

Water Operations Management Team Notes

February 17, 2023

Members Attending

- USBR: Liz Kiteck, Kristin White
- USFWS: Jana Affonso, Matt Nobriga
- CDFW: Brooke Jacobs
- NMFS: Garwin Yip
- DWR: Molly White, Lenny Grimaldo
- SWRCB:

Topics/Actions

Expected Operations

Turbidity Bridge Operation

Longfin Smelt (LFS)

Weekend Operations

Expected Operations

- Anticipated that turbidity will stay above 12 FNUs at OBI
- DWR tracking turbidity at OBI and planning to take an action to reduce if today's turbidity (2/17) is above 12 FNU, DWR will go to 1,500 cfs pumping to target -2,000 OMR. If 2/17 turbidity falls below 12 FNU, then this would be an offramp and DWR will operate as described in the following section on Weekend Operations through Tuesday.
- USBR plans to operate as if the projects were targeting an OMRI of -5000 cfs, but will not use DCI so will drop to 4 units targeting 3,500 cfs export on 2/18. If turbidity falls below 12 FNU at OBI, USBR would likely go back to 5 units and use of the DCI.
- Do we know what OMR would be with the combined operations?
 - Expected to be around -3,000 to -3,200 daily OMRI.

Proposed Action Turbidity Bridge Avoidance Offramp

- USBR rationale: Following the first flush and turbidity bridge actions, Delta smelt have likely completed their population-scale adult migration, and temperatures are now suitable for spawning. Historic data shows near-ripe fish being caught in February and recent catch of ripe Delta smelt has occurred. Localized movements may occur in relation to spawning. Under the PA, these conditions offramp the turbidity bridge avoidance action.
- USFWS would like to ensure agencies think about how a potential gap in turbidity-based delta smelt protection may occur this water year under USBR's rationale. In particular,

agencies may want to consider how Delta smelt actions are aligned in the LTO consultation.

LFS larval protection

- Range of OMRI -2,000 to -5,000 cfs considered in the SMT today.
- Larval LFS have been observed at survey stations in Lower SJR and Central Delta (Holland near OR, Franks Tract).
- CDFW thinks the changes in PTM results (particle fates) at OMRI between -2,000 and -5,000 cfs scenarios warrants reduction in exports to minimize take of larval LFS. If the turbidity bridge offramps, then DWR will target 3,500 OMRI to potentially alter the larval smelt entrainment dynamic and reassess at the next SMT meeting, Tuesday, 2/21.

Weekend Operation through Tuesday.

- If turbidity stays above 12 FNU, DWR will target their share of -2,000 cfs OMRI with operations.
- If turbidity drops below 12 FNU, DWR will maintain its current operation through the weekend, then target -3,500 cfs OMRI Monday and Tuesday. The SMT will meet again on Tuesday to assess conditions and operations at -5000 OMRI.
- USBR cannot use the DCI, but will operate as if -5,000 cfs was the current OMRI target.