Summary of DAT Conference Call 5/22/2007

Participants: EChappell (DWR), PJohnsen (FWS), RGartz(DFG), BOppenheim(NMFS), KFleming(DFG), JWhite(DFG), MWhite(DWR), NHindman(FWS), JSnow(WWD), TBoardman(SLDMWA), THinojosa(DWR), MGuerin(CCWD), SGreene(DWR), JSpeegle(FWS), AChu(DWR), TSwanson(BI), PBrandes(FWS), CKao(SCVWA), DSchuster(SWRI), MFord(DWR)

Conclusions and Recommendations

There were no new operational recommendations today.

VAMP ends today, Tuesday 5/22. VAMP started on April 22nd with a flow target of 3200cfs on the San Joaquin River at Vernalis and a combined export rate of 1500cfs. High mortalities of the acoustically tagged fish were observed in a small area on the lower San Joaquin River near the Highway 4 Bridge. A crew from the RWQCB will conduct water testing in the area this week.

20mm Survey Update – DFG started Survey 6 yesterday, 5/20. DFG has processed the first tow of the south Delta stations and no delta smelt were caught. Sampling in the central delta may have to be postponed due to the presence of the two whales near Rio Vista which are affecting boat traffic. So far this season DFG has caught a total of 25 larval delta smelt. This the lowest total on record for this time period. The results from the 20mm surveys are posted at http://www.delta.dfg.ca.gov/data/20mm/.

DSWG Update – The DSWG met yesterday, 5/21, to review survey results and water temperature data. The DSWG decided to use the average of three stations for the water temperature criteria. The stations are Holland Tract, Prisoner's Point, and Victoria Canal. Currently, water temperatures at those three stations range from 66 to 68F (~19C). The group will recommend continuing the action to keep the combined 5-day average flows in Old River and Middle River no more negative than 0 cfs until south Delta water temperatures reach 25C at WOMT today, 5/22. The science upon which the recommendation is based will be posted in the 5/14/2007 DSWG meeting summary at http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/delta_smelt.htm.

The group also requested PTM runs to look at whether it would be beneficial to open the DCC gates. The PTM runs were not available before the meeting so the DSWG will meet again on Thursday, 5/24 to review the results.

General Discussion(s) – Tina Swanson (BI) raised a concern about the DSWG only using south Delta temperature stations in their criteria. She is concerned that fish in the central delta may be drawn into the south delta when the action is stopped. Tina suggested that the DSWG consider using a broader area for the temperature criteria. Kevin Fleming (DFG) responded that water temperature rarely exceed 25C in the south Delta during this early in the season. She is also concerned about the loss of fish that can tolerate higher temperature and thereby reducing the population's genetic variability. Tina also recommended that the DSWG should be looking more closely at the current operation of the agricultural barriers. The DSWG responded that they will look at ag barriers operations at their meeting on Thursday.

Next DAT Conference Call Tuesday, 5/30/2007, 9:00 am - 11:00 am. Phone number - TBA.

Chinook Monitoring

Upper Sacramento River

Red Bluff Diversion Dam – The RBDD gates were lowered for the season on May 15th. No update on fish passage this week.

FWS posts biweekly reports on the Bay-Delta and Tributaries Project website, at http://baydelta.ca.gov/Php/Special_Reports/red_bluff.php

Mill Creek – The catch of both Chinook and steelhead is starting to taper off. DFG caught 962 fry/smolt Chinook and 11 steelhead. Water temperature has remained below 65F but flows have decreased due to water diversions.

Deer Creek – The catch of Chinook decreased in the last week. DFG caught 705 fry/smolt Chinook and 4 steelhead. Flows have decreased due to water diversions and water temperatures are above 65F so DFG pulled the trap for the season on May 18th.

Butte Creek – DFG pulled the traps on May 3rd for major repairs. They are done sampling for this season.

