

Delta Operations for Salmonids and Sturgeon (DOSS) Group
Conference call: 11/27/12 at 9:00 a.m.

Objective: Provide advice to the Water Operations Management Team (WOMT) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on measures to reduce adverse effects from Delta operations of the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project on salmonids and green sturgeon. DOSS will work with other technical teams. DOSS notes and advice can be found at: <http://www.swr.noaa.gov/ocap/doss.htm>.

DWR: Mike Ford, Edmund Yu, Kevin Reece, Tracy Pettit, James Gleim, Dan Yamanaka, Andy Chu

FWS: Craig Anderson

NMFS: Barb Byrne, Jeff Stuart, Barbara Rocco, Bruce Oppenheim, Garwin Yip

Reclamation: Russ Yaworsky, Josh Israel

DFG: Krystal Acierto, Bob Fujimura, Joe Johnson, Robert Vincik

EPA: Erin Foresman

SWRCB, USGS: not present

Agenda

1. Fish monitoring
2. Current operations
3. DCC gate closure
4. Delta water quality

Fish Monitoring: The following table presents fish monitoring data. Unless otherwise noted, reported sizes are fork length. See:

<http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/calfedmonitoring.cfm>.

Location	Chippis Is. Midwater Trawl	Sacramento Trawls	Mossdale Kodiak Trawl	Beach Seines	Knights Landing RST	Tisdale Weir RST
Sample Date	11/19, 21, 23	11/19, 21, 23	11/19, 21, 23	11/19, 20, 21, 23	11/21, 11/23–26	11/21, 11/23–11/26
Total Catch	13	9	0	9	273	143
FR						
WR		8		8	268	132
SR					4	10
LFR		1		1	1	1
Ad-Clipped Chinook						
DS	13					
Splittail						
Longfin						
SH (ad-clip)						
SH (wild)						

W. Temp. (avg. °F)	58.5	56.1	57.9	56.5	55.0	54.0
Flows (avg. cfs)					8,100	7,366
Turbidity (avg. NTU)	14.3	17.7	9.0	13.3	20.3	21.0
WR/LFR Avg. CPUE					2.13	0.68
FR/SR Avg. CPUE					0.025	0.03

Key: FR = Fall run; LFR = Late-fall run; SR = Spring run; WR = Winter run; SH = Steelhead; DS = Delta smelt; LFS = Longfin smelt; CPUE = catch per unit of effort

Fish Monitoring: The sudden increase in Chinook catch numbers is most likely from an increase in Sacramento River flows on both 11/20 and 11/23. A graph of the peak times of winter-run Chinook catch at Knights Landing from 1997 to 2007 is presented below. Peak times appear to be variable to a great extent. In some years, winter run peak in January and February; in other years, they might peak in December. It was observed that passage by Knights Landing tends to be later in dry years. Several people expressed surprise that migration this year appears to have been triggered by a relatively small flow event; it was noted that with flows having been so low so far this fall, fish are migrating downstream in response to *any* increase in flows. Another big storm is forecast for this week so there should be an increase in fish movement.

