

COASTAL RESIDENTS:

Help Maintain Stream Flow this Summer for Threatened and Endangered Fish

Water year 2021 is shaping up to be another very dry year, following on the similarly dry water year 2020. Precipitation levels are less than half of normal across much of the Central and South Coast regions. The coastal area encompassing southern Monterey and northern San Luis Obispo counties has fared slightly better, but is still well below normal. In fact, much of the California Coast is currently characterized as being in either severe or extreme drought. With the wettest months already past, the likelihood of making up current deficits is very low. As a result, flows in most streams in Central and Southern California are at or below those experienced during the historic 2012-2016 drought. The low flows are a significant threat to the survival of this year's juvenile coho salmon and steelhead, both listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. During the summer months, coho salmon and steelhead depend on small amounts of flow to provide food and maintain survivable temperature and oxygen levels in pools. Extremely low flows are predicted for this summer, and juvenile coho salmon and steelhead survival will be precarious until winter rains return.

Immediate actions to help conserve water by all surface water and groundwater well users is needed to mitigate the dry conditions this year. You can help protect these fish by reducing your surface and groundwater well diversions, and conserving water.

Even small efforts by individual property owners can result in significant cumulative stream flow benefits that will help maintain (and ideally increase) existing instream flows and help support these fish. Such efforts include:

- *Reducing water diversion activities (including groundwater) to preserve stream flow.*
- *Conserving water, reusing greywater, and limiting irrigation of landscaping and lawns to reduce water use.*
- *Coordinating with your neighbors to divert water at different times to limit cumulative impacts.*
- *Prepare for next year by exploring roofwater harvesting, tank storage, and other long-term options.*

Any immediate actions taken on your part could be instrumental in protecting your local creek this summer! Additional information on ways to conserve water can be found at:

saveourwater.com.



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



**CALIFORNIA
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RESOURCES & CONTACT INFO

Information for those interested in long term solutions, such as off-stream storage, habitat restoration, and projects that release flow instream from storage or groundwater during critical dry periods, can be found here:

San Mateo Resource Conservation District (RCD) info@sanmateoRCD.org

Santa Cruz County RCD info@rcdsantacruz.org

Monterey County RCD info@rcdmonterey.org

Upper Salinas-Las Tablas RCD devin@us-ltrcd.org

Coastal San Luis RCD info@coastalrcd.org

Cachuma RCD executivedirector@rcdsantabarbara.org

Ventura County RCD jamiwhiteford.vcrd@gmail.com

Santa Monica Mountain RCD info@rcdsmm.org

Mission RCD Darcy Cook darcy@missionrcd.org

Drought Information & Updates at www.waterboards.ca.gov/drought