



2022

HABITAT PROJECTS AT NIMBUS BASIN AND LOWER SAILOR BAR



Overview

Each year, the Water Forum works to create habitat for salmon and steelhead to return to during their annual migration. Fall-run Chinook salmon migrate to the Lower American River as adults to spawn from October through December. In the egg-laying process, females create a “nest” (called a redd) in loose gravel in flowing water, depositing their eggs and then covering them up with more gravel. Once hatched, young salmon move to the river’s shallow, slower moving areas to find protection from predators and grow before swimming back out to the Pacific Ocean.



About the Projects

The Water Forum’s 2022 Habitat Projects will enhance crucial habitat for native fall-run Chinook salmon and steelhead trout by collectively laying approximately 41,000 cubic yards of clean gravel into the flowing river and carving side channels into existing gravel bars. Project teams will add large woody material and plant riparian trees and bushes along the side channels. These elements create places for young fish to hide from predators, provide shade, and a place for insects to grow for feeding the fish and many other Parkway species.

Both are locations of previous Water Forum habitat work, implemented approximately 10 years ago, that would benefit from a “tune up” because these areas are heavily utilized by spawning fish every year. Although it has been altered to serve human needs for water supply and flood control, the Lower American is still a living and dynamic river, and continued gravel movement is part of a natural process. Since dams block new gravels from coming into the lower river, and existing river gravels keep moving downstream as the river flows, it’s important to keep replenishing spawning gravels for adult fish and add rearing habitat elements that support young fish, too.

The projects are expected to be constructed concurrently and would begin August 1st with gravel sorting and construction at Lower Sailor Bar. Work at Nimbus Basin will also begin in August, but gravel will be hauled in from Mississippi Bar, within Folsom State Recreation Area. All work is expected to be complete by mid-October, before anadromous Chinook salmon return in high numbers from the Pacific Ocean to spawn.

Crews may be on site Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. with in-river work occurring only on weekdays (and not on Labor Day).



For More Information

For more information, including a list of
Frequently Asked Questions, waterforum.org/habitat2022.



Background

This will be the Water Forum's 11th and 12th projects restoring fish spawning gravel beds and improving juvenile fish rearing habitat on the Lower American River. Previous projects were built along Ancil Hoffman Park, Sacramento Bar, Upper Sailor Bar and River Bend Park. The Water Forum's habitat restoration project at Upper Sailor Bar in 2019 created a surge in native fish nests within several months following the project.



About The Water Forum

The Water Forum includes a diverse group of water providers, environmentalists, business groups and local governments working to balance water supply needs with protection of the Lower American River.



Thank You Partners!

These projects are made possible by grant funding from the California Natural Resources Agency (Proposition 68) and the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation) and through partnerships with:

