

CALFED OPERATIONS COORDINATION GROUP
MEETING NOTES AND ACTION ITEMS
December 7, 2001

Announcements

Review of October 24 meeting notes

No revisions were made to the October 24, 2001 CALFED Ops meeting notes.

Proposed Meeting Schedule for 2002

The proposed 2002 schedule is now posted on the CALFED Ops website under 2002 Operations.

Handouts

1. Update on Winter-Run Chinook Salmon and Steelhead and Spring-Run Chinook, dated December 7, 2001; Bruce Oppenheim, NMFS.
2. CALFED OPS GROUP Operations Briefing, dated December 7, 2001; Curtis Creel, DWR.
3. WY 2001/2002 EWA Accounting Summary for the 90% and 50% Exceedence Hydrology, dated December 6, 2001; Curtis Creel, DWR.
4. Draft Key Dates for Water Year 2002 Operations, updated November 6, 2001; Curtis Creel, DWR.
5. Draft Upstream River Releases October Through September, revised November 26, 2001; Roger Guinee, USFWS.
6. Presentation on 2002 Operations Planning; Curtis Creel, DWR.

SWRCB Activities

Update on SWRCB activities

The SWRCB held a workshop on December 5, 2001, to hear comments on progress toward meeting the Narrative Salmon Objective contained in the Bay/Delta Water Quality Control Plan. The general consensus was that it was too soon to tell whether additional actions are needed by the SWRCB to implement this objective.

Ongoing Activities Related To The Ops Group

Temporary Barriers Update

The contractors are demobilizing. The next phase of removing the barriers is to sound the channel. Preliminary monitoring data will be presented to the regulatory agencies in January. A draft TBP monitoring report will be completed by next March.

Work Group Activities

OFF and DAT Update

The OFF calls are combined with DAT calls with water quality and the Delta Cross Channel (DCC) gates discussed. On November 27 and November 29, the calls were informal. On December 3, a DAT call was made. On December 4, the OFF and DAT calls were combined.

The DCC gates were closed before Thanksgiving, opened on November 29, and closed on December 4.

Fishery Status

Status of Sacramento River Monitoring

Six juvenile Chinook salmon were salvaged at the fish facilities. The DCC gates were open for one week for water quality reasons. Fish are arriving at Knight's Landing, and are caught in the Sacramento trawl and the beach seine early due to the storm.

NMFS and CDFG are working on the Juvenile Protection Plan and hope to be completed in January. The carcass surveys from the upper Sacramento River indicate adult spawners are double from last year. In general, the survey numbers are higher than the Red Bluff numbers. The Red Bluff counts had a higher proportion of the two-year olds than the carcass survey. The carcass survey is a more accurate method and there are six years of data to back it up. In the past three years, the carcass survey was compared to Red Bluff for the Juvenile Protection Estimate (JPE). The official method was Red Bluff. In the future, both methods will be used and the confidence will be determined. Accurate data will be obtained prior to determining the JPE. The methodology will be discussed in the salmon workshop. Changes (which happen every year) will be documented in a February letter from NMFS to the USBR. This letter will also include incidental take limits and how they are calculated.

Steelhead, Winter-Run and Spring-Run Chinook Salmon

None of the juvenile steelheads or Spring-Run Chinook salmon was present at the fish facilities. A new paper is being worked on regarding these two species. A handout was distributed.

On November 10, 2001, Reclamation began bypassing the generators at Folsom dam in order to access colder water in the reservoir. The Folsom Bypass was successful in decreasing the temperature. The hatchery ladder was open and allowed the Fall-run Chinook salmon on the American River to spawn early. The steelhead also benefited by being able to spawn. A small portion of EWA energy credits was used. CDFG found a large number of unspawned carcasses in their carcass survey. Nimbus will continue

releasing 1,500 cfs through the middle or end of December for spawning. The flow may decrease after an evaluation is made. In the 90% forecast, the flow will drop; in the 50%, Folsom will go into flood release sometime in January or February.

Changes in the operation of the DCC have occurred over the past month. The three changes are: initial closure for the Juvenile Salmon Protection Plan, opened for water quality and closure for high river flow. A question arose about whether the closure of the DCC gates due to high flow count as part of the 45 days. It appeared to be rather open-ended whether the DCC gates are closed due to flood control or fish. However, water quality, water supply and fish all factor in and affect the operations of the DCC gates. Whether the closure of the DCC gates for flood control reasons counts as a WQCP cost and not an EWA cost is under evaluation. An attempt to model the DCC gate operation was made, however it was unsuccessful due to its difficulty in modeling.

Splittail/Delta Smelt

None were found at the fish facilities.

Smelt were caught in the Fall Midwater trawl. Trawling will continue through December. The Index is at 571. Last year, the Index was 753. An update of the index will be given when it is determined.

Operations Status

CVP/SWP Operations Status

The Department of Interior has shut down its internet connection, leaving the USBR without any access to their website. The USBR cannot send out any information on operational changes, fish, etc. on the internet and can be contacted only by phone or fax. They may possibly get water quality from CDEC. The USBR's forecast and any operations information will be posted on the CALFED Ops website under the 2002 Operations page.

Excess conditions were declared on December 6, 2001. Releases to the Feather River are at 1,200 cfs and will remain at this level at least until the end of December. The DCC gates were closed on December 4, 2001 due to fish and high flows and they may be opened if the flows decrease. Both the SWP and CVP pumping from the Delta are at capacity. The Sacramento River peaked around 33,000 cfs and is now decreasing. Storage in Oroville remains low at 1.4 MAF, but has increased by ½ MAF from last year. Flow through the low-level outlet at Folsom (thereby bypassing power) has ended. Inflow to Shasta over the weekend peaked at 35,000 cfs. Keswick is releasing 3,800 cfs, which may decrease. Nimbus is release 1,500 cfs and the Tracy Pumping Plan has had five units operating since December 6, 2001. Flow in the Stanislaus is at 350 cfs.

