Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

12/30/25 at 11:00 a.m.

Actions

- CDFW to write biological context language re: thresholds for DWR. ***-complete***
- CDFW (Crystal) will follow-up with DWR fisheries team about the Jan 1-Jun 30 weekly interim loss threshold memo (the interim WR JPE was distributed on 12/30).
- DWR will coordinate with Cramer to share the SHERLOCK genetic results of the older juvenile salvaged last week (12/21) in a report when available. DWR will provide information to CDFW re: testing protocols for the SHERLOCK technique.
- Kearns & West develop SharePoint archival processes for member agencies for future notes editing processes and smoother document sharing/organization.

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)

Welcome & Housekeeping

- No updates.

Meeting Summary

Updates on 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. Due to First Flush (COA 8.3.1) being triggered on 12/23/25, OMR management Season has begun.
- **SWP ITP Natural-origin Winter-run Chinook Salmon Early Season Weekly Loss Thresholds (COA 8.2.1**): DWR will operate OMRI consistent with COA 8.2.1 of the ITP. These values are based on the December 1 – December 31 threshold of a 7-day rolling sum of Chinook Salmon winter-run loss 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 COA 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 COA 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), and 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 COA 8.7, 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 the Fish and Water Operations Outlook document.

Questions/Discussion on the Operations Review

- CDFW asked if there could be clarifications to the biological context, specifically if there could be greater explanation to the action implementation.

    - DWR agreed to add the language provided by CDFW: *First Flush Operations for the next two weeks per update to WOMT: Week 1 (12/25 to 12/31) DWR operate to an OMR no more negative than -3500 OMR CFS starting on 12/25 unless the following occurs: -San Joaquin River (SJR) or QWEST flow exceed 10,000 cfs. If either SJR flow or QWEST flow exceeds 10,000 cfs, DWR recommends operating to -5000 OMR cfs unless the following occurs: -2 days of consecutive natural winter-run or spring-run salvage is observed at the SWP or CVP. Week 2 (1/1 to 1/7) If both of SJR or QWEST flows are below 10,000 cfs, DWR will operate to an OMR no more negative than -3500 cfs.*

- CDFW asked DWR to confirm the salvage dates for Spring-run being the consecutive days of 24th and 25th of December and why they don't affect the action.
    - DWR confirmed the dates.
    - The 2 consecutive days of natural SR salvage while DWR was operating to -5000 OMRI that resulted in the DWR operations change from -5000 OMRI to -3500 OMRI occurred on 12/26 and 12/27.
- DWR confirmed that COA 8.3 is in effect and was triggered 12/23 with operations beginning 12/25.
- CDFW shared that there will be interim weekly loss thresholds between Jan 1-Jun 30, 2026 for COA 8.4.3.

Part 3. Salvage Reports

- CDFW shared the weekly salvage report.
- There was high salvage of Fall-run LAD fish and some Spring-run LAD.
- Winter-run LAD were included in the report at the time it was made but genetics determined the fish were not WR.
- Salvage of hatchery-origin fish indicates some are from the San Joaquin River Restoration Program release and are genetically Spring-run brood stock. Some are in the WR category but the coded wire tag data at the time of recording showed all the fish were from the San Joaquin River or late-Fall-run Coleman National Fish Hatchery production releases in Battle Creek.
- There were no clipped fish that corresponded to surrogate release groups.
- The first steelhead of WY was seen at CVP.
- No operational outages or variances this week.

Questions/Discussion

- CDFW asked if SHERLOCK testing is being run on older juveniles.
    - DWR replied that yes, SHERLOCK is being used by Cramer but the program is new. GT-Seq is also being done with the intention of getting results for all juveniles. There are technical protocols for these techniques, and they can be shared. But the details cannot be shared in this moment at the meeting. DWR can follow-up with the protocols.
- CDFW asked the timeline for getting the results from the older juvenile tested last week.
    - DWR confirmed that they had distributed the GT-Sequence results.

- DWR has shared samples with Cramer for SHERLOCK analysis, but the program is still being developed so they don't have the results yet.
- DWR will coordinate with Cramer to share the SHERLOCK results in a report when available.

Part 4. Species Distribution

- No updates.

Part 5. ITP Assessments

Spring-run Assessment

- DWR shared an updated version of the Spring-run Chinook Assessment document.
- CDFW provided some updates to the assessment:
    - Section 1.1
        - Exposure Level: CDFW believes that exposure level this week is estimated as medium for yearlings due to seasonal migration timing of yearling SR. The exposure level for routing in the Central Delta is medium for young of year due to the presence of LAD and genetically-confirmed young-of-year SR in CVP salvage.
        - Routing Level: CDFW believes that routing probability this week is estimated as low due to DCC gates being closed, high Freeport flows, and the operation of the Georgiana Slough Migratory Barrier.
    - Section 1.2
        - Overall Risk: CDFW believes that overall risk for loss at CVP/SWP facilities is medium due to seasonal migration timing of yearling SR and the presence of LAD YOY SR in salvage at the CVP

Items to Raise to WOMT

- The agencies had no items to raise to WOMT.

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 1/6/26 from 11am-12pm.