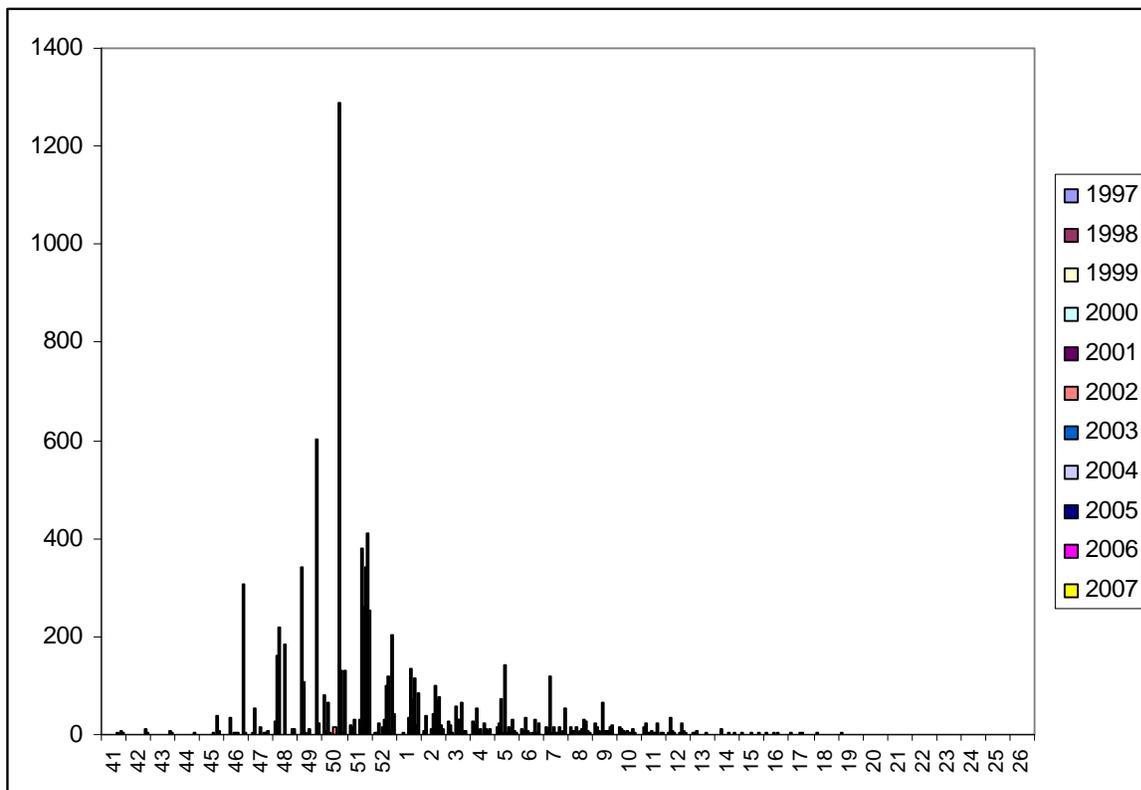


Figure 1. Winter-run Chinook peaks at Knights Landing from 1997 through 2007 from DFG

The spring-run surrogate releases from Coleman National Fish Hatchery (Coleman) were discussed briefly and whether it would be possible to release the first surrogates during the first week in December. Oppenheim (NMFS) will check with Coleman on what its schedule is for

this water year. Coleman reviews data from all tributaries to decide when to release the surrogates, especially the late-fall-run Chinook.

Salvage Report: The following report was provided by Geir Aasen (CDFG) for 11/19/2012 to 11/25/2012. Results are preliminary and subject to change.

Steelhead

Steelhead (non-clipped) (301 mm) were salvaged at the state facility (weekly salvage= 4), but not at the federal facility for the period of reporting. The seasonal (10/01/2012 to present) salvage totals of steelhead at the state facility are zero adipose clipped and 4 non-clipped. No steelhead have been salvaged at the federal facility this water year.

Splittail

No splittail were salvaged at either facility for the period of reporting. The seasonal (10/01/2012 to present) salvage total of splittail at the federal facility is 5. The seasonal (10/01/2012 to present) salvage total of splittail at the state facility is 4.

