

Delta Monitoring Workgroup

Meeting Record 03/05/2024

Working Group Members in Attendance

- USBR: Kristi Arend, Randi Field, Nick Bertrand, Erika Kegel, Grace Easterbrook, Cat Pien, Brian Mahardja
- USFWS: Leif Goude
- NMFS: Not in attendance
- CDFW: Not in attendance
- DWR: Mike Ford, Katie Osborn, Farida Islam, Brian Schreier, Nicole Kwan
- SWRCB: Not in attendance
- Water Contractors: Shawn Acuña (MWD), Chandra Chilmakuri (SWC), Heidi Williams (Valley Water), Sarah PiraMoon (Valley Water), Tom Boardman (WWD), Cindy Meyer (SLDMWA), Yuan Liu (CCWD), Deanna Sereno (CCWD)

Review Operations Outlook (USBR, DWR)

- Delta operations are currently limited to a 14-day average OMRI of no more negative than -2,500 cfs; OMRI is currently the most constraining factor.
- On the Sacramento and American Rivers, Shasta and Folsom Lakes are slightly encroached and are operating to flood management requirements.
- On the San Joaquin, currently releasing 1,000 cfs from Goodwin Dam into the Stanislaus but increasing to 1,500 cfs tomorrow (3/6/2024) and making adjustments as needed for flood management.
- Sacramento River inflows are generally decreasing into the Delta; while inflows are increasing from the San Joaquin River, they will decrease again soon due to flow changes on the Tuolumne and Merced Rivers.
- Vernalis forecasted flows earlier today suggested a peak of around 11,000 cfs but have since decreased due to upstream reservoir controls.
- Freeport daily average flows yesterday were approx. 65,700 cfs.
- Vernalis daily average flows yesterday were approx. 9,700 cfs.
- Freemont Weir flows are diminishing as excess flows in the system decrease and will continue to do so due to anticipated drier conditions.

- Releases on the Feather River at Oroville are at 14,000 cfs today and decreasing to 10,000 cfs tomorrow (3/6/2024) for the next few days.

- Clifton Court exports are at 3,500 cfs today and will likely remain between 3,500 cfs and 4,000 cfs over the next few days.
- Refer to the Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook for more information.

Additional Questions or Comments

- No additional questions or comments

Review PA Assessment (USBR)

USBR then provided the PA Assessment update.

- SaMT recommends to avoid exceeding the annual ITL an OMRI from 0 cfs to –500 cfs; then reassessing next week to see if a decrease in salvage has occurred and compare loss rates relative to the Tillotson Model predictions. (p. 2 in the PA Assessment)
- Currently waiting for operational decisions from WOMT in response to the 100% exceedance for Steelhead.

For more information, please refer to the PA Assessment document.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** Is the OMRI recommendation being made by SaMT -5,000 cfs or -500 cfs.
 - **Answer:** The correct recommendation based on the PA Assessment Document is to avoid exceeding an OMRI from 0 cfs to -500 cfs (refer to p. 2).
- **Question:** Regarding incidental take, does the ITS specify a limit for different seasons or for the full year?
 - **Answer:** The take limits are separated by season and do not represent the cumulative loss.
- **Question:** Are you testing Steelhead genetics and how long does it take to get the results? Are there any updates related to the Mokelumne Hatchery releases and whether we might be seeing hatchery salmon that might not be clearly clipped?
 - **Answer:** There is no real-time Steelhead genetic analysis the way there is for salmon. The genetic results are up to date in 2024 for all salmon genetics, but Steelhead genetics will become available at the end of the season.
 - **Question:** East Bay Municipal Utility District said coded wire tags were being put in all the hatchery fish. Are you wanting everything?
 - **Answer:** For salmon, we want every fish that goes through the Skinner Fish Facility. For Steelhead, we see if they are clipped or unclipped.

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