GCID – For four days of sampling, the catch of fry/smolt Chinook ranged from 2 to 425 per day. DFG also caught 1 adclipped Chinook. Debris is still heavy and is affecting trap operations.

Knights Landing – The catch of fry/smolt Chinook is decreasing and ranged from 1 to 8 per trap-day. DFG also caught 4 adclipped Chinook. Water temperatures are between 68 and 70F.

Delta Monitoring

Sacramento Mid-water Trawl – 2 sample days, 47 samples. FWS caught 182 fry/smolts and 330 adclipped Chinook. They also caught 2 adclipped steelhead.

Lower Sacramento River seine – 1 sample day, 7 samples. FWS caught 41 splittail and no other species of concern.

North Delta seine – 1 sample day, 7 samples. FWS caught 1 delta smelt (Rio Vista) and 3 splittail.

Central Delta seine – 1 sample days, 10 samples. FWS caught 21 fry/smolt Chinook, 3 adclipped Chinook, and 22 splittail.

South Delta seine – 1 sample day, 7 samples. No species of interest.

Mossdale Kodiak Trawl – 2 sample days, 15 samples. DFG, Region 4 is now sampling 7 days per week. For two days of reporting (5/13-5/14) they caught 138 fry/smolt Chinook, 6 adclipped Chinook, 3 in-river steelhead, and 2 splittail. For the period of 5/15 to 5/19 the catch of fry/smolt Chinook ranged from 18 to 83 per day. DFG also caught 1 adclipped Chinook and 2 in-river steelhead. After the DAT call, Jim White (DFG) reported DFG will continue sampling until June 15th and at that point FWS will resume sampling 3 days per week.

San Joaquin River seine – 1 sample days, 8 samples. No species of interest.

Chipps Island Midwater Trawl – 7 sample days, 70 samples. FWS caught 103 fry/smolt and 12 adclipped Chinook. They also caught 3 in-river steelhead, 1 adclipped steelhead, 1 delta smelt (not checked) and 8 splittail.

Bay seine – 1 sample day, 5 samples. No species of interest.

Delta Smelt Monitoring

20mm Survey Update – DFG started Survey 6 yesterday, 5/20. DFG has processed the first tow of the south Delta stations and no delta smelt were caught. Sampling in the central delta may have to be postponed due to the presence of the two whales near Rio Vista which are affecting boat traffic. So far this season DFG has caught a total of 25 larval delta smelt. This the lowest total on record for this time period. The results from the 20mm surveys are posted at http://www.delta.dfg.ca.gov/data/20mm/.

Delta Smelt Working Group Update – The DSWG met yesterday, 5/21, to review survey results and water temperature data. The DSWG decided to use the average of three stations for the water temperature criteria. The stations are Holland Tract, Prisoner's Point, and Victoria Canal. Currently, water temperatures at those three stations range from 66 to 68F (~19C). The group will recommend continuing the action to keep the combined 5-day average flows in Old River and Middle River no more negative than 0 cfs until south Delta water temperatures reach 25C at WOMT today, 5/22. The science upon which the recommendation is based will be posted in the 5/14/2007 DSWG meeting summary at http://www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/delta_smelt.htm.

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Salvage Facilities –

Chinook – No winter-run length Chinook were lost at either Facility in the last week. To date, the season total at the CVP is 1555 and the season total is 1742 at the SWP.

Steelhead – SWP salvaged 5 in-river steelhead last week. CVP salvaged 1 in-river and 4 hatchery steelhead. The combined salvage of in-river steelhead is

2748 for the season. The incidental take level is 3000. Salvage has dropped since the start of VAMP but biologists will continue to monitor salvage data, Mossdale trawl data, and water temperatures.

Delta smelt – None.

Splittail – SWP salvaged 4 splittail for a season total of 302. CVP salvaged 12 splittail for a season total of 132.

Longfin smelt – None.

Sturgeon – None.

