

Delta Monitoring Workgroup

Meeting Record 02/20/2024

Working Group Members in Attendance

- USBR: Elissa Buttermore, Randi Field, Cat Pien, Nick Bertrand, Grace Easterbrook, Chase Ehlo, Brian Mahardja
- USFWS: Not in attendance
- NMFS: Not in attendance
- CDFW: Erica Meyers
- DWR: Mike Ford, Nicole Kwan, Katie Osborn, Farida Islam, Brian Schreier
- SWRCB: Matt Holland
- Water Contractors: Shawn Acuña (MWD), Chandra Chilmakuri (SWC), Darcy Austin (SWC), Heidi Williams (Valley Water), Tom Boardman (WWD)

Review Operations Outlook (USBR, DWR)

- The projects are operating to an OMRI no more negative than -2,500 cfs.
- The wide release range from Whiskeytown Dam on Clear Creek indicates an anticipated spill event.
- Currently releasing 20,000 cfs from Keswick Dam into the Sacramento River with a change order tonight (2/20/2024) to increase to 25,000 cfs for flood management.
- There is uncertainty about the amount of inflows and side flows from this past week's storm event, so there are broad ranges of releases for the Sacramento, Feather, American, and Stanislaus Rivers.
- Freeport daily average flows yesterday were at 52,000 cfs, and today they are around 57,000 cfs and climbing. Flows could peak at 65,000 cfs by the weekend.
- Vernalis daily average flows yesterday were at 6,800 cfs, and today they are 7,300 cfs. Flows could peak around 10,400 cfs in the next few days.
- Delta Outflow Index is 72,000 cfs today and increasing to approximately 120-125,000 cfs by the weekend.
- No salinity issues or concerns in the Delta at this time, but salinity will continue to be monitored in the Delta after a strong tidal anomaly yesterday (2/19/2024).
- Current exports at JPP remain at 4,200 cfs without reduction due to increased flows from the San Joaquin and Sacramento Rivers.
- Releases on the Feather River at Oroville are at 8,000 cfs today and increasing to 10,000 cfs tomorrow (2/21/2024) and then will be held there for a few days.

- Clifton Court exports are at 2,200 cfs today and increasing to approximately 3,600-3,800 cfs over the next few days depending on Vernalis flows in compliance with OMRI requirements.
- Refer to the Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook for more information.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** Will CVP exports stay at 5 units the rest of the week?
 - **Answer:** Yes, that is the current plan.

Review PA Assessment (USBR)

Reclamation then provided the PA Assessment update. For more information, please refer to the PA Assessment document.

Note: The PA Assessment this week contains a new table (Table 6C, page 10): *Salvage predictor estimates for Central Valley Steelhead from model developed in Tillotson et al. (2022) across multiple OMR flow scenarios represented within a range of percentiles*. USBR expects to continue coordinating with operators to improve model output.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** Does the risk assessment assume hatchery smelt behavior is the same as wild smelt? Would the conclusions in the assessment have remained the same if the salvaged fish were hatchery or wild?
 - **Answer:** Yes, when evaluating risk, hatchery fish are treated the same as wild fish.

Review ITP Risk Assessment (DWR)

DWR provided the LFS update. For more information, please refer to the ITP Risk Assessment document.

Additional Questions or Comments

- No additional questions or comments.

Acronyms

- CVP – Central Valley Project
- DCC – Delta Cross Channel
- DOI – Delta Outflow Index
- DWR – California Department of Water Resources
- DCI – Delta Mendota Canal – California Aqueduct Intertie
- DS – Delta Smelt
- FNU – Formazin Nephelometric Unit
- I:E – Inflow to Export
- IOP – Interim Operations Plan

- ITP – Incidental Take Permit
- JPE – Juvenile Production Estimate
- LFS – Longfin Smelt
- NTU – Nephelometric Turbidity Unit
- OBI – Old River Bacon Island Station
- OMR – Old and Middle River Tidally Averaged Flow
- PA – Proposed Action (Federal)
- PTM – Particle Tracking Model
- SaMT – Salmon Monitoring Team
- SLS – Smelt Larval Survey
- SMT – Smelt Monitoring Team
- SWP – State Water Project
- SWRCB – State Water Resources Control Board
- TFCF – Tracy Fish Collection Facility
- TUCP – Temporary Urgency Change Petition
- TUCO – Temporary Urgency Change Order
- USBR – United States Bureau of Reclamation
- WCS – Winter Run Chinook Salmon
- WOMT – Water Operations Management Team
- WQ – Water Quality
- YOY – Young of Year