

Salmon Monitoring Team (SaMT) Weekly Meeting

1/20/26 at 11:00 a.m.

Actions

- Kearns & West will coordinate for the opportunity for CDFW Smelt representatives to provide updates to the Fish and Water Operations Outlook during the SaMT meetings. *-in progress*

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.
- **Onset of OMR Management (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 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 = 5,287.26). If cumulative loss of natural-origin CHNWR in a brood year exceeds 50% of the annual loss threshold (loss > 2,643.63), 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 > 3,965.45) 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 > 156.12 and loss > 6.22, respectively). If the 50% thresholds (loss > 78.06 and loss > 3.11, respectively) and 75% thresholds (loss > 117.09 and loss > 4.67, respectively) 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 1/1/26-6/30/26, DWR and Reclamation will operate Banks Pumping Plant and Jones Pumping Plant consistent with COA 8.4.4/PA 3.7.4.5.4 of the SWP ITP/CVP PA. These values are based on the product of the weekly percentage of natural-origin CHNWR present in the Delta, scaled to 100% (Table 4, Column E of the SWP ITP), and 50% of the natural-origin CHNWR annual loss threshold (COA 8.4.3/PA 3.7.4.5.3).
 - The weekly thresholds for the previous week and the upcoming weeks are provided below:
 - 1/15/26 – 1/21/26: 34.37
 - 1/22/26 – 1/28/26: 34.37
 - If the 7-day rolling sum of loss exceeds the above thresholds in any given week, the required response is to reduce SWP and CVP exports to reach an average OMR index of no more negative than -3,500 cfs for seven consecutive days. DWR and Reclamation shall restrict exports in response to initial LAD identification of natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon. If genetic analysis of an individual natural-origin older juvenile Chinook salmon observed in salvage at the SWP or CVP indicates that it is not a winter-run, that individual shall not count toward the loss threshold and continued export restrictions under the PA or COA are not required if the weekly loss threshold has consequently not been met.
- **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. This COA was exceeded on 1/9/26 for yearling SR surrogates and operations began 1/13/26 – 1/19/26.

Weekly Fish and Water Operations Outlook, Current Operations

- SaMT reviewed the Fish and Water Operations Outlook document.
- Oroville River releases are 2,500 cfs today (1/20/26) and range from 1,700-2,500 cfs this week. Storage at the Lake Oroville Reservoir was 2.734 MAF as of yesterday (1/19/26).

- Freeport flows are 40,800 cfs today (1/20/26) and range from 30,000-40,000 cfs this week.
- Vernalis flows are 2,500 cfs today (1/20/26) and range from 2,100-2,600 cfs this week.
- Delta Outflow is 39,000 cfs today (1/20/26) and range from 25,000-40,000 cfs this week.
- CCF is at 2,800 cfs today (1/20/26) and range is 1,500-4,000 cfs this week.
- OMRI is -4,900 cfs today (1/20/26) and the range is -3,500 to -5,000 cfs this week.
- Sacramento River flows at Rio Vista are 37,000 cfs today (1/20/26) and range from 25,000-40,000 cfs this week.
- QWEST daily is 5,300 today (1/20/26) and the 7-day average is 7,300.
- SWP shares at San Luis Reservoir are currently 976,000-acre feet.
- X2 is 60 km; the 14-day average is -4,500 and 5-day average is -4,000.

Questions/Discussion on the Operations Review

- CDFW asked what the JPP daily exports are for 1/20/26.
 - DWR confirmed that daily exports at JPP are 3,500 cfs.
- CDFW asked for confirmation on total San Luis Reservoir storage.
 - DWR confirmed total San Luis storage of 1.526 MAF.
- CDFW requested that Smelt representatives provide updates to the Fish and Water Operations Outlook during the SaMT meetings.
 - Kearns & West will coordinate with CDFW Smelt reps.

Part 3. Salvage Reports

- CDFW shared notes regarding weekly salvage.
- The overall number of salmon dropped considerably over the last week.
 - All of the unclipped fish, with the exception of the Spring-run Chinook collected at the CVP on 1/12/26, have been Fall-run LAT (30-40 mm size) Chinook.
 - Ad-clipped Chinook collected at Skinner Fish Facility and the CVP this week have been identified as either Late-Fall-run production release or Spring-run yearling surrogate release, with one instance of Spring-run ad-clipped fish from the San Joaquin SCARF release.

- The Chinook Salmon at the SWP on the 1/15/26 was a yearling spring-run Surrogate.
- Limited steelhead were collected this week.
 - One clipped steelhead was seen at the SWP on 1/14/26 this week.
- No operational notes to discuss this week.

Questions/Discussion

- No questions/discussion.

Part 4. Species Distribution

- No updates.

Part 5. ITP Assessments

Spring-run Assessment

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

Questions/Discussion

- No questions/discussion.

Items to Raise to WOMT

- No items to raise to WOMT.

Next SaMT Meeting

- The next SaMT Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, 1/27/26 from 11am-12pm.