



# Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 10/14/25 at 10:00 a.m.

## Objective

Provide information to the Water Operations Management Team (WOMT), the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and California Department of Water Resources (DWR) on measures to reduce adverse effects from Delta operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and the State Water Project (SWP) on salmonids and green sturgeon. Final versions of the Proposed Action Assessment, and Fish and Water Operations Outlook will be posted to Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Work Group webpage, while final version of the Meeting Notes will be posted to Reclamation's Salmon Monitoring Team webpage. Meeting participants include representatives from: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), DWR, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Reclamation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

## Participants

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- Kearns & West (K&W).

## Announcements

- Contact Mia at [mschiappi@kearnswest.com](mailto:mschiappi@kearnswest.com) and Michael at [mding@kearnswest.com](mailto:mding@kearnswest.com) for SharePoint access support.

# Meeting Summary

## Part 1. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

### **Relevant Actions & Triggers**

8.4.3 Winter-run Annual Loss Thresholds

8.4.5 Spring-run Chinook Salmon Protection Action and Surrogate Annual Loss Thresholds

8.5 Storm Flex

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3):** Gates are currently open to meet D-1641 water quality requirements.
- **OMR Management Season (PA 4.10.5.10.1, COA 8.3):** OMR Management for WY 2026 may begin in November, December, or January depending on what biological triggers are met.
- **SWP ITP Winter-run Chinook Salmon Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.3):** DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.4.3 of the ITP. These values will be based on the BY 2025 juvenile production estimate (JPE), which will be finalized in January 2026.
  - The natural-origin Winter-run Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is based on the initial length-at-date (LAD) identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon and the thresholds described above. If genetic analysis of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP subsequently confirms that any given Chinook salmon is not genetically identified as a CHNWR that fish will not count towards the loss threshold. This threshold is loss of natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.5% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss threshold = TBD). If cumulative loss of natural-origin CHNWR in a brood year exceeds 50% of the annual loss threshold (loss > TBD), then Permittee shall, in coordination with Reclamation, adjust south Delta exports to achieve a 7-day average of the OMR index no more negative than -3,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days. If a CHNWR is salvaged during the 7-day action, the action will be extended for another seven days. At the conclusion of the action, Permittee, in coordination with Reclamation shall revert to the weekly distributed loss threshold until the 75% threshold is reached or throughout the end of the OMR Management season. If the 75% loss threshold (loss > TBD) is exceeded AND the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days, then a 7-day average OMRI index of -2,500 cfs will be operated to for 7 consecutive days. Thereafter, each winter-run observed in salvage will trigger a 7-day OMR index of -2,500 cfs for 7

consecutive days IF the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days.

- The hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for WY 2026 is loss of both LSNFH and Battle Creek clipped CWT winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.12% of the winter-run Chinook salmon hatchery-origin JPE (loss  $\geq$  TBD and loss  $>$  TBD, respectively). If the 50% and 75% thresholds are exceeded, the same process will occur as what occurs for the natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon (as discussed in above bullet).
- **SWP ITP Spring-run Chinook Salmon Protection Action and Surrogate Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.5):** From 10/1/2025–6/30/2026, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.4.5 of the ITP. The ITP Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold for WY 2026 will include three late fall-run release groups from Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH), six spring-run release groups from either Feather River Fish Hatchery (FRFH) or CNFH. If cumulative loss from CVP and SWP is greater than 0.25% for any release group, the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach an OMRI of -5,000 cfs for 7 consecutive days in November and December, or an OMRI of -3,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days if the action is exceeded from January-June.