The DFG Salvage Database can be accessed at this ftp site: ftp://ftp.delta.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/.

Turbidity data for Clifton Court forebay is available at: http://cdec2.water.ca.gov/cgi-progs/queryFx?CLC.

VAMP Update

VAMP ends today, Tuesday 5/22. VAMP started on Saturday 4/22 with a flow target of 3200cfs on the San Joaquin River at Vernalis and a combined export rate of 1500cfs. High mortalities of the acoustically tagged fish were observed in a small area on the lower San Joaquin River near the Highway 4 Bridge. A crew from the RWQCB will conduct water testing in the area this week.

Agricultural Barriers

HORB – Due to concerns for delta smelt WOMT requested that all culverts be opened on May 16th. DWR opened all the culverts and notified the contractor to remove the barrier. The HORB was expected to be breeched yesterday, 5/21.

Old & Middle River – The barriers are closed and the culverts are operating tidally.

Grantline –The barrier was closed on May 10th.

The weekly updates on barrier operations are now available at: http://baydeltaoffice.water.ca.gov/sdb/tbp/index_tbp.cfm.

Operations

SWP -

CCFB – 350 cfs.

Oroville – 1,750 cfs.
X2 – ~ 74 km.
E/I - 14-day = 8.5%.
San Luis - ~690 taf. SWP share of San Luis capacity is 1,062 taf.

EWA - The current debt in San Luis is approximately 210taf. The DWSG action to moderate combined Old and Middle flow no more negative than 0cfs started last Wednesday (5/16). EWA was accruing debt at about 2taf per day this past week during the end of VAMP. With the DWSG action in place after VAMP till the end of May, the EWA cost is projected to be ~10taf per day for both Projects combined. The preliminary estimated cost of this post-VAMP action from May 23rd to May 31st is approximately 80 to 90taf bringing the total debt in San Luis to ~300taf by the end of May.

CVP -

Tracy PP – 850 cfs.
DCC – Closed.
Trinity –
Clear Creek – 200 cfs.
Keswick – 9,800 cfs.
Nimbus – 1,500 cfs.
Goodwin – 1,500 cfs. The MA's will discuss maintaining flows on the Stanislaus to help meet Old and Middle River flows and to support emigrating SJR fall Chinook and steelhead.
San Luis – 530 taf. CVP share of San Luis capacity is 966 taf.

Flows

Sacramento River at Freeport ~ 9,300 cfs and decreasing slowly.
Fremont Weir ~ 0.
San Joaquin River at Vernalis ~ 3,300 cfs.
Delta Outflow ~ 10,000 cfs. The 3-day average is 9,800 cfs.
Old and Middle Rivers ~ combined -1226 cfs as of 5/19/07; 5-day average is -1765 cfs.

Delta Water Quality

Salinity levels are good in the western Delta and have been improving in the south Delta except at the Old River near Tracy Road Bridge station which remains out of compliance. The SWRCB has requested that the Projects look at: recirculation through Delta-Mendota canal; evaluation of additional releases on the San Joaquin; and additional water purchases on the San Joaquin.

May Water Quality Standards

Collinsville X2 standard – The standard must be met for the full 31 days by a maximum daily EC of 2.64, a maximum 14-day running average EC of 2.64 or 3-day outflow of 7,100cfs.

Chipps Island X2 standard –The standard must be met for 1 day by a maximum daily EC of 2.64, a maximum 14-day running average EC of 2.64 or 3-day outflow of 11,400cfs. This standard has been met.

Port Chicago was not triggered for May.

E/I Ratio – <= 35%.

Contra Costa Canal – Cl <= 250 mg/L. In addition, Cl <= 150 mg/L for 165 days per year. This portion of the standard has been met for 123 days so far.

Western Delta – EC <= 0.45 at Emmaton, Jersey Point, Terminous, and San Andreas stations.

South Delta – 30-day average EC <= 0.7

Suisun Marsh = EC <= 11

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