



County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors
Chambers
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor
Salinas, CA 93901

Board Report

File #: WRABMAC 21-058, **Version:** 1

Consider receiving a report on the 2021 Salinas River Discharge Measurement Series.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Monterey County Water Resources Agency Basin Management Advisory Committee:

Receive a report on the 2021 Salinas River Discharge Measurement Series.

SUMMARY:

The 2021 Salinas River Discharge Measurement Series (River Series) occurred over July 19-21, 2021, with ten measurements being performed by Agency and USGS staff. Overall, the 2021 River Series documented an entirely losing system with 624 cfs, or 1,237 acre-feet per day, lost across the ninety-one sampled river miles. The 2021 River Series recorded more flow lost than in the 2020 River Series, reversing a decreasing trend observed in the River Series since the 2012-16 drought. This comes as the Salinas Valley faces its second consecutive water year with dry or dry-normal water conditions, groundwater elevations falling for the first time since their post-drought recovery, a shortened reservoir conservation release season, and the entire county now experiencing extreme drought conditions.

DISCUSSION:

The River Series provides valuable information in understanding the hydrologic conditions under which reservoir releases and flows in the Salinas River are managed, by quantifying the amount of discharge, or flow, lost across the various reaches between the reservoirs and the furthest downstream station.

The 2021 Salinas River Discharge Measurement Series (River Series) occurred during July 19-21, 2021. Agency and USGS staff performed ten measurements downstream of the Nacimiento and San Antonio reservoirs. The 2021 River Series documented an entirely losing system with 624 cfs, or 1,236 acre-feet/day, lost between the confluence of the reservoirs and the furthest downstream Spreckels station. This 2021 River Series recorded more flow lost than in the 2020 River Series, reversing a decreasing trend seen in the River Series since the 2012-16 drought. More information about the reach-to-reach variations in flow loss rates, comparison to historical and recent River Series, and discussion on factors that may have influenced the 2021 flow losses can be found in the 2021 Salinas River Discharge Measurement Series Results Memo (Attachment 1).

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

None.

FINANCING:

There is no financial impact in receiving this report.

Funds 111, 116: Data Collection, Processing, Analysis and Reporting

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Attachment:

2021 Salinas River Discharge Measurement Series Results Memo