Delta Monitoring Workgroup

Meeting Record 12/27/2022

Working Group Members in Attendance

- USBR: Nick Bertrand, Kristin Arend, Michael Beakes, Chadwick Moore, Kristin White
- USFWS: Leif Goude
- NMFS: Not in attendance
- CDFW: Crystal Rigby
- DWR: Mike Ford, Brian Schreier
- SWRCB: Not in attendance
- Water Contractors: Shawn Acuña (MWD), Deanna Sereno (CCWD), Yuan Liu (CCWD), Chandra Chilmakuri (SWC), Jennifer Buckman (ARSC)

Review Operations Outlook (USBR, DWR)

- The weather is showing major pattern shifts; more storms are forecasted for this week and next, with short breaks every few days.
- There is storage space in the reservoirs to capture inflows as a result of the coming precipitation.
- In the Delta, seeing a slight response from recent precipitation and runoff into the system, however, more significant in Delta inflows will arrive over the next several days.
- Regulating reservoirs may increase their releases over the next few days due to side flows.
- Folsom Lake capacity will be monitored over the next one to three weeks depending on the directions of the storms and may increase flows for storage management.
- Clear Creek is currently releasing 200 cfs, which will likely remain even with the upcoming storm events; however, more water might need to be released into Keswick from Spring Creek power plant to maintain elevation at Whiskeytown depending on the outcome of the storm.
- Currently releasing1,300 cfs on the American River, with a potential for minimum flow changes in January. Minimum flow changes (not operation) will be revisited on January 8 to January 10.
- Tulloch is fluctuating in the appropriate operating range; have issued a change order to 500 cfs for Goodwin to maintain Tulloch elevations and further changes may be necessary with the upcoming storms.

- Right now, project exports are likely limited by E:I constraints; the OMR management season begins on January 1 at -5,000 cfs, with the possibility of first flush coming next week.
- Oroville releases are at 950 cfs with plenty of storage space.
- Clifton Court is exporting 5,000 cfs today with the same amount scheduled for tomorrow; DWR will coordinate closely with Reclamation on maximum combined pumping and E:I ratio compliance as flows continue to show up in the Delta from the Sacramento River.
- See the Operations Outlook for more information.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question**: Do you anticipate minimum release requirements of 1,326 cfs at Folsom will be met?
    - **Answer**: The release at Folsom is hovering around 1,300 cfs. The change order was issued for 1,300 cfs, but it is difficult to target specific numbers. Earlier in December, the weekly average release from Nimbus was 1,340 cfs. Expecting quite a bit of side flow to the American River with the next storm event. We may see side flow affect Lake Natoma and require increased releases to maintain elevations, so it would be surprising to see a reduction in American River flows coming up.
- **Question**: As we go into OMR management on January 1, are flows at Vernalis forecasted to go up? Right now, flows at Vernalis are forecasted to go up to 5,000 cfs. I am curious if we will see that change more with Friant operations?
    - **Answer**: That 5,000 cfs is the combination of the base level of 1,000 cfs plus more from tributaries. That projection does not include Friant flood releases. We are at 50% exceedance in 10 days and 10% exceedance in 20 days. So, Vernalis may be forecast to go up.
- **Comment** on the San Joaquin River Restoration Program Update:
    - For the flood control operations, expecting an inflow event around New Year's Eve. Looking at the next 10 to 15 days for responses in the system from tributary flows, and below the confluence of Merced there is additional pickup. Capture of restoration flows will continue at least through January 3.

Review PA Assessment (USBR)

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

Review ITP Risk Assessment (CDFW)

DWR provided the LFS update. For more information, please refer to the ITP Risk Assessment document.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** When do you think [first flush] flow conditions and turbidity conditions will occur? Are there projections for the next 7 days, or just monitoring for now?

    - **Answer**: It is possible that flow conditions could get there on January 1, with potential on December 31 depending on turbidity. And while it is possible, it is not likely for December 30. And to clarify, we are talking about the first day of the 3-day average. That is not when the action would be triggered, but that would be the start of the three days.
    - **Question**: And is turbidity expected to be wind driven?
    - **Answer**: Freeport turbidity is runoff driven and not wind driven.
- **Question:** Regarding the monitoring data, are we seeing anything in the lower Delta for Delta Smelt?
    - **Answer**: At Station 812 we are seeing documented presence of Longfin Smelt
- **Comment**: I am sharing a reminder that there are 3-day averages for flow and turbidity on the SacPAS website for reference. This link is also included in the PA Assessment document.
  https://www.cbr.washington.edu/sacramento/workgroups/delta_smelt.html

Acronyms

- DCC – Delta Cross Channel
- DWR – California Department of Water Resources
- DS – Delta Smelt
- FNU -- Formazin Nephelometric Unit
- GCID – Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District
- 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