BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 10/10/23 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

- Hybrid Meeting Survey
- SaMT members are requested to complete the Hybrid Meeting Survey sent via email by Kearns & West on 10/10/23. Survey responses will be analyzed to determine the best times and locations for future hybrid meetings.

Agenda Item 3. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

- The Central Valley is experiencing cooler air temperatures this week with the potential for precipitation early in the week. Mid-week will bring slightly warmer temperatures with breezy conditions. (Adapted from the Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook 10/10/23 – 10/16/23.)

- Clear Creek releases from Whiskeytown Dam are at 200 cfs.
- Sacramento River releases from Keswick Dam are currently at 6,100 cfs. Releases are expected to decrease to 5,000 cfs by early November.
- Feather River releases from Oroville Dam are currently at 4,000 cfs and expected to begin dropping to a maximum of 2,450 cfs by 10/14/23.
- Sacramento River flows at Freeport are approximately 12,400 cfs and may decrease to 9,000-10,000 cfs.
- San Joaquin River flows at Vernalis are approximately 2,600 cfs and may decrease to 1,500 cfs.
- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports are at approximately 2,000 cfs and will vary through the week between 300 and 800 cfs to address fall X2 standards.
- American River releases from Nimbus Dam decreased to 2,500 cfs on 10/7/23.
- Stanislaus River releases from Goodwin Dam are currently following the fall pulse schedule continuing into early November. Releases are increased to 1,500 cfs and then back to base flows of 200 cfs.
- The Delta outflow index has been 8,600 cfs for 4-5 days and is expected to increase to 9,800 cfs on 10/10/23 in order to mitigate pressure wave changes at Collinsville.
- X2 is currently >81 km.
- Jones Pumping Plant exports are currently targeting 4 units and 3,500 cfs.
- QWEST flow values are approximately +1,800 cfs and may decrease through the week due to DCC gate operations.
- OMRI is at approximately -5,000 cfs and is expected to shift to approximately -3,000 cfs due to the upcoming maintenance and outage scheduled at the salvage facilities.
- The tidal cycle is transitioning from a neap to a spring cycle. The new moon will occur on 10/14/23.
- 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 10/9/23 and will reopen on 10/13/23. 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.

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) 10/11/23.
- SaMT discussed Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions as addressed within the Operations Outlook and updated accordingly.
- American River Carcass Surveys will officially begin carcass surveys next 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
Young-of-year (YOY) winter-run Chinook salmon	Current: 99-100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0-1% Last week: 0%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%
YOY spring-run Chinook salmon	Current: 100% Last week: 100%	Current: 0% Last week: 0%	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

- No salmon or steelhead have been salvaged so far this water year.

- The SWP facility experienced reduced counts for high fish numbers on 10/2/23 and 10/3/23.
- On 10/4/23, the federal facility experienced a power outage causing pumping and salvage operations to cease temporarily.
- On 10/5/23, the CVP continued exporting but experienced a salvage outage from 0800-1330 hours to replace a holding tank pump flapper valve.
- White sturgeon were observed on 10/6/23 and 10/7/23 at the CVP facility. One sturgeon measured 283 mm FL; the other was 187 mm FL. The facilities have observed greater amounts of white sturgeon (951 fish) this year than in previous years. They have been primarily observed at the federal facility.

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 10/11/23. The final assessment will be posted to Reclamation's Delta Monitoring Workgroup webpage.

ITP Risk Assessment

- The ITP Risk Assessment will not be distributed 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

- Crystal Rigby, CDFW, was asked to look at daily temperatures for each watershed tributary and asked SaMT for feedback on the information utility. Team members decided to incorporate a weekly temperature maximum and minimum for each watershed beginning 10/17/23. This data will not be added to the SacPAS webpage.
- A small group of SaMT members attended the meet-and-greet on 10/3/23. CDFW is open to organizing another in the future.

Agenda Item 7. Next Meeting

- The next SaMT meeting will be held on Tuesday, 10/17/23 on Microsoft Teams.