BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

Teams call: 10/28/25 at 10:00 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).

Participants

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
- California Department of Water Resources (DWR)
- State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- Kearns & West (K&W).

Announcements

- N/A

Meeting Summary

Part 1. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

Biological Context
SaMT agreed to add clarifying language: Migrating LAD Winter-run Chinook salmon in the Biological Context section. This is supported by the DCC Gate Action.

Relevant Actions & Triggers

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3)**: Gates are currently open to meet D-1641 water quality requirements.
- **OMR Management Season (PA 4.10.5.10.1, COA 8.3)**: OMR Management for WY 2026 may begin in November, December, or January depending on what biological triggers are met.
- **SWP ITP Natural-origin Winter-run Chinook Salmon Early Season Weekly Loss Thresholds (COA 8.2.1**): DWR will operate OMRI consistent with 8.2.1 of the ITP. These values are based on the November 1 – November 30 threshold of a 7-day rolling sum of [TBD]. Loss will be tracked 6 days prior to this COA being in effect and be included in the 7-day rolling sum. If the threshold is exceeded, a 7-day average OMR index of –5,000 cfs will be operated to for 7 days.
- **SWP ITP Winter-run Chinook Salmon Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.3)**: DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.4.3 of the ITP. These values will be based on the BY 2025 juvenile production estimate (JPE), which will be finalized in January 2026.
    - The natural-origin Winter-run Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for this year is based on the initial length-at-date (LAD) identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon and the thresholds described above. If genetic analysis of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP subsequently confirms that any given Chinook salmon is not genetically identified as a CHNWR that fish will not count towards the loss threshold. This threshold is loss of natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon from the CVP and SWP greater than or equal to 0.5% of the winter-run Chinook salmon JPE (loss threshold = TBD). If cumulative loss of natural-origin CHNWR in a brood year exceeds 50% of the annual loss threshold (loss > TBD), then Permittee shall, in coordination with Reclamation, adjust south Delta exports to achieve a 7-day average of the OMR index no more negative than -3,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days. If a CHNWR is salvaged during the 7-day action, the action will be extended for another seven days. At the conclusion of the action, Permittee, in coordination with Reclamation shall revert to the weekly distributed loss threshold until the 75% threshold is reached or throughout the end of the OMR Management season If the 75% loss threshold (loss > TBD) is exceeded AND the Winter-Run Chinook salmon

Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days, then a 7-day average OMRI index of -2,500 cfs will be operated to for 7 consecutive days. Thereafter, each winter-run observed in salvage will trigger a 7-day OMR index of -2,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days IF the Winter-Run Chinook salmon Machine Learning Model predicts that an OMR index of -2,500 cfs would shift the model output to a classification of CHNWR absence with a minimum probability of absence prediction of 0.559 for 1 of 30 sub-models for any of the 7 most recent prediction days.

- The hatchery-origin Chinook salmon Annual Loss Threshold for WY 2026 is loss of both LSNFH and Battle Creek clipped CWT 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 ≥ TBD and loss > TBD, respectively). If the 50% and 75% thresholds are exceeded, the same process will occur as what occurs for the natural-origin winter-run Chinook salmon (as discussed in above bullet).

- **SWP ITP Spring-run Chinook Salmon Protection Action and Surrogate Annual Loss Thresholds (COA 8.4.5**): From 10/1/2025–6/30/2026, DWR will operate Banks Pumping Plant consistent with Condition of Approval 8.4.5 of the ITP. The ITP Hatchery Surrogate Loss Threshold for WY 2026 will include three late fall-run release groups from Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH), six spring-run release groups from either Feather River Fish Hatchery (FRFH) or CNFH. If cumulative loss from CVP and SWP is greater than 0.25% for any release group , the required response is to reduce SWP exports by its proportional share, according to the COA, that would be required to reach an OMRI of –5,000 cfs for 7 consecutive days in November and December, or an OMRI of -3,500 cfs for 7 consecutive days if the action is exceeded from January-June.

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations

- SaMT reviewed and updated the Fish and Water Operations Outlook document.
    - Stanislaus River releases at Goodwin Dam are currently at 250 cfs with the final fall pulse flow scheduled for 10/30/2025 and not to exceed 1,500 cfs.
    - Feather River flows are currently 2,450 cfs.
    - Freeport flows are currently at 12,000 cfs and the anticipated range for the rest of this week will be between 11,500 cfs - 12,500 cfs.
    - Vernalis flows are 1,980 cfs and the anticipated range for the rest of this week will be between 1,600 cfs - 2,000 cfs.
    - Delta outflow is at 8,400 cfs.

- Clifton Court Forebay exports are at 0 cfs and will increase to 2,000 cfs later this week, with a range of 0 – 2,500 cfs.
- Rio Vista flows are currently 6,000 cfs and the anticipated range for the rest of this week will be between 5,800 cfs – 6,500 cfs.
- QWEST flow rate is at 3,327 cfs and seven-day average is 2,203 cfs.
- San Luis storage is 1.081 MAF.
- Expected Daily OMR Index is -2,800 cfs; five-day average OMR index is –5,600; 14-day average OMR index is –4,000.

Questions on Operations

- CDFW asked DWR about the duration of their herbicide application work.
  - DWR clarified that herbicide application will continue for 4 days, beginning on 10/27/25 and continuing through 10/30/2025.
- CDFW asked how herbicide applications may impact water quality issues. Are exports anticipated to increase even with delta water quality issues?
  - DWR responded that water quality impacts are largely dependent on exports from Clifton Court and monitoring will continue along with operational coordination with CVO.

