

# Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

**Conference call: 6/21/2022 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

Meteorological conditions are warming with a chance of precipitation in the southern Sierra with trace amounts reaching the valley floor.

Sacramento River releases out of Keswick Dam are currently 4,000 cfs. On 6/22/22 releases will increase to 4,250 cfs to meet downstream demands.

Flows at Freeport are currently at 8,430 cfs and may increase throughout the week.

American River releases out of Nimbus Dam are currently at 2,250 cfs and will increase to 2,500 cfs on 6/23/2022.

Whiskeytown releases into Clear Creek are experiencing a pulse flow with current flows at their peak of 500 cfs. Flows will decrease throughout the week.

Goodwin Dam releases on the Stanislaus River are currently at 900 cfs.

Delta exports at Jones Pumping Plant are 900 cfs.

Delta Cross Channel (DCC) gates are closed and may open over the July 4th weekend.

Clifton Court Forebay exports are currently 300 cfs with no anticipated changes.

QWEST was approximately -638 cfs on 6/20/22. X2 is > 81 km.

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 <https://filelib.wildlife.ca.gov/Public/salvage/>.

#### Actions Currently in Effect

- The Temporary Urgency Change Order (TUCO) was approved on 4/04/2022 and will be in effect until 6/30/2022. The TUCO approves the changes described below:
  - Reduces the Delta outflow requirement as measured by the Net Delta Outflow Index (NDOI) from a minimum of 7,100 cubic-feet per second (cfs) on a 3-day running average to 4,000 cfs on a 14-day running average. From May 1 – June 30, unmodified D-1641 includes an offramp to a minimum average flow of 4,000 cfs if the Sacramento River Index is less than 8.1 MAF at the 90% exceedance level.
  - Moves the Western Delta agricultural salinity compliance point on the Sacramento River at Emmaton 2.5 to 3 miles upstream to Threemile Slough.
  - Limits the maximum export rate to 1,500 cfs whenever unmodified D-1641 requirements are not being met.
  - Reduces the minimum monthly average flow requirement on the San Joaquin River at Airport Way Bridge, Vernalis from 710-1,140 cfs (April 1-14 and May 16-June 30) and 3,110-3,540 cfs (April 15 – May 15) to a minimum monthly average of 710 cfs. Pursuant to the NMFS (2019) Biological Opinion on the Long-Term Operation of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project, Reclamation proposes to operate New Melones Reservoir on the Stanislaus River in accordance with Stepped Release Plan, which includes a spring pulse flow (approximately April 15 – May 15). Reclamation proposes to increase New Melones Reservoir releases and Stanislaus River flows, if necessary, to meet the proposed Vernalis base flow of 710 cfs.
- 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

- DCC Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3): The DCC gates were closed on 11/30/2021, were opened on 4/6/2022 between 1100 to 1200 hours for maintenance work and on Memorial Day weekend from 5/27-5/31/2022 and are currently closed until further notice. Positive impacts of the DCC gates being closed include preventing routing of listed fish through the DCC into the interior Delta. From February 1 to May 20, the DCC gates were 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 1/1/2022 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 Daily Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.4): From 3/01/2022 – 6/30/2022, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.4 of the ITP. The ITP Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold for WY 2022 includes four fall-run release groups from Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH) and one spring-run release groups from Feather River Fish Hatchery (FRFH). If cumulative loss from CVP and SWP is greater than 0.25% for any release group (CNFH Group 1: loss >1,799.60; CNFH Group 2: loss >1,873.42; CNFH Group 3: loss >2,646.10, CNFH Group 4: loss >847.74, FRFH Group 1: loss >1823.00), 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.
- ITP End of OMR Management (COA 8.8): From 1/1/2022 – 6/30/2022, DWR will operate the SWP to ensure that entrainment and take of Covered Species is minimized during the OMR Management Season through 6/30/2022 or when the following species-specific offramps occur:
  - More than 95% of WR and SR have migrated past Chipps Island as determined by SaMT, AND
  - Daily average water temperature at Mossdale exceeds 22.2°C for 7 non-consecutive days in June, AND
  - Daily average water temperature at Prisoner’s Point exceeds 22.2°C for 7 non-consecutive days in June.

The above offramp criteria for COA 8.8 has been met as of 6/16/2022.

*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) 6/21/2022.

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. SaMT provides distribution estimates in five percent increments when feasible. 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: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0-1%	Current: 100% Last week: 100%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 1-5%	Current: 100% Last week: 95-99%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 100% Last week: 100%
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 0-1% Last week: 0-1%	Current: 1-5% Last week: 1-10%	Current: 94-99% Last week: 89-99%

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

NA.

### 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 6/21/2022. 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 Risk Assessment will be distributed via email by COB 6/21/2022 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Thursday 6/23/2022. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by Friday 6/24/2022 and can be found at [CDFW's Water Project Operations webpage](#).

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

As all of the end of season off ramping has or will occur within the week, the 6/28/2022 SaMT meeting will be the last meeting of Water Year 2022. The meeting will be used to discuss any reflections SaMT members have on this season and any changes that should be proposed to the LTO groups.

### Agenda Item 6. Next Meeting

The meeting on Tuesday 6/28/2022, at 9 a.m. will be the Water Year 2022 wrap up call.