

Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Group
Conference call: 9/27/11 at 9:00 a.m.

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 on salmonids and green sturgeon. DOSS will coordinate the work of other technical teams. DOSS notes and advice can be found at: <http://www.swr.noaa.gov/ocap/doss.htm>

DWR: Mike Ford, Angela Llaban, Cynthia LeDoux-Bloom, Edmund Yu, Andy Chu, Tracy Pettit

FWS: Roger Guinee, Craig Anderson, Leigh Bartoo

NMFS: Barbara Rocco, Bruce Oppenheim, Barb Byrne, Garwin Yip

Reclamation: Thuy Washburn, Josh Israel, Russ Yaworsky

DFG: Bob Fujimura, Joe Johnson

EPA, SWRCB: not present

Agenda

- 1) Update new members list
- 2) Annual review report analysis
- 3) DCC gate closure modeling
- 4) Data Reporting protocols
- 5) Current operations
- 6) Fish monitoring

Action Items:

- 1) **FWS (Brandes) and Reclamation (Israel)** will discuss the issue of data reporting protocols and develop a plan to make the data reports more consistent; however, neither were available for an update. **Carry to the next call on 10/11/11.**
- 2) **DCC gate closure** plan and Mokelumne R pulse flow schedule update.

New Member's list:

FWS: Nick Hindman has retired; Craig Anderson is taking Nick's place. Leigh Bartoo will also help with Nick's work. DFG: Dan Kratville is no longer here. Joe Johnson will fill in for Dan until there is a new replacement. DWR: Edmund Yu and Jim Gleim are new folks from Environmental Services.

Annual Report

A draft report was completed, but still missing a few sections (graphs from Angela and Thuy). Deadline is this Friday. Thanks to those who have already contributed, Pat Brandes with the summary on the VAMP studies in 2010 and 2011; and Bob Fujimura's report on improving reporting at the salvage facilities and the summary of real-time reporting needs.

The DOSS annual report does not include the 6-year acoustic tagging study because Reclamation will be giving a presentation on it at the workshop. It was suggested that data that affect operations should be looked at by DWR. Real-time CWT reading from Reclamation and DWR did not get incorporated into Bob's report. He basically looked at improving salvage information

from the state and federal facilities. DFG noted that discrepancies in the salvage data cannot be discarded unless information is provided that confirms or denies the data.

DOSS is also waiting for an update on the OMR formula from DWR (Pettit). The information is still with the fish folks, and Pettit has not seen any updated language. The fish agencies will most likely work on it this week. It was noted that there are actually two proposals circulating now; 1) OMR formula, and 2) OMR transitional language. The fish agencies are not sure about the paths of each one as far as timing. For example, if we struggle with the transition language, can we move forward with the formula? In addition, how would we implement the QA/QC of the formula if it does not work? It is consistent? We have not come to a conclusion with the agencies as to the final answer, but must make sure that we're all comfortable with it before making a recommendation. FWS (Bartoo) mentioned that progress has been made but the documents are still in draft form.

Oppenheim will send out new parts of the annual report to the DOSS members for review. The rest of the annual report is similar to last year's but there are quite a few issues such as OMR, implementation of the 4:1 ratio, formulas, etc.

Example of main topics to include in annual review:

