

PARTICIPANTS

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Kearns & West (KW)

ACTION ITEMS

- SMT will send the survey results for Station 716 to the full SMT as soon as they arrive.
- KW to add two topics to the list of Guidance Document-relevant issues to raise to the LTO Group: (1) the difference in the wording of the temperature off-ramp criteria in the PA and ITP, and (b) how to address Condition 8.12 in the ITP after the OMR Management season has off-ramped.
- SMT members to send any supporting information relevant to SMT understanding of the importance and timeliness of the proposed end-of-season meeting topics to the full group ASAP.
- For the end-of-season meeting planning, SMT members to respond to KW's email by:
 - Participating in the Doodle Poll;
 - Letting KW know if anything seems mis-categorized;
 - Looking at #2 and #3 in the category list and providing input on how to prioritize these items (e.g., rank them and/or indicate what should be addressed immediately and what can be deferred to next year); and
 - Ranking the studies in #4 in order of importance and indicating those they think should be done before WY 2021-22.

MEETING SUMMARY

PART 1: Updates on Water Operations and Biological Updates

NMFS and DWR reported on a meeting last Thursday (6/17) in which USBR and DWR shared their plans to request a fall TUCP. The preliminary TUCP proposal is to request reducing the monthly flow requirement at Rio Vista to 2,500 cfs between September 1st and December 31st; under the proposal, SWP and CVP exports would be capped at 1,500 cfs, unless Delta outflows/Rio Vista Flows meet D-1641 requirements. This request reflects an approximately 1,000 cfs reduction from current D-1641 flow requirements during that time period. USBR and DWR are still considering whether to shorten the period of the request to either Sept 1st to November 30th or September 15th to November 30th. DWR noted that the longer lower flows are extended, the more it could impact life stage distribution of Delta Smelt.

Relevant Actions & Triggers

USBR reported on the Old and Middle River (OMR) management measures currently in effect and whether they have been triggered; CDFW reported on the Incidental Take Permit (ITP) Conditions of Approval that are

currently in effect and whether they have been triggered. Both USBR and CDFW reported that temperatures had been above 77°F/25°C for 3 consecutive days as of June 21st, triggering the offramp of OMR management for WY 2021. The descriptions below are intended as summaries and do not provide all the details related to each action or trigger. For full descriptions, please see the OMR guidance document or ITP as relevant.

Proposed Action

OMR Management Measures	Requirement	Time Frame	Trigger	Active? Triggered?
End of OMR Management	OMR criteria may control operations until June 30 (for Delta Smelt and Chinook salmon), until June 15 (for steelhead/rainbow trout), or when the species-specific off ramps have occurred, whichever is earlier.	During OMR management to June 30, or when the DS temperature off ramp has been reached.	DS: when the daily mean water temperature at Clifton Court Forebay reaches 77°F (25° C) for 3 consecutive days	Yes

ITP Conditions of Approval

Condition of Approval	Requirement	Time Frame	Trigger	Active? Triggered?
8.1.5.2 (Smelt Monitoring Team Risk Assessment)	Outlines contents for weekly risk assessments of DS and Longfin Smelt (LFS) required under 8.1.5 and 8.1.1	Nov 1 st through June 30 th or until off-ramped by 8.8		Yes
8.8 (End of OMR Management)	If triggered, OMR Management would be off-ramped for Longfin and Delta Smelt.	From the onset of OMR management through June 30 th	Daily mean water temperature at Clifton Court Forebay is >25° C (77° F) for three consecutive days. ¹	Yes
8.12 (Barker Slough Pumping Plant Longfin and Delta Smelt Protection)	Barker Slough Pumping Plant will reduce exports so the maximum 7-day average is <60 cfs.	From January 15 th through March 31 st in dry and critical water years for LFS, and from March 1 st through June 30 th of dry and critical water years for DS	Larval Smelt are detected at SLS Station 716 during the period identified for each species, and/or when recommended by the SMT	Off-ramped for LFS; Active but not triggered for DS

