

Water Operations Management Team Notes

Water Year 2025 – October 30, 2024

Members Attending

- Reclamation: Elizabeth Kiteck
- USFWS: Jana Affonso, Matt Nobriga
- CDFW: Kristal Davis-Fadtke
- NMFS: Howard Brown
- DWR: Tracy Hinojosa
- SWRCB: Matthew Holland

Topics/Actions

- Approval of Meeting Notes from last week: Approved
- Upcoming Meetings
 - Salmonid Monitoring Team (meets weekly on Tuesdays): 11/05
 - Smelt Monitoring Team (meets weekly on Tuesdays): 11/05
 - Feather River Operations Group (meets monthly first and third Thursdays): 11/21
 - American River Group (meets monthly on third Thursday, and as needed): 11/21
 - Stanislaus River Watershed Team (meets monthly on third Wednesday): 11/20
 - Clear Creek Technical Team (meets quarterly on third Thursday): 12/12
 - Sacramento River Temperature Task Group (meets monthly on fourth Thursday): 11/21; USST (as needed): met on, 10/08
 - Shasta Planning Group (as needed): met on, 10/08
- Relevant Assessments
 - Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook 10/29/24 – 11/04/24
 - 20241008 Proposed Action Assessment
 - SaMT ITP Risk Assessment Summary for 29 Oct 2024 (first of the WY)
 - SMT ITP Risk Assessment Summary – No Risk Assessments Until December
- Operational Updates

- CVP: Trinity River release is 300 cfs. Clear Creek (Whiskeytown Dam) release is at 200 cfs. Sacramento River (Keswick) release is 6,800 cfs and will reduce to 6,400 cfs on Friday November 1. American River (Nimbus) release is 1,500 cfs and increasing to 2,000 cfs on Friday November 1. Stanislaus River (Goodwin) release is still releasing pulse flows at 600 cfs. Reclamation's Delta export is currently 2 units and increasing to 4 units on Friday November 1. Federal share of San Luis Reservoir is 332 TAF. Delta Cross Channel Gates are open.
- SWP: Feather River (Oroville-Thermalito Complex) releases are at 1,850 cfs today, decreasing to 1,750 cfs tomorrow. Clifton Court Forebay exports are at 4,800 cfs but will decrease on Friday November 1. State share of San Luis Reservoir is 732 TAF.
- Hydrology Update (DWR and Reclamation)
 - Potential for small precipitation tonight and larger amounts on Friday night. Conditions will be dry thereafter.

Upcoming Actions, Updates, or Discussion Items

- Reclamation:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- USFWS:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- CDFW:
 - Power Bypass Proposal and Discussion in the American River Group (ARG)
 - No upcoming actions or updates.
- NMFS:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- DWR:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- SWRCB:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.

Discussion Items

- Power Bypass Discussion in the American River Group (ARG)
 - CDFW: In September, there was a discussion in the ARG around the potential for a power bypass in the American River to improve temperature and dissolved oxygen (DO) conditions for fall-run Chinook Salmon at Nimbus Hatchery and in the American River below Nimbus Dam. Fisheries Agencies

put forth a proposal on September 30 and Reclamation responded on October 18 with a modified scenario for implementation. An ad-hoc meeting took place on October 24, where modeling results showed that the scenario that Reclamation was putting forth would reduce-egg to-fry survival by 20% compared to the scenario recommended by fisheries agencies. Reclamation confirmed they were going forward with their modified scenario. There was concern from agencies regarding the ability to discuss the modeling and evaluation that was conducted by Reclamation that led to the selection of the modified scenario. At the ad-hoc meeting on October 24, there was discussion around prioritization of water operations for the bulk of the spawning period and not on the preservation or protection of early spawning season. This is a concern from a fisheries perspective because of the need to protect life history diversity.

- Reclamation: Reclamation acknowledges the level of communication needed and recommends using the ARG to coordinate the recommendations coming forward. The function of Power bypass is to make sure there is no loss of cold water, which results in warmer water in November into early December. Warmer water during those times can potentially create loss of a larger portion of fish that are spawning in the earlier portion of the year. In Reclamation's proposal was the lower bypass, which was also proposed by the fish agencies, but around November 2 starting to slowly reduce the bypass until November 9. In Reclamation's action, it will consider how ambient air conditions and cold-water pool status may be either providing or not providing for cold water, so if a warm spell in November occurs, which has happened, there will still have some cold water available for additional bypass operations. Reclamation was taking a risk-based approach to address warm water on the American River. Reclamation will evaluate this based on real time conditions. Some analyses on the updated modeling looked at this issue and what different power bypasses may affect early life stage survival. Results from updated models was that depending on temperature mortality model you use; you can have a 1% to 15% difference between bypass scenarios.
- CDFW: Acknowledged that Reclamation cannot change operations until November 4. Evaluating real-time conditions as they progress further into season, is it possible to potentially implement a power bypass later in the month in a timely manner to try to be effective if we do see increasing temps?
 - Reclamation: Per the CVO- "If conditions are changing due to a heat wave, we could schedule Monday for a Wednesday change, Tuesday for Thursday, Wednesday for Friday & Saturday, Thursday for Sunday & Monday and Friday for Tuesday. This assumes there are no holidays. Holidays may add more scheduling time."
- CDFW: How can communication be improved in a timely manner for sharing information within the ARG and all entities?

- Reclamation: Reclamation recommends using facilitators within working groups to be more transparent about evaluating scenarios and sharing information.
 - NMFS: Is there a process for facilitators to get a group consensus on operations or does that have to be brought up by a proactive staffer?
 - Reclamation: Fish agencies have recommended that scenarios should be evaluated and presented at the same time and consensus from ARG to WOMT. But if not, each agency should be able to provide their input.
 - NMFS: The IOP process with Shasta Planning Group could be a path forward for coming to a consensus and elevating topics. Facilitators would go around and make sure there is agreement on proposed operations and testing for consensus. If all attendees are not on the same page, then it would be elevated to WOMT.
 - SWRCB: Was pre-spawn mortality and the effectiveness of power bypass options reducing pre-spawn mortality considered in the ARG and in Reclamation's considerations of the scenarios?
 - Reclamation: Both proposals were presented in ARG by Reclamation. Fish agencies spoke about the goals of improving holding conditions and reducing pre-spawn mortality for fall-run Chinook salmon.
- Action Items:
 - Question: How much time will it take to schedule a power bypass? RESOLVED 10/30 AND SENT TO WOMT VIA EMAIL 10/30
 - Reclamation: Will share feedback from WOMT about facilitator process to K&W RESOLVED AND SENT TO WOMT VIA EMAIL 11/05
 - Reclamation: Update meeting invite to reflect daylight savings time. RESOLVED 10/31
- Elevation Items
 - No elevation items.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, November 06, 2024, 1-1:50 p.m.