

CALFED OPERATIONS MEETING NOTES
Wednesday, September 23, 2009
1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Resources Building
Room 1131, 11th Floor

Announcements

None made

SWRCB Activities (P. Fernandez)

For 2009, there have been a total of 16 water transfers that the SWRCB has approved. Of the 16, thirteen were included in the Drought Water Bank (DWB) and the remaining three were outside of the DWB. The total water transferred as a result of the sixteen transfers was 98,715 acre-feet.

The staff report on the Periodic Review of the 2006 Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan was adopted by the Board on August 4, 2009.

The SWRCB will hold another workshop on November 4, 2009 at which Dr. Glen Hoffman will discuss how he will respond to public comments received on his draft report on salinity standards in the southern Delta.

Also, the SWRCB will hold a meeting on November 3, 2009 to approve some reports that were prepared as a result of Proposition 204, that require SWRCB approval as per the provisions in Prop. 204.

Fisheries Status

Winter-run Chinook salmon (B. Oppenheim):

Preliminary carcass surveys indicate that the run this year will be close to last years count (2850 adults). Juvenile winter-run have started to pass the Red Bluff Diversion Dam and peak passage should occur in October. The number of juveniles appears to be higher than this time last year (see graph). Once DFG estimates the number of adults, NMFS will calculate a juvenile production estimate (JPE) for purposes of quantifying the incidental take limit at the Delta pumping facilities. The JPE should be completed by December. New this year is a statistical review of the JPE by Cramer Fish Sciences. A contract is being funded by NMFS to review the methodology and determine confidence intervals around the estimate.

The new fish salvage season starts October 1st. Last year the combined loss rate for both the CVP and SWP was 1,443 winter-run juveniles out of a take limit of 12,365. Since April, no winter-run have been salvaged at either Delta Fish Facility.

Spring-run Chinook salmon (B. Oppenheim):

Preliminary reports based on snorkel counts indicate that escapement is down from previous years. A fish rescue on Butte Creek in June moved 29 adults further upstream, however, DFG reported all of these died by the end of the summer.

Adult Snorkel Counts (2008 data from DFG grandtab)

	2009 to date	2008
Antelope Cr	-	2
Mill Cr	-	369
Clear Cr	156	200
Deer Cr	223	140
Butte Cr	2,059	3,935
Feather R. Hatchery	1,000 tagged YTD	1,418

Two spring-run surrogate releases will be made this year to estimate incidental take at the Delta pumps. These fish are uniquely marked late-fall Chinook salmon from Coleman National Fish Hatchery released upstream of Battle Creek. Surrogate releases are scheduled for the first week in December and mid-January. These hatchery fish are released at the time and same size as the wild spring-run coming out of the tributaries.

Central Valley Steelhead (B. Oppenheim):

SWP and CVP salvaged a total of 1,307 steelhead last year at the Fish Facilities. 333 were non-clipped or wild fish. This is fewer fish than in previous years. Since June no steelhead have been salvaged. The incidental take limit remains at 3,000 non-clipped for both facilities.

Green Sturgeon (B. Oppenheim):

SWP and CVP Fish Facilities salvaged 0 green sturgeon in 2008 and no sturgeon have been reported to date in 2009. The new cumulative incidental take level identified in NMFS OCAP opinion is 110 juveniles annually based on a 10 year average.

