

# Delta Monitoring Workgroup

## Meeting Record 05/24/2022

### Working Group Members in Attendance

- USBR: Nick Bertrand, Mike Beakes, Randi Field, Kristi Arend, Ian Smith
- USFWS: *Not in attendance*
- NMFS: *Not in attendance*
- CDFW: April Hennessey, Gabe Singer
- DWR: Mike Ford, Brian Schreier, Farida Islam
- SWRCB: *Not in attendance*
- Water Contractors: Yuan Liu (CCWD); Chandra Chilmakuri, Darcy Austin (SWC); Heidi Williams (Valley Water), David Vang, Jose Rangel, Tom Boardman (WWD).

### Action Items

- No current action items.

### Additional Notes on Discussion Items

For detailed information on the outlook or assessment document overviews presented during the meeting, please refer to those documents.

### Review Operations Outlook (Randi Field, USBR and Mike Ford, DWR)

- Weather is shifting to warmer conditions with lower humidity. Expecting to shift to cooler conditions with a slight chance of precipitation north of the I-80 corridor. No change to operations from the minor chance of showers.
- Sacramento River – the releases are currently 3,750 cfs downstream from Keswick Dam, in response to decreased flows and temperature concerns.
- Stanislaus River – the releases are currently 700 cfs to meet the D1641 requirement.
- Jones Pumping Plant exports are currently 900 cfs. DCC gates will open for Memorial Day weekend on 05/27/2022 and close on 05/31/2022.
- Conditions in the Delta are recovering from a stronger spring tide. Emerging into mild neap and moderate spring.
- Currently targeting TUCO outflow requirements and monitoring salinity at Emmaton.
- Feather River – the releases are currently at 2,200 cfs and are expected to continue.
- CCF exports are currently 600 cfs to maintain public health and safety minimum.

### Questions/Comments

- *No discussion*

### **Review PA Assessment (Nick Bertrand and Kristi Arend, USBR)**

- There has been increase in loss for natural Steelhead at the CVP.
- Salmonid distribution estimates have been adjusted for YOY winter-run Chinook, YOY spring-run Chinook salmon, and Natural origin Steelhead. No change in YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon.
- No concerns to raise to WOMT.
- Due to warmer temperatures, DS spawning is slowing and DS observed are shifting from larvae to juveniles.
- DS All Strata abundance estimate for post-larval/juveniles was 13,086 for data collected between 05/09/2022 – 05/12/2022.
- The expected OMR index values are -1,500 cfs to -1,800 cfs. OMR represents lower likelihood of entrainment.
- Turbidity daily average at OBI was 3.06 FNU on 05/23/2022.
- Three Station Daily Average water temperature was 20.9 degrees Celsius on 05/23/2022. This is outside of the range of DS spawning: 9 to 18 degrees Celsius, but may be warmer than the rest of the Delta due to sampling at Mossdale.
- There was no salvage at the facilities, but larval sampling will continue for one more week. Larval sampling ceased last year on 06/01/2021.

#### Questions/Comments

*No discussion*

### **Review ITP Risk Assessment (Brian Schreier, DWR)**

- Samples from 20-mm Survey 5 are being processed.
- One juvenile LFS was detected in twelve stations in South and Central Delta. Triggers for ITP COA 8.4.2 were not reached.
- Salvage numbers for LFS are declining, but still significantly higher than in previous years. Over the last week, approximately 166 juvenile LFS were salvaged.
- High risk assessment was maintained for larval/juvenile fish for both species in the OMR corridor.
- No restrictions at Barker Slough Pumping Plant.

#### Questions/Comments

Q: Is the high risk assessment based on fish caught one month ago? How long will the risk be considered high?

R: “High risk” refers to high risk of entrainment for any larvae or juvenile fish in the OMR corridor, not risk of salvage. The assessment acknowledges that detections in DS monitoring are expected be stochastic due to low DS abundance and densities. The high risk assessment will likely be maintained due to the documented presence of DS. Additionally, the tows for 20-mm survey 5 were shortened

to 5 minutes and 2.5 minutes due to debris in the water, which may have decreased chances of detecting fish in the water.

Q: Did the larval qualitative sampling pilot study (LEPS) detect any DS?

R: No DS were detected in the qualitative larval sampling in the facilities or pilot larval samplings in the West Canal. However, these samples are still being processed. Data may not be available until later this summer.

Q: What does it mean for risk of LFS to be elevated compared to “baseline”?

R: The level of salvage for LFS is elevated. The current salvage is the highest it has been in 20 years.

Q: If there was a different regulatory framework for the ITP, would SMT recommend a different action to protect LFS, given the current high salvage at the export facilities?

R: The SMT’s role is to implement the existing regulatory framework and provide recommendations in the context of the ITP. It is difficult to speculate on what the SMT would recommend under a different regulatory framework.

## **Additional Questions or Comments**

*No discussion*

## **Acronyms**

- DCC – Delta Cross Channel
- DWR – California Department of Water Resources
- DS – Delta Smelt
- FNU -- Formazin Nephelometric Unit
- 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
- PTM – Particle Tracking Model
- SaMT – Salmon Monitoring Team
- SLS – Smelt Larval Survey
- SMT – Smelt Monitoring Team

- SWRCB – State Water Resources Control Board
- TFCF – Tracy Fish Collection Facility
- TUCP – Temporary Urgency Change Petition
- WCS – Winter Run Chinook Salmon
- WQ – Water Quality
- YOY – Young of Year