

POD Highlights

IEP Quarterly Directors Update

December 15, 2009

Fish Monitoring and Studies:

- 2009 FMWT fish indices will be available in late December and will likely once again be at or near record lows for the POD fish species.
- DFG fish sampling at new stations in the Sacramento Ship Channel found that delta smelt are present in the channel throughout the year.
- The US FWS Liberty Island fish monitoring program has been reinitiated and will be coordinated with other IEP fish monitoring and IEP and CALFED studies in the Cache Slough region and Liberty Island.
- The IEP is working with Cramer Fish Sciences to assess the potential for delta smelt and longfin smelt take at Mirant's Contra Costa and Pittsburg power plants based on fish monitoring data collected by the IEP and entrainment and impingement data collected by Tenera Environmental.
- In October, the IEP conducted an intensive pilot transect study along the channels and shoals of the lower Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers to better understand the spatial patterns of key physical, chemical, and biological habitat attributes of this important region in the fall.

2010 POD Workplan:

- The IEP broadly solicited study concepts focusing on mechanisms behind the delta smelt fall-X2 relationship and other factors affecting the POD fishes.
- We received 48 study concepts from universities (27), agencies (15), and consulting companies (6) with a combined requested budget of more than \$6 million. State and Federal water contractors submitted lists of study ideas.
- The study concepts were subjected to an internal merit review by IEP Management Team members and IEP Coordinators using three merit review criteria: technical merit, likelihood of success, and added value.
- 16 study concepts focusing on the effects of food resources (5), predators (3), habitat (2) and various combinations (5) of these drivers on POD fishes were selected for further proposal development.
- Completion of the draft 2010 POD workplan is anticipated for mid January 2010, with final approval in March 2010.
- As part of the POD work planning process, the IEP continues to work with the US FWS and the CALFED Science Program to put together a peer reviewed fall habitat study plan as required by the delta smelt biological opinion.

POD Products:

- The annual output of peer reviewed POD publications has been steadily increasing since 2006. In 2009, 14 papers have been published, with many more in review (see publication list).
- POD results were presented at each of the five workshops in the 2009 IEP workshop series and most recently at the October "State of the Estuary" conference and the November "Coastal and Estuarine Research Federation."