Current Operations & Outlook

USBR and DWR shared operations updates from the Outlook. Their observations included:

¹ CDFW noted that the ITP’s temperature offramp language is phrased as three days “exceeding 25° C,” in contrast to the PA language which calls for an offramp when temperatures “reach” 77° F for three consecutive days. CDFW consulted internally and has determined that under the ITP a temperature “exceeding 25° C” is anything 25.1° C or above, since CDEC reports to temperatures to the nearest 0.1°C. The SMT may want to note the discrepancy between the ITP and PA language and provide a recommendation clarifying what temperatures meet the criteria as part of the Guidance Document.

- USBR Central Valley Office (CVO) reported that temperatures will be cooler for the next few days, with another heat wave arriving at the end of the week and into early next week.
- CVO is currently implementing a pulse flow from Whiskeytown Dam on Clear Creek to afford transportation flows from the lower reaches further upriver. Releases are currently at a peak of 600 cfs on Clear Creek and will be reduced to 125 cfs.
- Releases on the Sacramento River from Keswick Dam are currently 8,000 cfs.
- American River releases from Nimbus Dam are currently 1,850 cfs.
- Releases from Goodwin Dam on the Stanislaus River are currently 1,500 cfs.
- In the Delta, single facility pumping operations were switched from Banks to Jones; Jones is now exporting 800 cfs and delivering to both projects. Banks will continue to export 100 cfs (for EID) today (June 22) through June 27th, at which point exports will be reduced to zero for June 28th and 29th. Discussions around pumping operations between DWR and USBR are ongoing; exports at Banks after June 29th could range between 100 and 900 cfs.
- The Delta Cross-channel (DCC) Gates opened on Wednesday (June 16th) to take advantage of improved salinity conditions during the neap tide cycle and remain open, but water quality conditions are being monitored closely, and the gates will be closed if there is any degradation.
- DWR reported that Feather River releases from Oroville are currently 2,750 cfs.
- Sacramento River flows at Freeport this week will be between 5,500 and 7,000 cfs.
- San Joaquin River flows at Vernalis are 1,400 cfs.
- Outflows continue to control operations. Delta outflows will be between 3,000 and 4,000 cfs this week.
- QWEST will be between 1,800 and 2,000 cfs in coming days.
- Construction of the West False River drought barrier is ahead of schedule: they met the hydraulic closure level as of Friday and expect to be done laying rock today.

Review of Environmental Conditions and Survey Updates

USBR updated the monitoring survey table in the Outlook to reflect that the Bay Study has been sampling again as of June 15th.

CDFW shared survey updates.

- 20-mm Survey 7 (June 14th to 17th) was in the field last week. Six of 12 stations in South and Central Delta have been processed (Stations 809, 812, 815, 902, 915, and 919). No Delta Smelt (DS) or Longfin Smelt (LFS) have been detected.
- Weekly updates of survey results will be posted online.

USFWS reported on the EDSM Program.

- EDSM Phase 2 (20-mm) sampled last week Mon to Thurs (June 14 to 17); all six strata were sampled. Processing is ongoing and proceeding slowly since the samples were vegetation and fish-heavy.
 - No DS have been detected so far, so no abundance estimate will be generated.
 - One LFS (27 mm) has been preliminarily ID'd but not confirmed; it was collected June 15th in Suisun Marsh.
- EDSM crews are scheduled to sample Monday through Thursday this week.
- The total number of LFS identified by EDSM Phase 2 sampling remains 1,704.
- The Chipps Island Trawl caught zero DS and zero LFS in the last week.
 - The Chipps Island Trawl is scheduled to sample three days this week.

CDFW provided a salvage update (June 15th to 21st).

- No DS or LFS were salvaged at either facility.
- The most recent LFS salvage occurred on May 31st.
- The SWP's expanded salvage season total remains at 677 LFS.
- The CVP's expanded salvage season total remains at 188 LFS.