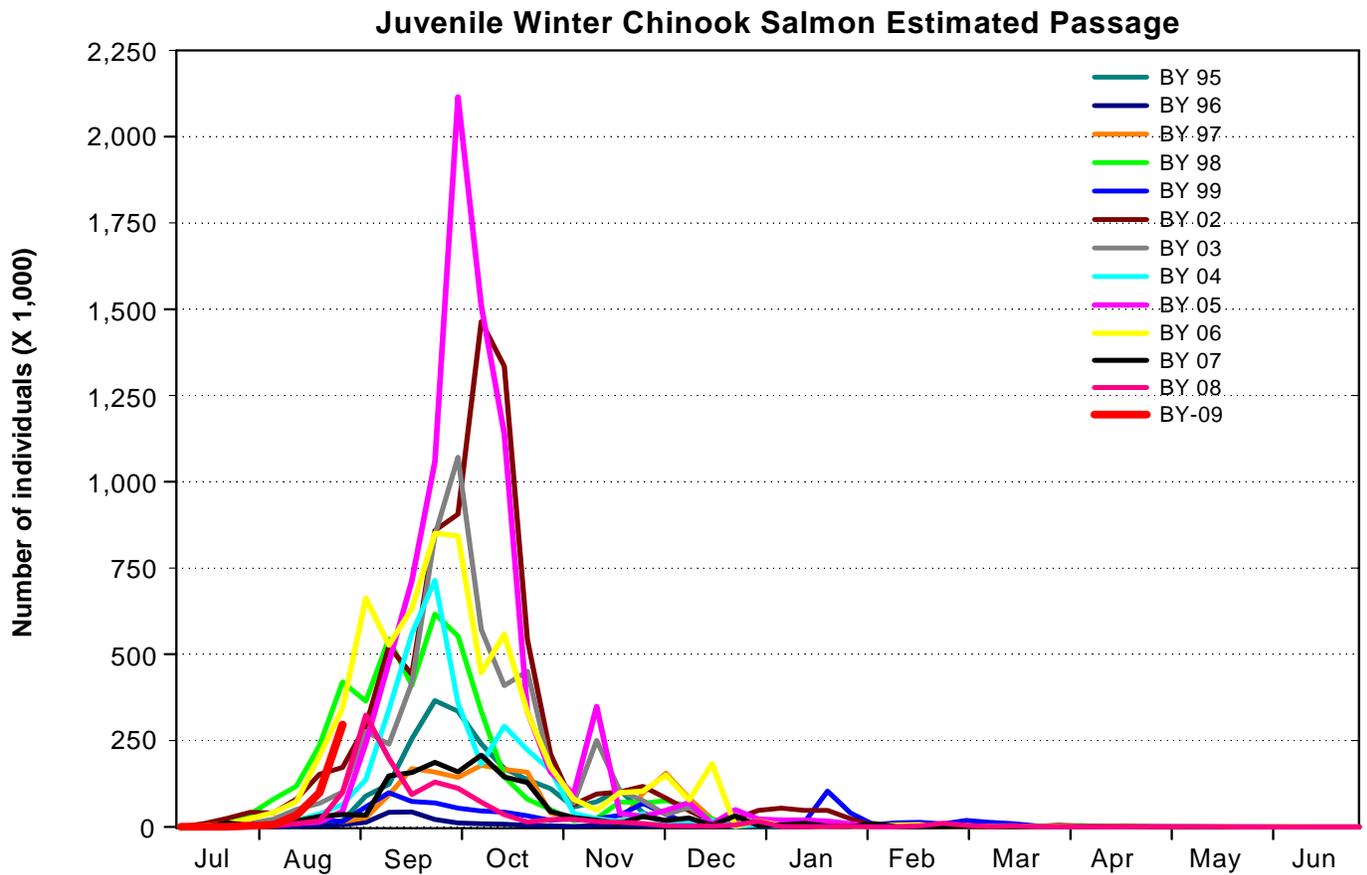


Figure 1. Weekly estimated passage of juvenile winter Chinook salmon at Red Bluff Diversion Dam (RK391), by brood-year (BY). Fish were sampled using rotary-screw traps for the period July 1, 1995 through June 2000 and July 1, 2002 to present.

Delta smelt – Nothing to report

Longfin smelt – Nothing to report

Work Group Updates

.DAT – Nothing to report..

WOMT – There have not been regular meetings of WOMT during this summer. WOMT is scheduled to resume regular meetings beginning in October. There was a recent meeting of WOMT at which the formation and agency membership of various technical teams mandated by NMFS' recent Biological Opinion was discussed. USBR, DWR, NMFS and USFWS have identified some representatives for the teams, DFG still needs to “weigh in” on representatives they would like added.

CVP/SWP Operations Updates

CVP – Trinity at 450 cfs, Keswick at 6,500 cfs now and going to 6,000 cfs this weekend, Folsom at 1,7500 cfs now, Jones PP at 4,200 cfs, Goodwin at 700 cfs and the federal share of San Luis is about 170 TAF.

SWP – Oroville at 1,325 cfs, Banks PP at 1000 cfs (most of the pumping is transfetr water, not SWP water) and the State share of San Luis is about 270 TAF.

Delta Criteria – Delta outflow is about 3,000 cfs. South Delta water quality is good, below the 1.0 EC standard for this time of year. October standards will be .65 for E/I ratio, 4,000 cfs monthly average outflow, 4,000 cfs Rio Vits monthly average, Contra Costa standard is 250 mg/l Chlorides. Suisun Marsh standards also begin in October. The pulse flow on the San Joaquin River for October will start sometime after the first week in October andend toward the end of October. The Stanislaus, Tuolomne and Merced rivers will all likely have some contribution to the pulse flows.

Miscellaneous

The future scheduling and need for maintaining CALFED's Data Assessment Team (DAT) was disussed, as WOMT had previously requested. Nobody at the meeting felt that DAT should be phased out or eliminated altogether. Lucinda Shih (CCWD) and Dennis Westcott (SJRGGA) both strongly supported the continuation of DAT and emphasized that DAT provided timely, weekly updates to proposed agency management actions to protect sensitive fish species that are very helpful in briefing their respective management on current Delta management issues and proposed actions.