BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Delta Action Team (DAT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 2/03/26 at 10:00 a.m.

Participants

- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- Contra Costa Water District
- Friant Water Authority
- Kearns & West (K&W)
- Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- San Luis & Delta Mendota Water Authority
- State Water Contractors
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Westlands Water District (WWD)
- Friends of the River

Welcome & Housekeeping

- None

Weekly Operations Update

Operational Intent

- None.

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations

- DAT reviewed and updated the Fish and Water Operations Outlook document.
    - Sacramento River releases at Keswick Dam are currently at 10,000 cfs and will range between 8,000 cfs and 10,000 cfs to meet X2 compliance.
    - Feather River releases decreased from 10,000 cfs to 8,000 cfs and are currently averaging 8,900 cfs. The plan is to maintain 8,000 cfs for the next several days while assessing whether higher releases may be needed to meet X2 requirements
    - American River releases at Nimbus Dam are 5,000 cfs and will range between 4,000 cfs to 7,000 cfs to meet X2 compliance.
    - Stanislaus River releases at Goodwin Dam are currently 1,000 cfs and will increase to 1,100 cfs on 2/5. Releases will range between 1,000 cfs to 1,400 cfs.
    - Freeport flows are currently at 30,142 cfs.
    - Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) is currently at 300 cfs to meet X2 compliance requirements.
    - Vernalis flows are currently at 2,200 cfs.
    - Delta outflow is at 31,500 cfs.
    - Rio Vista flows are currently at 25,600.
    - San Luis total storage is currently 1,596 TAF, SWP's share is 983 TAF and CVP's is 631 TAF (63%).
    - Jones Pumping Plant (JPP) exports are 800 cfs and will increase to 1,600 cfs on 2/4
    - QWEST is at 5,619 cfs and seven-day average is 1,440 cfs.
    - Expected Daily OMR Index is –95 cfs. Expected five-day OMR average is -3,273 cfs and the 14-day average is -4,309 cfs.
    - Export-to-Inflow (EI) Ratio three-day average is 5.2 and 14-day average is 4.7%

Questions/Discussion on Weekly Fish and Water Operations

- SWRCB asked about apparent reversals in electrical conductivity (EC) values at Port Chicago, including why the downstream location (64 km) appeared fresher than the upstream location (66 km) and how EC values were estimated given recent sensor outages.
    - DWR explained the apparent reversal was due to reviewing the 14-day average column; EC values are correct when the appropriate columns are

used. Additional clarification on Port Chicago compliance will be addressed offline.

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Species Tables Updates

- Reclamation updated Table 2a data.
- DWR updated Item 3a and provided an overview to date
    - Older juvenile Chinook salmon were salvaged at SWP and CVP and processed for rapid genetic analysis; no fish were confirmed as true winter-run Chinook salmon.
    - Two clipped spring-run surrogate fish (Group 3, Section 8.4.5) were salvaged at SWP, increasing Group 3 cumulative loss to 24.66, which remains below the threshold.

Questions/Discussions on Operations Outlook Species Tables Updates

- WWD asked about the use of the "SAC fall" label in genetic assignment data, noting that Sacramento and San Joaquin fall-run Chinook cannot be genetically distinguished.
    - DWR explained that the label is an artifact of contractor reporting and that the fish are simply fall-run. DWR noted the labeling change is reasonable and will follow up internally.

Proposed Action Assessments Update

Execute Summary

- Turbidity in the central and south Delta remains low-moderate.
- Entrainment season is still active.
- Seasonal loss remains 0 for natural winter-run and hatchery winter-run.
- Natural steelhead: 84 (7.8% of annual loss threshold)
- Hatchery steelhead: 1,041 (47% of spring circuit annual loss).
- Updated language coordinated with NMFS regarding BiOp single-year Incidental Take Limit (ITL) status:
    - Natural winter-run: 0% of 5,922
    - Natural steelhead: 84 (1.5% of the 505,294 ITL)
    - Spring-run surrogate yearling ITL context by experimental group release: Group 1: 0; Group 2: 257; Group 3: 24.7
- Both steelhead and later-day winter-run presence remains high based on historical monitoring, same for steelhead.

Salmonid Proposed Action Assessment

- Reclamation shared the Salmonid Proposed Action Assessment.

