

Delta Monitoring Workgroup

Meeting Record 01/31/2023

Working Group Members in Attendance

- USBR: Nick Bertrand, Kristin Arend, Randi Field, Brian Mahardja, Cat Pien, Erika Kegel, Michael Beakes
- USFWS: Leif Goude
- NMFS: Not in attendance
- CDFW: Crystal Rigby, April Hennessey
- DWR: Mike Ford, Brian Schreier, Farida Islam
- SWRCB: Matt Holland
- Water Contractors: Shawn Acuña (MWD), Deanna Sereno (CCWD), Yuan Liu (CCWD), Chandra Chilmakuri (SWC), Darcy Austin (SWC), Cindy Meyer (SLDMWA), Scott Petersen (SLDMWA), Heidi Williams (Valley Water), Tom Boardman (WWD), David Vang (WWD), Ian Buck-Macleod (FWA)

Review Operations Outlook (USBR, DWR)

- Updated Operations Outlook format:
 - The content of this new section will be developed each week on Monday by DWR and Reclamation.
 - The goal is to explain the intent of the proposed operations for the next seven days and provide biological context for that intent.
 - WOMT intends for SMT and SaMT to have an opportunity to respond to the operational plan by providing this new section.
- Expecting drier and cooler weather conditions this week; precipitation will favor the north coast and the Shasta Basin along the spine of the Sierras; expecting about 0.5 inches of rain in the Sacramento Valley and less in the San Joaquin Basin based on the six-day forecast.
- Whiskeytown Dam is currently releasing minimum flows of 200 cfs into Clear Creek.
- Currently releasing minimum flows of 3,250 cfs downstream of Keswick Dam on the Sacramento River.
- Currently releasing 4,000 cfs from Nimbus Dam on the American River with a chance for decreasing releases in the near future.
- In the San Joaquin system, Goodwin Dam currently releasing minimum flows of 200 cfs into the Stanislaus River.

- In the Delta, inflows are declining from the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. Expecting inflow values to continue to decrease later in the week; the range of combined exports in the Operations Outlook signifies the expectation to operate in either the –3,500 cfs or –5,000 cfs OMR requirements.
- Conditions in the Delta show slight salinity increases as inflows wane; while salinity is not currently a controlling condition, it will continue to be closely monitored. Additionally, tidal sequences are picking up and X2 has moved upstream between Martinez and Port Chicago.
- Still anticipating D 1641 requirements for February; waiting for updated hydrology to be available.
- Freeport flows are hovering around mid-20,000 cfs and slightly dropping.
- Vernalis flows are about 12,000 cfs today and will likely drop to 6,000 cfs or 5,000 cfs later this week without additional precipitation.
- JPP exports continue at 4,200 cfs.
- DCC Gates are closed with no expectations for opening.
- Clifton Court is exporting 7,300 cfs and will be decreasing exports following the receding limb of Vernalis down to about 3,000 cfs for the next week without more rain.
- Operations have been under the –5,000 OMR limit for the past several days. Operations will continue at this requirement with a possibility of operating under the –3,500 cfs OMR limit for five days depending on the genetic results of the winter-run-sized fish [winter-run Chinook Salmon] that was recently salvaged. Operations are tentatively scheduled to be at –3,500 cfs on 02/01/2023 depending on the genetic results of the winter-run-sized fish. If this fish is not winter-run, the –3,500 OMR limit will be off-ramped.
- Oroville releases remain at 950 cfs on the Feather River.
- See the Operations Outlook for more information.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** Were exports at Banks mentioned to be decreasing to 5,000 or 6,000 cfs over the next few days? Is this only if operations are under the –3,500 OMR requirements?
 - **Answer:** To clarify, exports will be declining to about 5,000 cfs at Banks tomorrow, then reaching about 3,000 cfs because of declining Vernalis flows. Operations under the OMR limit of –3,500 cfs are scheduled for tomorrow assuming the –3,500 cfs OMR limit will continue to be triggered. However, if the genetic results show that the salvage was not a winter run and this requirement is not triggered, then we'll operate to -5,000 cfs and will adjust our exports accordingly.
- **Question:** To clarify, if genetic results come back to show winter-run, would we be operating at –3,500 cfs tomorrow? If so, would we then be moving to approximately 3,000 cfs over course of the week because of declining San Joaquin flows and the –3,500 cfs OMR requirement?

- **Answer:** Regardless of whether the requirement is –3,500 or –5,000, SWP exports will decrease because Vernalis flows are decreasing. The amount of the decrease will depend on which requirement we are operating under.
- **Question:** Is the –3,500 cfs a cumulative total for both the state and federal projects?
 - **Answer:** The –3,500 cfs OMR limit, under shared proportions for the CVP and SWP, would be triggered by the State ITP. The SWP must meet its share of the export cut, if triggered.
- **Question:** Do we know when genetic testing will be available?
 - **Answer:** These results will be available tomorrow morning before operations scheduling call.

Review PA Assessment (USBR)

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

Review ITP Risk Assessment (DWR)

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

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** How many stations have not yet processed their respective samples?
 - **Answer:** The information provided in the risk assessment is preliminary as samples were only collected on 1/30/2023. DWR is anticipating the 12 south and central Delta stations will have processing completed by end of the week.
- **Question:** If enough fish are found for the trigger, would that be communicated to WOMT for their decision-making purposes this week, even if it is processed after WOMT's operations scheduling call on 02/01/2023?
 - **Answer:** We are still under a high flow off-ramp for 8.4.3, so while the notes would include a risk assessment, there would be no OMR guidance because that condition would still be off-ramped. There was a request for SMT to meet if 8.4.2 is triggered.
- **Question:** Regarding the single day winter-run that was salvaged, I want to confirm that the CVP is operating to –5,000 cfs, given no IOP?
 - **Answer:** This is our understanding: –5,000 cfs to continue exporting at 4,200 cfs at JPP.
- **Question:** Can this group be informed on the genetic results of the winter-run salvage?
 - **Follow Up Action:** *Facilitation team will circle back with DWR and USBR this week on this question.*

Acronyms

- CVP – Central Valley Project
- DCC – Delta Cross Channel
- DWR – California Department of Water Resources
- DS – Delta Smelt

- FNU -- Formazin Nephelometric Unit
- GCID – Glenn-Colusa Irrigation District
- IOP – Interim Operations Plan
- 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
- SWP – State Water Project
- SWRCB – State Water Resources Control Board
- TFCF – Tracy Fish Collection Facility
- TUCP – Temporary Urgency Change Petition
- USBR – United States Bureau of Reclamation
- WCS – Winter Run Chinook Salmon
- WOMT – Water Operations Management Team
- WQ – Water Quality
- YOY – Young of Year