

Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Group

01/12/10 Tues conf. call 9:00 am

(attached Delta Fish workshop proposal)

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, Shahcheraghi, & Andy Chu (DWR), Roger Guinee, Nick Hindman, Leah Bartoo, & Craig Anderson (FWS), Jeff Stuart, Barbara Byrne & Bruce Oppenheim (NMFS), John Hannon & Thuy Washburn (USBR), Bruce Herbold (EPA), Matt Nobriga (DFG)

Agenda: fish monitoring, water quality, and FMWT results

Fish Monitoring: Knights Landing (KL) weekly summary:

Date	Flow cfs	Water T (F)	Secchi (ft)	Turbidity (NTU)	Species	Catch	Min (FL)	Max (FL)	Ad- clips	CPUE Index
01/04/10	7168	51	2.3	14.5		0	0	0	3	0
01/05/10	6385	52	1.5	13.5		0	0	0	4	0
					6 FR, 2					
01/06/10	5732	51	2.8	11.2	LF	8	36	126	2	0.99
01/07/10	5415	51	1.9	12.9	3 FR	3	37	38	0	0
01/09/10	5019	49	2.9	7.7	1 FR	1	38	38	0	0
01/11/10		50	3.0	6.7	1 LF	1	121	121	0	0.25

FR = Fall run, LFR = Late fall run, WR = winter-run, SR = spring-run

Knights Landing (KL): Sacramento River flows, water temperature, and turbidity decreased last week. A small pulse of juvenile salmonids was seen on Weds. Most of these fish were fall-run or late-fall run Chinook. The number of ad-clipped (hatchery) fish has dropped off to zero. There were no winter-run or spring-run Chinook caught last week. The Knights Landing Index, or catch per unit of effort (CPUE), is still less than 1.0.

FWS data (for 1/3 – 1/9):

Beach Seines: 3 fall-run & 4 spring-run Chinook were caught at Discovery Park on the American River, 1 fall-run at Clarksburg and 2 ad-clipped (1 at Millers and 1 at Sherwood Harbor). 41 delta smelt (59 -77 mm) were caught at Sandy Beach near Rio Vista.

Sacramento & Mossdale trawl: No species of concern

Chippis Island: 1 late-fall run Chinook, 11 ad-clipped Chinook, 2 splittail, 25 longfin smelt and 2 delta smelt (64, 70 mm)

Mill and Deer Creeks: (Matt Nobriga): Very little to report, Mill Creek caught 9 fall-run fry and Deer Creek caught zero. Two steelhead were collected in Mill Creek.

CVP and SWP Fish Salvage Facilities (1/04 to – 1/10): No steelhead, no delta smelt, no splittail
1 late-fall Chinook (not clipped) salvaged at the CVP, loss = 4
The seasonal total for all races of Chinook = 7
The winter-run cumulative loss year-to-date = 3
1 white sturgeon was caught at the SWP (259 mm), this was a juvenile yearling

For fish data at other monitoring sites see:

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

Fish monitoring data did not trigger or warrant any operational changes. The KL catch index for winter-run has been less than 1.0 CPUE (3.0 is the criteria used to indicate salmon moving into the delta) Sacramento and Mossdale trawls have not caught any listed salmonids. The fish salvage facilities reported only one juvenile late-fall Chinook. Mike Ford asked what monitoring data we should be concerned about during this period. Bruce O replied that the incidental take and fish densities at the salvage facilities determine the next set of actions. However, the winter-run incidental take has not yet been calculated, and so few salmonids are being salvaged that the daily density is not necessary at this time. Coleman National Hatchery is planning a 2nd release of spring-run surrogates this Thurs (174,000 at 135 mm average fork length) into the upper Sacramento River at Battle Creek. These fish should start showing up at KL next week. DOSS concluded that due to the dry hydrology and lack of flows very few wild salmonids were moving into or out of the Delta.

Delta Smelt Working Group: This year's Fall Midwater Trawl index for delta smelt is 17. This index is the lowest year on record. More delta smelt were caught in December than the previous 3 months. Delta smelt and wakasagi, *Hypomesus nipponensis*, (a non-native smelt) were caught in non-core sampling areas such as Cache Slough and the Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channel. The delta smelt concern level for SWP and CVP delta pumping facilities is 92 and the incidental take limit is 123 (www.delta.dfg.ca.gov). There was some discussion over what the daily incidental take would be, deferred to FWS.

