

ANNUAL REPORT

SUMMER 2026



Putah Creek attracted 2,150 spawning Chinook salmon in 2025! SCWA staff shown. Photo credit, Max Stevenson

Putah Creek Sees Record Salmon Run

In fall 2025, a record 2,150 Chinook salmon returned to spawn in Putah Creek, which has historically supported a small but important salmon population. Estimates in 2016 put the salmon return at 1,700, but 2025's record-breaking census is the result of a precise, individual count conducted by biologists from the UC Davis Department of Wildlife, Fish, and Conservation Biology.

The increased population return represents a 25-year, multi-partner, multi-million-dollar effort to restore salmon habitat in the creek. Factors that led to the increased run include gravel-bed restoration, passage improvements within the Yolo Bypass Wildlife Area, and the timing of functional water flows to mimic natural flows and attract salmon into the creek. Once adult salmon travel up the creek, they find suitable habitat for spawning and rearing.



SCWA Manager of Water Resources, Drew Gantner, helps UC Davis count the Putah Creek salmon.

More than two decades of riparian restoration have improved instream rearing habitat. Additionally, improved floodplain accessibility provides food and refuge to juvenile salmon out-migrating through the Sacramento River. This improved habitat quality allows juveniles to grow bigger and stronger, increasing their odds of avoiding predators and building reserves for the ocean stage of their life cycle.

The Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) has been the primary driver of much of the work on Putah Creek, leveraging grant funds and building partnerships to achieve this historic return. The goal is to significantly increase the number of returning adults born in Putah Creek; in previous years, about 12% of the returning adults were born in the creek, with the remainder originating from the Mokelumne River hatchery. If more of the 2025 juveniles survive and return as adults, the run could grow larger, boosting statewide populations.

The 2025 success represents a snapshot, not a stopping point, and demonstrates that current efforts are paying off. With continued riparian and instream restoration, sufficient flows, and safe passage, there is hope for continued increases in the Chinook population in Putah Creek.

For more on the Putah Creek success, please contact Max Stevenson, Putah Creek Streamkeeper, mstevenson@scwa2.com, or visit www.scwa2.com.

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Lake County Special Districts Prop 1 Round 1 Project Updates

By Kattrina Fesmire

Lake County Special Districts (LCSD) is on the final stretch of the Prop 1, Round 1, IRWM Implementation Grant. The \$4.7M grant was awarded in 2021 and funded six (6) projects in Lake County, CA. The grant benefits several disadvantaged communities through critical water line upgrades, new water tanks, emergency water supplies, and measures to prevent contamination.

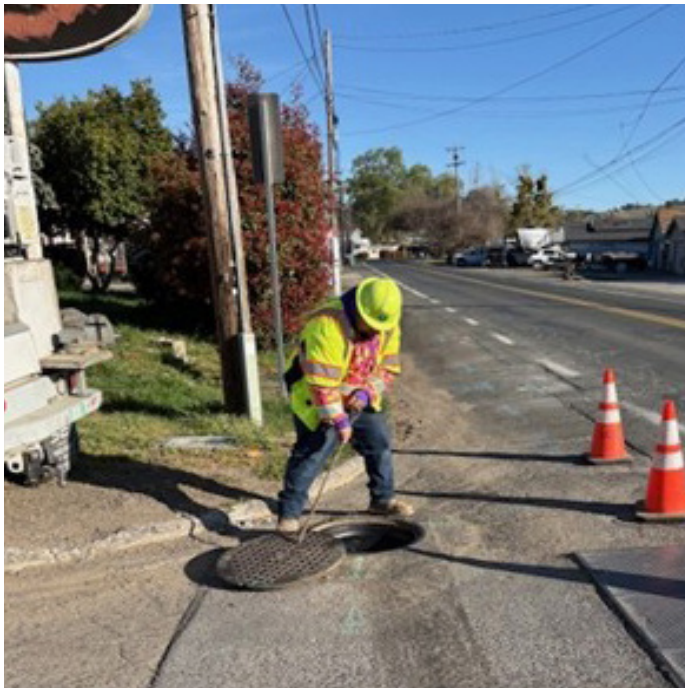
Three (3) of the six (6) projects have been completed as of June 2026: Quail Trail Water Line Replacement, Hidden Valley Lake (HVL) Infiltration & Inflow (I&I) Mitigation Plan, and HVL Community Services District Water Tank Replacement.

