



## Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 5/27/25 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 (Reclamation)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- Kearns & West (K&W)

### Announcements

- N/A

### Relevant Actions & Triggers

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3):** See Outlook and Assessment for more information.

- **SWP ITP/CVP PA Winter-run Chinook Salmon Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval (COA) 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3 of the SWP ITP/SWP and CVP PA. These values are based on the final juvenile production estimate (JPE).
  - The natural-origin Winter-run Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is based on the initial length-at-date (LAD) identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon and the thresholds described above. If genetic analysis of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP subsequently confirms that any given Chinook salmon is not genetically identified as a CHNWR that fish will not count towards the loss threshold. This threshold is loss of natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.5% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss threshold =  $98,893 \times 0.5\% = 494.47$ ). If cumulative loss of natural-origin CHNWR in a brood year exceeds 50% of the annual loss threshold (loss > 247.24), then Permittee shall, in coordination with Reclamation, adjust south Delta exports to achieve a 7-day average of the OMR index no more negative than -3,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days. If a CHNWR is salvaged during the 7-day action, the action will be extended for another seven days. At the conclusion of the action, Permittee, in coordination with Reclamation shall revert to the weekly distributed loss threshold until the 75% threshold is reached or throughout the end of the OMR Management season. If the 75% loss threshold (loss > 370.85) is exceeded AND the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days, then a 7-day average OMR index of -2,500 cfs will be operated to for 7 consecutive days. Thereafter, each winter-run observed in salvage will trigger a 7-day OMR index of -2,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days IF the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days.
  - The hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is loss of both LSNFH and Battle Creek clipped CWT 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  $\geq 162.41$  and loss > 3.44, respectively). If the 50% and 75% thresholds are exceeded, the same process will occur as what occurs for the natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon (as discussed in above bullet).
  - The final JPE was distributed on 1/10/25 for WY 2025.

- **SWP ITP and CVP PA Winter-run Weekly Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4):** DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4 of the SWP ITP/SWP and CVP PA. These values are based on the product of the weekly percentage of natural-origin CHNWR present in the Delta, scaled to 100% (Table 4, Column E of the SWP ITP), and 50% of the natural-origin CHNWR annual loss threshold (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3). The final JPE Memo was issued on 1/10/25.
  - The weekly loss threshold for the remainder of the season is provided below:
    - 4/2/25 – 6/30/25: 0 fish
  - If the 7-day rolling sum of loss exceeds the above thresholds in any given week, the required response is to reduce SWP and CVP exports to reach an average OMR index of no more negative than –3,500 cfs for seven consecutive days. DWR and Reclamation shall restrict exports in response to initial LAD identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon. If genetic analysis of an individual natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP indicates that it is not a winter-run, that individual shall not count toward the loss threshold and continued export restrictions under the PA or COA are not required if the weekly loss threshold has consequently not been met.
- **SWP ITP Spring Delta Outflow Implementation (COA 8.12.1):** Permittee shall reduce exports from April 1 to May 31 each year to achieve the SWP proportional share (COA 8.7) of export reductions established by the ratio of Vernalis flow (cfs) to combined SWP and CVP exports, scaled by water year type, to provide incidental spring outflow.
  - In a critical water year type, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 1:1
  - In a dry water year type, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 2:1
  - In a below normal year, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 3:1
  - In an above normal or wet year, the ratio of Vernalis flow to SWP and CVP combined exports shall be 4:1
  - The current San Joaquin Valley Index Water Year Type is Below Normal ([CDEC](#)); therefore, the ratio of San Joaquin flow at Vernalis to exports is 3:1.

### 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) 5/28/25. Additional details and operations context shared at the 5/27/25 meeting include:
  - Sacramento River releases at Keswick Dam are 9,000 cfs on 5/27/2025.

