Fish and Habitat Collaborative Effort (FAHCE)

Stream Planning and Operations Committee Meeting

March 12, 2026

Valley Water

Agenda

- Update on Stevens Creek and Guadalupe River Water Rights Change Petitions
- Monitoring Updates
- Next steps

Stevens Creek and Guadalupe River Water Rights Change Petitions

- Submitted an Agreement to Resolve Protest to the State Water Resource Control Board (Water Board) on 1/16/2026
- The Agreement proposes to add new conditions to the Water Right Licenses
- Met with the Water Board on 2/12/2026

New Fish and Habitat Restoration Plan (FHRP) a.k.a. “Implementation Plan”

- Based on the Final EIR’s Appendix A
- Concise, action-oriented, focused on FAHCE-Plus
- Adds more fish species
- Adds new Biological and Ecological Objectives
- Consensus-seeking Adaptive Management
- Submit an Initial Five-Year Update of the FHRP to the Water Board

Existing Monitoring Objectives

- Board-approved FAHCE-Plus
- Focused on flow objectives
- SMART= Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely

Table 4. Existing Compliance and Monitoring Objectives and Actions

Stevens Creek					
Number	**Relevant Natural Resource Goals**	**SMART MOs**	**Monitoring Methods**	**Monitoring Period and Frequency**	**Triggers for Adaptive Management Actions**
STV-01-C	Maintain flows in Stevens Creek that support steelhead habitat during the winter and spring base flow period, in accordance with the FAHCE Plus rule curves.	Target winter base flow releases based on reservoir storage[1]: • 3 cfs, 5 cfs, 8 cfs and 16 cfs in compliance with winter base rule curves set to storage within Stevens Creek Reservoir between Jan. 1 to Apr. 30, except for deviations during flood risk reductions releases, annually. • Minimum low storage release of 1 cfs and 0.5 cfs targeted when storage is below the lowest winter base flow curve.	Monitor reservoir storage level within Stevens Creek Reservoir (ALERT 4009) and 3-day rolling average of streamflow at Gauge No. 5044 for compliance of storage and flow magnitude Jan. 1 to Apr. 30, annually.	Immediately after implementation, annual monitoring during winter base flow period (Jan. 1 to Apr. 30) will occur for the duration of the Program.	From Jan. 1 to Apr. 30, winter base flow curve storage met at ALERT 4009, and target release level not maintained at Gauge 5044[2].

