

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Conference call: 3/15/2022 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

Action Items:

Sheena Holley – Include interested members on the distribution email for information about WY 2022 spring-run Chinook salmon surrogate releases (COA 8.6.4).

Suzanne Manugian – Speak with Reclamation management and consider creating a draft table that combines Fish and Water Operations Outlook Tables 2 and 3.

Agenda Item 2. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

Relevant Actions and Triggers

There is currently precipitation occurring and scattered showers expected later this week with an estimated 1.5 inches in the most favorable locations along the spine of the Sierras.

However, there is no anticipated response in the main stems because of continued persistent dry conditions.

Oroville releases into Feather River are currently at 2,500 cfs and will decrease starting on Saturday (3/19/2022) to transition to the lower outflow requirements for the remainder of March.

Sacramento River at Freeport was at 11,700 cfs yesterday and will decrease sharply throughout the week as Oroville and other decreases reach the Delta.

San Joaquin River at Vernalis will see a slight decrease throughout the week.

Clifton Court Forebay exports have increased from last week to 600 cfs to meet the last day of the 3-day average outflow to 11,400 cfs.

X2 was at 78 km and there will be a mild spring tide with a mild neap tide the rest of the month.

QWEST was in the +2,000 range. It may become more negative, around -400 to -600, in the next couple days but will become more positive after that.

The American River is transitioning to the lower D-1641 outflow requirements and there have been many cuts along the system. Current releases are 1,750 cfs and will decrease to 1,250 cfs tomorrow (3/16/2022) downstream from Nimbus Dam.

Current releases on the Stanislaus River are 400 cfs decreasing to 300 cfs on 3/16/2022.

There are anticipated changes in the inflow into the Delta from both the San Joaquin River and the Sacramento River.

Jones Pumping Plant exports are currently at a 3-unit operation targeting 2,700 cfs for two days, picking up the last of the outflow transition. On 3/17/2022 a single unit operation will resume targeting 800 cfs.

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 [CDFW's Public Data Library](#).

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 3/1/22 - 3/31/22, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.3 of the ITP. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for March is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from CVP and SWP greater than 0.00146% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE. If the threshold is exceeded (loss >18.26), 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.
- ITP Daily Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.4): From 3/1/22 – 6/30/22, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.4 of the ITP. The ITP Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold tentatively includes a minimum of six release groups, including fall-run and spring-run releases from Coleman National Fish Hatchery, Feather River Fish Hatchery, and Nimbus Fish Hatchery. If cumulative loss from CVP and SWP is greater than 0.25% for any release group (Group 1: loss >1,799.6), 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.

- There is an Interim Operations Plan (IOP) currently in effect resulting from a court order on 3/11/2022. Federal and State management are discussing how the IOP will affect the remainder of WY 2022 and SaMT weekly requirements.

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) 3/15/2022.

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: 1-15% * Last week: 0-15%	Current: 80-89% Last week: 80-90%	Current: 5-10% Last week: 5-10%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 15-30% Last week: 20-35%	Current: 70-85% Last week: 65-80%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 90-95% Last week: 94-98%	Current: 5-9% Last week: 2-6%	Current: 0-1% Last week: 0%
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 36-56% Last week: 36-56%	Current: 29-44% Last week: 29-44%	Current: 15-20% Last week: 15-20%

*Winter-run Chinook were caught in the Red Bluff Diversion Dam RST’s on 3/9/2022.

Agenda Item 3. Open Discussion on Species Status

No discussion at this time.

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 3/15/22. 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 3/15/22 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Thursday 3/17/22. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by Friday 3/18/22 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.

The SaMT continued to discuss the process for estimating fish distribution.

Agenda Item 6.

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