

NORTH COAST RESIDENTS:

Help Maintain Stream Flow this Summer for Threatened and Endangered Fish

Water year 2022 is shaping up to be another very dry year, following on the similarly dry water years of 2020 and 2021. Precipitation levels are more or less half of normal across much of the North Coast Region. With the wettest months already passed, the likelihood of making up current deficits is very low. Flows in most streams in Northern California are at or below those of the 2012-2016 drought. The low flows are a significant threat to the survival of this year's juvenile coho salmon and steelhead. 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 this summer and the survival of juvenile coho salmon and steelhead are at a precarious situation until winter rains return and they can migrate out to the ocean.

Every week is critical for threatened and endangered coho salmon and steelhead populations, so immediate actions to help conserve water by all surface water and groundwater well users is needed to mitigate the dry conditions this year. Surface flows in waterways are influenced by groundwater, especially during summer months. 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.*
- *Preparing 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.



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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:

Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District's Water Reliability Program: goldridgercd.org/htm/WaterReliabilityProgram.htm

Sonoma County Resource Conservation District's Water Resources Program: sonomarcd.org/programs/water-resources

Humboldt County Resource Conservation District's In-stream and Habitat Restoration Project: humboldtrcd.org/projects/in-stream_and_habitat_restoration

Mendocino County Resource Conservation District's Water Conservation Program: mcrcd.org/water-conservation-stormwater-education