

Quality Assurance Tools for Instream Flow: A Big Sur River Case Study

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Historically, the absence of established quality assurance (QA) systems left few mechanisms to assess if instream flow data were appropriate to support decisions pertaining to water allocation, fish and wildlife habitat, and Public Resources Code §10000-10005 (i.e., Stream Flow Protection Standards).

Depending on the intended audience and data use, instream flow reports may be highly variable in their approaches to planning, study design, data collection, and reporting formats.

In 2011, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife Water Branch's Instream Flow Program began a partnership with the QA Services group from the Marine Pollution Studies Laboratory (Moss Landing Marine Laboratories) to develop a QA system for instream flow measurements. To date, this partnership has produced standardized data collection procedures, technical guidance documents, in-person training courses, informational fact sheets, and templates for study plans and reports.

While this presentation will describe the minimum level of QA recommended for all instream flow studies in California, it will also include a case study to demonstrate the more rigorous QA systems appropriate for State Water Resources Control Board water allocation decisions and hearing environments.

Will Hagan's QA Presentation materials:

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Instream-Flow>