



Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 12/10/24 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

- Reclamation shared that SaMT will provide updates for the 12/24/24 and 12/31/24 meetings via email in lieu of virtual meetings.
 - Reclamation does not anticipate requiring Fish & Water Operations Outlook (Outlook) and Proposed Action Assessment documents for the Wednesday LTO Coordination Group meetings. Data for SMT and SaMT can be found on SacPAS and operational data is available on the project web pages.

- CDFW noted that some type of documentation (i.e., the Outlook) is required each week per the Record of Decision (ROD) and the ITP. For additional details, see the Part 4 section below.
- The subdirectors will be available to take on any urgent items that may arise during the two holiday weeks.
- If participating agencies have updates to share with the SaMT or SMT, they may send those via email.
- NMFS completed the Long-Term Operations (LTO) of the CVP/SWP Biological Opinion (BiOp), which is now available on the [NMFS website](#). NMFS included a PA comparison table (Table 3, page 27) in the Proposed Action section of the BiOp.

Part 1. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

Relevant Actions & Triggers

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3):** See Outlook and Assessment for more information.
- **ITP 2024 Early-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Discrete Daily Loss Threshold (COA 8.17):** DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with COA 8.17 of the ITP. These values are based on the December 1 – December 31 threshold of 26 older juvenile Chinook salmon per day. If the threshold is exceeded, a 5-day average OMR index of -5,000 cfs will be operated to for 5 days.
- **ITP Winter-run Chinook Salmon Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.3):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.4.3 of the ITP. These values are based on the juvenile production estimate (JPE). The final JPE for brood year 2024 natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon will be determined early next year. The thresholds below will be based on the final JPE.
 - The ITP 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 \geq N/A). If the 75% loss 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 ITP hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is loss of 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 \geq N/A). 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 JPE has not yet been calculated for WY 2025 and hatchery-origin winter-run Chinook salmon have not been released yet in WY 2025; therefore, threshold values are not yet available for hatchery-origin or natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon.

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) 12/11/24. Additional details and operations context shared at the 12/10/24 meeting include:
 - Reclamation shared that all reservoirs are ready to be filled, and all releases are at minimum levels.
 - Sacramento River flows at Freeport are 16,085 cfs and are expected to vary with anticipated precipitation this week.
 - San Joaquin River at Vernalis flows are 1,352 cfs and expected to range between 1,000 cfs to 2,000 cfs.
 - Delta Outflow is at 4,900 cfs.
 - Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) remains at 6,680 cfs.
 - QWEST is -7,516 cfs and expected to range between -2,000 to -9,000.
 - Rio Vista flows is currently at 13,000 cfs and expected to range between 9,000 cfs and 15,000 cfs.
 - U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permits remain the controlling factor this week
 - OMRI is currently -9,700 cfs.
 - SWP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 841 TAF.
 - CVP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 420 TAF.
 - Total storage of the San Luis Reservoir is approximately 1,301 TAF.

- Jones Pumping Plant (JPP) is pumping at a rate of 4,200 cfs
- Questions on Operations:
 - CDFW asked if daily OMRI values will change if the CCF range is higher.
 - DWR confirmed that the OMRI values will be more negative with the higher range at CCF. The lower range will be -10,300 cfs.
 - CDFW asked about the increased maximum at CCF and if the combined maximum import would also increase, or if will they be pumping at the maximum level at the same time.
 - DWR clarified that the additional one-third at Vernalis will be in addition to the 6,680 cfs at CCF and confirmed that the combined maximum should increase proportionally by that amount.
- 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. Estimates this week are based on YOY winter-run and YOY 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.

Table 1. Fish Distribution Table

Location	Yet to Enter Delta	In the Delta	Exited the Delta
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 75-80% Last week: 80-85%	Current: 20-25% Last week: 15-20%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 95-99% Last week: 95-99%	Current: 1-5% Last week: 1-5%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: N/A Last week: N/A	Current: N/A Last week: N/A	Current: N/A Last week: N/A
Natural origin steelhead	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%

Justification for Fish Distribution Estimates

- YOY winter-run Chinook salmon
 - 6 winter-run were observed at Knights Landing, 2 at the Lower Sacramento rotary screw trap (RST), and 2 at the Beach Seines. There is no data available this week for Chipps Island.
 - SaMT chose to increase the estimate of winter-run in the Delta to 20-25%.
- YOY spring-run Chinook salmon
 - 2 spring-run were observed at Knights Landing, zero at the Lower Sacramento RST, and a few in the Beach Seines. There is no data available this week for

Chippis Island. The current range of 1-5% in the Delta mirrors historical data for this point in time.

- SaMT recommended keeping the amount of spring-run in the Delta to 1-5%. SaMT also acknowledged the possibility that some of the spring-run Chinook salmon detected a few weeks ago may have actually been late-emerging winter-run.
- YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon
 - N/A
- Natural origin steelhead
 - N/A

Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

Salvage Update

- Coded wire-tagged, clipped fish from the spring-run yearling surrogate groups were collected in high numbers.
- Wild juvenile-sized unclipped Chinook salmon were seen at the CVP facility on 12/4, 12/5, and 12/7/24.
- No unclipped fish have been collected at the SWP facility.
- No steelhead were salvaged this week.
- Detailed figures can be found in the salvage report shared by CDFW.

Hatchery and Collection Facility Operations

- N/A

Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

ITP Risk Assessment

- SaMT reviewed the draft ITP Risk Assessment.
- The final ITP Risk Assessment can be found on CDFW's [Water Project Operations webpage](#).

Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion

Discussion on Revised and Weekly Documentation

- CDFW shared findings from a discussion with Reclamation that an Outlook will be required on a weekly basis under the ROD and the ITP. The agencies have begun discussing how best to draft this updated document. CDFW expects to have further information to share with SaMT at the 12/17/24 meeting.

- CDFW plans to contact their WOMT representative sometime in the next couple of weeks to request that WOMT direct SaMT and SMT to review the new PA and ITP and develop a new Fish & Water Operations Outlook under the new PA as a result of the ROD.
- DWR inquired if the weekly requirement will be relaxed over the upcoming holiday weeks as well as the timeline for rapid genetic testing, which includes the development of the genetic analysis report as well as staff to collect the Chinook salmon.
 - USFWS responded that once the ROD is signed and it operationalizes the BiOp developed by NMFS, there's an immediate switchover; there is no transitional time between the old and new versions. Measures can be found in the Proposed Action Appendix, the Terms and Conditions Appendix, and the Incidental Take Statement.

Items to Raise to WOMT

- N/A

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 12/17/24 at 9 a.m.

Action Items

- Erica Myers, CDFW, to share information from WOMT on development of an updated Outlook document at the 12/17/24 meeting.
- Kristin Begun, NMFS, to share the link for the CVP/SWP BiOp with SaMT.