

# Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Conference call: 1/25/2022 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

Mild weather conditions are anticipated for this Outlook period with the potential for minimal precipitation in early February.

Freeport flows are anticipated to continue decreasing through the end of January due to lower Nimbus releases and dry conditions. Feather River releases are currently at 950 cfs and have the potential to increase later this week to support Delta outflow requirements starting 2/1/22.

American River releases are being managed to follow inflows. While current releases are at 2,700 cfs, a change order will go out today to bring flow down to 2,000 cfs tomorrow. There may also be temporary changes next week to accommodate the installation of additional rotary screw traps.

X2 is currently positioned at 74 km and is anticipated to continue moving upstream

The Stanislaus River is anticipating a winter instability flow before the end of the month. February will see an increase in flow in response to D-1641 requirements.

Clifton Court Forebay exports are 1,600 cfs today and will range from 1,400 to 1,800 cfs this week. Jones Pumping Plant is targeting 4,200 cfs.

Operators plan to maintain the 7-day and 14-day OMR no more negative than -5,000 cfs until February 1 after which flows will likely be 300 cfs to meet the Chipps Island standard.

Current Delta outflow is approximately 7,900 cfs and will decrease through the end of January.

QWEST is approximately -2,300 cfs and is anticipated to become more negative.

Yearling spring-run surrogate loss from hatchery release group 2 occurred during the past week. Loss of steelhead was observed at the CVP and SWP facilities.

The tidal cycle is currently coming from the base of a neap cycle to a strong spring around January 31 to February 1.

#### Actions Currently in Effect

- Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations: The DCC gates were closed on 11/30/2021 and are expected to remain closed through mid-May 2022. Positive impacts include preventing routing of listed fish through the DCC into the interior Delta. There is a possibility that the DCC gates could be opened before Jan 31st to prevent exceeding D-1641 water quality criteria if drought conditions are observed between December 1 and January 31, and modeling indicates that water quality concern levels are exceeded during this period if the gates remain closed. If these conditions are present, Reclamation and DWR will consider opening the DCC gates for up to five days for up to two events within this period to avoid D-1641 water quality exceedances following a risk assessment of this action. During a DCC gates opening between December 1 and January 31, the CVP and SWP will divert at Health and Safety pumping levels.
- OMR Management Season: Onset of OMR Management season began on 1/1/22 due to the exceedance of the 5% threshold for the winter-run Chinook salmon population presence within the Delta. Old and Middle River (OMR) flows cannot be more negative than -5,000 cfs on a 14-day average. Additional restrictions and changes to operations may be required per the Proposed Action (PA) and the CDFW Incidental Take Permit (ITP-COA 8.3.2).
- ITP Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.1): DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.1 of the ITP. The ITP Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of length-at-date winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 1.17% of the winter-run Chinook salmon juvenile production estimate (JPE). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss > 731.47), the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the coordinated operations agreement (COA), that would be required to reach a 14-day average OMR of -3,500 cfs. If 75% of this threshold is exceeded (loss > 1,097.21), the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,500 cfs.

- ITP Older Juvenile Daily Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.3): From 1/1/22 - 1/31/22, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.3 of the ITP. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for January is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from CVP and SWP greater than 0.00635% of the winter-run Chinook salmon juvenile production estimate (JPE). If the threshold (loss > 7.94) is exceeded, the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach an OMR of -3,500 cfs for five consecutive days.

*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) 1/25/22.

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.

Location	Yet to Enter Delta	In the Delta	Exited the Delta
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 15-30% Last week: 20-35%	Current: 69-80 % Last week: 60-79%	Current: 1-5% Last week: 1-5%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 35-50% Last week: 45-60%	Current: 50-65% Last week: 40-55%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: NA Last week: NA	Current: NA Last week: NA	Current: NA Last week: NA
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 60-70% Last week: 70-75%	Current: 27-39% Last week: 25-29%	Current: 1-3% Last week: 0-1%

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

No open discussion items.

**Agenda Item 4. Live edit Assessments**

*Proposed Action Assessment*

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 1/25/22. The final assessment will be posted to [Reclamation's Salmon Monitoring Team](#) webpage.

*ITP Risk Assessment*

SaMT discussed the ITP Risk Assessment document. The updated draft ITP Assessment will be distributed via email by COB 1/25/22 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Thursday 1/27/22. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by Friday 1/28/22 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, 2/1/22, at 9 a.m.