The following was provided by Victoria Poage (FWS) after the DOSS call:

“To clarify Action 1 B Triggers now in effect

Turbidity thresholds are a three-day average of at least 12 NTU at all three stations (see page 329 of the 2008 B.O.).

Salvage thresholds are three days of delta smelt salvage at either facility OR if the cumulative daily salvage count [looking at both facilities, together] is above the risk threshold based upon the “daily salvage index” approach. Based on the 2010 FMWT index of 17, that threshold is 2 (for an expanded salvage value of 8).

Please note that it is the intent of the B.O. that salvage be avoided or minimized to the extent practicable. Thus, the B.O. provides that the SWG may recommend and the Service may consider an action based upon the estimated risk of entrainment, based upon additional factors

such as relative abundance and distribution of delta smelt, predicted inflow from precipitation events, and turbidity observations from stations not available when the B.O. was written in 2008.”

Green Sturgeon update: John Hannon reported that mobile tracking had observed 7 adults holding in the pool below the Glen –Colusa Irrigation Diversion.

1) Other Compliance Standards:

The Old and Middle River (OMR) is currently approximately – 4,000 cfs, for 5-day running average, and salinity is controlling export pumping rates.

2) Turbidity: Not an issue, currently under 12 NTU 3 day average at all locations

Prisoners Point = 5.2 NTU

Holland Cut = 2.9 NTU

Victoria Canal = 2.2 NTU

3) Water operations: Current reservoir releases are at, or near minimum release levels:

Keswick 3250 cfs, Oroville 1350 cfs, and Nimbus 1550 cfs. Flows are 1,258 cfs at Vernalis (San Joaquin River) and 9,692 cfs at Freeport (Sacramento River).

Weather forecast is for a large storm to move into the Central Valley this week with rain today, Thursday and Friday. Approximately 1.6 inches of precipitation from today’s storm and Feather River Basin is expected to increase to 188% of normal over the next week. Sacramento River flows are predicted to increase to 20,000 cfs at Verona over the weekend, which will likely increase turbidity into the Delta.

4) Other items: NMFS has added a website to their Southwest Region home page which will include DOSS notes and advice. See: <http://swr.nmfs.noaa.gov/ocap/actions.htm>

Stanislaus River: A 3 day pulse flow of 400 cfs will start on Weds morning 1/13 and go through Sat morning 1/16. This is being done to mimic short-duration flow variability the river would have had before impoundment and provide *O. mykiss* with cues to promote anadromy and nutrient mobilization.

Bruce O. announced a new workshop has been proposed for February 15 concerning management tools available for implementing the OCAP biological opinions. See attached agenda below for discussion next week.

No advice to WOMT or NMFS for the week of 1/11 to 1/15.

Next Mtg: 01/19/10 at 9:00 am

Draft Workshop Proposal from Victoria Poage (FWS)

The Delta Fish Management Toolbox: A Review

Date/Time: February 15, 2010, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Location: Delta Room, 650 Capitol Mall, 5th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Purpose: The purpose of the Workshop is to achieve a common understanding of the management tools available for implementing the Federal biological opinions on the *Coordinated Operations of the Central Valley Project and State Water Project*. This will be facilitated through discussion with and among agency biologists, model developers and users, stakeholders and the interested public on the capabilities, limitations, uses of, and potential improvements to DWR's Potential Entrainment Index and RMA's Smelt Behavior Model.

Participants: Members of the Smelt Working Group (SWG) and Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) team

Target Audience: Agency staff, stakeholders, academicians and the interested public.

Workshop Products: A summary of the information presented at the Workshop will be drafted and posted to the Delta Science website

Agenda

9:00 am	Welcome and Introduction
9:10 am	Background – Victoria Poage, USFWS
9:25 am	Description of Delta water operations – USBR and CDWR
9:45 am	NMFS BO Action IV.2.3 (Jan-Jun OMR flows) – Garwin Yip(?), NMFS
10:15 am	DOSS Tool Box
10:45 am	FWS BO Actions 1 & 2 – Victoria Poage, USFWS
11:15 am	SWG Tool Box – Matt Nobriga, CDFG
11:45 am	Lunch
12:45 pm	Entrainment Investigations – Gonzalo Castillo, USFWS
1:15 pm	RMA Smelt Behavior Model – John DeGeorge, RMA Associates
2:00 pm	DWR Potential Entrainment Model – DWR Staff
2:45 pm	Wrap-up