



Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 10/22/24 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
 - Kearns & West reminded SaMT members that the original email sent by Mia Schiappi is the best way to access the SharePoint folder.

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 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 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 N/A). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), 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 N/A), 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 N/A), 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 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 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 \geq N/A). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq N/A), 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 N/A), the required response would be to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,500 cfs. 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 winter-run loss.

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) 10/23/24. Additional details and operations context shared at the 10/22/24 meeting include:
 - Sacramento River releases at Freeport are approximately 9,000 cfs.
 - San Joaquin River flows at Vernalis peaked around 2,550 cfs on 10/21/24 and will likely decrease with the neap tide and Stanislaus River fall pulse flow.
 - Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are at 4,200 cfs as of 10/22/24 and are expected to increase along with the San Joaquin River flows in order to keep the Delta outflow stable at approximately 4,000 cfs.
 - QWEST was at +400 cfs as of 10/21/24 and is expected to remain near this level through the week.
 - Rio Vista flows are approximately 4,000 cfs and are expected to remain relatively stable.
 - CVP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 337 TAF.
 - American River releases will remain at 1,500 cfs until November.
 - Questions on Operations
 - CDFW asked about Mokelumne River pulse flows.
 - K&W shared the graph and release table for the Mokelumne River included in the Proposed Action Assessment.
 - CDFW added that the pulse flow was delayed two days due to fish screen installation. The volume of water did not change.
- 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 young-of-year (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
 - 1-2 winter-run were caught in the Tisdale rotary screw trap (RST).
 - 3 winter-run have been caught at Knights Landing so far this season, showing that they are starting to move more into the Delta.
 - 3 winter-run have also been caught at the Lower Sacramento RST so far this season.
 - SaMT discussed whether to keep the number for In the Delta at 0-1% or increase to 1-2% since it is known that more than 0% are in the Delta based on the RST data. However, some SaMT members thought that 2% may be a high estimate at this point in the season and the group did not want to remove the range. Therefore, the figure was kept at 0-1%.
- YOY spring-run Chinook salmon
 - None observed as of 10/21/24.
- YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon
 - None have been released as of 10/21/24.
- Natural origin steelhead
 - None observed as of 10/21/24.

Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

Salvage Update

- There were no species pertaining to SaMT collected in salvage this week.

Hatchery and Collection Facility Operations

- Herbicide application has completed at the SWP facility.

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 10/22/24. 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. Beginning in November, 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

Genetic SOP Document from DWR

- CDFW asked if DWR will be accepting comments on the document from SaMT members or if it will go directly to WOMT.
 - DWR replied that Reclamation and DWR have already reviewed and approved it. The next step is for the DWR WOMT representative to present it to WOMT for their discussion and approval. If there are any glaring issues, please reach out to DWR.

SacPAS Website

- NMFS asked for assistance with locating data on historical timing of spring-run, as SacPAS has made some changes to the website.
 - Reclamation will check into this and respond directly to NMFS with this information.

Items to Raise to WOMT

- N/A

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 10/29/24 at 9 a.m.

Action Items

- K&W will also begin sending out the PDF version of the final notes along with the document link.
- Chase Ehlo, Reclamation, to confirm the location of spring-run sturgeon historical timing data on SacPAS and share any information with NMFS. [Complete]