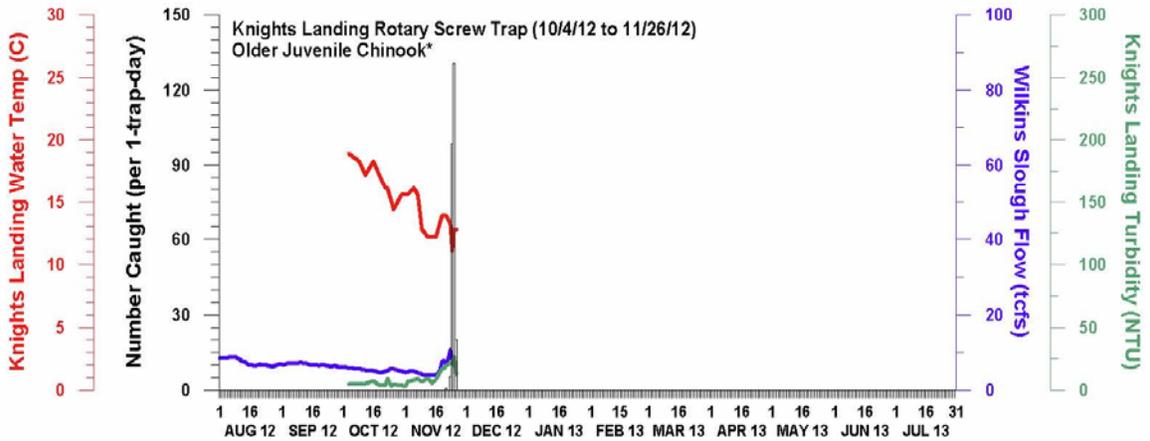
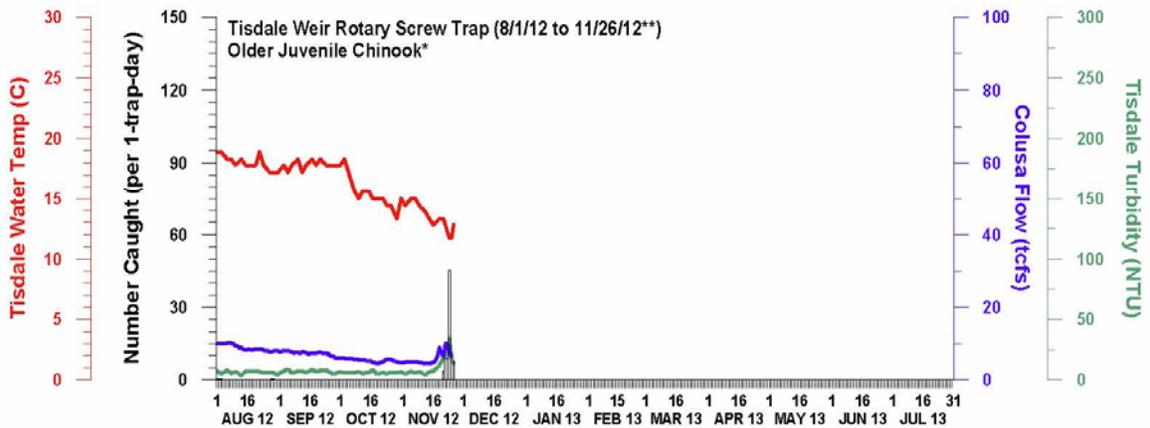
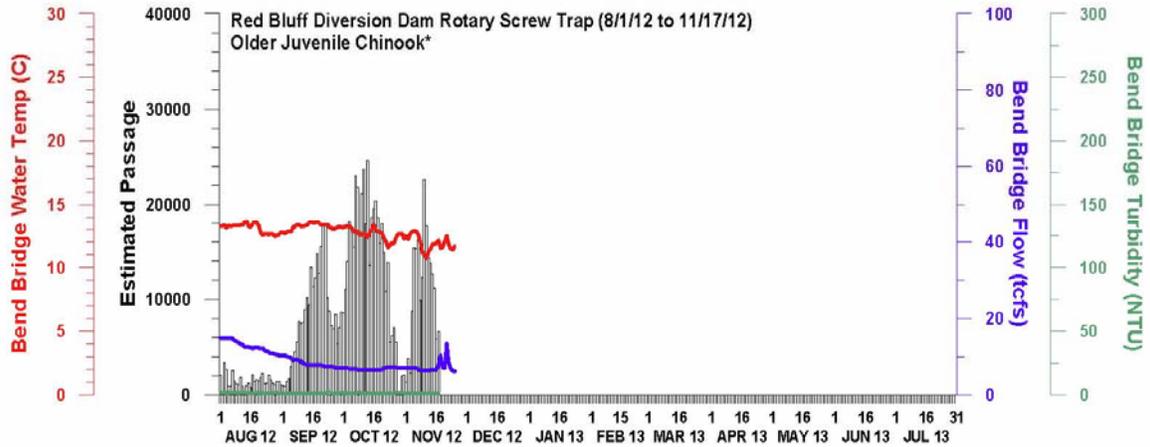
White sturgeon

White sturgeon (317 mm) were salvaged at the federal facility (weekly salvage= 4), but not at the state facility for the period of reporting. The seasonal (10/01/2012 to present) salvage total of white sturgeon at the federal facility is 4. No white sturgeon have been salvaged at the state facility this water year.

The first Chinook of undetermined size was caught/salvaged on 11/8/12.

NOTE: Below are graphs provided by DWR through 11/26/12 for older juvenile salmon and steelhead in the Sacramento and San Joaquin rivers. For additional graphs, please visit the DWR website at: <http://www.water.ca.gov/swp/operationscontrol/calfed/calfedmonitoring.cfm>.

