

Delta Monitoring Workgroup

Meeting Record 02/21/2023

Working Group Members in Attendance

- USBR: Nick Bertrand, Kristin Arend, Brian Mahardja, Cat Pien, Erika Kegel, Elissa Buttermore, Randi Field
- USFWS: Leif Goude
- NMFS: Not in attendance
- CDFW: Not in attendance
- DWR: Mike Ford, Brian Schreier, Farida Islam
- SWRCB: Not in attendance
- Water Contractors: Shawn Acuña (MWD), Yuan Liu (CCWD), Chandra Chilmakuri (SWC), Heidi Williams (Valley Water), Jose Rangel (WWD), Tom Boardman (WWD), David Vang (WWD), Cindy Meyer (SLDMWA), Deanna Sereno (CCWD), Michelle Banonis (RWA)

Review Operations Outlook (USBR, DWR)

- Expecting unsettled weather starting today, higher winds and cooler temperatures; freezing temperatures are dropping to low elevations; precipitation is anticipated within a week, favoring Southern California, the north coast and Shasta Basin along the spine of the Sierras.
- Anticipated freezing temperatures will reduce runoff.
- Whiskeytown Dam is currently releasing minimum flows of 200 cfs into Clear Creek.
- Keswick Dam is currently releasing minimum flows of 3,250 cfs into the Sacramento River.
- Nimbus Dam is currently releasing 4,000 cfs into the American River; there is a chance for making reductions if conditions are favorable.
- In the San Joaquin system, Goodwin Dam is currently releasing minimum flows of 200 cfs into the Stanislaus River; have a change order out for a February Winter Instability Flow, 2/24/2023 through 2/28/2023 with pulse flow ranging from 200 cfs, going to 900 cfs, and back down to 200 cfs.
- Yesterday's (2/20/2023) daily average at Freeport was 16,600 cfs; in the range of 14,000 cfs to 28,000 cfs currently.

- At Vernalis, flows are declining and range from 3,000 cfs to 3,500 cfs; yesterday's (2/20/2023) average was about 3,300 cfs inflows into the Delta from the San Joaquin Basin.
- Operationally, Reclamation is targeting OMRI of -5,000 cfs, however due to regulatory restrictions under the ITP, Reclamation is currently unable to use the Delta Conveyance Intertie (DCI). Federal exports were reduced late last week and JPP is currently exporting 3,500 cfs while looking for opportunities to increase.
- DCC Gates are closed and will remain closed for seasonal operations.
- Oroville releases remain at 950 cfs on the Feather River.
- Clifton Court exporting 2,100 cfs today (2/21/2023); operating at an OMR limit to -3,500 cfs under ITP Condition 8.4.2 to protect juvenile LFS.
- Today, 2/21/2023, formal approval was received for the Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) submitted to the SWRCB.
- See the Operations Outlook for more information.

Additional Questions or Comments

- **Question:** Will the approved Temporary Urgency Change Order (TUCO) be posted somewhere so if there are conditions tied to it, we can see them?
 - **Answer:** It is posted on the State Board's website [here](#).

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:** Of the 38 DS that have been caught, how many were cultured?
 - **Answer:** 31 DS were cultured.
- **Question:** Did the SMT look at the overall proportion of the larval LFS in the 12 stations relative to the entire catch?
 - **Answer:** For SLS 4, the only stations that are currently processed are those upstream of the Confluence. We looked at new information today (2/21/2023) for the Sacramento River side and there are elevated detections as well in the lower Sacramento River. But we are still waiting for the rest of the samples to be processed from downstream of the Confluence.
- **Question:** So, is the risk based primarily on the lower Sacramento River catch and not the relative proportion?
 - **Answer:** Yes. As discussed in previous years, the SMT is tracking the overall distribution and is acknowledging the distribution that is further downstream of larvae as well, also observing that X2 has been moving upstream for a few weeks

and we have been seeing signs that distribution of LFS is shifting upstream again. While SMT is tracking the full distribution, the risk and triggers in the ITP are based on the 12 South and Central Delta stations only.

- **Question:** You mentioned there is a disagreement on the duration on the –3500cfs OMRI. Is that going to be discussed at WOMT tomorrow?
 - **Answer:** Yes.
- **Question:** What was the disagreement, and can you go into more detail? Is this because there was no consensus on whether it should be 7 days for more data to be available as stated in the report?
 - **Answer:** Yes, essentially the OMR management started on Saturday. The disagreement is centered around whether to pursue the 7-day defined action or not to define the end date of the –3500 cfs requirement.
- **Comment:** Request for DWR and USBR to determine the risk based on the overall relative proportion of detections to catch and not just the 12 South and Central Delta stations, even though sampling and verification takes time.

Acronyms

- CVP – Central Valley Project
- DCC – Delta Cross Channel
- DWR – California Department of Water Resources
- DS – Delta Smelt
- FNU -- Formazin Nephelometric Unit
- 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
- TUCO – Temporary Urgency Change Order
- USBR – United States Bureau of Reclamation
- WCS – Winter Run Chinook Salmon
- WOMT – Water Operations Management Team
- WQ – Water Quality
- YOY – Young of Year