

IEP Science Highlights

Quarterly Directors Update

June 2013

IEP Fish Monitoring Highlights

- Delta smelt monitoring results: The CDFW concluded the monthly “*Spring Kodiak Trawl*” (SKT) sampling for adult delta smelt in May. Larval delta smelt were first observed by the CDFW *smelt larva and 20-mm surveys* starting in mid-March at stations throughout the north, central, and southern Delta, by *CVP/SWP salvage monitoring*, and by IEP monitoring in the *Yolo Bypass Toe Drain*.
- Delta smelt monitoring evaluations: Several studies aimed at improving delta smelt monitoring were discussed at the annual IEP Workshop in April and at a follow-up IEP Estuarine Ecology Team (EET) meeting with 65 participants in May. The EET meeting was facilitated by SFCWA staff and included many stakeholders. SFCWA is interested in partnering with the IEP to fund additional studies that will provide a more comprehensive picture of delta smelt abundance. Ongoing studies include “*gear efficiency*” evaluations (FWS-DFW), studies with the “*SmeltCam*” (BOR-DWR-DFW- SFCWA-SureWorksLLC), the “*First Flush*” studies (USGS-FWS-DFW-UCD-SFSU), delta smelt sampling in *Liberty Island* (FWS), delta smelt *health, diet, and growth* evaluations (UCD-DFW-BOR), additional concurrent sampling of a variety of *habitat attributes* (DFW-BOR-UCD), and various *data analysis, monitoring evaluation, and modeling* efforts (FWS-UCD, DFW, IEP SAG, IEP MAST, SFCWA,...). Possible future routine monitoring might include the SmeltCam and genetic tissue analyses to assess “*effective population size*.”
- Salmonid monitoring evaluations: On June 4-5, the IEP held a public meeting with its Science Advisory Group (SAG) to review the long-term IEP *Delta Juvenile Fishes Monitoring Program* (DJFMP) (focuses on juvenile salmonids) and associated *Delta Juvenile Salmon Survival Studies*. These programs provide critically important data for the NMFS BiOp, the SWRCB Bay-Delta Plan, the South Delta Salmon Research Collaborative, BDCP, and others. The review will lead to recommendations for program improvements. IEP Project Work Teams have also recently evaluated *Chinook salmon and steelhead monitoring throughout the Central Valley* (CV). They completed monitoring plans and are now working on implementation plans.

Other IEP Science News and Activities

- A History of the IEP, written by long-time IEP member Perry Herrgesell (DFW, retired), was published in April, see http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/docs/Herrgesell_IEP_Report_FINAL.pdf
- April 2013 IEP Annual Workshop: Diverse oral and poster presentations, 360 registered participants. New student-mentor luncheon was very successful. Panel discussion about Collaborative Science was featured and summarized on “Maven’s Notebook” on May 13, see <http://mavensnotebook.com/>
- IEP Management, Analysis, and Synthesis Team (MAST): Produced Guidelines and Timeline for completion of Comprehensive Delta Smelt Report planned for October 2013. 40-day scientific peer and public review of draft report planned for July-August 2013.
- IEP Project Work Teams: held 15 public meetings in the first half of 2013 (Jan.-June), see <http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/activities/calendar.cfm>
- Science Integration: IEP staff continues to actively participate in WQMC Estuaries Work Group, Delta RMP, Delta Conservancy outreach events, and various multidisciplinary science workshops and activities (e.g. on Wetland Restoration, Predation, Contaminant Biomarkers, Nutrients, BDCP, CSAMP, SDSRC, Delta Science Plan, Ecosystem Restoration, etc.).