DCC

Action IV.2.3

Action IV.2.1

Improving real-time daily reporting

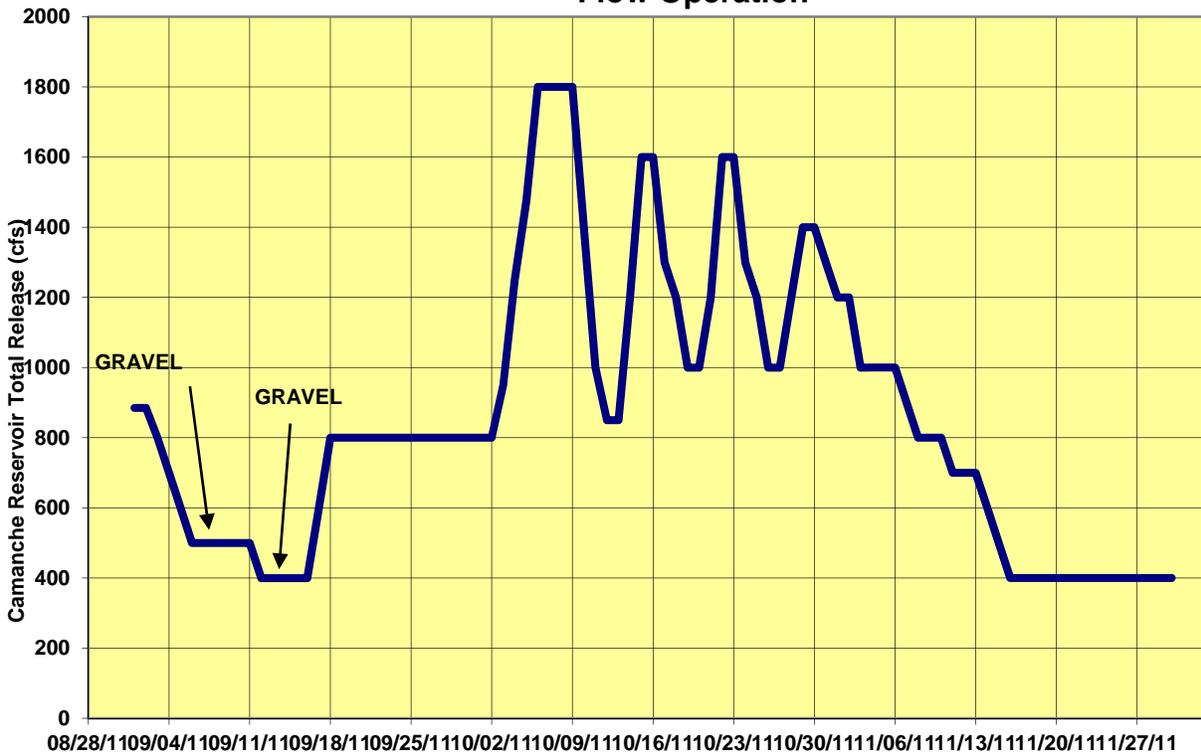
Green sturgeon information from the subgroup

DCC Gate Closure Proposal

DSMII Modeling: Water quality (WQ) is looking really good right now at key locations. There has been insignificant degradation of WQ recently. DWR has modified the DCC gate closure plan to beginning on 10/4 (instead of about 10/1) and holding for 10 days to 10/14/11. The timing was changed to 10/4 to take better advantage of the tides. Reclamation has not yet looked at it but EBMUD, CALFED, and Reclamation are being notified. Reclamation (Israel): doing a categorical exclusion for NEPA and will write up a paragraph of no impact relating to WQ for exports. Washburn (Reclamation) will send out a press release for boaters.

There is a DFG crew in the Jersey Island area capturing adults— up to 8 or 9 adults right now (part of DCC data) captured with gill nets. They are tagging only the CWT fish with acoustic tags, targeting 15 now and 15 more when the DCC gates close. The objective is to see whether there is any change in movement from pulse flow on the Mokelumne. EBMUD will release pulse flow over a 10-day period of DCC closure and wants to document any behavioral changes of fish at that point.

Camanche Reservoir Total Release - Gravel Placement & Pulse Flow Operation



Data Reporting Protocols

The Fish Facilities are implementing a few changes. Real-time reporting of CWT results at the fish facilities will be read daily and reported weekly on the DOSS calls. This should cut down 2 weeks of lag time in reporting and the potential to misplace tags and shouldn't create that much more work for the facilities. DWR, DFG, Reclamation, and NMFS are meeting on Friday to discuss salvage data reporting and will talk more about it at the next DOSS mtg. In response to last year's annual review, NMFS included improved CWT and daily reporting—changes in how information is being reported, in the annual review.

Fish Monitoring: The following table presents the fish monitoring data from 9/19 to 9/26/11.

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

Location	Chippis Is. Midwater Trawl	Sacramen to Kodiak Trawl	Mossdale Kodiak Trawl	Beach Seines	Knights Landing RST	Tisdale Weir RST	Moulton Weir RST
Sample Date	9/19, 9/21, 9/23	9/19, 9/22, 9/23	9/19, 9/21, 9/23	9/19, 9/20, 9/22		9/19, 9/23, 9/26	
Total Catch	74	0	1	0		0	
FR	1 (adult)						
LFR							

WR							
SR							
Ad-Clipped Chinook							
DS	71						
LFS							
SPTL	2		1				
SH (ad-clip)							
SH (wild)							
W.Temp. (avg. °F)	70.3	67.5	66.4	70.0		63.1	
Flows (avg. cfs)						8,693	
Turbidity (avg. NTU)						5.99	
FR/SR Avg. CPUE							
WR/LFR Avg. CPUE							

Key: FR = Fall run; LFR = Late-fall run; SR = Spring run; WR = Winter run; SH = Steelhead; DS = Delta smelt; LFS = Longfin smelt; SPTL = Splittail, CPUE = catch per unit of effort, ACT = acoustical tag

Since this is the first DOSS mtg, not all of the usual reports are available. Juvenile Chinook salmon and steelhead have not begun moving downstream.

