

Sacramento River Temperature Task Group (SRTTG) Call
Friday, October 30, 2015 | 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

MEETING SUMMARY

Participants:

- Craig Anderson, FWS
- Charlie Chamberlain, USBR
- Eric Danner, NMFS
- John Hannon, USBR
- Doug Killam, CDFW
- Ken Kundargi, CDFW
- Duane Linander, CDFW
- Ron Milligan, USBR
- Tom Patton, WAPA
- Jason Roberts, CDFW
- Diane Riddle, SWRCB
- John Rueth, FWS
- Jim Smith, FWS
- Stacey Smith, USBR
- Thuy Washburn, USBR

Note-taking:

- Kelsey Rugani, Kearns & West

Key Discussion Topics with Summary of Outcomes and Agreements:

Fisheries Update

Jim Smith explained why FWS estimates on juvenile passage have changed so much within the past six weeks. He noted mitigating circumstances that made estimates lower than they were in 2014, such as the number of eggs per female, and these have impacted estimates overall. The numbers at Red Bluff are 22% less than they were last year, for example. Jim also noted that because preliminary estimates were used, this may have caused an overall discrepancy in the estimates. Jim explained that new population estimates were run last week and the estimate increased substantially, although numbers are still low. He advised that additional juvenile winter-run could be observed if there is a turbidity event.

Jim noted that previous estimates had been approximately 2,000-2,250 fish, however the new estimate is over 3,000 fish. Jim further explained that preliminary estimates are presented during the season and are based on total carcass counts. FWS will use the estimate and compare it with carcass counts from previous years to determine a final estimate range for how many fish to expect.

Jim was asked about the female to male ratio in the population estimates. He noted that the number of females at the Keswick (*KWK*) trap is higher than average. Jim advised that Table 1 summarizes all of this information and was circulated last week.

Jim explained that the lower recapture rate in 2014 was likely caused by a large turbidity event that decreased visibility in the river system making it difficult to recapture as many fish.

Livingston Stone National Fish Hatchery is currently seeing a 94% spawning rate. Average eggs per female this year is lower than average. All juveniles are out of the incubation stacks and into tanks; the Hatchery is seeing good numbers since the fish have been moved into the tanks. There are

currently 440,000 fish at the Hatchery. There was a small problem with coagulated yolk but it has been resolved; the issue may have resulted from high temperature fluctuations. Hatchery temperatures are increasing and are being closely monitored. Jim noted that the chillers have not been used at the Hatchery yet but they are prepared to use them if needed.

Doug Killam noted that Winter Run escapement numbers are in draft and will be finalized by December.

Operations Update

Thuy Washburn provided the following operations updates:

- Flows at Keswick (*KWK*) are at 5,000 cfs
- Delta salinity is beginning to improve
- Flows at Trinity are at 300 cfs, which is at capacity for the bypass. Since temperatures are starting to cool down, Reclamation is considering tapering back the bypass at Trinity.
- On the Sacramento River, the TCD weighted average by the time the water gets to Clear Creek (*CCR*) is 57 °F or less. Overall, the TCD weighted average is between 56 – 56.5 °F.
- Forecasted temperatures are expected to be warm through November 1 and then will cool down. The average water temperature projected is 56 °F.

Thuy advised that the Sacramento River will be cooling down hopefully during the first week of November. Reclamation projects cooler ambient temperatures between November 1 and November 3, and then a mix of temperatures. Reclamation noted that they are keeping Keswick (*KWK*) as the control since many fish are spawning there.

Thuy advised there has been some cooling at Trinity River and temperatures are between 53-55 °F. Reclamation is trying to get the coolest water out of the configuration. When releases were cut at Keswick (*KWK*), the dynamic changed and it is more difficult to pull that water when flows are at 5,000 cfs.

Ron Milligan explained that if they start to see more typical rain patterns, SRTTG can discuss what the right flow configuration should be. If the weather continues to stay dry, Reclamation may need to see where they are with South of Delta Refuge demands. Ron also noted that Reclamation does not want to stray from the water management plan but thinks the discussion of water for rice decomposition and water refuges may need to be elevated based on rainfall.

Currently, Reclamation anticipates that the next ten days will not be overly wet but they will have a better idea next week.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the SRTTG is scheduled for November 5 at 1:00 p.m.