



Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 10/15/24 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 (USBR)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Kearns & West (K&W)

Announcements

- SaMT Teams SharePoint
 - Reclamation and Kearns & West are in the process of finalizing the workflow for SaMT documents. Any new announcements or procedures will be shared with SaMT.
 - Please reach out to Mia Schiappi and Bethany Taylor with any access issues or requests. When you are first given access, you will receive an automated email

notification and should be able to access the WY 2025 folder via the link in the email.

- The Proposed Action Assessments, Water and Operations Outlooks, and Meeting Summaries will all be stored on the SharePoint site.

Part 1. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

Relevant Actions & Triggers

- The Interim Operations Plan (IOP) is currently in effect resulting from a court order issued on 4/1/2024 and in effect until 12/20/2024. Reclamation shall adopt the following provisions of the SWP ITP:
 - 8.5.2 Larval and Juvenile Delta Smelt Protection
 - 8.6.1 Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.2 Early-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Discrete Daily Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.3 Mid- and Late-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Daily Loss Threshold
 - 8.6.4 Daily Spring-run Chinook Salmon Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold
 - 8.7 OMR Flexibility During Delta Excess Conditions
 - 8.8 End of OMR Management
- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3):** See Outlook and Assessment for more information.
- **ITP Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.1):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.1 of the ITP. These values are based on the juvenile production estimate (JPE). The final JPE for brood year 2023 natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon has been estimated at 234,896. The thresholds below are based on the final JPE.
- The ITP natural-origin Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of unclipped length-at-date (LAD) winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 1.17% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss \geq 2,748.28). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq 1,374.14), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -3,500 cfs. If 75% of this threshold is exceeded (loss \geq 2,061.21), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,500 cfs. If 100% of this threshold is exceeded (loss \geq 2,748.28), the required response is to immediately convene SaMT to review recent fish distribution information and operations and provide advice regarding future planned Project operations to minimize subsequent loss during that year.
- The ITP hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of clipped LAD 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 ≥ 232.30). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss ≥ 116.15), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -3,500 cfs. If 75% of this threshold is exceeded (loss ≥ 174.23), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,500 cfs.

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) 10/16/24. Additional details and operations context shared at the 10/15/24 meeting include:
 - Sacramento River releases at Freeport were 10,300 cfs of 10/14/24 and are expected to remain stable with the possibility of a slight decrease.
 - San Joaquin River flows were slightly above 2,000 cfs as of 10/14/24 and are expected to vary with the Stanislaus River fall pulse flow, decreasing to a range of 1,300 to 1,400 cfs and increasing back to 2,000 cfs.
 - Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are at zero cfs from 10/14-10/16/24 to allow for herbicide application and a switch yard outage at Banks Pumping Plant that will end on 10/18/24.
 - Delta Outflow is 8,100 cfs as of 10/14/24 due to the outage at Banks Pumping Plant and will decrease to nearly 4,000 cfs once complete.
 - QWEST is at +3,000 cfs as of 10/14/24 due to the current outage and is expected to hover between the negative and positive range by a few hundred cfs once Banks Pumping Plant is back to normal operations.
 - Rio Vista flows are between 4,000 and 5,000 cfs and remaining relatively stable in relation to the Sacramento River flows.
 - The SWP share of San Luis Reservoir storage was 718 TAF as of 10/14/24.
 - American River releases will remain at 1,500 cfs until November, when operations ramp back up to 2,000 cfs with the controlling Minimum Release Requirements (MRR). A proposal for a power bypass is currently under Reclamation consideration for the American River.
 - Questions on Operations
 - CDFW suggested adding a release amount to anywhere in the Outlook that lists "Hold" as the anticipated weekly range of releases.
 - CDFW requested that DWR continue to send graphs of the OMR data.
- SaMT discussed Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions as addressed within the Operations Outlook and updated accordingly.

SaMT Estimates of Fish Distribution

- 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: 99-100% Last week: N/A	Current: 0-1% Last week: N/A%	Current: 0% Last week: N/A
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: N/A	Current: 0% Last week: N/A	Current: 0% Last week: N/A
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: N/A	Current: 0% Last week: N/A	Current: 0% Last week: N/A

Justification for Fish Distribution Figures

- YOY winter-run Chinook salmon
 - Two or three winter-run were caught in the Lower Sacramento rotary screw trap (RST).
 - One winter-run was caught at Knights Landing during the previous week.
- YOY spring-run Chinook salmon
 - None observed as of 10/15/24.
- YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon
 - None observed as of 10/15/24.
- Natural origin steelhead
 - None observed as of 10/15/24.

Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

Salvage Update

- There were no salmonids collected in salvage this week.

Hatchery and Collection Facility Operations

- N/A

Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

Proposed Action Assessment

- SaMT reviewed and updated the current week's Proposed Action Assessment document. The updated Proposed Action Assessment will be available to SaMT on SharePoint by COB 10/15/24. The final assessment will be posted to Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Workgroup webpage.

ITP Risk Assessment

- Risk Assessments will not be conducted until November at the earliest due to a pending permit. When applicable, the updated draft ITP Risk Assessment will be distributed via email by COB of the meeting day for review by SaMT members with comments due by COB Thursdays. The ITP Risk Assessment will be finalized by COB on Fridays and can be found at CDFW's Water Project Operations webpage.
- Reclamation and CDFW may give a presentation in the upcoming months to share any new changes with the ITP and the new Record of Decision (ROD).

Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion

Discussion on the Proposal to Switch to the Full Chinook Panel for Genetic Run-Type Assignment

- At the 10/8/24 meeting, Melinda Baerwald (Baerwald), DWR, presented on genetic panels for run-type assignment. SaMT members were instructed to review the proposal information with their upper management staff and determine if they approve of the switch from the Clemento panel to the Full Chinook panel. Comments from the follow-up discussion are included here:
- DWR leadership is in support of the change with the addition of elevating a new Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for the Full Chinook panel to WOMT, rather than submitting a panel-only recommendation.
- DWR relayed that Baerwald shared the new SOP that contains the new panel. It's currently under review by Josh Israel and Brian Mahardja.
- USFWS endorses the change to the Full Chinook panel.
- CDFW continues to voice support for the change to the Full Chinook panel.
- The Water Board will defer to the fisheries agencies on this decision.
- NMFS supports the change to the Full Chinook panel.
- Questions
 - N/A

CDFW and RST Data Distribution

- During WY24, CDFW shared a fisheries email containing unpublished data on RSTs and other CDFW data with SaMT. CDFW asked SaMT members this item was useful and if it would be worthwhile to continue sharing this data during WY24
 - DWR requested to continue receiving these emails.
 - CDFW added that Delta entry data will soon be uploaded to SacPAS.

Items to Raise to WOMT

- SaMT wishes to recommend switching from the Clemento panel to the Full Chinook panel for genetic run-type assignment.
 - DWR and Reclamation will continue to get this item and the new SOP sorted once Reclamation has fully reviewed the proposal. Endorsements of this process will be captured in the meeting notes and will be shared with WOMT.

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 10/22/24 at 9 a.m.

Action Item

- SaMT members to inform their WOMT representatives of the above item to be elevated.
- Farida Islam, DWR, to share the panel proposal and SOP information with Sam Pyros, NMFS, in order to get up to speed on this item.
- Mia Schiappi, Kearns & West, to forward Baerwald's panel presentation to Sam Pyros.