Current Status

- Natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon show 86% entering the Delta based on Knights Landing RST, about 4% exiting at the Chipps Island trawl; annual loss remains 0; STARS indicates medium survival probability at 0.12 and 0.03; JPE was reported as unchanged during the update.
- No Livingston Hatchery releases of winter-run Chinook salmon have occurred in WY26; JPE is 130,000; the annual loss threshold is 1% of JPE, consistent with the single-year ITL; no physical releases have occurred, and no annual loss has been observed to date.
- Natural-origin Central Valley steelhead show 16% entering the Delta based on Knights Landing RST, 6% exiting at the Chipps Island trawl, and 10% salvaged; cumulative loss is 84, representing about 1.5% of the single-year ITL.
- Hatchery-origin Central Valley steelhead include five releases totaling 1.3 million fish in WY26 from Nimbus, Coleman, and Feather River Hatcheries; JPE to date is 590,000; cumulative loss is 1,041, or about 47% of the annual loss threshold. cumulative loss is 461 (7.8%).
- Spring-run Chinook salmon surrogates show 0% exiting at the Chipps Island trawl with zero salvage; total releases for WY26 are 800,000; JPE is 219,000, including 800,000 Coleman late fall-run Chinook; the annual loss threshold is 1% of JPE (2,100) entering the Delta;
- Loss models indicate low risk of exceeding thresholds for all species.

Zone of Influence

- Current conditions at Freeport and Vernalis fall within the high-med category for current and forecasted conditions.
- Change in altered channel length between scenarios is 88 km for both current and forecasted flows.
- Altered channel length described as moderate across all scenarios.

Smelt Proposed Action Assessment

- Reclamation shared the Smelt Proposed Action Assessment.

Delta Smelt

- The most recent Delta smelt abundance estimate is 2,584, as of last week.
- No additional cultured Delta smelt releases are planned; releases are complete for WY2026.
- WY2026 detections include 35 adult and 25 juvenile Delta smelt across all surveys.

- No Delta smelt salvage has occurred to date.
- Detections are concentrated in Suisun Marsh and Suisun Bay, with additional detections at Chipps Island and the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel.
- Evidence suggests the onset of Delta smelt spawning, with fish moving upstream.

Real Time Assessment Thresholds

- Conditions required to trigger larval and juvenile Delta smelt entrainment management actions have not been met this week. JPF is not forecasted to drop below 0 this week.
- Turbidity has decreased from earlier elevated levels and is now moderate across key stations. The most recent 12-station South Delta turbidity was 6.4 FNU based on 1/26 SLS-3 survey.
- Temperature off-ramps at Rio Vista and Jersey Point have not been reached.

Longfin Smelt

- WY2026 detections across all surveys include 337 adults, 584 juveniles, and 768 larvae.
- No longfin smelt salvage has occurred this water year.
- Recent larval detections were observed in the lower San Joaquin area, reflected in recent SLS survey results.
- Adult longfin smelt entrainment management thresholds are not met; JPF is not less than 0 and annual loss is not trending toward the 5% threshold.
- For larval and juvenile longfin smelt, JPF is not predicted to drop below 0 CFS this week; no population-level entrainment effects are anticipated.

Questions/Discussions on Proposed Action Assessments

- None.

Open Discussion

Salvage Genetics Changes Overview

- DWR provided an overview explaining recent changes in genetic assignments for Chinook salmon salvage data and the reasons for those updates.
- Beginning in WY2025, the Cramer Fish Sciences transitioned from the Clemento 2014 panel to the Anderson et al. 2025 Genotyping-by-Thousands panel developed by the Southwest Fisheries Science Center.
- The updated panel analyzes more than twice the number of genetic loci and is specifically designed for California Chinook salmon, improving resolution for run identification and parentage-based tagging.

- An interagency laboratory calibration and consensus process was conducted to ensure consistent and reproducible results across multiple labs; this effort was supported by USBR.
- The new panel incorporates genetic markers linked to adult return to better distinguish fall- and spring-run Chinook salmon.
- Analytical code updates made to align with the interagency consensus resulted in retroactive reassignment of some fish from fall- to spring-run.
- These changes are expected to improve the accuracy and consistency of genetic salvage reporting moving forward.

Questions/Discussion on Presentation

- MWDH asked how the updated genetic panel distinguishes spring-run Chinook salmon populations and whether spring-run assignments indicate specific tributary origins such as the Feather River or San Joaquin system.
    - DWR explained that the Anderson panel can specifically identify spring-run fish from Butte, Mill, and Deer Creeks; spring-run fish not matching those tributaries are assigned to a broader Feather River lineage spring-run category. This designation reflects a shared genetic lineage rather than a confirmed Feather River origin and serves as a catch-all for spring-run fish that cannot be resolved to the three identified tributaries.

Action Items

- K&W to update the email distribution list to remove contacts who have changed roles or retired to ensure materials are sent to current team members.
- Matthew Holland and Bryan Giorgi to discuss EC measurements.
- DWR to internally discuss changing the label “Sac fall” for clarity.

Next DAT Meeting

- The next Delta Action Team Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 2/10/26.