

## **Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Group**

11/03/09 Tues conf. call 9:00 am

**Objective of the DOSS group:** Create a technical advisory team that will provide recommendations to WOMT and NMFS on measures to reduce adverse effects of Delta operations of the CVP and SWP to salmonids and green sturgeon and will coordinate the work of the other technical teams.

**Meeting Objective:** Review fish monitoring data and provide recommendation to the Water Operations Management Team (WOMT) as to triggers for Delta Cross Channel (DCC) gate closures in the NMFS 2009 OCAP biological opinion.

**Attendees:** Andy Chu, Mitch Goode, Carol Stroble, & Sheila Greene (DWR), Thuy Washburn & Paul Fujitani (USBR), Matt Nobriga (DFG), Pat Brandes, Roger Guinee, & Nick Hindman (FWS), Bruce Oppenheim, Jeff Stuart, & Garwin Yip (NMFS), Greg Wilson & Tom Kimball (SWRCB)

**Notes:** Reviewed data from FWS Stockton 10/25/2009 - 10/31/2009

Sac KDTR, 1 CHNW

Mossdale KDTR, No species of concern

Chippis Island MWTR, 1 SPLT, & 8 DSM (53 - 61 mm)

LS Seine, No species of concern

Sac Seine, 6 CHNW

ND Seine, No species of concern

CD Seine, 1 DSM (60 mm)

SD Seine, No species of concern

SJ Seine, No species of concern

Bay West Seine, No species of concern

Bay East Seine, No species of concern

Reviewed data from DFG Knights Landing rotary screw trap:

Date	# Winter	CPUE
10/12/09	0	0.00
10/14/09	0	0.00
10/15/09	1	0.49
10/17/09	0	0.00
10/19/09	2	0.50
10/21/09	12	3.02
10/23/09	6	1.52
10/26/09	14	2.47
10/28/09	9	2.26
10/30/09	1	0.25
11/02/09	1	0.17

See DWR's new OCO (Operations Control Office) website <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/index.cfm> . No salmonids or sturgeon have been reported salvaged at the fish salvage facilities since October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Discussed the sharp spike in Delta outflow at Chipps Island following the most recent rainstorm (Oct 16, 2009). Sheila and Mitch indicated that this sharp spike was an artifact of the way they captured data and used it to calculate flows. Some of the data comes from precipitation gages. The Stockton Fire Dept. gage had over 2.5 inches of rain in that storm event which drove the outflow calculation.

Discussed whether the Sacramento Catch Index (SCI) criteria had been met based on juveniles observed in beach seines (3 Chinook, 50-60 mm, observed 10/30 at Sherwood Harbor, water temp. 58F). In previous years for the Salmon Decision Tree the SCI used both the FWS Sacramento Midwater Trawl and Sacramento seine sites. The SCI was standardized to 10 trawls and eight beach seine hauls per sampling period. DOSS decided to hold off making a recommendation until the methodology for the SCI was clearly defined.

Six (actually 7 CS) captured in Sac trawl during week. 1 on 10/26, 2 on 10/28 and 4 on 10/30. All are above WR size criteria (>42 mm). Discussion on whether the 4 on 10/30 should have resulted in trigger criteria for closure of DCC gates being met. Roger/Nick brought up discussion point of how the trawl/seine triggers are actually calculated. Nick brought up a document from the Delta Rearing PWT from 4/21/2004 that indicated that the catches were averaged over 2 days. Discussion of protocol for the trawls and seines indicated that nominally, 10 tows /day for the trawls and 8 seines /day are done, but frequently not on the same day and this is a potential reason that the 2 day average was indicated. Sheila and Mitch would talk to Erin Chappell to get a better understanding for the methodology used in calculating the trigger numbers in the salmon decision tree.

After the DOSS call Erin Chappell (DWR) confirmed that the sampling period was standardized for one day (24 hrs). Both the 2004 and 2008 decision trees clearly state; "the raw catches are standardized to one day of effort" (in the footnotes). The notes do indicate that the Sacramento Catch Index (SCI) includes both the trawl and the Sac area beach seine.

