



Delta Monitoring Workgroup Weekly Meeting

Meeting Record 01/14/2025

Working Group Members in Attendance

- Reclamation: Thuy Washburn, Alex Vaisvil, Lilly McCormick, Grace Easterbrook, Cat Pien, Erika Kegel, Tony Yang, Chase Ehlo
- USFWS: Leif Goude
- NMFS: Not in attendance
- CDFW: Not in attendance
- DWR: Mike Ford, Katie Osborn, Brian Schreier, Nicole Kwan
- SWRCB: Not in attendance
- Water Contractors: Darcy Austin (SWC), Chandra Chilmakuri (SWC), Tom Boardman (WWD), Jose Rangel (WWD), Steve Micko (MWD), Deanna Sereno (CCWD), Yuan Liu (CCWD), Ian Buck-Macleod (FWA), Scott Petersen (SLDMWA), Pablo Arroyave (SLDMWA)
- Kearns & West: Nora De Cuir, Marlys Jeane

Review Operations Outlook

- At Keswick Dam on the Sacramento River, releases are at 15,000 cfs and decreasing this week to reach 8,000 cfs by Friday 1/17.
- At Whiskeytown Dam on Clear Creek, releases are at 300 cfs.
- At Goodwin Dam on the Stanislaus River, releases are at 200 cfs.
- At Nimbus Dam on the American River, releases are at 1,750 cfs.
- At Oroville Dam on the Feather River, releases are at 1,750 cfs.
- Federal storage at San Luis Reservoir is 583,000 acre-feet; total storage is 1.4 million acre-feet.
- On Sunday (1/12) all three south Delta daily average turbidities (Old River at Bacon Island, Holland Cut at Bethel Island, and Franks Tract) were above 12 FNU, triggering an adult Delta Smelt entrainment protection action to start operating to an OMRI no more negative than -3,500 cfs beginning Wednesday January 15. Unless one of the three

stations drops below 12 FNU for two consecutive days prior to Wednesday, the OMRI limit of no more negative than -3,500 cfs will be initiated on Wednesday.

- CVP and SWP exports will therefore both drop by about 800 cfs each and could remain at this level until the turbidity drops below 12 FNU at one of the three stations for more than 2 consecutive days. After 5 days of continued high turbidity at -3500 OMR, Reclamation and DWR may prepare an assessment for WOMT evaluating the effectiveness of continuing the action, if WOMT decides the action can be off ramped then the action will return to the 14-day averaged OMRI no more negative than -5,000 cfs per the Fed BiOp and State ITP for joint operations.
- JPP exports are currently 4,200 cfs and will reduce to 3,400 cfs tomorrow (1/18) for OMR requirements.
- CCF exports are currently 1,700 cfs and will reduce to 800 cfs tomorrow (1/18) for OMR requirements.
- DCC Gates closed on 11/18 and will remain closed for the season.
- Tides are transitioning from Spring to Neap; first quarter moon will be on January 21st.

Additional Questions or Comments

- Question: To confirm the latest 2024 BiOp action for turbidity bridge avoidance: is it 5 days or 2 consecutive days where one station needs to be below 12 FNU?
 - Answer: The action is characterized as a -3,500 cfs OMRI action based on a 5-day average but the objective of the action is to create a “break” in a “turbidity bridge” that could form in the south Delta. If there are 2 consecutive days of a daily FNU reading of less than 12 FNU at one or more of the three stations leading up to the action or within the time of the action, then the objective of “breaking” the turbidity bridge has been met, and OMR action can be off-ramped. There is also an option after the 5 days to continue the action or seek an offramp in an assessment that would go to WOMT.
- Question: The effect is a reduction in exports from both CVP and SWP by 800 cfs respectively?
 - Answer: Cumulatively, the reduction is 1,500 cfs because the OMRI is changing from -5,000 cfs to -3,500 cfs. CVP is reducing exports by about 800 cfs and SWP is reducing exports by about 800 cfs, combined slightly more than 1,500 cfs at about 1,600 cfs. But keep in mind that Vernalis flows are also dropping off.
- Question: If this is a wind driven event, it is plausible we could see two consecutive days below 12 FNU at one of the stations on day 2 or 3 and never complete 5 days.
 - Answer: If you have two consecutive days without having the turbidity bridge in place prior to the implementation of the action, then the action wouldn’t need to be implemented at all.

- Question: Regarding scheduling, if we get two consecutive days within the first two days of the 5 days of the action, will we still have to experience the 5 full days of reductions because that's what's been scheduled?
 - Answer: No.
- Question: Is there a CDEC station for Holland Cut that will provide turbidity data?
 - Answer: Yes, station [HOL](#). However, daily average turbidity is currently not reporting correctly, but it does provide 15-minute and hourly turbidity data. The daily average could be manually calculated.

Review PA Assessment (Reclamation)

Reclamation provided a brief update on the current monitoring conditions. For more information, please refer to the PA Assessment document.

Additional Questions or Comments

No additional questions or comments.

Review ITP Risk Assessment (DWR)

Facilitator's note: Due to a new ITP, no Risk Assessment document was presented. DWR provided a verbal update.

- Under the adult LFS protection measure, only 8 LFS have been salvaged to date, significantly below the salvage threshold of 181.2.
- The larval and juvenile LFS protection measure threshold for any individual bi-weekly survey is 50 larvae at stations 809 and 812. In the most recent survey (Survey 1), conducted two weeks ago, 18 larvae were detected at stations 809 and 812. The team was out on the water Monday (1/13) at these two stations, but no new catch data is available yet.
- Juvenile, sub-adult, and adult LFS continue to move upstream. Catch at Chipps is strong, while catches in Suisun Marsh, Suisun Bay, and the Lower Sacramento River for ESDM remain steady.
- Fish movement continues, and spawning is underway. Not nearing any threshold triggers at this time.

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
- EDSM – Enhanced Delta Smelt Monitoring Program
- FNU – Formazin Nephelometric Unit
- I/E – Inflow to Export
- IOP – Interim Operations Plan
- ITP – Incidental Take Permit
- ITL – Incidental Take Limit
- 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
- SRDWSC – Sacramento River Deep Water Ship Channel
- 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