



## Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

**Teams call: 11/7/23 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.
- Freeport flows decreased to 8,500 cfs and will likely not drop further. San Joaquin River flows are approximately 1,800 cfs and will decrease through the week to approximately 1,500 cfs.

- Clifton Court Forebay (CCF) exports will decrease from approximately 3,000 cfs to 2,000 cfs this week.
- Delta Outflow is approximately 4,100 cfs and is expected to stay within a range of 4,000 cfs to 5,000 cfs in order to meet the monthly average of 4,500 cfs required by D-1641.
- Due to maintenance activities, exports at the CVP will drop to 900 cfs on Thursday, 11/9/23 and will return to 2,700 cfs.
- QWEST is at approximately +500 cfs. When the DCC gates are closed, this figure is expected to be negative; with the gates open, flow levels are expected to be in the positive range.
- 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). 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.

#### ***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) 11/8/23.
- SaMT discussed Fish Monitoring Gear Efficiency/Disruptions as addressed within the Operations Outlook and updated accordingly.
- American River Carcass Surveys have begun. The carcass surveys observed 21 pre-spawn mortalities this week, which is 48% pre-spawn mortality for the week of 10/30/23 – 11/2/23. More than 50 redds were observed in the same week and 13 spawned females, indicating that fall-run spawning is starting to pick up on the American River.

#### ***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: 97-99% Last week: 97-99%	Current: 1-3% Last week: 1-3%	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 listed fish species were salvaged during the previous week.
- The CVP facility experienced reduced counts on 10/30/23 due to facility maintenance.
- The SWP facility missed a count on 10/31/23 due to an unscheduled flow change. A shutdown flush count was conducted immediately after. Typically, counts are conducted on odd hours (1:00, 3:00, etc.), but if flows are adjusted to a higher or lower level, a count is conducted at the top of the hour as part of the facility’s standard operating procedure (SOP).
- The SWP facility also reduced a count to 10 minutes on 11/1/23 due to unscheduled flow change.
- On 11/5/23, the SWP facility did not conduct a 45-minute count following the Daylight Savings time changeover, therefore were under their 25% sampling coverage.
- The CVP facility has salvaged over 950 white sturgeon during the 2023 calendar year, which is approximately four times the combined amount of the previous 10 years.

#### 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 11/8/23. The final assessment will be posted to Reclamation’s Delta Monitoring Workgroup webpage.

##### *ITP Risk Assessment*

- The ITP Risk Assessment will be distributed on 11/7/23 with comments due COB Thursday (11/9/23). Past ITP Risk Assessments can be found at [CDFW’s Water Project Operations](#) webpage.

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

- DWR plans to discuss fall-run versus late fall-run fish once their new salmon genetics specialists are onboarded. The date for this discussion with SaMT and additional information will be forthcoming.

### **Agenda Item 7. Next Meeting**

- The next SaMT meeting will be held on Tuesday, 11/14/23 on Microsoft Teams.