Delta Operations Criteria

The water quality has changed in the Western Delta. Frank's Tract has freshened. The Contra Costa Canal needs 14 days in a row for the standard as opposed to 3 days. The salinity gates in Suisun Marsh are now operating to control salinity. All standards were met in October. They can be operated as early as September (after Labor Day).

EWA

A handout was distributed and discussed. The status of EWA and Tier 3 will play a factor in the fish protection for EWA assurances.

2002 Operations Plan

Key Dates for WY 2002

A handout was distributed and discussed. The following items were highlighted:

- The initial allocation for the SWP contractors is 20% which is based upon the 90% hydrology.
- In March, it is unknown whether the real-time monitoring will be implemented.
- Updates of the daily accounting of B(2) and EWA will be made periodically.
- A workshop will be conducted in May to discuss the daily accounting of both B(2) and EWA.
- An attempt to have final accounting determined by the end of VAMP will be made.
- After VAMP, there are minimal actions.
- Accounting was difficult in 2001, but will improve over time. Resources are tight presently.

Fish and Operational Objectives

Fish Objectives: A handout was distributed and discussed. There is more focus on B(2). There will be a Delta action before the next Ops meeting. Between December and January for CWT, the relationship between fish survival and exports will be evaluated at high exports (a combined 10,000 cfs) and at low exports (a combined 2,000 to 4,000 cfs). EWA focused on Delta actions in 2001 and possibly in 2002. However, export reductions will occur at both the CVP and SWP facilities and both assets (B(2) and EWA) will be used.

Operational Objectives: Both the SWP and CVP want to fill San Luis Reservoir and keep it full until the start of VAMP. High point will be in spring and will dictate the water supply allocation for the CVP and SWP. Both Projects want to effectively use San Luis Reservoir's storage for: water quality for Santa Clara, for the SWP – dedicate to dead

supply (legal and contractual) and protect water quality (i.e.: instream (temperature) for the American, Sacramento and the Feather Rivers) . Also both Projects want to facilitate flexible operations such as joint point integration (improve capability), transfer EWA assets upstream of the Delta, and for the Dry Year Program.

Operations Planning

Fish objectives have been quantified in order to incorporate them into operational scenarios. December is the first unofficial forecast. The November precipitation in the Feather River area was 180% of normal. By the middle of February, the CVP will have determined their allocation. The storage in Folsom will touch the flood control diagram in the 50% exceedence hydrology. The Sacramento River is flood-control sensitive. Temperature control on the Sacramento River is a concern if Lake Shasta is below 1.9 MAF. The fish agencies will be consulted to determine if the temperatures are ok. Deliveries for the CVP are 15% and 45% in the 90% and 50% exceedence hydrologies, respectively. Shasta is above 3.2 MAF and the CVP's allocation is 100% for water right, settlement contractors, full supply to Level 2, and full 800 TAF for B(2) for both exceedence hydrologies. M&I will be 75% and 65% in the 50% and 90% exceedence hydrologies, respectively. Temperature studies are not included in the hydrology. The question of why the actual storage level in San Luis Reservoir last summer was higher compared to the forecast arose. The answers were cooler weather patterns, MWD used its resources efficiently, KCWA aggressively used its conjunctive use program, and the availability of the Sacramento Valley accretions (although they were lower in August and September thereby reducing the exports). Also, the winter-run salmon temperature operation has a bearing on the forecasting, but it is not always included. San Luis Reservoir's low point fluctuated and extended for a length of time. It also occurs more frequently in dry cases. The difference in storage between the base and B(2) is due to releases and exports – could have more exports but not necessarily higher releases. In the 90% exceedence hydrology, the capacity in June is available to move those assets upstream of the Delta. In the 50% exceedence hydrology, the capacity is limited. There aren't any EWA expenditures in April or May, even with VAMP) at the SWP because the SWP is near base operations for the 90% exceedence hydrology. There aren't any EWA expenditures on the CVP side. Variable assets are not shown. State gains can occur in the 50% exceedence hydrology, but not in the 90% exceedence hydrology. There isn't any space to store joint point water in San Luis Reservoir, however other assets can still accrue.

Acquisitions Strategy

EWA was credited for power on the cuts taken earlier this year. Water located upstream of the Delta is less expensive and that all that is lost is the carriage water. Water located south of the Delta is more expensive because it had to be pumped.

The budget is maxed out in the below normal, normal and above normal year types. There is potential competition between the EWA and the Dry Year Programs. The

will hurt the water contractors more. The ESA assurance letter will be sent to the Management Agencies by the end of December.

A discussion of Tier III protocols followed. An operational reserve of assets and options can backstop fishery protection measures. In 1999, the SWP was impacted by 800 TAF due to Delta smelt. SWP thought the impact would be less (i.e.: ~150 TAF). Options should not be bought for Tier III and it is best to keep the money. However, Tier III money should be used to exercise options. Collateral can be used all at once or annually. The question of when to call on Tier III exists. The Management Agencies would have to exhaust all the assets. Tier III will be put on the next agenda. Comments should be sent to David Fullerton and Curtis Creel.

Issues

Sensitive topics include looking at the issues. Assets will be included in the forecasts/ operations as they firm up. More money is needed from Congress than the \$30 million.

An OFF Call is needed before the Policy Group meeting (possibly Monday or Tuesday). A WOMT meeting is not scheduled for Tuesday.

Agenda Items For The Next Meeting

- Tier III
- Status and opportunities for Joint Point