

WOMT Off-Cycle Meeting Notes

Water Year 2025 – February 03, 2025 – 4 pm Off-cycle Meeting

Members Attending

- Reclamation: Present
- USFWS: Present
- CDFW: Present
- NMFS: Present
- DWR: Present
- SWRCB: Acting Member Present

Relevant Assessments

"Storm Flex Assessment (Date: 02/02/2025) and ITP Storm Flex Assessment (Date: 02/03/2025)"

Discussion Items

Assessment regarding potential Storm Flex Operations (Proposed Action, 3.7.4.6 Storm-Flex)

- DWR provided a written ITP Assessment on 2/03/2025 (Attached) and Reclamation provided Storm Flex Assessment on 2/02/2025 (Attached). The ITP Storm Flex Assessment does not differ from Reclamation's, except for the coverage of Storm Flex under the ITP.
 - NMFS asked Reclamation if CVP was already at 5 units of exports, which Reclamation responded yes. DWR would initiate Storm Flex.
- CDFW asked what the process would be for updating the assessments, since the ITP and PA discuss updating assessments no less than weekly, and what the process would be for offramps that are written into the action.
 - DWR is monitoring conditions that are listed in the ITP Condition 8.5 and if conditions continue to satisfy Storm Flex, biologists will provide updated assessments weekly until and unless those conditions are not being met.
- CDFW asked how DWR will be tracking the likelihood of additional conditions being triggered and if weekly is the appropriate frequency for updates.
 - DWR answered that its biologists are continuing to assess whether other conditions of approval are triggered. An email will be sent to WOMT to notify

agencies if a trigger has been reached or is anticipated to. DWR and Reclamation would prefer not to have to provide WOMT with a daily update.

- CDFW recommends thinking about these questions using Wednesday's WOMT meeting to discuss the frequency for updates and how that process would look including some bounds on the definition of likelihood of triggering a condition.
 - DWR recommends looking at real time data to make assessments of the potential of hitting fish triggers. QWEST flow will increase to around 11,000 cfs, which would help decrease the probability of hitting a larval LFS trigger. For Chinook salmon, tracking is done through acoustic tag studies, which can be used to inform the potential of hitting a Chinook salmon trigger. There were a couple of big Chinook salmon fry releases recently in the Feather River Fish Hatchery, however they are untagged. Additionally, the (85%) efficiency of the Georgiana Slough BAFF in keeping juvenile Chinook salmon in the mainstem Sacramento River rather than the interior Delta along with winter-run Chinook salmon rearing in the Delta rather than actively migrating, making them less susceptible to entrainment at the fish facilities. Monitoring the three South Delta turbidity stations is ongoing.
- CDFW recommends that if Storm Flex is implemented, there is an understanding on how to keep WOMT updated on the assessments and with sharing information both about actual triggers and the likelihood of triggers conditions.
 - USFWS wants to make sure there is a common understanding of what that notification process looks like between now and at WOMT on Wednesday.
 - DWR answered that agencies and technical teams will be notified via an email to WOMT regarding relevant information and date of action. DWR has sent those emails in the past and will continue to notify via email. DWR would prefer not to report daily and instead have an email on event driven or anticipated events.
- CDFW recommends that WOMT reads the assessments and provide to the Wednesday WOMT meeting the specific data points that are helpful to track more frequently than weekly.
- DWR asked to start Storm Flex tomorrow and talk about how notifications and monitoring will be done on Wednesday.
 - Reclamation agrees with this approach.
 - USFWS answered that the criteria to initiate the storm flex action have been met. However, if between now and Wednesday's WOMT meeting, if it becomes apparent that any of the storm flex criteria offramp or it is likely that any of the criteria will offramp, WOMT would be notified even if it is before Wednesday WOMT. With those understandings, USFWS is comfortable with agreeing to initiate the action.

- CDFW agrees with USFWS that the criteria to initiate storm flex are met based on current conditions and information provided and looks forward to the discussion on Wednesday regarding communication and if a condition of approval is triggered or is likely to be triggered, CDFW expects to be notified sooner.
- NMFS agrees with USFWS and CDFW. NMFS noted that key points should be captured either in WOMT notes or assessment to factor in biological considerations. NMFS concurs with the Storm Flex action and looks forward to revisiting this discussion on Wednesday.
- SWRCB concurs with Storm Flex action.

Next Steps

- DWR to initiate Storm Flex Operations. COMPLETED
- WOMT to be prepared to discuss at the Wednesday WOMT meeting:
 - the specific data points that are helpful to track throughout the implementation of the storm flex action. COMPLETED
 - the frequency of updates on the assessment and with sharing information both about actual triggers and the likelihood of triggers. COMPLETED