



IEP Science Highlights

Director's Meeting Update

December 2015

Monitoring Highlights

- Delta Smelt: The September-October 2015 Fall Midwater Trawl survey **Delta Smelt** abundance index was 5, making it the second lowest on record. The spring 20 mm Survey and Summer Townet Survey were similarly poor.
- Longfin Smelt: No Longfin Smelt were caught during the September-October 2015 Fall Midwater Trawl, making the index (0) the lowest in survey history.
- Chinook Salmon: Initial Red Bluff Diversion Dam trapping suggests that Winter Run Chinook Salmon abundance could be at a record low. Season catch through October was approximately 230,000 young salmon, only $\frac{3}{4}$ of the previous year's estimate for the same period.

Synthesis Activities

- Salmon and Sturgeon Assessment, Indicators, Life Stages (SAIL). This new IEP synthesis team is working to complete conceptual models for Chinook salmon and Sturgeon, and provide recommendations on how to improve the management value of the monitoring network for these species.
- Drought MAST: The IEP Drought Management Analysis and Synthesis Team (MAST) are preparing a report summarizing how recent drought conditions have influenced Delta fishes and their habitat.

Habitat Restoration

- Tidal Wetlands:
 - The IEP Tidal Wetlands Team has led the effort to develop conceptual models and hypotheses to support habitat restoration monitoring.
 - CDFW staff has completed initial testing of key field methods and are planning additional work for winter-spring 2016.
- Yolo Bypass Floodplain:
 - Since 2012, IEP has been working with UCD, CalTrout, and local landowners to develop methods for managed inundation of rearing habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon.
 - In 2016, the team proposes to test the use of small berms and local water sources to extend the duration of inundation after natural flood events.

Estuary Field Station

- In late October the EIR/S for the proposed new IEP Delta field station was released for public comment.
- Public meetings were held in early December in Stockton and Rio Vista.
- Key issues include transportation, existing buildings, and the construction of a marina.
- Funding is still needed for the federal cost share for this project.

Workshops and Work Teams (see <http://www.water.ca.gov/iep/activities/calendar.cfm>)

- The 2016 IEP Annual Workshop is scheduled for April 20-22 at Lake Natoma Inn, Folsom.