A milestone completed in 2025 was the awarding of a contract to begin work on the Live Oak Water Line Replacement project.

For the Lake County Sanitation District (LACOSAN) I&I Project, LCSD has continued inspecting and cleaning over 10,000 lineal feet of sewer lines (consisting of over 30 pipe segments) and installing at least 80 “dog bowls” (maintenance hole cover inserts, see photos).

Through this grant, LCSD has purchased (3) SL-RAT (Sewer Line Rapid Assessment Tool) machines, a handheld acoustic device that quickly identifies blockages in sewer lines without entering the pipe, making more efficient use of staff time and saving wear and tear on equipment.

Due to cost overruns associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, the Spring Valley Lake Reservoir Recovery Project is on hold pending additional funding.



One of the many “dog bowls” or maintenance hole covers, installed for the LACOSAN I&I project. Photo credit: LCSD staff.



An LCSD staff member holds an SL-RAT. Photo credit: LCSD staff.

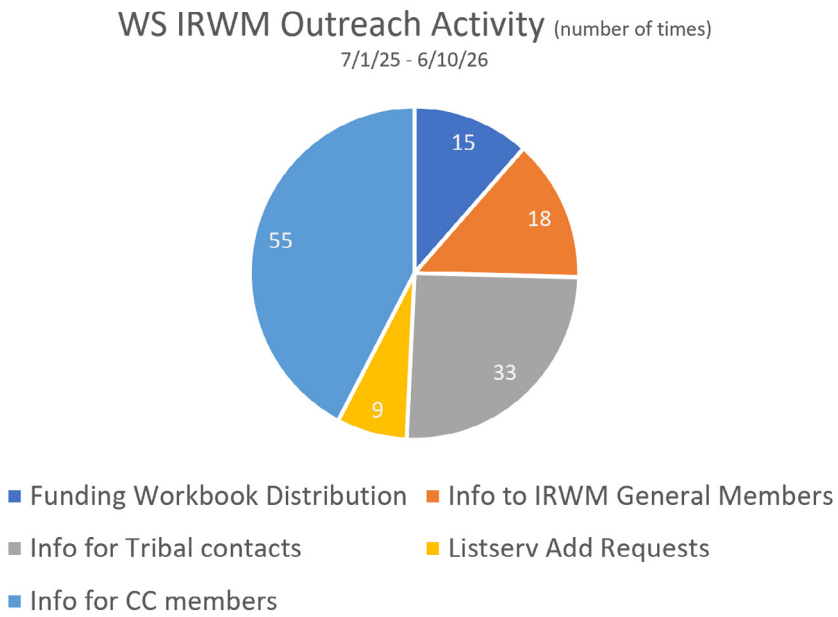


An SL-RAT in use. Photo credit: LCSD staff.

Westside Sac IRWM Outreach Efforts 2025 - 2026

Among the goals of the WS IRWM Plan are to acknowledge and respect the cultural values of the region, to improve awareness of water, watershed functions, the need for sustainable resource management to protect community health, and to improve understanding of watershed characteristics and functions to enable effective responses to evolving water-related challenges and opportunities. To help meet these goals, WS IRWM administrative staff maintains several listservs to provide relevant information to interested parties.

