Abstract

From 1999 to 2001, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) conducted a multi-scale snorkel survey focusing on juvenile steelhead, while also including other species and life stages (DWR 2004). In 2010, DWR reinstated the lower Feather River snorkeling surveys in preparation for FERC license issuance. The objectives were to determine the relative abundance and distribution of rearing juvenile Chinook salmon and steelhead prior to habitat improvements, identify habitat conditions (depth, substrate, velocity, and cover) where juvenile Chinook salmon and steelhead occur, and collect baseline data for future monitoring programs associated with habitat restoration projects. Data from this monitoring will also inform effective management of dam operations and implementation of any associated restoration activities. Having a thorough understanding of how river conditions and habitats affect the distribution, abundance, and behavior of downstream fish communities is crucial.