



Upper Sacramento Scheduling Team, Fall Flow Planning Subgroup Meeting Summary

Tuesday, September 10, 2024, 1:00–2:15 p.m.

Participants

- CDFW: Crystal Rigby, Jamie Chelberg, Tracy Grimes, Travis Apgar
- DWR: Kevin Reece, Mike Ford
- NMFS: Garwin Yip, Rachael Alcala, Stephen Maurano, Sam Pyros
- USBR: Elissa Buttermore, Karissa Bridges, Peggy Manza, Tom Patton
- SRSC: Anne Williams, Yuen Lenh
- SWRCB: Craig Williams, Jeff Laird
- USFWS: Bill Poytress, Craig Flemming, Gary Zhao
- Kearns & West: Eva Spiegel, Terra Alpaugh

Action Items 9/10

- Reclamation (Tom Patton) to add a scenario that tracks with “Aug 90% WR shape dec” scenario but increases flows the last 4 days of September to 7,000 cfs.
- In late Sept/early Oct, Reclamation (Tom Patton) to report on the Spring Creek debris dam inspection and monitoring results regarding resulting water quality.
- KW to add review of SacPAS webpage to next week’s agenda.
- Reclamation (Tom) and SRSC (Anne Williams) to discuss with diverters whether it is feasible to shift some of their diversions into early October (or alternatively, into November, though that appears to be the second choice); report back at the September 17 meeting.
- SRSC (Anne) and KW to investigate what alterations were made for flow smoothing in 2020 and supporting documentation.

- Update: KW did some initial digging and found that there were some diversions shifted into November in 2020. One key timing difference the notes indicated: harvest and therefore decomposition was delayed because of the big fires that year; also, overall flows appeared lower in October and November. It is not clear if this occurred because of lower decomp demand or lower downstream demands or some combo. Documentation will be distributed later in the week.

Action Items Review from 9/3

Action Item 1: Mark Gard (CDFW) will share his PPT presentation. Update: Done.

Action Item 2: Tom Patton (Reclamation) will include quantified impacts on storage of the alternatives within the "daily flow tab" of the spreadsheet. Update: Done.

Action Item 3: Tom Patton (Reclamation) will update the Alternatives Spreadsheet and share with the group by EOW. Scenarios should include:

- A scenario that reflects the anticipated pattern of flows that will be needed to supply rice decomposition demand.
- A scenario with a September average of 7,500 cfs and in October the lowest possible flatline flow during the rice decomp period.
- A scenario that shows the lowest possible drop in September flows.
- A scenario that moves some rice decomposition demand into early October and some into November (potentially two scenarios: one October modifications only; one Oct and Nov)
- Update: Provided at today's meeting.

Action Item 4: Reclamation BDO will run the semi-automated analysis of dewatering estimates of Tom's new scenarios. Update: done.

Action Item 5: Tom Patton (Reclamation) will talk with the Contracting office about the potential to extend rice decomp into early November, including the lead time and information needed. He will report information back to the group via email. Update: Reclamation reported that if there is ultimately a preference for shifting diverters decomp water into November, it can be done without any additional environmental analysis, since that option was included under the 2020 ROD. It would still require contract adjustments, which would not require the lengthy 4-6 weeks mentioned yesterday. SRSC noted that there is a limited potential to shift demand earlier or later; they have a call with the contractors scheduled to gage their interest. In the past, most demand shifting has been voluntary and informal, though there were contract extensions that shifted demand into November in 2015 and 2020.

Fishery Monitoring Update

- CDFW reported that they are currently tracking 14 shallow redds based on monitoring this morning. All are holding within an inch of the original measurement.
- CDFW expects that there will be 11 redds remaining in gravel by October.
- Reclamation's analysis currently estimates that 1% of the WR population amounts to 3 redds.

Operations Update

- Contractors anticipate their demand will be 1500 to 2,5000 cfs upstream of Wilkins Slough in late October, though that will depend somewhat on accretions at that point.
- Reclamation reported that flows had been reduced from 9,000 cfs to 8,500 cfs at Keswick early this morning. Reclamation expects to reduce flows to 8,000 cfs on Friday, September 13 and will hold there for a week to help with Spring Creek Debris Dam release dilution resulting from work on the Spring Creek Debris Dam.

Alternative Spreadsheet

- CDFW, USFWS and NMFS concurred that the following three principals should guide any flow alternative:
 - Keep the flow high enough that no WR redds are dewatered.
 - Try to get flows as low as possible as soon as possible for fall-run.
 - Do not lower flows only to increase them again for decomp.
- Reclamation added four new alternatives to the spreadsheet. All scenarios:
 - Keep the agreed buffer (250 cfs) flows to protect the last emerging redds, which are expected on November 11. CDFW clarified that it predicts that the last redd will emerge on November 23.
 - Meet fall X2 standards.
 - Target 4,000 cfs at Keswick as the end of season base flow.
- The four new scenarios are:
 - Aug 90% WR dec = Developed on 9/6/2024. Based on the 90% forecast exceedance. Follows ramping rates. Keswick releases decrease in late September and then increase as demand increases later in October. Essentially, follows the natural decomp demand pattern.

- Aug 90% WR flat dec = Developed on 9/6/2024. Based on the 90% forecast exceedance. Follows ramping rates. Flows remain at 7,500 cfs in October.
- Aug 90% WR shape dec = Developed on 9/6/2024. Based on the 90% forecast exceedance. Follows ramping rates. Shifts 500cfs diversion from late Oct to early Oct.
- Aug 90% adj dec = Developed on 9/6/2024. Based on the 90% forecast exceedance. Follows ramping rates. Keswick releases decrease in late September and then increase as demand increases later in October. Flows remain higher in early November to shift diversions later into the season.
- All the new scenarios result in zero shallow winter run redds dewatered. With respect to fall run redds:
 - The scenario in which some limited decomp water was shifted from late October into early October (Ag 90% WR shape dec) had the lowest fall run dewatering estimate (9.7%).
 - The scenario in which some limited decomp water was shifted from late October into early November (Aug 90% adj dec) had the highest fall run dewatering estimate (13.3%).
 - Keeping status quo decomp patterns (Aug 90% WR dec) (i.e., a late October peak) had a FR dewatering estimate of 10.4%.

Next Steps

- SRSC and Reclamation are talking to the diverters on Tuesday to find out whether it is feasible to shift decomp volume earlier or later.
- Reclamation is adding another version of the scenario in which they shift some diversions into early October (Aug 90% WR shape dec). This adjusted version will work to eliminate the slight dip in late September that requires a ramp up into October.