

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Conference call: 3/29/2022 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

Feather River releases are at 3,500 cfs. Recent rain in the Delta may affect hydrology in the beginning of April.

Sacramento River flows at Freeport are currently at 9,400 cfs. The increased flow may be from the rain event and could keep outflows high for the next few days.

San Joaquin River flows at Vernalis are currently below 900 cfs with a possibility of slight increases throughout the week.

Goodwin Dam, on the Stanislaus River is currently releasing 300 cfs with a range of 200-500 cfs to meet Vernalis flow requirements.

Nimbus Dam, American River is currently releasing 1,200 cfs with a possible decrease in releases.

Delta exports from Jones Pumping Plant will increase to 2,700 cfs today and will decrease to between 800 cfs and 900 cfs on 4/1/22.

Exports at Clifton Court Forebay are currently 2,500 cfs to capture the rain event and will decrease on 4/1/22 to meet Vernalis flow requirements.

QWEST is currently at +1,700 cfs but will likely be near -500 due to higher exports this week. The rain will likely result in QWEST of +2,000 to 3,000 cfs at the beginning of April.

X2 has moved upstream of the confluence (>81 km).

If the TUCP is approved in April, Feather River releases will significantly decrease with the transition and see flows in the range of 1,000 cfs to 2,000 cfs. The American River will also decrease and see release reductions of around 200 to 300 cfs.

For 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

- The Interim Operations Plan (IOP) is currently in effect resulting from a court order on 3/11/2022 and will determine operations for the remainder of WY 2022. Federal and State management are discussing how the IOP will affect the SaMT's weekly requirements. Reclamation shall adopt the following provisions of the SWP ITP:
 - 8.5.2 Larval and Juvenile Delta Smelt Protection
 - 8.6.1 Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.2 Early-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Discrete Daily Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.3 Mid- and Late-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Daily Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.4 Daily Spring-run Chinook Salmon Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold
 - 8.7 OMR Flexibility During Delta Excess Conditions
 - 8.8 End of OMR Management
- 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 0.0146% 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. From 4/1/22 – 4/30/22, the ITP Daily Loss Threshold is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from CVP and SWP greater than 0.00507% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss > 6.34).
- 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 Group 2: loss > 1,873.42 Group 3: loss >1822.99), 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) 3/29/22.

CDFW updated the group on the spring-run Chinook salmon surrogate release groups as part of ITP Condition 8.6.4.

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: 1-5% Last week: 1-10%	Current: 75-84% Last week: 75-89%	Current: 15-20% Last week: 10-15%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 10-25% Last week: 10-30%	Current: 75-90% Last week: 70-90%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 67-79% Last week: 75-85%	Current: 16-23% Last week: 14-20%	Current: 5-10% Last week: 1-5%
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 30-50% Last week: 35-55%	Current: 35-50% Last week: 30-44%	Current: 15-20% Last week: 15-20%

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 3/29/22. 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 3/29/22 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Friday 4/1/22. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by Friday 4/1/22 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.

Thursday 3/31/22 is a California State Holiday. As a result, the time period for review of the weekly notes has been extended to COB Friday 4/1/22.

Agenda Item 6. Next Meeting

The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 4/5/22, at 9 a.m.