

Water Operations Management Team Notes

Water Year 2025 – January 22, 2025

Members Attending

- Reclamation: Levi Johnson (not in attendance), Elizabeth Kiteck
- USFWS: Jana Affonso, Matt Nobriga
- CDFW: Kristal Davis-Fadtke (not in attendance), Brooke Jacobs
- NMFS: Garwin Yip, Howard Brown (not in attendance)
- DWR: Tracy Hinojosa (not in attendance), Chris Wilkinson
- SWRCB: Matthew Holland, Diane Riddle (not in attendance)

Topics/Actions

- Approval of Meeting Notes from last week: Postponed to next week's meeting on 1.29
- Upcoming Meetings
 - Salmonid Monitoring Team (SaMT, meets weekly on Tuesdays): 01/28
 - Smelt Monitoring Team (SMT, meets as needed on Tuesdays, met on): 01/28
 - Feather River Operations Group (meets monthly first and third Thursdays): 02/06
 - American River Group (meets monthly on third Thursday, and as needed): 02/20
 - Stanislaus River Watershed Team (meets monthly on third Wednesday): 02/19
 - Clear Creek Technical Team (meets quarterly on third Thursday): 03/20
 - Sacramento River Group (meets monthly on fourth Thursday): 02/27
 - Winter-run JPE Sub-Team (as needed): met on 12/20
- Relevant Assessments
 - 20250121 Proposed Action Assessment
- Operational Updates
 - CVP: Trinity River release is 1,500 cfs. Clear Creek (Whiskeytown Dam) release is 275 cfs. Sacramento River (Keswick) release is 5,800 cfs and will be going down to 5,000 cfs by Sunday. American River (Nimbus) release is 1,750 cfs. Stanislaus River (Goodwin) release is 200 cfs. Reclamation's Delta export is currently 1 unit which is approximately 800 cfs due to the outage at O'Neill, which will persist until Friday. On Saturday, Delta export will go up to 3 units which is approximately 2,800 cfs. Federal share of San Luis Reservoir is 611 TAF. Delta Cross Channel

Gates are closed and will remain closed until May, unless there is a water quality issue.

- SWP: Feather River (Oroville-Thermalito Complex) releases are at 1,750 cfs. Clifton Court Forebay exports are at 3,400 cfs due to a planned outage at Jones Pumping Plant. State share of San Luis Reservoir is 902 TAF.
- Hydrology Update (DWR and Reclamation)
 - Dry weather persists for northern part of state this week.

Upcoming Actions, Updates, or Discussion Items

- Reclamation:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.
- USFWS:
 - No upcoming actions or discussion items.
 - Update: Real Time Operations.
- CDFW:
 - No upcoming actions or updates.
 - Discussion: SaMT meeting frequency.
- NMFS:
 - No upcoming actions or updates.
 - Discussion: SaMT OMR Implementation on Weekly Loss Threshold.
- DWR:
 - No upcoming actions or updates.
 - Discussion: Risk assessment for larval and juvenile Longfin Smelt protection action.
- SWRCB:
 - No upcoming actions, updates, or discussion items.

Discussion Items

- Real Time Operations Update
 - USFWS: Subcubs will meet to discuss triggers for SMT, the WOMT charter, and the 2024 Seasonal OMR report this Friday.
- SaMT Meeting Frequency

- CDFW: The condition included in both the PA/NMFS' BiOp (3.7.4 Spring-Run Chinook Salmon) and the ITP (Condition of Approval 8.4.5) calls for weekly spring-run risk assessments.
- DWR: In agreement that there is a need to do a weekly spring-run assessment, as described in the ITP and Proposed Action/NMFS BiOp but is unsure if there is a need to have SaMT meet weekly. There is room for discussion on what the format of the assessment could be, which would alleviate SaMT meeting every week.
- NMFS: Discussed meeting frequency with the NMFS representative to SaMT and there was neither an agreement nor a disagreement about whether the team needs to meet weekly. NMFS proposed that agencies look at the PA and talk with their SaMT representatives, so by next week WOMT can reach a decision regarding meeting frequency. In the meantime, SaMT should meet next Tuesday.
- USFWS and DWR did not have a concern with this approach.
- CDFW: Proposed agencies think about what the assessment should focus on and how that is communicated to technical staff and WOMT members.
- Risk assessment for larval and juvenile Longfin Smelt protection action
 - DWR: Last week the larval and juvenile longfin smelt protection action was triggered based on larval fish catch and net flows in the lower San Joaquin River. In the SWP ITP Condition of Approval (COA) 8.4.2. and PA Section 3.7.4.5.1., there is an assessment from DWR and Reclamation that is mentioned. Documenting the logic and justification for actions regarding this action is important because of the high potential for this action to trigger again next week after the next SLS survey. DWR requests to have the logic and justification documented in an assessment to see if OMR no more negative than -3,500 cfs is warranted. DWR proposes that a risk assessment is conducted this Friday for larval longfin, along with the potential need to hold an off-cycle WOMT meeting to discuss that assessment.
 - CDFW: The purpose of the assessment is to gather relevant information and discuss it on Friday, knowing that the survey would go out again on Monday?
 - DWR: Correct, DWR is looking to establish additional documentation on the status in advance of the trigger to provide a description of conditions that may lead up to any further trigger exceedance with subsequent surveys as we move forward in the season.
 - CDFW: Does the assessment go to the SMT?
 - DWR: The ITP and PA don't state that explicitly. It states that DWR and Reclamation through WOMT may prepare an assessment if the 7-day action can be adjusted or off-ramped. SMT is not identified as participating. Per 8.1.6., assessments that are for discussions for WOMT are supposed to be distributed to the technical teams as well. The plan is to distribute assessments to SMT members at the same time sent to WOMT.

- CDFW: Agrees with the need of technical staff having the same information as WOMT.
- USFWS: Seeking clarification on process and if this is a joint request from both DWR and Reclamation? USFWS requests that CDFW and DWR are clear as to what is expected to be in that assessment since CDFW is unsure how WOMT will weigh into it.
- DWR: Agrees with being clear in what is expected to be in the assessment. DWR will review what goes into an assessment and how DWR would work with Reclamation on preparing it. DWR proposes sending out a separate communication to WOMT responding to those questions as early as Friday for the special meeting of WOMT.
- NMFS: SaMT OMR Implementation on Weekly Loss Threshold
 - NMFS: Seeking clarification, in response to SaMT request, on if the action is already in effect, do the 7 days start over or is additional loss captured within the 7-day action range? The PA and ITP do not clearly state that OMR is required to be no more negative than -3,500 cfs for 7 days after each loss exceedance. The question is, if the action is already in effect, does the 7 days start over when another WR loss exceedance occurs? Or is additional loss captured within that 7-day action range? From the PA in Section 3.7.5.4., the intention is to provide for the protection of the species, and there were several discussions among the subcub team that it should be the former, that the 7-day action response starts over when another WR loss exceedance occurs.
 - CDFW: Requests having this discussion item moved to next week so there is more time to reflect on subcub discussions.
 - DWR and NMFS were in agreement with having time to reflect on this discussion item until next week.
- Action Items
 - Agencies to provide WOMT facilitator with their identified SHOT representative(s).
 - Agencies to review the PA and talk with SaMT representatives regarding meeting frequency and how assessments will be communicated to technical staff and WOMT members.
 - DWR to coordinate having a special WOMT meeting on Friday regarding risk assessments for larval Longfin Smelt if one is needed.
 - Agencies reflect on SaMT OMR Implementation on Weekly Loss Threshold discussion item.
- Elevation Items
 - No elevation items.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 1-1:50 p.m.