

# Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

**Conference call: 11/2/2021 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 Central Valley Project (CVP) and the State Water Project (SWP) on salmonids and green sturgeon. Final versions of the Meeting Notes, Proposed Action Assessment, and Fish and Water Operations Outlook will be posted to [Reclamation's Salmon Monitoring Team](#) webpage. Meeting participants include representatives from: California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), DWR, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), Reclamation, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

## Agenda Items:

1. Roll Call
2. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions
3. Open Discussion on species status
4. Live-edit Assessments (Proposed Action Assessment and ITP Risk Assessment)
5. Additional Considerations/Other Topics
6. Next Meeting

## Agenda Item 2. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

### Relevant Actions and Triggers

SaMT reviewed and accepted edits made to the 10/26/21 Outlook document by WOMT subsequent to the 10/26/21 call.

The DCC gates are closed as of 10/25/21 and are currently controlled by fish catch indices. Weather systems over the course of the next week may yield precipitation totals ranging from 2" in the Sierras and Shasta Basin to .5" in the northern Central Valley to trace amounts further south in the Valley.

DWR noted that an herbicide application within Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) and work within the SWP facilities have been rescheduled for 11/4/21 - 11/5/21 and will entail a temporary stoppage at Banks Pumping Plant. The CCF radial gates will close on 11/3/21 and reopen late in the day on 11/5/21. X2 is starting to move back upriver as the recent high flow events from last week's storms recede this week. QWEST is now negative following high positive flows last week coinciding with the storm event. QWEST is currently around -7,000 cfs.

The final of three scheduled Mokelumne Fall Pulse Flows will occur this week.

CDFW noted that the Merced River Hatchery had its first spawning last week.

*Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations*

SaMT reviewed and updated the Outlook document. The updated Outlook document will be distributed to the SaMT via email by close of business (COB) 11/2/21.

Reclamation noted that a non-adipose fin-clipped (natural) 189 mm steelhead was salvaged at CVP facilities on 10/30/21 and released. SaMT discussed whether to record the salvage event within the Daily or Cumulative Loss tables (Table 2a-b), given that it occurred prior to the December 1 to March 31 window specified in the PA for OMR Management actions. SaMT agreed to omit the event from Table 2a-b but to acknowledge it within a footnote as well as to bring the question to the LTO. NMFS noted that this fish is part of the annual incidental take authorized in the NMFS Biological Opinion for the operations of the Projects and needs to be accounted for.

The SaMT discussed Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions as addressed within the Operations Outlook and updated accordingly.

*SaMT Estimates of Fish Distribution*

SaMT estimates of the current distribution of listed Chinook salmon and CCV steelhead, as a percentage of each population, are based on recent monitoring data and historical migration timing patterns. These estimates are reported in the final Assessment document, available on [Reclamation's Salmon Monitoring Team](#) webpage.

<b>Location</b>	<b>Yet to Enter Delta</b>	<b>In the Delta</b>	<b>Exited the Delta</b>
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 85-90% Last week: 97-99%	Current: 10-15% Last week: 1-3%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 99-100% Last week: NA	Current: 0-1% Last week: NA	Current: 0% Last week: NA
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon <sup>1</sup>	Current: NA Last week: NA	Current: NA Last week: NA	Current: NA Last week: NA
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 95-99% Last week: 100%	Current: 1-5% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%

SaMT discussed the observation of LAD young of the year spring-run Chinook at GCID and Knights Landing. The group agreed to insert a footnote within the Outlook document explaining that while the fish are spring-run according to LAD, in fact, they may be late emerging winter-run given the time of year. In addition, larger older juvenile Chinook salmon were observed at Tisdale and Knights Landing RSTs, and in several beach seines that may be yearling spring-run Chinook salmon by LAD.

**Agenda Item 3. Open Discussion on Species Status**

NMFS noted that flows at Deer and Mill creeks are still above 95 cfs, indicating that yearling spring-run Chinook salmon may be emigrating from the tributaries.

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<sup>1</sup> Estimation of YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook Salmon distribution is complicated by multiple releases over a prolonged period of time.

## **Agenda Item 4. Live edit Assessments**

### *Proposed Action Assessment*

Reclamation reviewed changes to DCC gate recommendations within the prior week's PA Assessment (10/26/21) which were made subsequent to the SaMT meeting. The week's storm event necessitated shifting the explanation for gate closure from the need to meet flow requirements at Rio Vista to the need to prevent scouring within the DCC.

SaMT reviewed and updated the current week's PA Assessment document. The updated PA Assessment will be distributed to the SaMT via email by COB 11/2/21. The final assessment will be posted to [Reclamation's Salmon Monitoring Team](#) webpage.

SaMT members discussed distribution of the Outlook and Assessment documents. The draft Outlook document will be distributed on Mondays and the final PA Assessment, Outlook and meeting notes will be distributed on Thursdays.

### *ITP Risk Assessment*

CDFW provided an overview of the weekly ITP Risk Assessment noting an updated format. The updated draft ITP Assessment will be distributed by COB 11/2/21 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Thursday, 11/4/21. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by Friday, 11/5/21 and can be found at [CDFW's Water Project Operations webpage](#).

## **Agenda Item 5. Additional Considerations/Other Topics**

No additional considerations for WOMT were noted.

## **Agenda Item 6.**

The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 11/9/21, at 9 a.m.