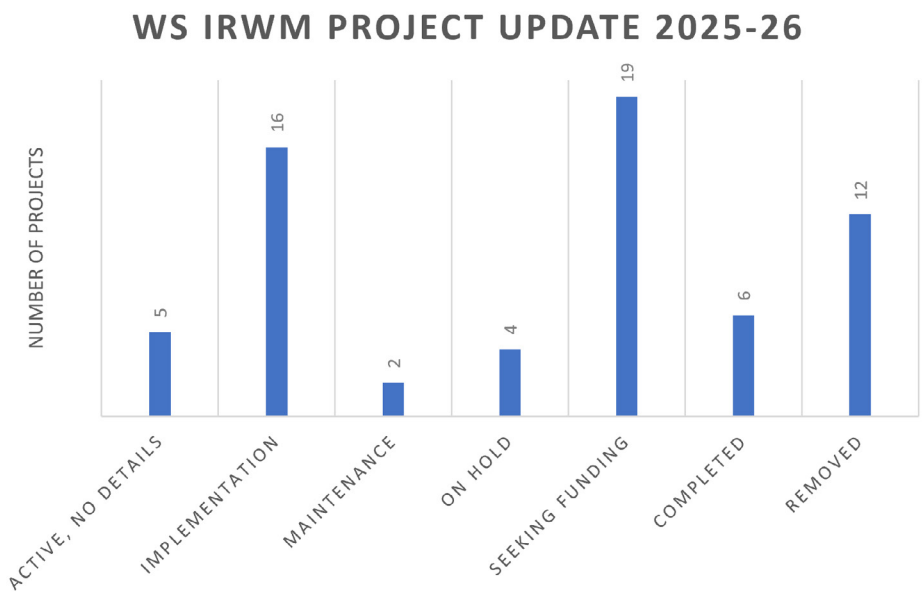
Carefully curated information is provided periodically throughout the year to inform participants about funding opportunities, water-related issues, watershed news, and other regionally relevant updates. The chart to the right provides a breakdown of outreach emails. The funding opportunities workbook, the most popular outreach item, is sent out about every two weeks and is available on the [WS IRWM website](#).



Westside Sac IRWM Project Updates

Every other year, the Westside Sac IRWM CC reviews its project list to determine the status of prioritized projects. Project sponsors for each project active at the time of the last review are contacted to determine the project’s current status. For the 2025-2026 Update, project sponsors of 64 projects recorded as “active” in 2023-2024 were contacted to confirm each project’s current status.

Of the 64 projects, six were completed, four are on hold, and twelve were removed for various reasons, including being replaced by or integrated into another project or no longer being a priority. Two projects are in the maintenance phase, sixteen are being actively implemented, and nineteen are seeking funding. The chart to the right shows the status of the Westside Sac IRWM priority projects , and a link to the project update spreadsheet is available [here](#).





Damage caused by failing infrastructure in Madison. Photo credit: Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency staff.

Madison CSD Water Infrastructure Completion - Westside Project Success Story

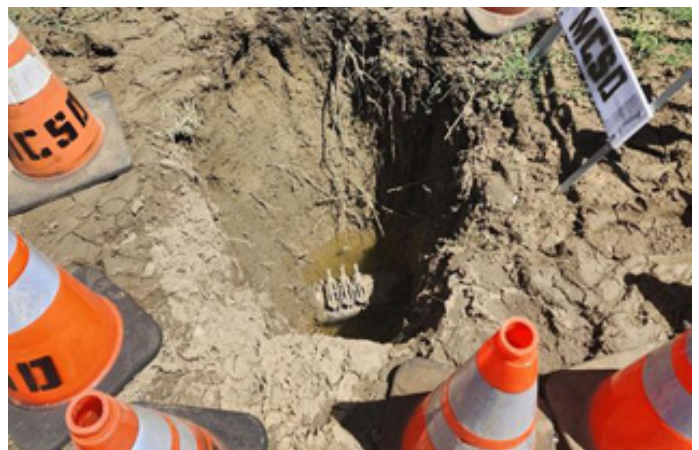
In November, 2024, the Madison Community Services District (CSD) Community Drinking Water System Replacement Project was added to the Westside Sacramento IRWM Project List. The Project consists of replacing existing leaky drinking water pipelines to ensure the unincorporated community of Madison has a reliable water supply during future droughts. The heavy clay soils and drought conditions cause shrinking and swelling, which have led to pipeline failures. The system serves Madison Community High School, 230 housing units, and 10 commercial connections, all of which are affected by frequent pipeline failures.

In 2022, Madison CSD secured a \$3.8 million grant from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) through the Small Community Drought Relief Program for the replacement of the drinking water system. Rising material and labor costs created a \$1.45M construction shortfall.