New Objectives- More Species to Consider

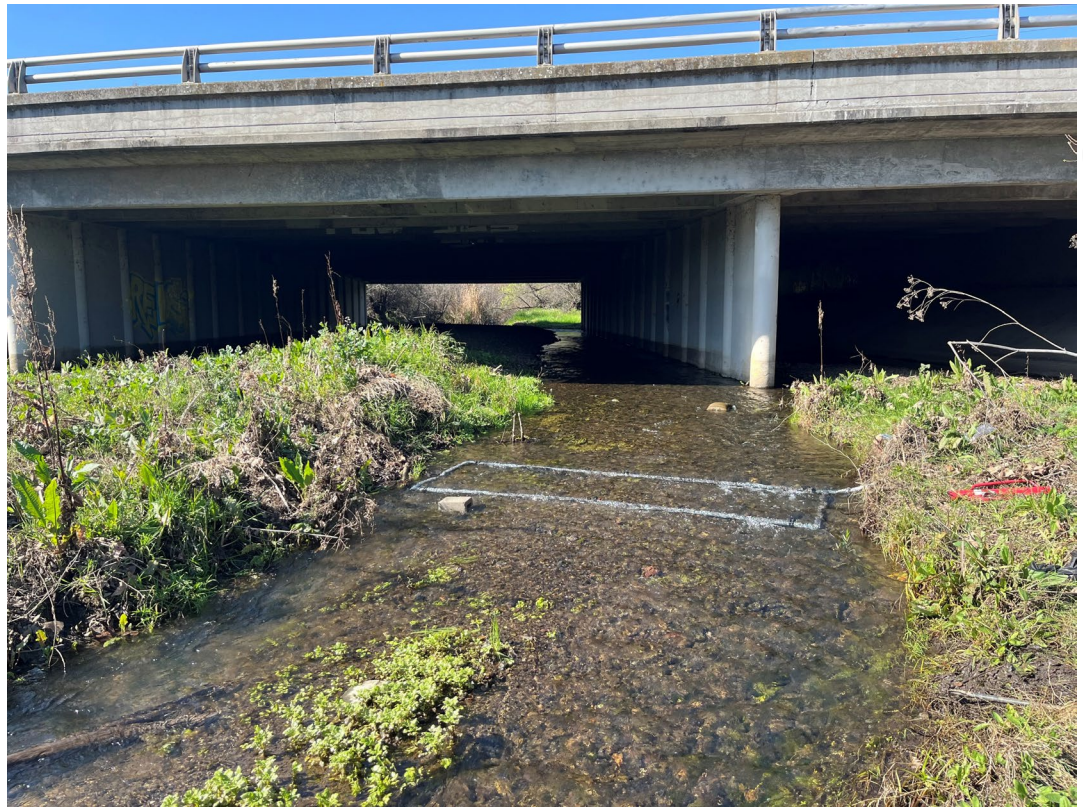
Species	General Life Cycle Description	Habitat by Life State
Pacific Lamprey	Anadromous, spawning in fresh water, larvae rear in streams, adults migrate to the ocean to feed parasitically, then return to fresh water to spawn and die.	**Eggs & Larvae:** Freshwater streams, burrowed in sediment. **Juvenile:** Migrate to the ocean to feed on fish. **Adult:** Migrate back to freshwater streams to spawn.
Prickly Sculpin	Mostly fresh water, sometimes brackish. Spend days hiding under rocks and logs, feeding on invertebrates at night.	**Juveniles:** Shallower, slower water than adults. Stream margins with submerged vegetation, cobble, gravel. **Adults:** Rocky bottoms of ponds and streams. Lower reaches of bays and estuaries
Sacramento Hitch	Omnivorous, feeding on zooplankton and insects near the surface of streams or in open water. Primarily fresh water, tolerant of some brackish conditions. Spawning occurs in rivers.	**Juvenile:** Shallow, vegetated areas near the shore of lakes. **Adult:** Slow, warm water of lakes and quiet stretches of rivers. Also found in cool, clear, low-gradient streams.
Sacramento Sucker	Bottom dwellers, feeding on a mix of algae, detritus, and invertebrates. Thrive in various freshwater conditions, including streams, lakes, and mild estuaries. Move from pools to riffles to spawn.	**Young larvae:** Hiding in gravel substrate of streams or lake tributaries. **Juvenile:** Forage along the bottom of stream banks. **Adult:** Deeper water during the day, feeding during twilight hours. Occupy pools, runs, or riffles with cover from predators.
Southern Coastal Roach	Highly adapted to intermittent streams and can persist in fragmented or seasonal habitats. Feed on small invertebrates, algae, and detritus. Spawn in spring to early summer. Lay adhesive eggs in shallow, slow-moving or still waters over gravel, rocks, or submerged vegetation.	**Larvae/Juveniles:** Warm, shallow backwaters or pool edges with cover (vegetation, woody debris). **Adults:** Small streams, perennial pools, and low-gradient creeks with warm water. They tolerate seasonal drying by seeking residual pools or deeper refugia.
Riffle Sculpin	Headwater rivers and streams with cold water and adequate flow with rock or gravel substrate; adults occupy fairly shallow, fast flowing water with adequate velocity refugia; spawns under rocks in swift riffles or inside cavities in submerged woody debris; all life stages are benthic and do not disperse far from their natal nest.	**Larvae/Juveniles:** Shallow, fast-flowing riffles and runs with coarse substrate and interstitial spaces for cover. **Adults:** Same riffle and run habitats, often in cold, well-oxygenated headwater streams with rocky bottoms and minimal sedimentation.
Chinook Salmon	Anadromous, spawning in freshwater rivers, rearing as juveniles in fresh water before migrating to the ocean to mature, and returning to fresh water to spawn and die.	**Eggs & Fry:** Redd (nest) in gravel of freshwater streams. **Parr:** Freshwater streams, feeding on insects. **Smolt:** Migrate downstream to the sea, adapting to saltwater. **Adult:** Ocean, feeding and growing. Return to natal streams to spawn.
Steelhead/Rainbow Trout	Exhibit diverse life history patterns, including an anadromous form (steelhead) and fresh water residents (rainbow trout). Anadromous steelhead spawn in fresh water, rear as juveniles in fresh water, migrate to the ocean, and return to fresh water to spawn.	**Eggs & Juvenile:** Freshwater streams, similar habitat to other salmonids. **Adult (steelhead):** Ocean. Return to fresh water to spawn. **Adult (rainbow trout):** Fresh water.
Longfin Smelt	Multi-stage life cycle with habitat needs that vary by stage. Adults migrate into and spawn in fresh or slightly brackish water typically from October to April. Spawning sites are usually in tidal reaches of rivers or streams, with sandy gravel bottoms. Newly hatched larvae are buoyant and disperse with currents. Larval recruitment is positively tied to freshwater inflow to the estuarine environment. Larvae live in a wide range of salinities but tend to aggregate in low salinity environments (0-6ppt).	**Eggs:** Adhesive **Larvae:** Buoyant, drift downstream and aggregate in brackish water. **Juvenile:** Brackish waters. **Sub-Adults:** Saltwater. **Adults**: Bays and saltwater habitats.

