



Upper Sacramento Scheduling Team Flow Smoothing Coordination

Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 10–11 a.m.

Meeting Summary

Members Attending

- CDFW: Tracy Grimes, Doug Killam, Erica Meyers, Crystal Rigby
- Kearns & West: Terra Alpaugh, Eva Spiegel
- Reclamation: Elissa Buttermore, Chase Ehlo, Lisa Elliott, Tom Patton, Elizabeth Kiteck,
- NMFS: Stephen Maurano, Garwin Yip, Evan Sawyer
- SWRCB: Claudia Bucheli, Jeff Laird, Craig Williams
- SRSC: Mike Des, Lenh Yuen
- USFWS: Matt Brown, Jim Earley, Craig Fleming, Bill Poytress
- NMFS-SWFS: Flora Cordoleani, Cyril Michael
- WAPA: Mike Prowatzke
- Yurok Tribe: Chris Laskodi

Action Items

- Reclamation (Tom Patton) will hold flows at 6,100 cfs for another week.
- Reclamation will update redd dewatering document to remove scenarios that are no longer relevant to current conditions; also update document with brief explanation of what each alternative scenario is intended to provide (e.g., protection for specific redds or flows for rice decomp at particular time); also update script so that scenarios can be updated with real time flows more easily.

Operations Update

- Reclamation reported it had decreased flows to 6,100 cfs as discussed last week. Wilkins Slough is now at 5,500 cfs and decreasing.

- Reclamation met with the SRSCs on Friday to confirm their diversion schedule; they still anticipate increasing diversions to approximately 2,000 cfs in the upper reaches of the Sacramento River near the end of October.
- Reclamation noted that the 50% Forecast assumed there would be some rain in October, which would help meet decomp needs and have allowed them to reduce releases somewhat; since that significant precipitation has not materialized, they assume they need flows of 6,500 cfs at Keswick Dam to meet the SRSC's rice decomp needs.
- Reclamation reported that if they moved water for rice decomp into November in order to reduce peak October flows, November flows would need to be kept higher (~5,500 cfs) to support those later diversions. Their analysis suggests that higher November flows would impact fall-run Chinook redds more than if the schedule is kept as is with flows higher in October and ramping down in November – with the former scenario's estimated fall-run redd dewatering around 8.5% and the latter around 7.5%.
- For winter-run Chinook salmon redd dewatering estimates, Reclamation suggested that the group look at the estimates based on the estimated expansion factor of 3.0, since CDFW reported that initial calculation of the actual redd count supported that expansion factor.

Fishery Monitoring Update

- CDFW reported that there were no additional winter-run Chinook salmon redds dewatered by the most recent reduction in flows. The depths of the remaining shallow winter-run Chinook salmon redds did not change much between 6,400 and 6,100 cfs. Two more winter-run Chinook salmon redds have successfully emerged.
- CDFW reported that there has been rain in Redding, which is moving into the smaller tributaries.
- CDFW reported the KES gage is registering flows ~200 cfs higher than the KWK gage, which they believe is inaccurate. Reclamation reported that the debris blocking the KES gage, which had made the gauge unreliable, has been removed. KES registers stable flows, which is good.

Flow Scheduling Adaptive Management

- Reclamation reviewed the summaries sent on Friday with various scenarios. Scenarios 3p and 3q, which were designed to assess the impacts of moving some diversions into November (i.e., 5,500 cfs for first half of month), estimate fall-run Chinook salmon redd dewatering at 8.5%; 3l and 3m, which reflect keeping diversions in October (November flows of 5,000 cfs), estimate fall-run Chinook salmon redd dewatering of 7.5% and 7.4% respectively.
- USFWS noted that scenario 1c has the best results for fall-run Chinook salmon redd dewatering but would dewater more winter-run Chinook salmon redds. Reclamation explained that 1c is based on the 50% Forecast (wetter than current conditions), which is not something that can be selected for and is only in the chart for comparison.

- Reclamation advised keeping flows higher at this point to make sure that none of the late winter-run Chinook salmon redds are dewatered and to maintain flows at Wilkins Slough at 5,500 cfs. At mid-month, they will likely need to increase flows to 6,500 cfs to meet the rice decomp needs through the end of the month. Reclamation can ramp down quickly at the end of October into November at a rate of 200 cfs per night, which will allow flows to drop from 6,000 to 5,000 cfs by early November. This will help minimize dewatering of fall-run Chinook salmon redds. This proposal is reflected in Scenario M.
- USFWS and CDFW supported following Scenario M unless conditions change. Next week, the group will discuss any changes in winter-run Chinook salmon redd depths and how much flows should be increased for diversion needs.
- Reclamation will also update the redd dewatering document to remove scenarios that are no longer relevant to current conditions; update the document with brief explanations of what each alternative scenario is intended to provide (e.g., protection for specific redds or flows for decomp at particular time); and update the script so that scenarios can be updated with real time flows more easily.

Meeting Schedule

- The next meeting is October 17, 2023, 10 to 11 a.m.