- Clear Creek releases at Whiskeytown are 200 cfs on 5/27/25 and will decrease to 175 cfs on 5/28/25.
- Feather River releases are at 2,500 cfs and will decrease to 2,300 cfs on 5/27/25.
- Sacramento River flows at Freeport were approximately 19,700 cfs as of 5/26/25.
- San Joaquin River flows at Vernalis are approximately 2,600 cfs.
- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports remain at 600 cfs.
- Jones Pumping Plant is currently exporting 3,200 cfs.
- Delta Outflow is approximately 17,400 cfs as of 5/27/25. The 7-day average is 17,700 cfs.
- QWEST was +5,140 cfs on 5/26/25. The 7-day average is +2,600 cfs.
- Rio Vista flows are approximately 12,000 cfs with a range of 12,000 to 15,000 cfs.
- CVP share of San Luis Reservoir storage is approximately 659 TAF.
- Total storage of the San Luis Reservoir is approximately 1.35 MAF.
- Questions and Comments
  - CDFW asked if releases at Clear Creek [were listed in the Outlook as] 800 cfs due to the pulse flow.
  - Reclamation confirmed this is correct, but those flows were during the week of 5/18/25. Flows are confirmed to decrease to 175 cfs on/by 5/28/25.
  - CDFW asked about whether water temperature has started to be recorded for a smelt off-ramp.
  - Reclamation showed that there is a space for this information in the Outlook, and CDFW and Reclamation agreed to start inputting data next week since the Central Valley is seeing an increase in air temperatures.

## Part 2: Open Discussion on Species Status

- N/A

## Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

### ***Natural Spring-Run Weekly Risk Assessment***

- SaMT reviewed the Natural-Origin Spring-Run Weekly Risk Assessment.
- Questions and Comments
  - Reclamation stated that opening the DCC gates is under consideration for 5/31/25. Reclamation is still confirming if appropriate staffing will be available; if

not, the gates will remain closed. Reclamation will update DWR when more information is available.

- CDFW noted that rotary screw traps (RSTs) are still active in Knights Landing and the Lower Sacramento River, but water temperatures are starting to increase. CDFW requested that a related statement be removed from the assessment.
- CDFW offered to send data from the Knights Landing and Lower Sacramento River RSTs to DWR on 5/27/25 to be added into the assessment.

## Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion

### ***Spring Delta Outflow***

- SaMT revisited the topic of the Proposed Action (PA) for the Spring Delta Outflow.
- NMFS had asked about the following language: *"PA Section 3.7.5 Spring Delta Outflow (Table 3-11) shows SWP and CVP Foregone Exports of 175 TAF from March 1 – May 31, for the first 2 years of implementation. Modeling assumptions in Appendix F (page 48) include CVP export cuts of 147 TAF and SWP 117.5 TAF."*
- NMFS shared that according to the Sacramento Valley Index, the current water year type is Above Normal as of 5/1/25. According to Section 3.7.5 of the PA, the total foregone exports for both facilities is 175 TAF (or 87.5 TAF at each facility). However, the Appendix F modeling assumptions (which the Biological Opinion relied on to analyze effects) show exports cuts were assumed to be 147 TAF at the CVP facility and 117.5 TAF at the SWP facility.
- NMFS asked SaMT for any insight on these varying numbers and which numbers should be used.
- Questions and Comments
  - CDFW asked about the rationale behind the decision to not implement the Spring Delta Outflow this water year.
  - DWR responded with their understanding that they will not be operating to Healthy Rivers and Landscapes (COA 8.12.2) until it is approved by the state. Therefore, this year they are operating with COA 8.12.1 for April/May for the I/E ratio.
  - CDFW stated that they have the same understanding as DWR.
  - NMFS added that they heard a memo was circulated by Reclamation saying they're not implementing the Spring Delta Outflow this year. They were not clear on why it wasn't happening this year. NMFS wants to understand the Spring Delta Outflow PA component to better anticipate what happens the following year, and suggested SaMT discusses the topic early next spring.
  - Kearns & West asked NMFS if this topic should be elevated to WOMT or wait to be addressed next season.

- NMFS said the topic is already at the Director level, and it's more a desire to understand the PA and how to implement it.
- CDFW also expressed an interest in knowing how this information will be tracked in the future and wondered if anyone at Reclamation can provide that information.
- Reclamation offered to speak with their dam operators on how to track this information going forward.

## Items to Raise to WOMT

- N/A

## Next SaMT Meeting

- The next Weekly Operations Meeting will be on Tuesday, 6/3/25. If needed, SaMT will meet at 10:00 a.m. on Tuesday.

## Action Items

- Chase Ehlo, Reclamation
  - Provide an update on Stanislaus River status on Related Environmental and Fish Conditions for the Outlook.
  - Circulate the Assessment for CVP and SWP Delta Operations on ESA and CESA-listed Species to SaMT. The Assessment will also be sent to WOMT and will cover steelhead only.
  - Communicate with dam operators on how to best track data that results in determining the presence or absence of a Spring Delta Outflow and to clarify related language in the PA.
- Crystal Rigby, CDFW, to send data from the Knights Landing and Lower Sacramento River RSTs to Kevin Reece, DWR, by 2 p.m. on 5/27/25. [Complete]