

Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Group

12/08/09 Tues conf. call 9:00 am

Objective: Provide advice to the Water Operations Management Team (WOMT) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on measures to reduce adverse effects from Delta operations of the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project to salmonids and green sturgeon. DOSS will coordinate the work of other technical teams.

Attendees: Mike Ford, Andy Chu, & Mitch Goode (DWR), Thuy Washburn & John Hannon (USBR), Nick Hindman & Roger Guinee (FWS), Bruce Oppenheim, Garwin Yip, & Jeff Stuart (NMFS), Greg Wilson (SWRCB), Matt Nobriga (DFG)

Agenda items:

- 1) DCC gate ops
- 2) Update Rio Vista Flow standard
- 3) Weather & water quality outlook
- 4) Delta smelt work group update

Fish Monitoring: Knights Landing (KL) summary:

Date	flow (cfs)	water Temp. (F)	Secchi (ft)	Turbidity (NTU)	Species	Catch	CPUE
11/30/09	3903	52	2.8	8.7		0	0
12/03/09		52	2.6	7.1		0	0
12/06/09		49	2.7	7.2		0	0

KL water temperatures dropped significantly due to cold weather. No salmonids were observed last week. Sacramento River flows still decreasing. The DOSS does not think major movement of juvenile salmonids will occur without an increase in Sacramento River flow and turbidity.

FWS data (11/29 – 12/6):

2 winter-run Chinook caught on 11/30/09 on Sacramento seine run (Sand Cove)
1 winter-run Chinook caught on 12/03/09 on Lower Sacramento seine run (KL)
9 delta smelt caught at Chipps Island Trawl (ranging from 50 - 63 mm) no gamete expression. Delta smelt do not typically begin to ripen until at least February so this lack of evidence for reproductive readiness is normal.

Deer and Mill Creek (Mitch Goode): 1 Chinook (yearling spring-run, 102 mm) observed in Mill Cr, no steelhead. No salmonids in Deer Cr. Flows ranged from 90-102 cfs for both creeks and water temperatures were 44°F.

The first juvenile delta smelt was salvaged at the federal facility (for an expanded weekly salvage = 4) during the period of reporting (10/1/09 to 12/6/09). No salmonids or sturgeon have been reported salvaged at the fish salvage facilities since October 1st.

For other monitoring sites, see:

<http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/calfedmonitoring.cfm>

Fish monitoring data did not trigger or warrant DCC gate closures. DFG data at KL up to Sunday 12/06, showed catch per unit effort (CPUE) has been zero since 11/23, trawls have been zero, and seines < 3 fish per day.

1) DCC gate ops: The Delta Cross Channel (DCC) gates were closed for one day on Sunday to meet the 7-day average Rio Vista flow standard pertaining to State Water Resource Control Board Decision (SWRCB) Decision 1641. The gates were reopened on Monday at 10:00 am and are expected to remain open until December 15 (end of experimental period for Delta Action 8 study). On Dec. 15, the gates default to the closed position, pursuant to the 45 days of closure from November through January contained in D-1641.

2) Rio Vista Flow Standard: The 7-day standard is being met and will probably be OK even without the rain expected later this week. The monthly standard for December should be met assuming the DCC gates are closed Dec. 15 (closure increases net flows at Rio Vista).

3) Weather and Water Quality outlook: Light to moderate precipitation is expected from Thursday through Sunday. Less than previously anticipated, but should cause some increase in Sacramento River flows. Water quality is degrading due to salinity increases with recent tides and low inflows. Exports are low for this time of year (4,000 cfs combined) relative to typical operations occurring since the CALFED ROD was signed, in an attempt to flush out the salts in the Delta before the next tidal cycle (14 days). Jersey Point peaked at 2.0 mS/cm, but has since come down to 1.8 – 1.7 mS/cm.

The Smelt Working Group (SWG) is starting to track the Old and Middle River (OMR) flow rate, currently in the -3,000 to -4,000 cfs range. The first trigger in the FWS BiOp is turbidity > 12 NTUs at 3 stations in the Delta. DWR will report the daily OMR rate, turbidity, and water temperatures on their Operations Control Office website. Thus far, turbidity has not increased at any of the three stations.

4) Smelt Working Group (SWG) update: Cancelled Monday's call. Still early for smelt salvage at the Fish Facilities (only one reported so far) and turbidity in the Delta is not an issue yet. No pending recommendation from the SWG. Next meeting 12/14.

OMR transitional period language was completed by FWS and sent to the SWG for review. DWR has expressed concerns over the language. DWR and USBR will meet with FWS to discuss. Project agencies do not think that the 3 day OMR transitional period can be achieved. The transition language applies to the majority of the delta smelt season, from the conclusion of RPA Component 1, Action 1 through the conclusion of RPA Component 2.

No advice to NMFS or WOMT for the week of 12/7 – 12/11

Next Mtg: 12/15/09 at 9:00 am.