### ***Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations***

- SaMT reviewed and updated the Fish and Water Operations Outlook document.
- A current weather system is moving through Northern California. As of 10/14/25, precipitation has mostly occurred in Coastal ranges and some parts of Southern California. While cold front accumulation has been occurring in the Sierras. Monitoring will continue as conditions change.
  - Clear Creek releases at Whiskeytown Dam are currently at 225 cfs. No anticipated operational changes at this time.
  - Feather River releases are currently at 2,450 cfs, decreased from 2,500 cfs the day before. From this week onwards, releases will be maintained at 2,450 cfs.
  - American River releases at Nimbus Dam are currently at 1,000 cfs. No anticipated operational changes at this time.
  - Stanislaus River releases at Goodwin Dam are currently at 700 cfs but will vary throughout the week for fall pulse flows with peak flows not exceeding 1,500 cfs.

- Freeport flows are currently at 12,871 cfs.
- Vernalis flows are 1,449 cfs and the range for the rest of this week will be between 1,300-1,900 cfs.
- Delta outflow is at 15,700 cfs.
- Jones Pumping Plant exports are at 1,800 cfs, adjusted for plant outage. Adjustments will tentatively end on 10/25/25.
- Clifton Court Forebay exports are at 3,000 cfs and will decrease to 2,000 cfs starting 10/15/25.
- Rio Vista flows are currently 8,800 cfs
- Delta Cross Channel gates are open.
- QWEST flow rate is at 1,810 cfs.
- Expected Daily OMR Index is -4,500; five-day average OMR index is -5,000; 14-day average OMR index is -7,400.
- Adjusted X2 to be greater than 81 km.
- Tides are currently in the Last Quarter Moon phase, transitioning from NEAP to Spring.
- Expected Daily OMR Index is -4,500; five-day average OMR index is -5,000; 14-day average OMR index is -7,400.

### ***Questions on Operations***

- CDFW asked for the seven-day average for QWest; the value is 2,469 cfs.
- CDFW sought confirmation on 'Yearlings' label for Fall-run Chinook salmon smolts.
- CDFW verified whether evidence of Fall-run Chinook salmon smolts migrating downstream was based on Red Bluff diversion passage or storm conditions.
  - Reclamation will follow up. No Fall-run Chinook salmon length-to-date fish have been caught in traps. Only Winter-run Chinook salmon as of 10/14/25.
- SaMT discussed the possibility of inviting Big Notch Project team member(s) to present on monitoring data and operations.
  - DWR has several monitoring operations on Big Notch.
  - DWR and CDFW Fish Rescue Crew plan to monitor after flows recede for fish rescue work.
  - Fish salvage operations will be implemented soon.
  - Little Notch project in the area will be activated as well contingent on factors.

- Acoustic receivers will be installed by this year. Some will be Juvenile Salmon Acoustic Telemetry System (JSATS). Uncertain if receivers will be 69 kHz.

## **Part 2. Open Species Discussion**

### ***Salvage Update***

- N/A

### ***Yolo Bypass Survey Update***

- Mackenzie Miner, DWR, has joined the SaMT and will be providing regular updates on the various Yolo Bypass surveys.
- As of 10/14/25, have begun sampling adult Fall-run Chinook salmon.
- The team conducts monitoring activities year-round to monitor salmon and native fish in the bypass. Anticipate deploying a rotary screw trap in November to monitor out-migrating juvenile salmon.

### ***Regular Salmon Survey Discussions***

- SaMT discussed the usefulness of including time during each meeting to share about survey updates and where fish are currently being observed in the system.
  - CDFW shared they thought this would be a useful addition to the meeting given the need last season to discuss the Steelhead Special Study.
  - DWR supported adding this topic as a regular agenda item to support their Spring-Run Assessment.
  - SaMT agreed that this topic would be included regularly on the agenda.
- CDFW suggested allocating 10 minutes in SaMT meetings to cover all monitoring activities and updates, including Yolo Bypass survey updates.

## **Part 3. Live Edit Assessments**

### ***Proposed Action Assessment***

- N/A

### ***Spring Run Assessment***

- DWR shared an updated version of the Spring-run Chinook Assessment document.

## **Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion**

- N/A

## **Next SaMT Meeting**

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 10/14/25.

**Action Items**

- Mia will follow up with members experiencing SharePoint access issues.
- Mia will reach out to the Big Notch Project to schedule a presentation.