Roger G./Nick discussed Stanislaus River flows. River flows are to hold at 250 cfs. This should have benefits for fall run Chinook and any steelhead holding in the system. Currently water temps at Orange Blossom were 56° F.

Operators discussed the need to close the DCC to meet Delta flow standards. If it stays dry, the monthly standard for outflow at Rio Vista (4500 cfs) for November may be a problem. Exports have been reduced due to Net Delta Outflow Index standard and are expected to remain low. Typical rains in November would eliminate the need for DCC gate closures for the Rio Vista standard. Some storms are forecast for this weekend but there may not be any significant runoff produced.

**Update on Delta Action 8 Study (Pat Brandes, FWS):**

The NMFS BO allows an exception during the default closure starting December 1<sup>st</sup> for this study. The study plan calls for closing the DCC gates on Dec 15.

1<sup>st</sup> release, starting on Dec. 1 – 240 tagged fish at Elkhorn

2<sup>nd</sup> release, starting on Dec. 15 -240 tagged fish

Study plan is to release acoustically tagged fish the first and third week of December. Releases will be at Elkhorn instead of Old Sacramento location. There will be 2 releases of 240 fish, 480 fish total for the study. Releases will be made on Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> from Sacramento (2 days with 84 fish released per day) and a subsequent release in Georgiana Slough on Dec 5<sup>th</sup> of 72 fish. Groups of fish will be released every 4 hours over a 24 hour period. First release will have the DC gates open. After December 15<sup>th</sup>, the DCC gates are closed and the second group of tagged fish is released. Sacramento fish will be released on December 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>. Georgiana Slough fish are released on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Pat will write up a brief summary of the study proposal for NMFS' consideration and approval regarding DCC gate operations per the OCAP RPA. Pat indicated that the US Army Corps of Engineers will also be releasing acoustically tagged fish this December and January for their dredging studies.

84 fish released per day starting upstream at Elkhorn, also 72 fish released at Georgiana Slough on Dec. 5. Brief discussion of export level during this time frame. Expect exports to be low (3,000 – 4,000 cfs range) in December, but could be higher if it rains. Pat indicated that the US Army Corps of Engineers will also be releasing acoustically tagged fish this December and January for their dredging studies

**Other items:** Discussed timing of DAT call and posting of juvenile salmonid data on DWR's website. Need to get data reported before Tuesday's DOSS call.

Bruce O. asked Sheila G. whether the spring run surrogates were going to be released this December and January. Sheila indicated that fish would be released in late Nov or early Dec and again in January.

**Recommendation for the week of 11/1 – 11/7:**

DOSS deferred DCC gate recommendation until methodology for SCI is clearly defined. DOSS recommended to WOMT moving the DAT meeting time to Weds.

Next Mtg: 11/10/09 at 9:00 am

Agenda items: addition of EPA, website status, delays in getting real-time data, discuss other actions covered in the NMFS BO by DOSS (quarterly mtg in person, annual reports).

**Post DOSS Analysis:** (Sheila Greene):

The Sac Index is based on how many fish are caught in the Sac trawl in one day standardized to 10 trawls per day, or in the Sacramento Area beach seines in one day standardized to 8 seine hauls.

FWS tries to do 10 trawls per day but sometimes they get fewer in, so if they did only 8 trawls for some reason, we would multiply the catch for the day by 10/8.

FWS tries to get to the 8 seine sites in the Sacramento Area in one day, but sometimes they get to fewer, so if they seined only 7 sites, then the catch for the day would be multiplied by 8/7.

On Oct 30th, FWS seined at 7 sites and caught 3 at Sherwood and 1 at Miller. The calculation would be

$$(3+1) * (8/7) = 4.57$$

Technically, we met the criterion to close the DCC for 3 days last Friday, but didn't get the data until 9 am this morning.