Part 2. Open Species Discussion

Salvage Update

- There were no salvage updates.

American River Carcass and Temperature Management Update

- CDFW provided an update on the American River Carcass Survey:
  - There were 18 additional carcasses observed this past week with 7 females (4 natural and 3 hatchery). Of the observed carcasses, 68% (6 females) were determined to be pre-spawn mortality while 14% (1 female) had spawned.
- Redd surveys observed 9 new redds in the American River, which is slightly early based on historical timing. With releases around 1,000 cfs, spawning gravel seems to be limited and with releases anticipated to continue to be low CDFW anticipates seeing redd superimposition at higher than normal rates.
- Water temperatures at the AFO gauge reached 62.2°F between 10/20/2025-10/24/2025, with a daily average of 61.5°F. The power bypass began on 10/21/2025 with flows of 250 cfs and will reach peak bypass with flows of 500 cfs on 10/29/2025 which will likely have a more positive effect on water temperature.

Natural-origin Winter-run Early Season Weekly Loss Thresholds

- CDFW shared the formula for the November Early Season Threshold. The formula uses the most recent data available (BY 2025 fry to smolt survival term) although the multiplier for the Smolt Survival term is not yet available. CDFW understands that

based on Attachment 2, if the most recent data is not available, the previous brood year's data would be used to fill the missing data; therefore, the threshold will be based on BY 2025 fry to smolt survival and the BY 2024 smolt survival. CDFW asked for concurrence from DWR and Reclamation to ensure the same outcomes.

- DWR agreed with the need to use the 2024 Smolt Survival Term. Monitoring staff will be providing the most recent passage data from RBDD to input into the formula in order to calculate the threshold for November.
- Reclamation added that SacPAS has been working to ensure passage data is available for RBDD on a bi-weekly basis. USBR will communicate that information to the SaMT when available.

Questions on Early Season Loss Thresholds

- Reclamation asked CDFW about the 7-day rolling sum of loss was being tracked with this information.
    - CDFW confirmed it is.
- DWR asked CDFW about whether COA 8.17 would become active in this Water Year?
    - CDFW clarified that was a single year action from WY 2025.
    - DWR asked a follow up about when they should begin with genetic analysis for Winter-run and if the genetics are needed for the Early Season Thresholds.
    - CDFW responded that thresholds are based on genetic Winter-run Chinook Salmon which means that the thresholds are smaller than if based on length-at-date (LAD) but the ITP states that if we cannot get genetics in time, LAD method will be used.
    - DWR noted that they wanted to get ahead of the genetic work this year and to avoid any last-minute scrambles to begin that work.
    - CDFW noted that SaMT can request rapid genetics on any LAD Spring-run Chinook Salmon observed in salvage, but it is unlikely that they would do that this November. CDFW stated that they would confirm with their management about the rapid genetics for winter-run and report back.

Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

Proposed Action Assessment

- Reclamation shared the most recent Proposed Action Assessment.
- The KLCI and SCI have triggered multiple times over the past week despite low salinity in most of the Delta. Chloride has been triggered since 10/20 and working on raw conductivity measures to verify gage data is accurate in the Contra Costa pumping plant. KLCI was triggered on 10/22/25-10/24/25 and 10/27/25.
    - DCC Gates cannot be closed at this time.

- Historically, ~70% of winter-run Chinook Salmon juveniles have passed through RBDD RSTs but given that Winter-run are spawning later this year, estimates suggest juvenile passage through RBDD RST is closer to ~50%.

Questions on Proposed Action Assessment

- DWR agreed that the data suggested passage was likely around 50% and more fish will still emerge based on current redd monitoring.
- DWR asked how common it is to see the current numbers of winter-run Chinook Salmon passing Knights Landing and Delta RSTs?
    - CDFW shared that when RSTs were placed in September, there were detections, indicating that there may have been passage before then. The early numbers could be good for the run and the timing could be due to the favorable conditions.
    - CDFW added that this year is the fifth highest winter-run spawning year on record based on the previous 25 years.
    - DWR noted that this was helpful context and suggested that the information could be good for SaMT to have the information on the Proposed Action Assessments in future.
    - Other SaMT members agreed on the value of the information.
- CDFW suggested additional language about the DCC action, with the goal being to decrease the number of juveniles entering the Central Delta and thus reduce entrainment later in the season which provides context about why loss is included in the assessment.
    - Reclamation agreed to the addition.
- CDFW asked about checking chloride levels to ensure accurate reporting at the Contra Costa pumping station and whether Reclamation know about when that verification would be reported.
    - Reclamation responded that the information being received is accurate, the idea would be to confirm the Chloride values at that station. Levels will hopefully drop soon.
    - CDFW asked if the goal would be to close the DCC Gates after the Chloride values drop below 250 ppm.
    - Reclamation responded that they would close the DCC Gates once Chloride values drop below the threshold. The DCC Gates will remain closed until the catch index is less than 3 fish/day at Knights Landing and Sacramento monitoring. The closure will be for 3 days, and then 2 consecutive days of no catch before being opened again.

Spring Run Assessment

- DWR shared an updated version of the Spring-run Chinook Assessment document.

Part 4. Additional Considerations/Discussion

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 11/4/25.

Action Items

- N/A