

## ATTACHMENT A

Constructed in 2018, the Fremont Weir Adult Fish Passage Project (AFP) facilitates fish passage, including passage of listed salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon, between the Yolo Bypass and the Sacramento River. Operational periods for AFP are from November 1 to May 31. Under the current project design, operation of the AFP structure would occur under the following scenarios;

- The fish passage structure remains open for three days after the Fremont Weir stops overtopping.
- The fish passage structure remains open for one day after the Fremont Weir stops overtopping and reopens when the river stage falls below 27 feet and closes when the river stage reaches 24 feet, for no longer than five days.

Following a series of overtopping events at the Fremont Weir in winter 2023, debris accumulation and prolonged flooding within the Fremont Weir Wildlife Area (FWWA) resulted in a delay of opening and operating the AFP structure post-overtopping. The last overtopping of the Fremont Weir occurred from March 30, 2023, to April 2, 2023 (Figure 1). Since cessation of overtopping, site conditions have improved to the point that stoplogs and woody debris were removed from the AFP area in mid-April 2023. Recent surveys conducted in the FWWA by Environmental Scientists with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) have noted the presence of potential sensitive species within Deep Pond, located immediately south of the AFP. DWR, in coordination with CDFW and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), propose to facilitate the fish passage of potentially stranded sensitive species from the FWWA portion of the Yolo Bypass to the Sacramento River by conducting an experimental opening of the AFP gate from April 27, 2023 to April 29, 2023, with the possibility of operating two additional days the week of May 1, 2023 when Sacramento River levels are on a descending curve. This proposed activity will help to inform future operating scenarios for AFP.

During the proposed operational period, monitors from DWR would be stationed at various locations along Tule Pond, Tule Channel, and Tule Canal. Monitoring will inform decisions on gate operations with the intent to keep all flows within the existing capacity of the Tule Canal and to avoid overtopping of Tule Canal. Any fish capture and relocation efforts associated with this operation would be conducted by CDFW under existing California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Incidental Take Permits (ITP). No cumulative impacts to additional projects within the vicinity of the project area are anticipated. Operations of the AFP gate would be similar to existing authorized AFP operating scenarios therefore no unique circumstance giving rise to significant effects on the environment are expected. There is likewise no effect on scenic highways, historic resources, or hazardous waste sites.

Information gathered during the intended operations will inform ongoing adaptive management efforts and be considered when evaluating whether similar operational scenarios would be required in order for the project to achieve its intended purpose in comparable future hydrologic conditions.

Figure 1: NOAA California Nevada River Forecast Center River Forecast Verification Plot for Fremont Weir (FMWC1) from Mar. 27, 2023 – Apr. 6, 2023. Accessed Apr 27, 2023.

