

WOMT Off-Cycle Meeting Notes

Water Year 2026 – January 9, 2026 – 1 pm Off-cycle Meeting

Members Attending

- Reclamation: Absent
- USFWS: Present
- CDFW: Present
- NMFS: Present
- DWR: Present
- SWRCB: Present

Relevant Assessments

- "Storm Flex (ITP COA 8.5) Assessment (Date 1/9/2026)"

Discussion Items

Assessment regarding potential Storm Flex Operations (ITP COA 8.5)
DWR provided a written ITP Assessment on 1/09/2026 (Attached)

- DWR went through the assessment, which included multiple models for winter-run (WR) Chinook salmon and pointed out that the WRCML and Tillotson models are based on, and calibrated with, LAD WR and not genetically confirmed natural origin WR.
 - CDFW responded that additional analyses have been done with the model to compare its predictive ability for both LAD and genetic WR, and that the model predictions were shown to be useful for predicting salvage of genetic WR. This analysis was written up and provided to the WR exceedance independent review panel. CDFW suggested sending that to WOMT as well since it had high accuracy rate for genetic WR.
 - Materials provided to the review panel are posted at:
<https://deltacouncil.ca.gov/delta-science-program/water-year-2024-and-2025-winter-run-chinook-salmon-annual-loss-independent-peer-review>
 - DWR responded that most genetic WR fall within the bounds of the LAD WR and are captured by the model, but there are many false positives.
- CDFW asked why "Exports" are the same for the current conditions, projected -5,000 OMRI, and projected -3,500 OMRI.
 - DWR responded that they are trying to figure out if OMR is actually driving the changes in entrainment. They said they could make some changes to exports to see if it changes predictions in entrainment.
 - CDFW responded that exports would change if DWR were operating to a different OMR, and modeling should reflect the conditions fish will experience.

- DWR responded that if they can get the export data from operations folks then they can run those scenarios.

- CDFW said the timing of larval White Sturgeon is one of the things they want to investigate moving forward. They want that to be part of the WST science plan.

- CDFW asked if the 31 CWT CHN that came in to SWP yesterday (1/8/2026) are part of the Assessment.
 - DWR responded that they are NOT part of the assessment as results were not ready by the time of the Assessment's release. They also said that results should be ready by COB today (1/9/2026).
 - CDFW pointed out that there is a chance, once those fish are processed, that COA 8.4.5 will be triggered, thus terminating the initiation of Storm Flex.

- CDFW mentioned that during approved Storm Flex operations the ITP requires a change in exports if there is the likelihood of triggering a COA. They wondered, if we are already close, is a Storm Flex still appropriate? To meet the requirement in the ITP, CDFW suggested a buffer range to indicate the "likelihood" of a COA being triggered. For example, if we were to certain proximity to a COA trigger, then we would go down to -5000 OMR. They mentioned that salmon salvage tends to build over a couple of days.
 - DWR responded that this proximity buffer issues was not discussed internally and so there is no number like that in mind. They said that the COA threshold is already conservative.
 - CDFW said that if a COA trigger hits then Storm Flex ends immediately. Then it will be 48 hours until -3500 OMR takes place. As a point of discussion they asked, "If the threshold is 152, if we get to 90% of that, should we consider that likely to trigger the COA in coming days and therefore move to offramp? "
 - DWR responded by arguing that they are already bound by a conservative threshold and if it is triggered then they will immediately offramp.
 - CDFW pointed out that, as things stand, if turbidity (at OSJ) drops then all the conditions have been met for Storm Flex and it would be initiated. However, once Storm Flex begins, if we are getting close to a trigger then the project is required to go down to -5000 OMR. They wanted to know - When do we determine what is "close" to a trigger? How do we plan proactively for that? This has never happened before.
 - DWR suggested that CDFW and DWR management discuss this issue outside of the WOMT meeting.

- CDFW suggested that once 90% of the threshold is reached then operations should go down to no less than -5000 OMR. It was determined that 90% is a loss of 136.962.
- DWR responded that, given the flows happening now, they are focused on SR Surrogates. If they are going to have an opportunity for Storm Flex they would like to implement it now since no rain is in the forecast and the window may be closing. We suggest a closer buffer than 90%.
- CDFW wanted to know if the 31 CWT fish would be processed soon or wait until Monday. They also wanted to know how new CWT fish coming in to Skinner would be treated during the weekend.
 - ▪ DWR responded that the 31 CWT fish were being processed while the meeting was taking place and that the results should be available by COB today (1/9/2026). They further responded that all CWT fish coming in to Skinner over the weekend would be processed as soon as possible.
 -
 - CDFW wanted to know what the latest turbidity trend was at OSJ.
 - DWR responded that turbidity has increased a little.
 -
- CDFW said that Agency reps (they and DWR) will coordinate as more information becomes available from the 31 CWT fish.