

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Conference call: 10/13/2020 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 CVP and the SWP on salmonids and green sturgeon. Meeting notes will be posted to Reclamation's SaMT web page [here](#).

- **California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW):** Adam Chorazyczewski, Andrew Huneycutt, Duane Linander, Geir Aasen, Sheena Holley
- **DWR:** Alicia Seesholtz, Brett Harvey, Bryant Giorgi, Chris Cook, Farida Islam, Ian Uecker, John Ford, Kevin Reece, Tracy Pettit, Vadim Demchuk
- **Kearns & West:** Rafael Silberblatt, Susan Ellsworth
- **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS):** Jeff Stuart, Kristin Begun
- **State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB):** Craig Williams, Matthew Holland, Michael Macon
- **Reclamation:** Elissa Buttermore, Rafael Lopez, Suzanne Manugian, Tom Patton
- **US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):** Geoff Steinhart, Katherine Sun

Agenda Items:

1. Introductions
2. Relevant Actions and Triggers
3. Outlook, Current Operations, and Weather Forecast
4. Fish Abundance and Distribution
5. Fish Exposure and Behavioural Cues
6. Other Topics
7. Additional Considerations for WOMT
8. Next SaMT Meeting

Agenda Item 2. Relevant Actions and Triggers Review Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate Operations

Reclamation proposes to operate the DCC gates to reduce juvenile salmonid entrainment risk beyond actions described in D-1641, consistent with Delta water quality requirements in D-1641. From October 1 to November 30 Reclamation proposes to operate the DCC gates consistent with past operations. See Reclamation's Proposed Action (PA), Section 4.10.5.3 (page 4-55). The DCC gates are scheduled to be closed from 1600 hours on 10/13/20 to approximately 1000 hours on 10/17/20 during the Lower Mokelumne River pulse flow release. Closures are in accordance with the DCC operations described in the PA. Closure of the gates is anticipated to reduce straying of Mokelumne River fall-run Chinook salmon through the DCC and into the Sacramento River system during the attraction pulse flows.

Agenda Item 3. Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations Project Operations

SaMT reviewed and updated the Outlook document.

Fall-run Chinook salmon carcass surveys on the American River started on 10/13/20.

Temperatures are running at 66-67°F at Hazel Ave Bridge.

An updated version of the document will be circulated to the SaMT through email and posted to MS Teams.

Agenda Item 4. Fish Abundance and Distribution

SaMT reviewed the Assessment document that describes fish abundance and distribution.

Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions: COVID-19 or air quality impacts.

Monitoring Survey	Status (as of 10/13/20) Most Recent Change in Green
Delta	
SWP regular counts, CWT reading, and larval sampling	Ongoing
CVP regular counts, CWT reading, and larval sampling	Ongoing
Smelt Larval Survey	
20mm Survey	
Bay Study	
DJFMP- Chipps and Sacramento Trawls	Ongoing
DJFMP- Seines	Ongoing
EDSM	Ongoing
EMP	
Mosssdale	Ongoing
USGS Flow monitoring	Continuous monitoring continues
Sacramento River	
Red Bluff Diversion Dam screw trap	Ongoing
Knights Landing screw trap	Ongoing through modified staffing
Tisdale screw trap	Ongoing through modified staffing
Redd dewatering and stranding surveys	Ongoing
Sacramento Carcass and Redd Surveys	Continuing
Spring Kodiak Trawl	Typically sample in Dec but starting in Jan this year
San Joaquin River	
SJRRP CDFW Field Monitoring	Start 10/6/20
SJRRP USFWS and USBR Field Monitoring	Since 8/31 with some interruption due to air quality

Green Sturgeon

13 Green Sturgeon detected during CDFW surveys of the Sacramento River north of Sherman Lake – 8 on 10/6, five on 10/8 and one white sturgeon on 10/6.

Fish Monitoring: Salvage

No species of interest salvaged during this past week.

No significant aquatic weed issues have been noted, though some may become present in the system when agricultural barriers are removed in mid-November.

SaMT Estimates of Fish Distribution

SaMT estimates of the current distribution of listed Chinook salmon, as a percentage of the population, are based on recent monitoring data and historical migration timing patterns.

Location	Yet to Enter Delta (Upstream of Knights Landing)	In the Delta	Exited the Delta (Past Chipps Island)
<i>Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon</i>	99-100% Last week: 99-100%	0-1% Last week: 0-1%	0% Last week: 0%
<i>YOY spring-run Chinook salmon</i>	100% Last week: 100%	0% Last week: 0%	0% Last week: 0%
<i>YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon</i>	N/A Last week: N/A	N/A Last week: N/A	N/A Last week: N/A
<i>Natural origin steelhead</i>	99-100% Last week: 99-100%	0-1% Last week: 0-1%	0% Last week: 0%

Agenda Item 5. Fish Exposure and Behavioral Cues, Current Conditions, Sensitivity to Operational Actions

SaMT reviewed this information and provided input captured in the Assessment document.

The STARS model does not currently include the DCC close action because simulations are for 10/9. The upcoming water year doesn't have a drop down yet; considering adding a widget to pinpoint day-by-day.

SaMT members note that it is important to make sure all dates are updated in the Assessment.

An updated version of the Assessment will be circulated to the SaMT through email and posted on MS Teams.

Agenda Item 6. Other Topics

CDFW ITP: Proposing low risk for juvenile winter-run Chinook salmon entrainment into the central and south Delta. Since 0% of the juvenile spring-run population are estimated to be in the Delta, the risk assessment did not estimate risk of entrainment of juvenile spring-run Chinook salmon.

CDFW noted that DCC gates are anticipated to open 10/17. Three day lag time for pulse flows might be an overestimate. One to two days is probably more accurate.

CDFW will follow up with the SaMT regarding the date of document release.

- CDFW Response: WOMT advice per the ITP risk assessment will be finalized during the SaMT call, but the complete package will be finalized and distributed Friday to give SaMT members time to comment and provide edits.

The Feather River hatchery temperature requirement between October 1 and November 30 is 51°F +/- 4°F.”

Kearns & West reviewed MS Teams functionality and file structure, noting the ability to simultaneously live edit SaMT documents. Various SaMT member agencies noted that they may need approval from IT/legal/management to fully utilize MS Teams. All SaMT members should have access – notify Rafael Silberblatt or Susan Ellsworth if not.

Agenda Item 7. Additional Considerations for WOMT

No additional considerations for WOMT are noted.

Agenda Item 8.

Next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 10/20/20 at 9:00 a.m.