

Water Operations Management Team Notes

January 18, 2023

Members Attending

- USBR: Liz Kiteck
- USFWS: Jana Affonso, Matt Nobriga
- CDFW: Brooke Jacobs, Kristal Davis-Fadtke
- NMFS: Barb Byrne (Acting)
- DWR: Molly White
- SWRCB: Diane Riddle, Matt Holland

Topics/Actions

- Approval of January 11, 2022, Meeting Notes: Approved
- Upcoming Meetings
 - Salmonid Monitoring Team (meets weekly on Tuesdays): 1/24
 - Smelt Monitoring Team (meets weekly on Tuesdays): 1/19 off-cycle
 - Feather River Operations Group (meets monthly first and third Thursdays): 1/19
 - American River Group (meets monthly on third Thursday, and as needed): 1/19
 - Stanislaus River Watershed Team (meets monthly on third Wednesday): 1/18
 - Clear Creek Technical Team (meets quarterly on third Thursday): 3/16
 - Sacramento River Temperature Task Group: 2/23
 - Shasta Planning Group: not currently meeting
- Operational Updates
 - CVP: Trinity River releases are at 300 cfs. Sacramento River (Keswick) releases are currently at 3,250 cfs. Clear Creek (Whiskeytown) releases are spilling through glory hole spillway at 300 cfs but are expected to no longer be spilling by end today. American River (Nimbus) releases are at 10,000 cfs. Stanislaus River (Goodwin) releases will be 400 cfs by tomorrow. Reclamation's Delta pumping tomorrow will be at 4 units targeting 3,600 cfs. Federal share of San Luis Reservoir is 388 TAF.
 - Note: Millerton/Friant Dam is currently in Flood Operations, targeting 8,000 cfs in the San Joaquin River.

- SWP: Feather River (Oroville-Thermalito Complex) releases are at 950 cfs. Exports are targeting 9,500 cfs and scheduled to hold for next several days. Oroville storage is 2.06 MAF. State share of San Luis Reservoir is 559 TAF.
- Relevant Assessments
 - Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook 1/17/23 – 1/23/2023
 - 20230117 Proposed Action Assessment
 - SaMT ITP Risk Assessment Summary dated 1/17/2023
 - SMT ITP Risk Assessment Summary dated 1/17/2023
 - Delta Monitoring Workgroup Notes dated 1/17/2023
- Upcoming Actions
 - Reclamation:
 - No actions.
 - Discussion Item -
 - FWS:
 - Update: There is a Delta Smelt experimental release scheduled for today and tomorrow 1/18-1/19. Details are included in the Proposed Action Assessment.
 - Discussion Item – Plan for operations as the initial 5 days of Turbidity Bridge Action ends on Saturday, including expected hydrology and operations and differences between the Federal and State
 - CDFW:
 - No actions.
 - Discussion Item – Agree with the item mentioned by FWS, and would also like to discuss what WOMT should communicate to SMT tomorrow so they can be well-informed for their risk assessment.
 - NMFS:
 - Action: NMFS issued the calendar year 2023 annual technical memo for the SJRRP, effective 1/15/23, RE: Accounting of San Joaquin River Spring-run Chinook Salmon at the Central Valley Project and State Water Project Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Fish Collection Facilities.
Direct link to the technical memo: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2023-01/2023-sjrrp-spring-run-tech-memo.pdf>
 - No discussion items beyond those already mentioned.
 - DWR:
 - No actions.

- No discussion items beyond those already mentioned.
- SWRCB:
 - No actions. No discussion items.
- Hydrology Update (DWR and Reclamation)
 - Storm today/tonight which may result in 0.25-in precipitation in the valley and 0.75-in Feather. After this storm, the 10-day forecast looks dry. Snowpack across the Sierra is highest ever for this date. Oroville gained 1 MAF over the last few weeks!
- Discussion Items

Plan for operations as the initial 5 days of Turbidity Bridge Action ends and beyond 01/21/23 if daily average turbidity at Old Bacon Island (OBI) remains above 12 FNUs after the initial 5 days (this measure began 1/17/23). Currently, Turbidity Bridge Avoidance (In the PA as “South Delta Turbidity” action and ITP COA 8.5.1) is in effect, which limits OMR to -2,000 cfs. This limit is not currently controlling because San Joaquin Flows are very high, and the Delta is in excess conditions. Currently operating to -2,000 OMR. After five days, could revise based on protectiveness.

- Preparing for possibility that turbidity stays elevated. Ideally, turbidity would drop, but need to plan for possibility that it won't.
- Reclamation and DWR expect to have elevated flows in the San Joaquin River at Vernalis through next Monday. Currently, OMR is positive and the Turbidity Bridge Avoidance measure is not controlling. Facility capacity is likely to be limiting into the weekend. The expectation is that facility capacity would limit OMR to no more negative than -3,500 without any other constraints.
- Differences between Federal PA/BiOp and State ITP:
 - Federal: Beyond initial 5 days, if turbidity is still above 12 FNU at OBI, action would continue until turbidity is brought back down. If DWR and Reclamation feel that protections can still be afforded to Delta Smelt at OMR between -2,000 and -5,000 cfs, they can present rationale to that and agencies can discuss and respond with goal of approving operations beyond that time.
 - State: For the SWP ITP, SMT may meet and recommend different operations and/or an OMR between -2,000 and -5,000 cfs to be protective for Delta Smelt. If SMT does not make a recommendation and/or WOMT does not approve, -2,000 cfs OMR would continue as long as turbidity remains above 12 FNU at OBI.
- Last week, WOMT suggested that SMT meet proactively on Thurs 1/19 to discuss potential adjustments on Sunday. Advice from SMT would go from Sunday 1/22 until next SMT meeting next Tuesday 1/24. SMT is scheduled for an off-cycle meeting on 1/19 at 8 am.
 - Reclamation and DWR will present proposed operations under different OMR management scenarios so SMT can understand what conditions are likely to

be after the initial 5 days. SMT is tasked with assessing the risk of entrainment of Delta Smelt, not only turbidity.

- From the Federal perspective, the purpose of SMT is to receive ops plan and assess risk. Operators would propose operations through Tuesday and SMT would assess that following typical process. DWR and Reclamation will make projections of what different water supplies would look like depending on OMR to help inform conversations.
- More narrow range of options for SMT based on forecasted system conditions, not the full range of OMR -2,000 to -5,000 cfs.
- SMT would prepare abbreviated Risk Assessment based on new information.
- Monitoring Update: EDSM currently sampling in the South Delta. Is that adequate for this purpose?
 - DWR planning to couple eDNA sampling with EDSM, but not sure if it will provide value for this decision making.
 - Given that DS was sampled in south delta, seems helpful to have additional trawl in near-term or prioritize South Delta sampling.
 - Consensus that additional information is not available in time for this decision, even if staff were available to do it.
- WOMT decided to schedule a short meeting for tomorrow after SMT to discuss risk assessments and advice. This topic is on the agenda for the Director's meeting. If there isn't agreement at SMT for advice to WOMT, it may be an elevation item.
- Action Items
 - Will schedule 11:30 meeting tomorrow 1/19
- Elevation Items
 - Potential elevation item if there is not resolution at 1/19 WOMT.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 25, 1-1:50 p.m.