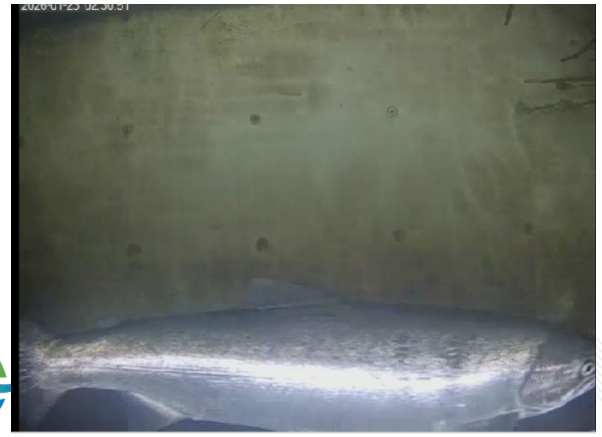
Biological and Ecological Objectives

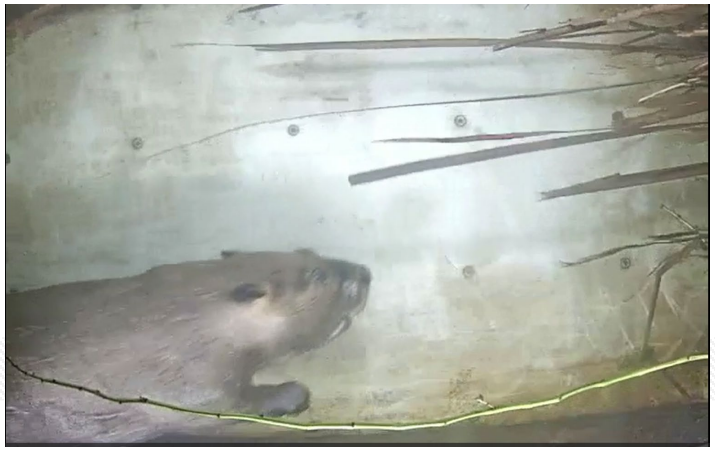
- Commitment to develop new **SMART** objectives with AMT
- Biological: Abundance, life history, productivity, and spatial extent for the new species (i.e., number of spawners)
- Ecological: Establish targets for habitat qualities and quantities that would support Biological Objectives (i.e., acres of spawning habitat)
- New objectives would be included in the Initial Five-Year Update to the Water Board

