

Water Operations Management Team Notes

January 10, 2024

Members Attending

- Reclamation: Tom Patton (Acting), Levi Johnson
- USFWS: Jana Affonso, Matt Nobriga
- CDFW: Kristal Davis-Fadtke, Brooke Jacobs
- NMFS: Barb Byrne (Acting)
- DWR: Molly White
- SWRCB: Matthew Holland

Topics/Actions

- Approval of Meeting Notes from last meeting: 1/9/24
- Upcoming Meetings
 - Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) (weekly on Tuesday): 1/16/24
 - Smelt Monitoring Team (SMT) (weekly on Tuesday): 1/16/24
 - Feather River Operations (monthly first and third Thursdays): 1/18/24
 - American River Group (monthly on third Thursday, and as needed): 1/18/24
 - Stanislaus Watershed Team (monthly on third Wednesday): 1/17/24
 - Clear Creek Technical Team (quarterly on third Thursday): 3/21/24
- Relevant Assessments
 - Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook 1/9/24 – 1/15/24
 - Proposed Action Assessment 1/9/24
 - SaMT ITP Risk Assessment Summary 1/9/24
 - SMT ITP Risk Assessment Summary 1/9/24
- Operational Updates
 - CVP: Trinity River release is 300 cfs. Sacramento River (Keswick) release is 5,000 cfs. Clear Creek (Whiskeytown) release is 200 cfs. American River

(Nimbus) release is 1,750 cfs. Stanislaus River (Goodwin) release is 1,000 cfs. Reclamation's Delta pumping is at 4 units, targeting 3,600 cfs. Federal share of San Luis Reservoir is 802 TAF.

- SWP: Feather River (Oroville-Thermalito Complex) releases are 1,750 cfs. Clifton Court Forebay exports are 2,700 cfs. State share of San Luis Reservoir is at 379 TAF.
- Hydrology Update (DWR and Reclamation):
 - Seeing rain coming in, expecting 3-4 inches along the Coast, 1-2 inches in Eureka, 1/4-1/2 inches in Redding, and 2-3 inches in the Yosemite area. No rain forecasted on Friday. Snowlines, currently at 2,000 feet in elevation, are expected to increase to 4,000-5,000 feet in the Feather River area beginning on Saturday. More rain is forecasted on Monday (1/15/24); expecting ¼ - 1 inch along the Coast and ¼ - ½ inch in the Sacramento area.

Upcoming Actions, Updates, and Discussion Items

- Reclamation:
 - Updates:
 - Reclamation is working through recent ITP amendments related to Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Daily Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.3) and how it relates to the extended WY 2023 Interim Operations Plan (IOP). There is a Director's Meeting tomorrow afternoon to discuss this subject.
 - New Regional Director starting next week: Karl Stock
 - No actions or discussion items.
- FWS:
 - No actions, updates, or discussion items.
- CDFW:
 - Update: The Smelt Larval Study (SLS) detected larval Longfin Smelt at four of the Central and South Delta stations, which triggers Condition 8.4.2 of the Incidental Take Permit. This offramps any Storm Flex and triggers SMT to meet and assess risk to larval and juvenile Longfin Smelt. Tentatively, SMT will meet tomorrow at 11 am. If they determine it is warranted, they may make a recommendation to WOMT for OMR between -5000 cfs and -1,250 cfs.
 - Discussion item: There was a winter-run sized (length at date) Chinook Salmon observed in salvage at CVP yesterday, and we have additional information about that trigger.
- NMFS:
 - No actions, updates, or discussion items.
- DWR:

- No actions or discussion items other than those already mentioned.
- Update: DWR sent additional information via email re: Fall X2. Request that agencies reply to the 1/10/24 email with representatives that would like to participate in the Delta Operations 101 overview meetings.
- SWRCB:
 - No actions, updates, or discussion items.

Discussion Items

- One winter-run sized (LAD) Chinook Salmon observed in salvage on Tuesday 1/9/24:
 - CDFW updated WOMT that there was one winter-run (LAD) observed in salvage at CVP yesterday, with a calculated loss of 2.88. This exceeded the daily loss threshold of 2.54 for January in ITP Condition 8.6.3 as amended.
 - DWR stated that they are waiting on genetics (GT-seq) to determine if the salvaged fish is a genetic winter run. Per ITP Condition 8.6.3 as amended, the trigger would off-ramp if genetics indicate that the fish is not a winter-run. If the genetics indicate that the fish is a winter-run, or if genetic results are not yet available, DWR is prepared to reduce exports on Friday 1/12/24 for an OMRI of -3,500 for five days.
 - CDFW described how the daily loss thresholds in ITP Condition are calculated as a proportion of the winter-run Juvenile Production Estimate (JPE). The current daily loss threshold for January is based on the “Interim” JPE, which was received on 12/29/23 and is based on preliminary data through mid-December. The Winter-run Project Work Team is currently drafting the “Final” JPE recommendation, and we are expecting the JPE for natural winter-run to increase from ~205,000 to ~235,000. This would increase the January daily loss threshold from 2.54 to 2.91, and yesterday’s loss of 2.88 would not trigger with the updated threshold.
 - CDFW requested the Winter-run Project Work Team expedite finalization of the JPE recommendation letter, and they expect to receive the letter and approve the Final JPE by noon Friday 1/12/24. Approval of the final JPE would update the ITP Condition 8.6.3 daily winter-run loss threshold to 2.91 for January 1-31, 2024.

Post-Meeting Decision

- The SMT met for an off-cycle meeting on Thursday (1/11/24) to assess the risk of entrainment to Longfin smelt in response to SWP ITP Condition of Approval (COA) 8.4.2 having been triggered on 1/10/24. The SMT provided the following recommendation to WOMT on 1/12/24: Limit SWP exports to target the State’s share of a -3,500 cfs OMRI on a 7-day average under COA 8.4.2.
- SWP ITP COA 8.1.3 requires WOMT to evaluate recommendations from SMT and make the final operational decision. It was suggested that WOMT confirm the decision via email. WOMT agency representatives responded accordingly:

- DWR accepted; on Sunday 1/14/24 the action was initiated and exports were reduced to 1,800 cfs which equates to SWP's share of the -3,500 OMRI.
- CDFW accepted.
- NMFS abstained.
- FWS abstained.
- Reclamation abstained.
- Elevation Items
- No elevation items.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 17, 1–1:50 p.m.