

Hi Folks,

For years, TRT has been making the case that the SFPUC has plenty of water, and can afford to leave more in the Tuolumne River for ecosystem restoration. The attached article from the San Francisco Chronicle supports our case.

During the recent storms, the SFPUC captured enough water to last more than two years (the article says “more than a year’s worth,” which is technically accurate, but could have said “more than two year’s worth”). At the height of the recent drought, the SFPUC still had enough water in storage to last four years, so now they’re up to six years. The snowpack is already at 130% of annual mean, so there will be a lot of runoff this spring, and the Hetch Hetchy System will fill and spill. All the water we conserved over the past three years will flow down the River in a single year, when it was most needed during the previous dry years. Meanwhile, salmon counts have been in the hundreds, where they used to be in the tens of thousands.

From 2012-2016 (five years) unimpaired flow in the lower Tuolumne averaged just 12%. 2017 was a very wet year, and the unimpaired flow was 79%. The Tuolumne experienced one exceptionally good year at the expense of five terrible years. Had the Bay Delta Plan been in effect, the ecosystem would have experienced decent flows in all six years.

Please let me know if you’d like to get more involved in our campaign to implement the Bay Delta Plan.

-Peter

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