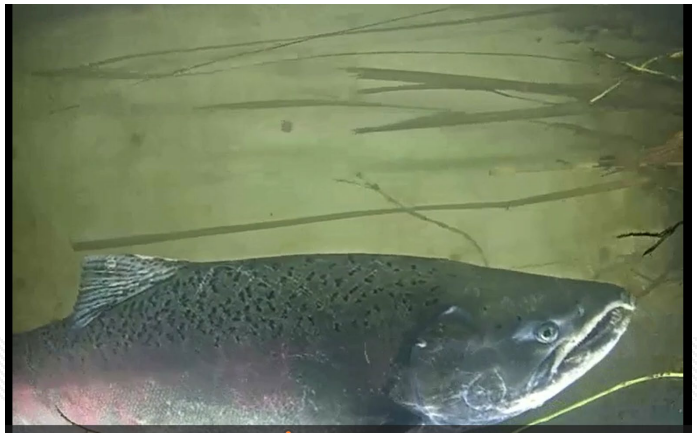
Monitoring Updates

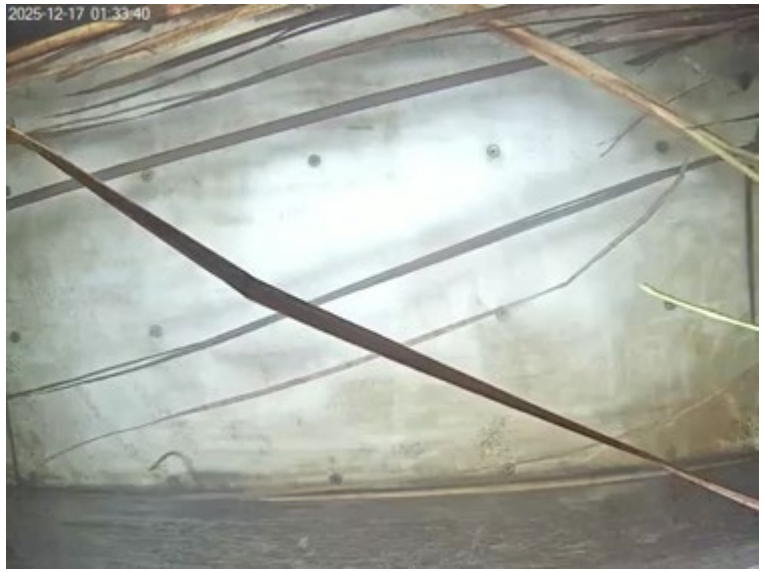
1. Migration monitoring using PIT Tags
2. Temperature monitoring
3. Biotactic Camera at Stevens Creek
4. Spawning habitat transects
5. Improvements on Guadalupe Vaki Riverwatcher











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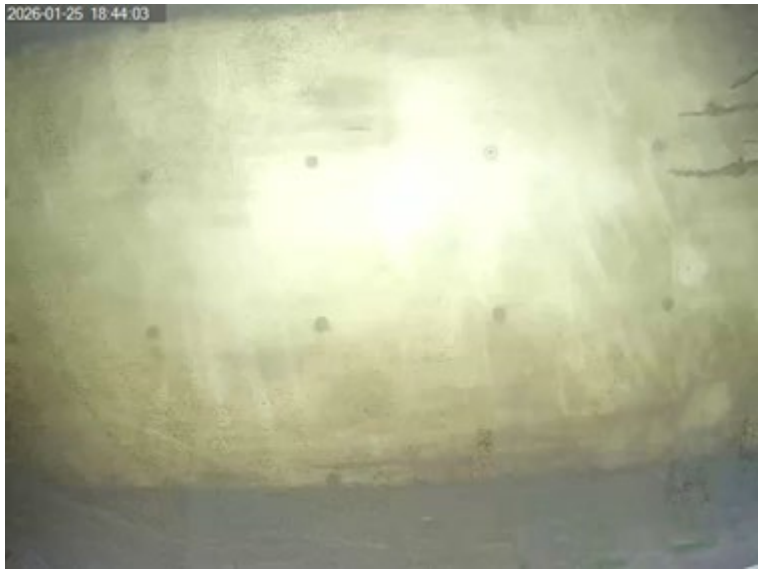

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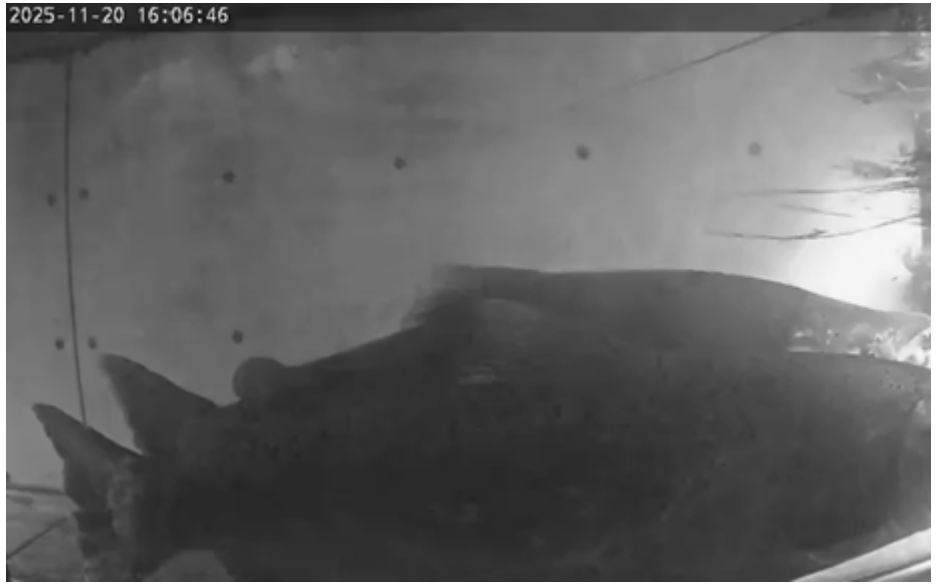

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Next Steps

- FAHCE Annual Report for 2024-2025 will be released in mid-March 2026
- Additional studies to support the development new objectives
- Work with the Water Board to complete the water rights amendments

QUESTIONS

Valley Water

Clean Water • Healthy Environment • Flood Protection