BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 2/18/25 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).

Participants

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

Announcements

- N/A

Relevant Actions & Triggers

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3)**: See Outlook and Assessment for more information.

- **SWP ITP/CVP PA Winter-run Chinook Salmon Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3 of the SWP ITP/SWP and CVP PA. These values are based on the final juvenile production estimate (JPE).
    - The natural-origin Winter-run Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is based on the initial length-at-date (LAD) identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon and the thresholds described above. If genetic analysis of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP subsequently confirms that any given Chinook salmon is not genetically identified as a CHNWR that fish will not count towards the loss threshold. This threshold is loss of natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.5% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss threshold = 98,893 x 0.5% = 494.47). If cumulative loss of natural-origin CHNWR in a brood year exceeds 50% of the annual loss threshold (loss > 247.24), then Permittee shall, in coordination with Reclamation, adjust south Delta exports to achieve a 7-day average of the OMR index no more negative than -3,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days. If a CHNWR is salvaged during the 7-day action, the action will be extended for another seven days. At the conclusion of the action, Permittee, in coordination with Reclamation shall revert to the weekly distributed loss threshold until the 75% threshold is reached or throughout the end of the OMR Management season If the 75% loss threshold (loss > 370.85) is exceeded AND the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days, then a 7-day average OMRI index of -2,500 cfs will be operated to for 7 consecutive days. Thereafter, each winter-run observed in salvage will trigger a 7-day OMR index of -2,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days IF the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days. The JPE has not yet been calculated for WY 2025; therefore, threshold values are not yet available but natural-origin winter-run loss is still being tracked until these thresholds are determined.
    - The hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is loss of both LSNFH and Battle Creek clipped CWT 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 ≥ 162.41 and loss > 3.44, respectively). If the 50% and 75% thresholds are exceeded, the same process will occur as what occurs for the natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon (as discussed in above bullet).
    - The final JPE was distributed on 1/10/25 for WY 2025. Hatchery-origin winter-run Chinook salmon have not been released yet in WY 2025.

- **SWP ITP/SWP and CVP PA Winter-run Weekly Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4):**
    - DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4 of the SWP ITP/CVP PA. These values are based on the product of the weekly percentage of natural-origin CHNWR present in the Delta, scaled to 100% (Table 4, Column E of the SWP ITP), and 50% of the natural-origin CHNWR annual loss threshold (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3). The final JPE Memo was issued on 1/10/25. The weekly thresholds for the previous week and the upcoming weeks are provided below:
        - 2/12/25 - 2/18/25: 36.74
        - 2/19/25 - 2/25/25: 36.07
        - 2/26/25 – 3/4/25: 31.65
    - If the 7-day rolling sum of loss exceeds the above thresholds in any given week, the required response is to reduce SWP and CVP exports to reach an average OMR index of no more negative than –3,500 cfs for seven consecutive days. DWR and Reclamation shall restrict exports in response to initial LAD identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon. If genetic analysis of an individual natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP indicates that it is not a winter-run, that individual shall not count toward the loss threshold and continued export restrictions under the PA or COA are not required if the weekly loss threshold has consequently not been met.

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations

- SaMT reviewed and updated the Outlook document. The updated Outlook document will be shared with SaMT via SharePoint link by close of business (COB) 2/19/25. Additional details and operations context shared at the 2/18/25 meeting include:
    - Feather River releases are at 15,000 cfs as of the morning of 2/18/25 and scheduled to decrease to 14,000 cfs at noon on 2/18/25. Releases are expected to decrease further through the week as inflows recede.
    - Sacramento River releases at Keswick Dam will start ramping down from the current 30,000 cfs to approximately 20,000 cfs beginning on 2/20/25.
    - Sacramento River flows at Freeport are at 74,400 cfs as of 2/18/25 with additional flow still running down the Yolo Bypass.
    - Nimbus Dam on the American River will increase releases from the current 5,000 cfs to 7,200 cfs on 2/19/25.
    - San Joaquin River at Vernalis flows were 2,600 cfs as of 2/17/25 and may decrease to 1,500 cfs through the week.
    - Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) is currently exporting 2,500 cfs.

- JPP is exporting 3,400 cfs. The plant experienced an outage with one of the units at approximately 00:00 on 2/18/25. Reclamation is investigating the issue.
- Delta Outflow was approximately 167,000 cfs on 2/17/25 and is expected to decrease to under 100,000 cfs by the end of the week.
- X2 is currently downstream of Martinez, less than 56 km.
- QWEST was +15,000 cfs on 2/17/25 and will likely decrease this week to a range of +4,000 cfs to +5,000 cfs.
- Rio Vista flows are approximately 150,000 cfs as of 2/17/25 and are decreasing through the week.
- OMRI remains at -5,000 cfs as of 2/18/25.
- CVP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 684 TAF.
- Total storage of the San Luis Reservoir is approximately 1.62 MAF.
- Questions:
    - Reclamation asked DWR for the QWEST 7-day average.
        - DWR responded that the 7-day average is +13,000 cfs.

Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

- N/A

Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

Natural Spring-Run Weekly Risk Assessment

- SaMT reviewed an abbreviated version of the Natural-origin Spring-Run Weekly Risk Assessment developed by DWR.
- DWR noted assessment is still pending discussions at the subdirector level.
- Questions and Comments
    - CDFW asked if DWR received updated data for Rotary Screw Traps (RSTs), given the gap in reporting time from the 2/17/25 holiday.
        - DWR responded that they did not receive data, but instead used data pulled from SacPAS that was updated through 2/17/25.
    - CDFW commented about the possibility of listing a range of low to medium risk in the assessment, and recommended that the interior Delta be listed as low to medium risk due to seasonal migration timing for young-of-year spring-run Chinook and hatchery fish being salvaged at the pumps in the previous week indicates those spring-run hatchery surrogates are still moving through the system.

        - This recommendation was incorporated into the assessment.
    - CDFW recommended adding the OMRI range under the Facilities Entrainment Risk section of the assessment since OMRI values are one of the tools for what is used to evaluate risk at the facilities each week.
        - This recommendation was incorporated into the assessment.

Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion

- N/A

Items to Raise to WOMT

- N/A

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next Weekly Operations Meeting will be on Tuesday, 2/25/25. If needed, SaMT will meet at the conclusion of the Operations meeting.

Action Items

- N/A