RBDD: FWS traps are trapping juvenile winter run: about 157,000 total passage YTD. Passage of juvenile winter-run is late—about a month behind the usual schedule and the numbers are smaller compared to past years.

Knights Landing: Rotary screw traps are not going in until next week.

Chippis Island trawl: 1 adult Chinook this past week. This represents spawners coming upstream now. They have gotten 1 or 2 adult Chinook each week in past 3 weeks and caught two splittail and quite a few delta smelt, which is normal for their location.

Salvage and Loss at the Delta Fish Facilities

There has been no salvage or loss of salmonids reported since July. Mostly splittail being reported over the summer.

Chinook Escapement

NMFS and DFG are looking at the decline in WR this year. There has been a significant decline in WR escapement in the upper river this year. The carcass survey count was 429, which is the lowest in about 15 years. Population estimates might be half of what they were last year, and last year it was pretty low (1,596). The 2008 brood year (year class returning this year), experienced a critically dry year and low flows. Ocean conditions in spring 2009 were okay, but those in

summer were terrible. The conditions were not good when WR entered the ocean, which may have led to poor survival that year. Survival rates of the hatchery WR were 0.04% to Chipps Island that year. Spring-run escapement this year is down overall; and fall-run is up. There are a lot of 2-year-olds Chinook on the Feather River this year (52%). This is a good indication for next year. Ocean harvest rates were low—less than average—so they are most likely not a big factor in these numbers. NMFS will put together some sort of white paper on this year’s run and expect to get more feedback this week.

Operations (9/27/11)

SWP		CVP	
Exports (cfs)			
Clifton Court Forebay	7,180	Jones Pumping Plant	4,200
Reservoir releases			
Feather - Oroville	7,500	American - Nimbus	3,200
		Sacramento - Keswick	8,800
		Stanislaus - Goodwin	2,250
Reservoir Storage (TAF)			
San Luis (SWP)	869	San Luis (CVP)	637
Oroville	3,098	Shasta	3,370
		Folsom	751
		New Melones	
Delta Operations			
DCC	Open	Sacramento River at Freeport	21,554
Outflow Index (cfs)	13,600	San Joaquin River	4,241
Total Delta Inflow	27,321	OMR (daily)	
Water Temperature (°F)		OMR 5 day	
X2 (km)	76 (avg. < 74)	OMR 14 day	
E/I	42.6%		

Nimbus Dam releases on the American River will be down to 2,000 cfs for 8 hours and then back up to 4,000 cfs on Friday. This is required to perform the gravel augmentations to be completed on Thursday.

X2: it was noted that an error in the DWR calculations was identified; therefore, the data is off by about 1 km and should be farther west than indicated. DWR is fixing the error.

Stanislaus River flows: are high (2,400 cfs). Storage in New Melones Reservoir is being evacuated to meet flood control guidelines; flows are likely remain high during October. They need to be at low point in early November for optimum fall-run Chinook spawning; looks like about 2,500 cfs until 10/10 and then they will drop in mid-October to 2,000–2,100 cfs. By the end of October, they will drop again to about 1,000 cfs. If any storms come in New Melones will have to release more water. In terms of the hydrology, the snowpack is higher than normal. There is still snow and inflows are higher.

Merced or Tuolumne River flows: Some upstream reservoirs are also putting out higher releases for flood control management. Craig Anderson (FWS) will send out the schedule for the fall attraction flows on the San Joaquin River tributaries.

SOG: (Byrne) From mid-October onward, flows will be fairly high on the Stanislaus River; sustained flows through early winter might be about 500 cfs. Reclamation is accommodating and will vary flows from 1,800 and 2,400 cfs to discourage spawning at higher flow levels. There will be some within-day variation. The high flows may delay adult passage of fall-run until later in November. The counting weir cannot be installed until the flows come down, so we will miss some data. Beginning in October, different canals are being used to evacuate additional water without raising flows even more. For example, 200 cfs will be diverted into the canal that bypasses the river and come out at Vernalis; 100 to 600 cfs will go through a different canal system that will return to the Stanislaus River at some point.

Agenda Items for next DOSS mtg (10/11/11):

It was decided that DOSS would skip next week to be able to continue working on the annual report. The only agenda item suggested for the next DOSS meeting is an update on DCC closure protocols.

The Delta Smelt Working Group is planning on having a tentative introductory meeting in November; the group will begin to meet regularly in December.

DOSS advice to WOMT and NMFS: No advice

Next Meeting: Conference call on Tuesday, 10/11/11, 9:00 a.m.