USBR shared water quality data (three-station average daily water temperature as of June 21st was 22.44° C; daily average turbidity at Old River at Bacon Island (OBI) was 2.83 FNU and is currently 4.80 FNU). The seven-day weather forecast for Antioch is sunny and clear with winds from the WNW to WSW at 6 to 17 mph and gusts up to 24; the seven-day weather forecast for Stockton is sunny and clear with NNW to WNW winds from 6 to 17 mph and gusts up to 23 mph. X2 > 81 km; the estimated Sacramento and San Joaquin X2s are both 97.3 km. There have been three consecutive days (June 19th, 20th, and 21st) with temperatures >25° C (77° F) at Clifton Court.

PART 2: Open Discussion on Species Status (Structured-Unstructured Time)

CDFW stated that, based on their internal agency interpretation of ITP Condition of Approval 8.8's temperature offramp criteria (as described in footnote 1, page 2 of the notes), the days prompting the offramp of OMR management were June 19th, 20th, and 21st. CDFW outlined their proposal for the closing ITP Assessment of the management season:

- Provide advice to WOMT that OMR management has ended since water temperatures exceeded 25° C at Clifton Court for three days;
- Remove the risk assessment text, since that is no longer relevant now the OMR management has been off-ramped;
- Under "Basis for Advice," include the text for Condition 8.8 and 8.12 but remove all the other conditions; and
- Include the updated hydrologic and catch data.

DWR agreed with CDFW's approach; DWR asked whether there needs to be any additional discussion on Condition 8.12 since it has a June 30th offramp, unlike the other conditions.

- CDFW agreed that the ITP is ambiguous about how to address Condition 8.12 once OMR management has off-ramped, thereby ending SMT meetings. This may be another topic that could be clarified in the Guidance Document.
- CDFW and DWR agreed to include language in the assessment from Condition 8.12 saying that the SMT has determined that risk is considered low throughout the remainder of the month but that CDFW and DWR will continue to monitor catch data and may convene the SMT again if risk increases before the June 30th offramp.
- USFWS asked what the role of the other agencies will be in the absence of SMT meetings.
- CDFW confirmed that they will notify the full SMT if they detect a Delta Smelt at Station 716 and will determine via email whether another meeting is warranted.
- CDFW survey staff confirmed that they will send the survey results for Station 716 to the full SMT as soon as they arrive.

PART 3: Live-edit Assessments

ITP Longfin Smelt Risk Assessment

CDFW updated the ITP assessment based on the discussion documented in Part 2 above.

Proposed Action Weekly Evaluation of Delta Smelt, including Distribution, Abiotic Conditions, Risk Assessment Questions, and Executive Summary

USBR reviewed updates to the Assessment, which included making minor changes in anticipated conditions in the Delta (including OMR Index, turbidity, X2, and QWEST values), as well as:

- Removing the mention of detection of larval delta smelt as evidence of initiation of spawning in the Biological Conditions section; it was determined this was no longer relevant since the SMT believes spawning has concluded.
- Documenting the days (June 19th, 20th, and 21st) on which the temperature offramp criteria were met in the Other Environmental Conditions section.

The group reviewed the relevant assessment questions: (1) Between December 1 and January 31, has any first flush condition been exceeded? (2) Do DS have a high risk of migration and dispersal into areas at high risk of future entrainment? (3) Has a spent female DS been collected? (4) If OMR of -2,000 cfs does not reduce daily average OBI turbidity below 12 NTU/FNU, what OMR target is deemed protective between -2,000 and -5,000 cfs? (5) If daily average OBI turbidity is greater than 12 NTU/FNU, what do other station locations show? (6) If daily average OBI is greater than 12 NTU/FNU, is a turbidity bridge avoidance action not warranted? What is the supporting information? (7) After March 15 and if QWEST is negative, are larval or juvenile DS within the entrainment zone of the CVP and SWP pumps based on surveys? (8) Based on real-time spatial distribution of DS and currently available turbidity information, should OMR be managed to no more negative than -3,500? (9) What do hydrodynamic models, informed by EDSM or other relevant data, suggest the estimated percentage of larval and juvenile DS that could be entrained may be?

