



Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 1/9/24 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).

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. All flows and releases, unless otherwise noted, are reported as approximated daily averages.
- Sacramento River flows at Freeport were at 18,300 cfs on 1/8/24 and are expected to decrease through the week. During the previous week, flows peaked at 23,700 cfs.
- Stanislaus River flows from Goodwin Dam increased last week to 1,000 cfs for flood space management.

- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are 2,700 cfs as of 1/9/24 and are not expected to vary greatly in order to target the OMRI of -5,000 cfs.
- Net Delta Outflow Index is approximately 16,600 cfs and likely decreasing through the week due to decreasing Sacramento River flow.
- QWEST was approximately -200 cfs on 1/8/24 and may range to -2,000 through the week.
- Rio Vista flows are approximately 18,000 cfs and are expected to decrease through the week.
- 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 until the IOP for WY 2024 is finalized and distributed. 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 Threshold¹
 - 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). An interim JPE has been estimated at 204,808. The final JPE will be determined later this month. The below thresholds are based on the interim JPE.
 - 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

¹ Due to the SWP's ITP being amended on 12/22/23 to include genetics for the daily thresholds in COA 8.6.3, management is still determining whether or not the IOP includes this COA amendment.

2,396.25). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq 1,198.13), 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 1,797.19), 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 239.15). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss \geq 119.58), 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 179.36), 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 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 0.00124% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE. If the threshold is exceeded (loss $>$ 2.54), 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. DWR shall restrict exports in response to the initial length-at-date identification of natural older juvenile Chinook salmon and the thresholds described above. If genetic analysis of an individual natural older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP indicates that it is not CHNWR, that individual shall not count toward the daily loss threshold and continued export restrictions under this Condition of Approval are not required if the daily loss threshold has consequently not been met.

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) 1/10/24.
- SaMT discussed Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions as addressed within the Operations Outlook and updated accordingly.
- American River carcass survey data showed a decrease in fall-run Chinook salmon spawning. 613 fish were observed during the previous week with a pre-spawn mortality rate of 6% for females. Average water temperature was 51.8°F. Redd surveys observed 7 redds, however, the entire reach was unable to be surveyed.

- Stanislaus River carcass survey data showed a decrease in spawning as well with 145 redds observed during the previous week.

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: 60-70% Last week: 75-80%	Current: 30-40% Last week: 20-25%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 75-85% Last week: 90-95%	Current: 15-25% Last week: 5-10%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY hatchery winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
Natural-origin steelhead	Current: 95-99% Last week: 99-100%	Current: 1-5% Last week: 0-1%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%

Agenda Item 4. Open Discussion on Species Status

Salvage Update for 1/1/24 – 1/7/24

- No wild Chinook salmon were observed during the reporting period.
- Clipped Chinook salmon originating from the Battle Creek 12/18/23 release and the SCARF program were collected at both the state and federal facilities.
- A wild Steelhead was collected on 1/4/24 at the federal facility.
- White sturgeon were collected during the reporting period.
- No operational variances were reported.

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 1/10/24. 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 1/9/24 with comments due COB Thursday (1/11/24). Past ITP Risk Assessments can be found at [CDFW’s Water Project Operations](#) webpage.

Agenda Item 6. Additional Considerations/Other Topics

- Reclamation shared that conversations are currently taking place at the subdirector level regarding the original IOP and the ITP Amendment for the daily loss triggers. If this is triggered in the near future, this item will be raised to WOMT for further discussion.

Agenda Item 7. Next Meeting

- The next SaMT meeting will be held on Tuesday, 1/16/24 on Microsoft Teams.