



# **Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting**

Teams call: 12/02/25 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**

- CDFW announced the passing of a salvage team member and noted possible upcoming data gaps as the team adjusts and fills the role.

- Questions can be directed to Virginia Afentoulis or Kyle Griffiths at:
  - [Virginia.Afentoulis@Wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Virginia.Afentoulis@Wildlife.ca.gov)
  - [Walter.Griffiths@wildlife.ca.gov](mailto:Walter.Griffiths@wildlife.ca.gov)

## Meeting Summary

### Part 1. Updates on Water Operations and Biological Conditions

#### ***Biological Context***

##### Relevant Actions & Triggers

- **Delta Cross Channel (DCC) Gate operations (PA 4.10.5.3):** Gates are currently closed.
- **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 December 1 – December 31 threshold of a 7-day rolling sum of 231.64. 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 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 ( $\text{loss} > \text{TBD}$ ) 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 ( $\text{loss} \geq \text{TBD}$  and  $\text{loss} > \text{TBD}$ , 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.
  - Sacramento River releases at Keswick Dam are currently at 4,000 cfs.
  - Feather River releases are currently at 2,400 cfs and will range between 1,700 cfs to 2,400 cfs.
  - American River releases at Nimbus Dam are 1,000 cfs.
  - Stanislaus River releases at Goodwin Dam are currently at 200 cfs.

- Freeport flows are currently at 11,500 cfs and will range between 11,000 cfs to 11,600 cfs.
  - Vernalis flows are currently at 1,200 cfs and will range between 1,100 cfs to 1,300 cfs.
- Delta Outflow is at 5,100 cfs and will range between 5,000 cfs to 5,400 cfs.
- JPP exports are at 1,900 cfs and will be reduced to 900 cfs on 12/3/25. The range for the remainder of the week will be between 900 cfs to 1,900 cfs.
  - CCF exports are currently at 4,300 cfs and will range between 2,600 cfs to 4,300 cfs.
  - Rio Vista flows are at 8,800 cfs and will range between 8,000 cfs to 8,600 cfs.
  - QWEST flow rate is at -3,600 cfs and seven-day average is -4,100 cfs.
  - San Luis storage is 1.276 MAF. SWP's share is 906 TAF and CVP's is 378 TAF.
  - Expected Daily OMR Index is -5,600 cfs; five-day average OMR index is -6,100 cfs; 14-day average OMR index is -7,300 cfs.
  - Tides are transitioning from Neap to Spring.

#### ***Questions/Discussion on Operations***

- CDFW verified with Reclamation that tides are transitioning from Neap to Spring.

## **Part 2. Open Species Discussion**

#### ***Salvage Updates***

- CDFW mentioned that no protected species were collected this week.

#### ***Distribution/Survey Updates***

- DWR updated Red Bluff data for the month of December.
- DWR explained that the original Red Bluff data appeared a week ahead because data polling transitioned from a biweekly to a weekly schedule.

#### ***Questions on Open Species Discussion***

- Part 3. Live Edit Assessments

#### ***Proposed Action Assessment***

- Reclamation provided an update. Key points included:
  - DCC gates are closed for the season but can be opened if D-1641 criteria are exceeded.
  - Salvage may occur next week, as many winter-run Chinook salmon were observed moving into the Delta

- As of November 25, there are 2.6 million winter-run Chinook salmon that passed the Red Bluff diversion dam. Estimates may be higher since it doesn't include spring-run Chinook salmon numbers.

#### ***Spring Run Assessment***

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

#### ***Questions on Spring Run Assessment***

- DWR clarified that the finalized PDF of the Spring-Run Assessment can be accessed in the SaMT SharePoint folder.

## **Next SaMT Meeting**

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 12/09/25.

#### **Action Items**

- N/A