- The responses to questions were updated to reflect the latest dates and abiotic data.
- The response to question seven was updated to state that no larval or juvenile DS were observed in the South Delta in WY 2021.
- The response to question eight was updated to note increased turbidity in Franks Tract due to high winds of 25 mph in the last 24 hours and to state that the SMT does not see it as high enough to elicit concern.

USBR reviewed the Executive Summary.

- SMT members agreed to add an introductory sentence explaining that the temperature offramp criteria was met on June 21, 2021 and the SMT held its concluding meeting on June 22, 2021.
- USFWS asked whether USBR considered the first day of 25° C temperatures (June 18), which were 25.02° C, as fulfilling the temperature offramp criteria – or whether they were using the same 25.1° C and above criteria as the ITP. USFWS noted that the difference in language between the new PA and ITP could cause confusion and was curious how USBR was interpreting it. Under the old PA, they would have considered the 25.02° C day (June 18) as the first day meeting the criteria.
 - USBR was unsure how to deal with the difference; for this year, they determined to align their interpretation with the ITP and report June 19, 20, and 21st (all > 25.1° C) as the dates meeting the temperature criteria. They suggested that this be an issue raised for the LTO Group to address.
 - USFWS agreed.
- USFWS asked whether the Assessment mentions the daily average temperatures at Clifton Court that resulted in the temperature offramp.
 - USBR confirmed that the Assessment includes those temperatures.

No non-consensus issues were identified.

Additional Considerations/Discussion

Post-Season Meeting Planning

KW updated the SMT on their proposed next steps in planning a post-season meeting. In the last meeting, the SMT provided input on topics of interest organized by time in the OMR management season. KW summarized those topics in the meeting notes and then reorganized them into four categories, which they proposed to address in the following order:

1. Process items likely to result in revisions to the Guidance Document
2. Process items that need SMT discussion but probably do NOT need to be memorialized in the Guidance Document
3. Process items that likely need to be elevated, potentially with a recommendation from the SMT, but go outside the Guidance document (e.g., that touch on PA or ITP language)
4. Proposed studies and data analysis

They assume they will not be able to find a time block to do a full/half day meeting in the near future and so are proposing to spread these discussions out over more than one meeting in order to prioritize providing the LTO group with any OMR Guidance Document revision recommendations (category #1 above) by mid-July when the LTO Group is scheduled to begin discussing that document. For the other categories (#2-4), KW asked that SMT members:

- Let KW know if anything seems mis-categorized;
- Look at #2 and #3 and provide input on how to prioritize these items (e.g., rank them and/or indicate what should be addressed immediately and what can be deferred to next year);
- Rank the studies in #4 in order of importance; indicate those you think should be done before WY 2021-22.

KW will organize an agenda and scale the length of meetings accordingly based on feedback the SMT provides on their priorities. This will then be provided the LTO group as a proposed agenda.

Last week, USFWS offered to look at relevant temperature data to see whether DS were present when temperatures in the South Delta were above 25° C (77° F). They found that DS were present at those temperatures in the South Delta and also in the Sacramento in the past. USFWS also pointed out that the SMT initially developed the 25° C off-ramp trigger used in both the PA and ITP, but there is more information on thermal tolerance available now and those triggers should be reassessed. USFWS asked that there be an opportunity to send out information relevant to any of the topics on this list to inform the group's prioritization.

- KW encouraged USFWS and any SMT member with relevant supporting information that could impact SMT understanding of the importance and timeliness of the proposed topics send that out to the full group ASAP.

Agencies reported no items for elevation to WOMT.