



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

Weekly Assessment of CVP and SWP Delta Operations

December 8, 2025

Executive Summary

- No salvage of salmonids has occurred in WY 2026, but winter-run Chinook salmon are abundantly rearing in the Delta.
- Winter-run juvenile production past Red Bluff is large, thus Early Migration winter-run threshold is large and its exceedance is unlikely.
- Delta Cross Channel gates will remain closed for fishery protection unless opening is warranted per D-1641 criteria.

Operational and Regulatory Conditions

For more information see Weekly Fish and Water Operation Outlook document for December 9 - 15.

Biology, Distribution and Evaluation of Winter run Chinook salmon

Table 1. Average percent presence by October 19 with 95% confidence intervals of annual emigrating population of juvenile Winter-run Chinook salmon. From: [WY2026 Current Conditions for the Salmon Monitoring Team SaMT: SacPAS Sacramento Prediction and Assessment of Salmon and other fishes](#). Last updated 12/01/2025

Species	Red Bluff Diversion Dam	Tisdale RST	Knights Landing RST	Sac Trawl (Sherwood) Catch Index	Chippis Island Trawl Catch Index	Salvage
Chinook, LAD Winter-run, Unclipped	93% (90%,96%) BY: 2014 - 2024	35% (14%,55%) BY: 2014 - 2024	37% (13%,61%) BY: 2014 - 2024	19% (-4%,41%) BY: 2014 - 2024	1% (-1%,3%) BY: 2014 - 2024	0.0% (0.0%,0.0%) WY: 2016 - 2025

As of December 2, an estimated 2.6 million LAD winter-run fry have passed Red Bluff Diversion Dam (this estimate does not include spring-run size fish that may be true genetic winter-run based on timing). Catch at RBDD has been decreasing indicating that most winter-run have migrated downstream (Figure 1). The early season Winter-run migration salvage threshold is estimated to be 232, based on RBDD passages. Sacramento Valley flow and temperature conditions support juvenile Chinook salmon migration. Mill and Deer creek flows exceeded 95 cfs but has been steady over the past week. Wilkins Slough flow has continued to decrease to below 7500 cfs in the past week.

Survival, Travel Time, and Routing Simulation (STARS) predicts low overall survival (0.25), interior routing (0.13), and interior delta survival (0.07). Delta entry catch continues to occasionally exceed catch indices, but at a decreasing level at Knights Landing (Figure 2). High catch continues during seining surveys indicating increased rearing of young-of-year winter-run in the Delta (Figure 2).

**Red Bluff Unmarked (not mark-corrected) Juvenile Passage Estimates
BY2025 Winter Chinook
2025-07-01 to 2025-11-25**

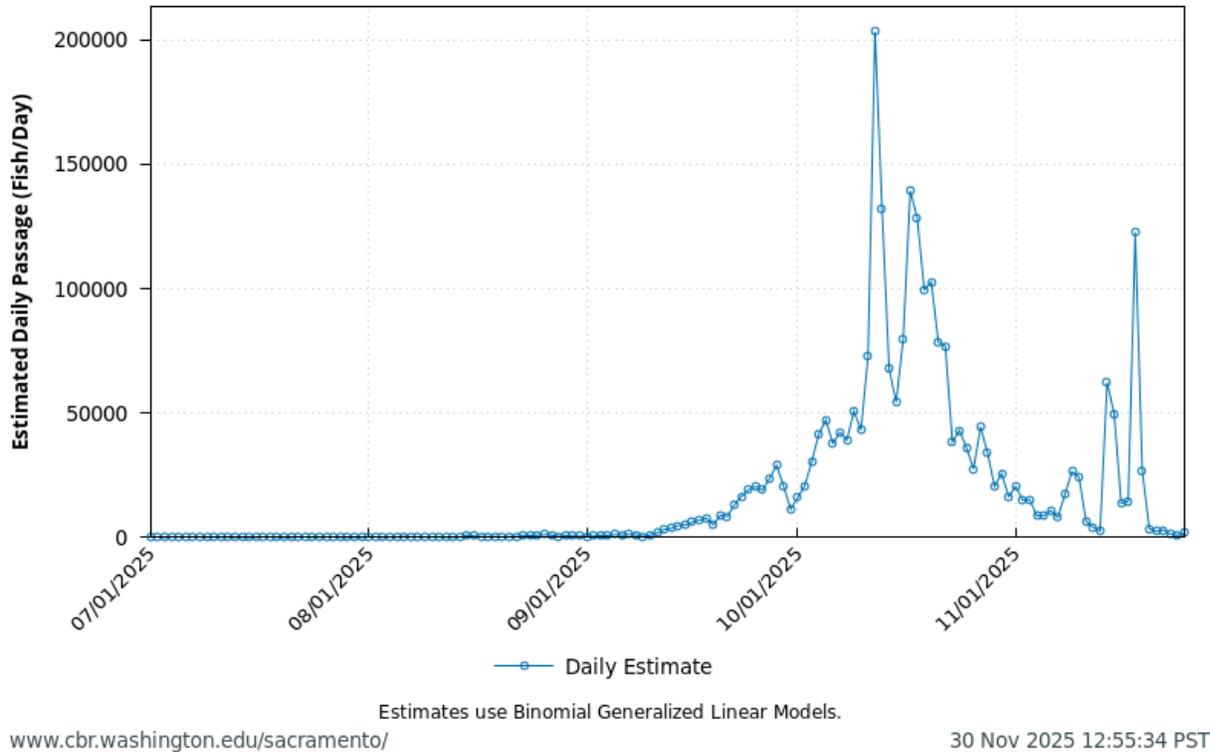


Figure 1. Length-at-date winter-run daily passage estimates at Red Bluff Diversion Dam as of November 25.

