

# Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

**Conference call: 2/22/2022 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 U.S. 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**

Currently experiencing a small amount of precipitation occurring in the higher elevations of the Sierras, with cooler trends throughout the week. Dry conditions continue on the valley floor.

QWEST is currently positive at 2,300 cfs and will remain more positive than 1,500 cfs throughout the week.

X2 is currently moving between the high 70s and the confluence depending on tidal conditions (> 79 km).

Current tide conditions: nearing the bottom of a weak neap cycle.

Releases on the American River are 2,000 cfs and operators are continuing to look for opportunities to further reduce releases for storage conservation but will likely remain consistent.

Releases on the Stanislaus River are at 800 cfs downstream from Goodwin Dam. There is a fishery experiment which requires a decrease to 300 cfs on 2/24/22 and will return to 800 cfs on 2/24/22.

Jones Pumping Plant was exporting 1,700 cfs last week, and is now currently at 900-1,000 cfs and expecting variability to meet the D-1641 Delta Flow Requirements.

There are no anticipated changes in flows for the beginning of March. In the last 10 days of March, there may be an opportunity to decrease outflows to the Collinsville target but it will be determined by the 8 River Index that will be released the first week of March.

For more details on salvage that occurred in the past week please refer to the Operations Outlook, PA Assessment, and ITP Risk Assessment documents. Additionally, all salvage information can be found online at <https://filelib.wildlife.ca.gov/Public/salvage/>.

#### Actions Currently in Effect

- Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3): The DCC gates were closed on 11/30/21 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. From February 1 to May 20, the DCC gates will be closed consistent with D-1641. From May 21 to June 15, the DCC gates will be closed for a total of 14 days, consistent with D-1641.
- OMR Management Season (PA 4.10.5.10.1; COA 8.3.2): 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 PA and the SWP Incidental Take Permit (ITP)
- 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 natural-origin Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of unclipped 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.

- The ITP hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of clipped length-at-date winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.12% of the winter-run Chinook salmon hatchery-origin JPE. If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss > 90.93), 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 > 136.39), 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 2/1/22 - 2/28/22, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.3 of the ITP. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for February is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from CVP and SWP greater than 0.00991% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE. If the threshold is exceeded (loss >12.39), 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 no more negative than -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) 2/22/22.

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: 5-20% Last week: 10-25%	Current: 77-88% Last week: 74-85%	Current: 3-7% Last week: 1-5%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 22-40% Last week: 22-41%	Current: 60-78% Last week: 59-78%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 43-62% Last week: 43-62%	Current: 28-42% Last week: 28-42%	Current: 10-15% Last week: 10-15%

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

No additional discussion occurred.

## **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 2/22/22. 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 2/22/22 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Thursday 2/24/22. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by Friday 2/25/22 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.

There was an unplanned outage at the Tracy Fish Collection Facility (TFCF) on 2/17/22 starting at 1530 hours due to excessive debris and accumulation in the holding tanks. The TFCF was forced to decrease secondary channel velocity below 3 fps to limit debris entering holding tanks. This put conditions not within salmon criteria (Salmon Criteria: secondary channel of 3-3.5 fps). Salvage and salvage monitoring at the fish facility continued. Exports at Jones Pumping Plant were not interrupted. TFCF salvage operation returned to Salmon Criteria (i.e., secondary channel of 3-3.5 fps) on 2/18/22 at 0700 hours.

SaMT members were invited to join the American River Group meeting on 2/17/22 for a thiamine deficiency presentation and discussion led by Rachel Johnson (SWFSC) and Amanda Cranford (NMFS). The point of contact for thiamine observations in monitoring and salvage is Amanda Cranford at [amanda.cranford@noaa.gov](mailto:amanda.cranford@noaa.gov). The recording of the presentation can be found here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1SwvkjPUF8JrgQ0NuSnXuoC3Sx03MuQfK/view>

## **Agenda Item 6.**

The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 3/1/22, at 9 a.m.