



— BUREAU OF —  
RECLAMATION

## Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

**Teams call: 10/03/2023 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

### Introductions

- New SaMT members were invited to introduce themselves to the group and provide their affiliations.

### Housekeeping

- Beginning 10/10/2023, the weekly meeting series will begin with the Joint Water Operations Meeting at 9 a.m. Upon conclusion, SaMT attendees may switch over to the SaMT meeting link. Both meetings will take place on MS Teams.
- The Kearns & West meeting facilitation team consists of Mia Schiappi, Lead Facilitator, and Bethany Taylor, Project Coordinator, who will distribute a draft meeting summary to

all SaMT members by COB Tuesdays. Summary edits will be accepted through COB Thursdays, and a finalized summary will be distributed on Fridays.

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

- The Central Valley expects mild weather conditions over the next seven days. Little-to-no precipitation is expected. Temperatures are reflecting typical fall conditions.
- Clear Creek releases from Whiskeytown Dam are at 200 cfs.
- Sacramento River releases from Keswick Dam are currently at 6,400 cfs.
- Feather River releases from Oroville Dam are scheduled to decrease from 7,500 cfs to 5,500 cfs on 10/3/2023. By mid-October, releases are expected to drop to just below 2,500 cfs.
- Sacramento River flows at Freeport are approximately 16,700 cfs and may decrease to as low as 13,000 cfs later in the week.
- San Joaquin River flows at Vernalis are at 1,700 cfs with fall pulse releases scheduled at levels of 2,000 cfs.
- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are at 6,000 cfs today and may decrease as low as 3,000 cfs through the week.
- American River releases from Nimbus Dam are currently at 3,000 cfs.
- Stanislaus River releases from Goodwin Dam will begin increasing from 300 cfs to 1,500 cfs starting on 10/4/2023 as part of the fall pulse schedule. Releases will continue to follow the pulse schedule into early November.
- The Delta outflow index is approximately 7,000 cfs. Operators hope to increase outflow to 8,000+ cfs.
- X2 is upstream of Martinez (79 km).
- Jones Pumping Plant exports are approximately 3,500 cfs with the potential to increase following maintenance activities.
- QWEST flow values are approximately -2,500 cfs.
- OMRI is at approximately -9,000 cfs and is expected to vary between -7,000 cfs and -9,000 cfs through the week.
- The tidal cycle is transitioning from a spring to a neap cycle. The last quarter moon will occur on 10/6/2023.
- 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):** DCC gates closed on 10/2/2023 and will reopen on 10/6/2023. The scheduled pattern to open the gates on Fridays to allow for recreational activity followed by a closing of the gates on Mondays is expected to continue through October 2023. Gate operations are still targeting the X2 /Collinsville salinity requirement.
- **OMR Management Season (PA 4.10.5.10.1, COA 8.3.2):** Onset of OMR Management season began on 1/1/2023 due to the exceedance of the 5% threshold for the winter-run Chinook salmon population presence within the Delta. Old and Middle River (OMR) flows cannot be more negative than -5,000 cfs on a 14-day average. Additional restrictions and changes to operations may be required per the PA and the CDFW Incidental Take Permit (ITP- COA 8.3.2).
- **ITP End of OMR Management (COA 8.8):** From 1/1/2023 – 6/30/2023, DWR will operate the SWP to ensure that entrainment and take of Covered Species is minimized during the OMR Management Season through 6/30/23 or when the following species-specific off-ramps occur:
  - More than 95% of WR and SR have migrated past Chipps Island as determined by SaMT, AND
  - Daily average water temperature at Mossdale exceeds 22.22°C for 7 non-consecutive days in June, AND
  - Daily average water temperature at Prisoner’s Point exceeds 22.2°C for 7 non-consecutive days in June.
- **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) of 49,924 fish.

- 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  $\geq$  584.11). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$  292.06), 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  $\geq$  438.08), 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 -2,500 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  $\geq$  229.15). If 50% of the threshold is exceeded (loss  $\geq$  114.58), 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  $\geq$  171.86), 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 -2,500 cfs.
- **ITP Daily Spring-Run Chinook Salmon Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold (COA 8.6.4):** From 2/1/2023 – 6/30/2023, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.6.4 of the ITP. The ITP Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold for WY 2023 will include two fall-run release groups from Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH), two spring-run release groups from Feather River Fish Hatchery (FRFH) and one fall-run release group from Nimbus Fish Hatchery (NFH). If cumulative loss from CVP and SWP is greater than 0.25% for any release group (FRFH Group 1: loss  $>$  1,828.64; FRFH Group 2: loss  $>$  1,821.47; FRFH Group 3: loss  $>$  2,204,70, CNFH Group 1: loss  $>$  1,002.24, CNFH Group 2: loss  $>$  5,871.92, NFH Group 1: loss  $>$  534.62), 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 -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) 10/4/2023.
- 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.

Location	Yet to Enter Delta	In the Delta	Exited the Delta
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: NA	Current: 0% Last week: NA	Current: 0% Last week: NA
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: NA	Current: 0% Last week: NA
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: NA	Current: 0% Last week: NA	Current: 0% Last week: NA

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

- Kyle Griffiths, CDFW, will begin distributing the salvage report later in the season since fish are not usually observed until December onward.
- A genetically confirmed fall-run Chinook salmon was salvaged on 8/3/2023.
- A Chinook salmon measuring 135 mm FL was captured on 9/21/2023. Genetic analysis is not yet available as of 10/3/2023.

#### 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 10/4/2023. The final assessment will be posted to [Reclamation’s Delta Monitoring Workgroup](#) webpage.

##### *ITP Risk Assessment*

- The ITP Risk Assessment will not be reviewed until the first Tuesday of November. Past ITP Risk Assessments can be found at [CDFW’s Water Project Operations](#) webpage.

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

- SaMT is looking into hosting a hybrid meeting once per month. Mia Schiappi, Kearns & West, will send a scheduling poll to SaMT members. The expected location is the Bureau of Reclamation Sacramento office.
- Please reach out to K&W with any questions concerning hybrid meetings.
- Kearns & West will update the SaMT roster to reflect new members and agency staffing changes.

#### Agenda Item 7. Next Meeting

- The next SaMT meeting will be held on Tuesday, 10/10/2023 on Microsoft Teams.