



## Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 12/26/23 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).

### Agenda Items:

1. Introductions
2. Housekeeping
3. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions
4. Open Discussion on Species Status
5. Live-edit Assessments (Proposed Action Assessment and ITP Risk Assessment)
6. Additional Considerations/Other Topics
7. Next Meeting

#### Agenda Item 2. Housekeeping

- N/A

#### Agenda Item 3. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

- The Fish and Water Operations Outlook document was reviewed. Please refer to the Operations Outlook, PA Assessment, and ITP Risk Assessment documents.
- Sacramento River flows at Freeport peaked at 20,100 cfs on 12/24/23 with storm-related precipitation and by 12/25/23 had decreased to 7,400 cfs.

- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are expected to remain at approximately 5,500 cfs through 12/31/23 and then will be adjusted to meet the target OMR of -5,000 cfs beginning on 1/1/24.
- Delta Outflow on 12/25/23 was approximately 14,000 cfs but is expected to decrease to a range of 5,000 cfs to 10,000 cfs this week as storm flows drop down. Flow levels may remain dynamic with the upcoming, anticipated precipitation.
- QWEST is approximately -1,600 cfs and may move further into the negative range, reaching -5,000 cfs. Levels may remain dynamic with the upcoming, anticipated precipitation.
- Rio Vista flows are approximately 15,000 cfs and are expected to vary in accordance with Sacramento River flows.
- For details on salvage that occurred in the past week please refer to the Operations Outlook, PA Assessment, and ITP Risk Assessment documents. Additionally, all salvage information can be found online at <https://filelib.wildlife.ca.gov/Public/salvage/>.

***Actions Currently in Effect:***

- The Interim Operations Plan (IOP) is currently in effect resulting from a court order on 2/28/2023 and will determine operations for the remainder of calendar year 2023. 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 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) that have not been determined.
  - The ITP natural-origin Winter-run Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of unclipped length-at-date 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 is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the coordinated

operations agreement (COA), that would be required 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 is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,000 cfs.

- The ITP hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Single-year Loss Threshold for this year is loss of clipped length-at-date 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<sup>1</sup>). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$  N/A), the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the coordinated operations agreement (COA), that would be required 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 is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach a 14-day average OMR of -2,000 cfs.
- **ITP Early-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Discrete Daily Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.2):** From 11/1/23 – 12/31/23, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plan consistent with COA 8.6.2 of the ITP. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for November is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP equal to or greater than 6 per day. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for December is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP equal to or greater than 26 per day. If the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$  6, loss  $\geq$  26), the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would reach an OMR no more negative than -5,000 cfs for five consecutive days.
- **ITP Mid- and Late-season Natural Winter-run Chinook Salmon Daily Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.3):** From 1/1/24 – 1/31/24, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.3 of the ITP. The ITP Daily Loss Threshold for January is loss of older juvenile Chinook salmon from CVP and SWP greater than 0.00635% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE. If the threshold is exceeded (loss  $>$  N/A), the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach an OMR of no more negative than -3,500 cfs for five consecutive days.

#### ***Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations***

- SaMT reviewed and updated the Outlook document. The updated Outlook document will be distributed to the SaMT via email by close of business (COB) 12/27/23.
- SaMT discussed Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions as addressed within the Operations Outlook and updated accordingly.
- American River redd surveys showed 17 redds during the previous week, however, not all reaches were able to be surveyed, resulting in a lower number.

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<sup>1</sup> These thresholds are not yet calculated due to the Interim JPE not yet being finalized. Once the Interim JPE is determined these thresholds will be updated; however, until then, N/A will be used as a placeholder.

**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.

Location	Yet to Enter Delta	In the Delta	Exited the Delta past Chipps Island
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 85-90% Last week: 95-99%	Current: 10-15% Last week: 1-5%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 95-99% Last week: 98-99%	Current: 1-5% Last week: 1-2%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: NA Last week: NA	Current: NA Last week: NA	Current: NA Last week: NA
Natural-origin steelhead	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%

**Agenda Item 4. Open Discussion on Species Status**

**Salvage Update for 12/18/23 – 12/24/23**

- No operational discrepancies were reported.
- No Chinook salmon were detected at the collection facilities during the reporting period.
- The CVP salvaged a striped mullet, measuring 32 mm, on 12/20/23. Striped mullet are typically seen during El Niño-year conditions.

**Agenda Item 5. 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 distributed to the SaMT via email by COB 12/27/23. The final assessment will be posted to [Reclamation’s Delta Monitoring Workgroup](#) webpage.

**ITP Risk Assessment**

- The draft ITP Risk Assessment will be distributed on 12/26/23 with comments due COB Thursday (12/28/23). Past ITP Risk Assessments can be found at [CDFW’s Water Project Operations](#) webpage.

**Agenda Item 6. Additional Considerations/Other Topics**

- N/A

**Agenda Item 7. Next Meeting**

- The next SaMT meeting will be held on Tuesday, 1/2/24 on Microsoft Teams.

***Action Item***

- Kristin Begun, NMFS, to update and redistribute the Fish Data Table to include Knights Landing and Feather River data. [Complete]