



## Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 11/29/22 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 Proposed Action Assessment, and Fish and Water Operations Outlook will be posted to [Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Work Group](#) webpage, while final version of the Meeting Notes 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. Introductions
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

Dry conditions continue for the earlier part of the week. Storms on 12/1/22 and 12/3/22 are expected to bring precipitation ranging across the region from less than 2 inches to 5 or more inches with a significant amount on the valley floor.

Clear Creek releases from Whiskeytown Dam remain at 200 cfs.

Releases from Keswick Dam into the Sacramento River are at the minimum release of 3,250 cfs.

Sacramento River flows at Freeport are 6,300 cfs.

San Joaquin River flows are currently at 600 cfs with the potential for minor changes due to expected precipitation.

Feather River releases are currently at 1,400 cfs and may decrease to 950 cfs if conditions allow.

American River releases are currently at 1,300 cfs with no anticipated changes this week.

Stanislaus River releases are currently at 200 cfs with no anticipated changes this week.

Delta outflow index is currently around 4,000 cfs.

Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are currently at 300 cfs.

QWEST flow values continue to be variable depending on DCC gate operations. With the gates open, QWEST flow values were approximately 2,000 cfs over the weekend. With the gates closed this week, values are expected to be in the negative range.

Rio Vista flows were approximately 2,000 cfs with the DCC gates open over the weekend. With the gates closed during the week, flows are approximately 4,000 to 5,000 cfs. Flows are expected to increase with the upcoming precipitation later in the week.

The tidal cycle is approaching a neap cycle, causing tides to recede. Tides are expected to strengthen leading up to the full moon on 12/7/22 with the spring tide.

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**

- Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3): Gates closed for the season on 11/28/22 to meet Rio Vista flows criteria. The gates will remain closed unless an opening is needed to meet D-1641 requirements. Persisting dry conditions are a concern. Salinity conditions will be monitored with the upcoming precipitation.
- 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. These values are based on the JPE, which is TBD at the moment.
  - 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) (loss  $\geq$  TBD). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$  TBD), 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  $\geq$  TBD), 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 -2,000 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 (loss  $\geq$  TBD). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$  TBD), 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  $\geq$  TBD), 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 -2,000 cfs.

- ITP Early-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Discrete Daily Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.2): From 11/1/22 – 12/31/22, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plan consistent with COA 8.6.2 of the ITP. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for November is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP equal to or greater than 6 per day. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for December is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP equal to or greater than 26 per day. If the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$ 6, loss  $\geq$ 26), the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would reach an OMR no more negative than -5,000 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) 11/29/22.

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. One wild steelhead was collected at the Butte Creek rotary screw trap (RST) and one wild spring-run Chinook salmon at an upper Feather River RST this past week. Estimates this week are based on YOY winter-run and spring-run as well as natural origin steelhead at the real-time monitoring locations. These estimates are reported in the final Assessment document, available on the [Delta Monitoring Workgroup](#) webpage.

Location	Yet to Enter Delta	In the Delta	Exited the Delta
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 95-100% Last week: 95-100%	Current: 0-5% Last week: 0-5%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	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: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%

**Agenda Item 4. Open Discussion on Species Status**

No salmonids have yet been salvaged at the SWP or CVP export facilities for WY 2023. Researchers have observed a few acoustically tagged fish as part of a study conducted by Cramer Fish Sciences.

Water temperatures over the past week averaged 55.4° F on the American River. Carcass surveys revealed 913 total carcasses this week; however, due to the holiday week time did not allow them to survey all of the reaches. This increase in carcasses is likely due to the decrease in temperatures. Redd surveys revealed 154 fish last week; however, not all the reaches were sampled due to time constraints.

## **Agenda Item 5. Live edit Assessments**

### **Proposed Action Assessment**

SaMT reviewed and updated the current week's Proposed Action Assessment document. The updated Proposed Action Assessment will be distributed to the SaMT via email by COB 11/29/22. The final assessment will be posted to [Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Workgroup](#) webpage.

### **ITP Risk Assessment**

SaMT discussed the ITP Risk Assessment document. The updated draft ITP Risk Assessment will be distributed via email by COB 11/29/22 for review by SaMT members with comments due COB Thursday 12/1/22. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by COB Friday 12/2/22 and can be found at [CDFW's Water Project Operations](#) webpage.

## **Agenda Item 6. Additional Considerations/Other Topics**

Nick Bertrand, Reclamation, gave an update on a tentative, upcoming presentation for DSM2. The DSM2 tool may be discontinued if no anecdotal evidence is provided to support its utility. The need for a presentation is still TBD.

Nick Bertrand, Reclamation, requests assistance with gathering input from SaMT on the release of spring surrogate release groups for WY 2023, specifically on maintaining the existing strategy or adjusting it. Details on the releases are included:

- Production release: Targeting early December, in concert with a significant precipitation event.
  - First surrogate release: Approximately three days after the production release, regardless of precipitation events.
  - Second surrogate release: Late December, ideally preceding (by three to seven days) a precipitation event and at least a week after the previous surrogate release.
  - Third surrogate release: Mid-January, ideally preceding (three to seven days) a precipitation event and at least a week after the previous surrogate release.

## **Agenda Item 7. Next Meeting**

The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 12/6/22, immediately following the Joint Operations & Outlook 9 a.m. meeting.