

Dam safety: storing water, protecting communities

EBMUD owns and operates 23 dams, and each provides reliable water storage. Keeping these structures safe and secure is one of our most important responsibilities. As a public agency, we are proactive and comprehensive in our approach. We inspect, maintain, upgrade and improve all our dams to protect people, property and the environment.

Since 2010, EBMUD has improved the local outlet towers serving dams at San Pablo, Upper San Leandro and Briones reservoirs to ensure they will remain safe and reliable in the event of a major earthquake. Now, we're doing similar work at Lafayette Reservoir.

You'll soon see us in action as we begin a project to shorten and seismically strengthen Lafayette's well-known outlet tower. For nearly a century it has served an essential function as the reservoir's spillway. The tower connects to a large pipe that runs beneath

Lafayette Dam so that EBMUD can open valves on the outlet tower below the waterline to safely send water to the local creek or nearby water treatment plant. Like a drain in a bathtub, it protects the integrity of the dam and provides flood protection. Unfortunately, the system no longer meets modern safety standards.

The new design, approved by state regulators, will allow us to operate safely and provide flood protection for Lafayette, Walnut Creek and other downstream communities for decades

to come. In a nod to the structure that has greeted reservoir visitors for so long, the new tower will include a modern, lightweight operating house inspired by the original.

Public safety is a top priority at EBMUD, and we appreciate your cooperation as this work gets underway. Continuous reinvestment in our shared water infrastructure is part of our responsibility to protect the communities we serve.

Above, a rendering of the upgraded outlet tower planned for Lafayette Reservoir.

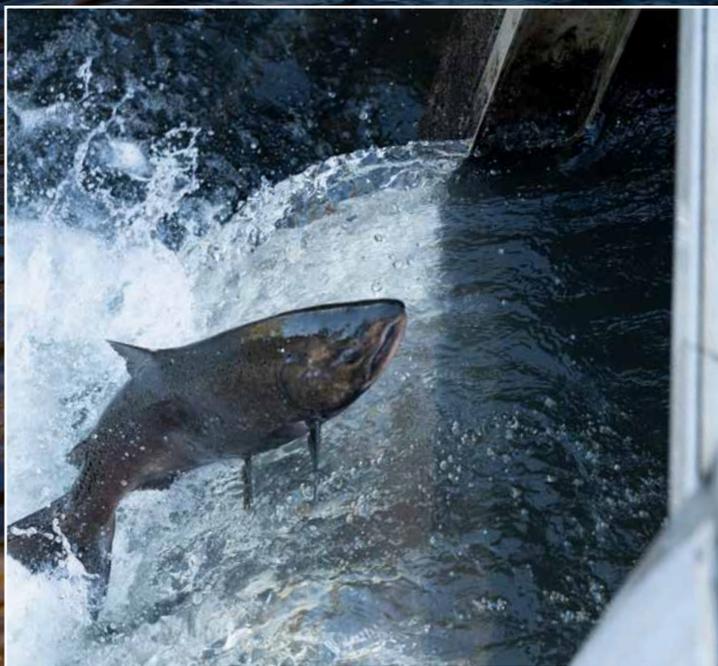
Learn more at
ebmud.com/damsafety

River stewardship, salmon success

Talk about an overachiever. The Mokelumne River not only supplies some of the best water on the planet to nearly one and a half million people in the East Bay. It also supports one of California's most robust salmon populations.

Over the past few months, strong salmon returns have contributed to natural spawning in the river and allowed our Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery to reach its goal of collecting and fertilizing 7.5 million salmon eggs in partnership with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Mokelumne's remarkable role as a salmon superhighway benefits from natural characteristics. Fed by Sierra Nevada snowmelt, its clean, clear waters support healthy aquatic and riparian ecosystems. But its ability to punch above its weight reflects EBMUD's dedication to river stewardship. We take a science-driven approach to habitat restoration, fish hatchery operations and flow management in coordination with local, state and federal agencies.



The result is an impressive stat sheet. Though the Mokelumne only contributes about three percent of the freshwater flow to the Sacramento–San Joaquin Delta, the river can account for up to half of the state's commercial salmon catch.

Every fall, Mokelumne Chinook salmon return to their home waters to reproduce and die after spending two to five years maturing in the Pacific. EBMUD counts these returns through the spawning season, which typically runs from September to January.

More than 10,500 Chinook salmon returned to the Mokelumne during the 2025–26 fall run, in line with historical averages for the past quarter century. This year also supported a strong run of over 730 steelhead in the hatchery, a result of careful management and release strategies to support this federally threatened species.

By balancing water management and environmental stewardship, EBMUD is able to deliver lasting benefits for both people and fish.



Learn more about EBMUD's work on the Mokelumne River at ebmud.com/salmon



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EBMUD Mission Statement

To manage the natural resources with which the District is entrusted; to provide reliable, high-quality water and wastewater services at fair and reasonable rates for the people of the East Bay; and to preserve and protect the environment for future generations.

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