Figure 1 is a line graph showing Red Bluff unmarked (not mark-corrected) Juvenile Passage Estimates for BY2025 Winter Chinook. The y-axis shows estimated daily passage in fish per day. The x-axis shows dates from 7/1/2025 through 11/25/2025. Estimated daily passage remains at or near zero fish per day until mid-September, increasing to around 30,000 fish per day in late September before dipping to early October. In October, estimated daily passage steadily increases to 50,000 fish per day, then spikes to over 200,000 fish per day in early October. Estimated daily passage decreases sharply to around 50,000 fish per day in mid-October and increases again to around 130,000 fish per day before decreasing through the end of October to less than 50,000 fish per day. In early November, estimated daily fish passage continues to decrease to almost zero fish per day before two spikes in mid-November at around 60,000 fish per day, then 125,000 fish per day. In mid-to-late November, estimated daily passage decreases again and evens out close to zero fish per day.

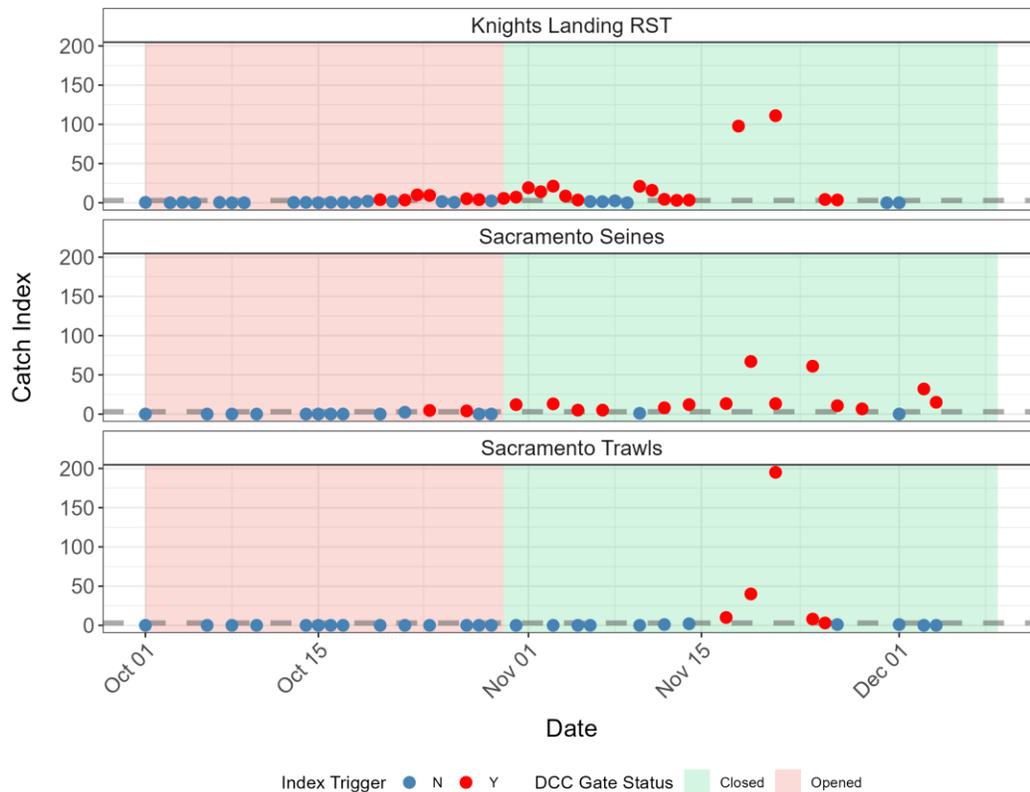


Figure 2. Summary of DCC gate operations and Knights Landing and Sacramento River Catch Index. Red shaded area indicates open DCC gates, green shaded area indicates closed DCC gates, blue dots represent catch indices below thresholds, red circles represent catch indices above thresholds, and grey dashed line represents catch index threshold.

Figure 2 presents three panels summarizing daily catch indices from Knights Landing RST, Sacramento Seines, and Sacramento Trawls from October 1 through early December, shown in relation to Delta Cross Channel (DCC) gate status. Red shading indicates periods when DCC gates are open, and green shading indicates periods when gates are closed. Points are colored by whether the index trigger was exceeded. The dashed line in each panel shows the catch index threshold used to inform operations. At Knights Landing, catch indices remain near zero through mid-October, increase gradually in late October, and exceed the threshold on multiple days in late October and early November. Additional elevated values occur in mid-November, including two high catch index days exceeding 100, before declining back toward near-zero values by late November and early December. Sacramento Seines catch indices remain near zero through mid-October, with occasional exceedances beginning in late October. Several threshold exceedances occur throughout November, including moderate spikes in mid- to late November, followed by lower values near the end of the period. Sacramento trawl catch indices remain near zero through most of October and early November, with a spike in mid-November reaching approximately 200, followed by a rapid return to low values that remain below the index trigger through late November and early December.

No loss of natural-origin winter-run Chinook Salmon has occurred in the past week at the State or Federal fish salvage facilities. While STARs predicts low survival and low probability of routing into the interior delta, the increased abundance of salmonids, particularly winter-run, in the Delta indicate that salvage may be possible over the next week. However, a more positive OMR greater than -5000 decreases South Delta entrainment towards the salvage facilities.

See WY 2026 current conditions for the Salmon Monitoring Team: [WY2026 Current Conditions for the Salmon Monitoring Team SaMT: SacPAS Sacramento Prediction and Assessment of Salmon and other fishes](#) for additional historical and current monitoring data.

Monitoring Teams Summary

The assessment was shared with SaMT and discussed during the meeting. There were no issues raised to WOMT by SaMT.