Madison CSD contributed available reserve funds to help address the shortfall, and in January this year, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation provided \$990,000 through their Doyuti T’uhkama grant program.

Doyuti T’uhkama means “to give the acorn” in the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation’s native Patwin language. For the Patwin people, the acorn is a cherished symbol that reflects Yocha Dehe’s commitment to sharing its resources, particularly with those in need. The Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation’s \$990,000 grant filled the remaining funding gap and allowed Madison CSD to proceed with construction immediately, with project completion expected by summer 2026.

Due to the tenacity of the Madison CSD and the funding from DWR and the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, about 750 people, including about 450 permanent residents and 300 migrant farmworkers, will have access to more reliable water supplies.



Left and Right: Pre project pipeline failures were costly and time-consuming. Photo credit: Yolo Subbasin Groundwater Agency staff.

Golden Mussel Update

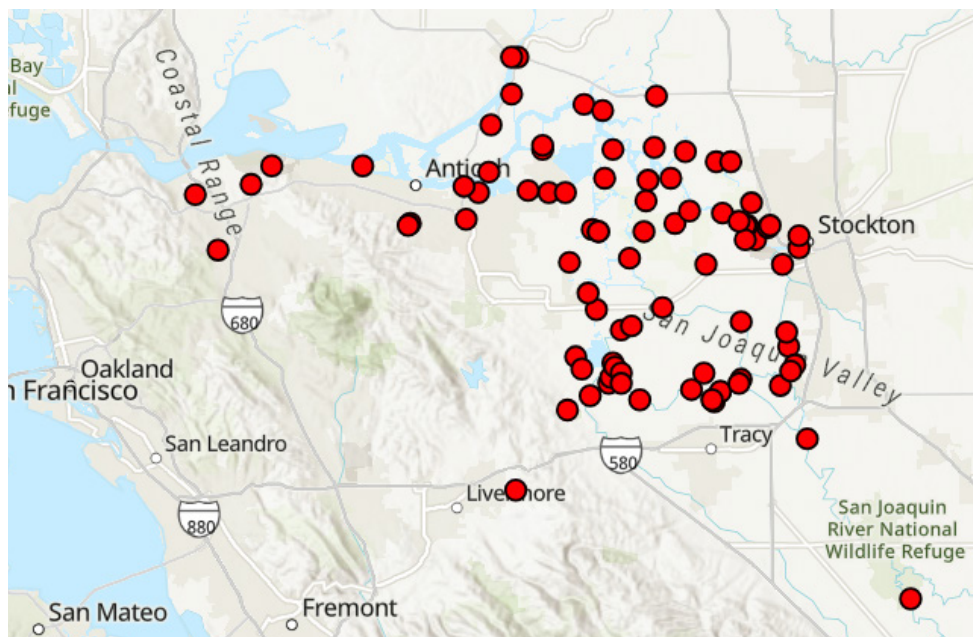
Since their discovery in October, 2024, in a port near Stockton, golden mussels have been documented in the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta (see map) and as far south as Bakersfield. Given the proximity of Clear Lake and Lake Berryessa to documented golden mussel observations, it is imperative that everyone recreating on these lakes exercise appropriate caution when transferring their watercraft between waterbodies.

Westside Sac IRWM member agencies have enacted measures to protect the lakes. In 2025, the Napa County Board of Supervisors adopted an ordinance adding Chapter 6.02 (Invasive Mussels) to the Napa County Code. The [ordinance](#) authorizes inspections of watercraft for invasive mussels at Lake Berryessa.

Lake County Water Resources Department has an extensive [website](#) that provides information about invasive mussel ecology, prevention, screening procedures, and screening locations.

Likewise, the Solano County Water Agency has a detailed [webpage](#) that provides boat-launching protocols, the “seals” process, and access to schedule watercraft decontamination at several approved locations.

The [California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#) states that golden mussel environmental impacts include loss of game fish and contribution to algae blooms. Economic impacts include costly repairs and maintenance for boats and water infrastructure as well as impacts to water delivery and flood control.



Red dots denote verified observations of golden mussels (*Limnoperna fortunei*) since October, 2024.

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