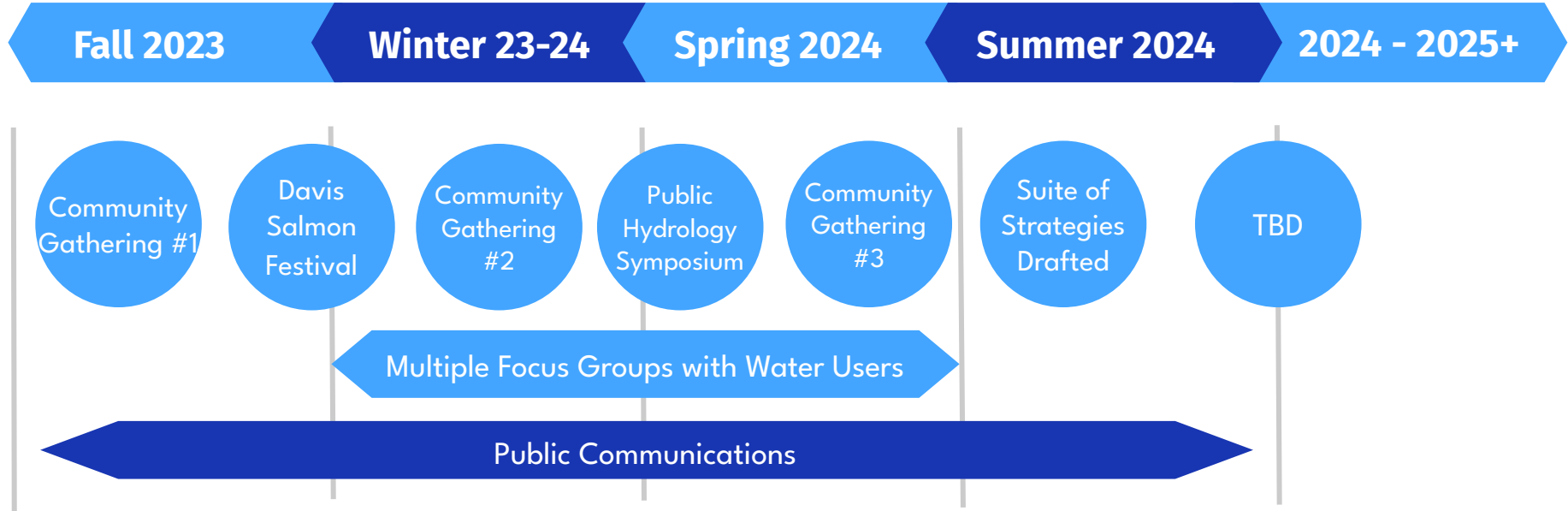


**Maintain
Environmental
Flows**

Ideas for Strategies So Far...

- Communication & Coordination mechanisms
- Infrastructure fixes
- Sourcing other water supplies
- Coordinating across agencies for recharge, water conveyance etc.
- Improving and sharing measurements
- Accounting for transitions in Landownership & Lessee's
- Fish passage improvements
- Coordinate on grant funds for mult benefits

PCWM Initiative Roadmap





THANK YOU!

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