BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 4/29/25 at 9:00 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)
- NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Kearns & West (K&W)

Announcements

- N/A

Relevant Actions & Triggers

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3)**: See Outlook and Assessment for more information.

- **SWP ITP/CVP PA Winter-run Chinook Salmon Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval (COA) 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3 of the SWP ITP/SWP and CVP PA. These values are based on the final juvenile production estimate (JPE).
    - 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 = 98,893 x 0.5% = 494.47). If cumulative loss of natural-origin CHNWR in a brood year exceeds 50% of the annual loss threshold (loss > 247.24), 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 > 370.85) 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 this year 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 ≥ 162.41 and loss > 3.44, 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).
    - The final JPE was distributed on 1/10/25 for WY 2025.

- **SWP ITP and CVP PA Winter-run Weekly Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4 of the SWP ITP/SWP and CVP PA. These values are based on the product of the weekly percentage of natural-origin CHNWR present in the Delta, scaled to 100% (Table 4, Column E of the SWP ITP), and 50% of the natural-origin CHNWR annual loss threshold (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3). The final JPE Memo was issued on 1/10/25.
    - The weekly loss threshold for the remainder of the season is provided below:
        - 4/2/25 – 6/30/25: 0 fish
    - If the 7-day rolling sum of loss exceeds the above thresholds in any given week, the required response is to reduce SWP and CVP exports to reach an average OMR index of no more negative than –3,500 cfs for seven consecutive days. DWR and Reclamation shall restrict exports in response to initial LAD identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon. If genetic analysis of an individual natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP indicates that it is not a winter-run, that individual shall not count toward the loss threshold and continued export restrictions under the PA or COA are not required if the weekly loss threshold has consequently not been met.
- **SWP ITP Spring Delta Outflow Implementation (COA 8.12.1):** Permittee shall reduce exports from April 1 to May 31 each year to achieve the SWP proportional share (COA 8.7) of export reductions established by the ratio of Vernalis flow (cfs) to combined SWP and CVP exports, scaled by water year type, to provide incidental spring outflow.
    - In a critical water year type, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 1:1
    - In a dry water year type, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 2:1
    - In a below normal year, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 3:1
    - In an above normal or wet year, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 4:1

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations

- SaMT reviewed and updated the Outlook document. The updated Outlook document will be shared with SaMT via SharePoint link by close of business (COB) 4/30/25. Additional details and operations context shared at the 4/29/25 meeting include:
    - Sacramento River releases at Keswick Dam will increase from 6,000 cfs to 8,500 in the approximate time frame of 5/3 – 5/4/25.

- Sacramento River flows at Freeport were approximately 20,800 cfs as of 4/28/25 and are expected to increase as releases from Shasta Dam make their way into the system.
- San Joaquin River at Vernalis flows were approximately 2,500 cfs on 4/28/25 and have been variable with the pulse flow.
- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports will remain at 600 cfs through the end of April.
- An outage is scheduled for Skinner Fish Facility from 5/4 – 5/9/25. Water will still be moved into CCF but will not be pumped at Jones Pumping Plant.
- Jones Pumping Plant is currently exporting 900 cfs.
- Delta Outflow was approximately 27,100 cfs as of 4/28/25.
- QWEST was +7,700 cfs on 4/28/25. The 7-day average is +5,900 cfs.
- Rio Vista flows were approximately 19,400 cfs..
- X2 was 67 km as of 4/28/25 and may continue to move further inward.
- CVP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 825.7 TAF.
- Total storage of the San Luis Reservoir is approximately 1.7 MAF.

- Questions and Comments
  - CDFW asked about the planned outage at Skinner Fish Facility and if it is at all related to the scheduled herbicide treatment.
  - DWR responded that the outage is for annual maintenance. The herbicide treatment is scheduled for late June.

Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

- Reclamation shared the following via email:
  - "The last winter-run Chinook salmon observed was a hatchery fish on 4/4/25.
  - Natural CCV steelhead loss has been low in the past week with only 2 individuals sampled in salvage with an estimated loss of 5.44 fish between 4/20 – 4/27/25."

Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

Natural Spring-Run Weekly Risk Assessment

- SaMT reviewed and updated the Natural-origin Spring-Run Weekly Risk Assessment.
- Questions and Comments
  - N/A

Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion

Special Steelhead Study

- NMFS spoke with leadership staff who expressed agreement with the recommendation for counting +1s to the annual loss totals.
- NMFS leadership approved the recommendation to omit including the +30 fish in the database and instead adding it as a footnote for this WY 2025.
- Questions and Comments
    - DWR asked for clarification: Are they adding or not adding the +1 for the weekly loss threshold.
    - It was confirmed that it will be added to annual loss but not the weekly loss threshold.
    - DWR is tracking the fish along with the collection facility. When their data is available, it will be shared with CDFW; the data is updated twice weekly.

Steelhead Salvage vs Loss

- Kearns & West submitted the recommendation form to WOMT on behalf of SaMT but a response from WOMT has not been shared back as of 4/29/25.

Surrogate Release

- DWR shared that WOMT approved the fifth and sixth scheduled young-of-year (YOY) spring-run surrogate releases.

Items to Raise to WOMT

1. N/A

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next Weekly Operations Meeting will be on Tuesday, 5/6/25. If needed, SaMT will meet at the conclusion of the Operations meeting.

Action Items

- Timothy Malinich, CDFW, to follow up with Kyle Griffiths, CDFW, on looking into discrepancies on SacPAS related to Steelhead.