NUMBER OF OLDER JUVENILE CHINOOK MEASURED IN THE SACRAMENTO RIVER



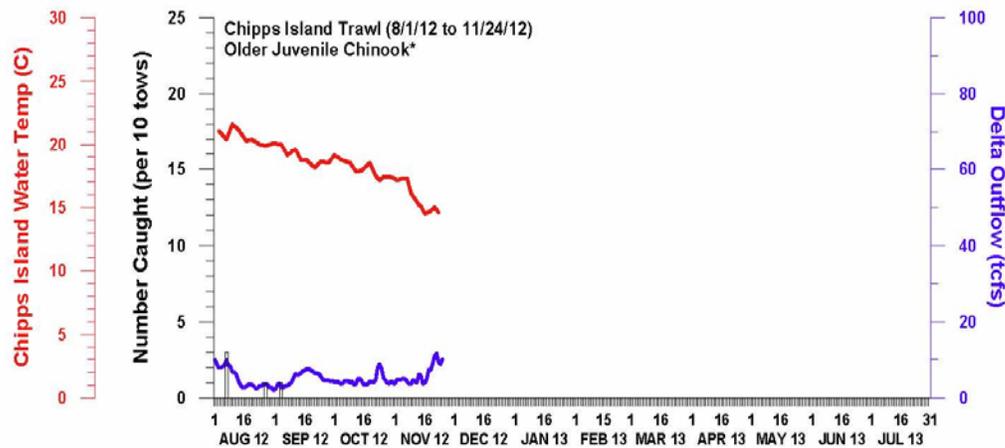
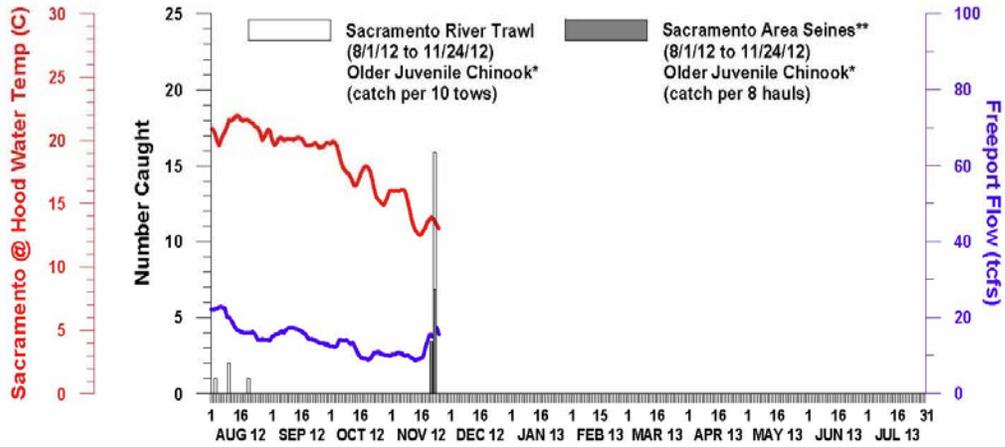
DWR-DES 26 NOV 2012

Preliminary data from DFG, FWS, and CDEC; subject to revision.

*Older juvenile Chinook defined as all Chinook above the minimum length for winter-run (Frank Fisher model).

** Tisdale Weir: One older juvenile caught on 9/14 and 43 older juvenile caught on 11/25. However, CPUE could not be calculated due to problems with the cone clickers. As a result, data are not presented on the graph.

NUMBER OF OLDER JUVENILE CHINOOK MEASURED IN THE LOWER SACRAMENTO RIVER & CHIPPS ISLAND



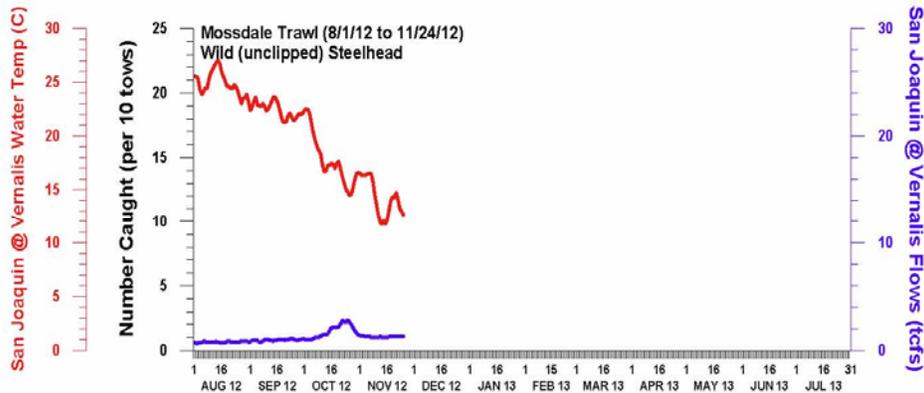
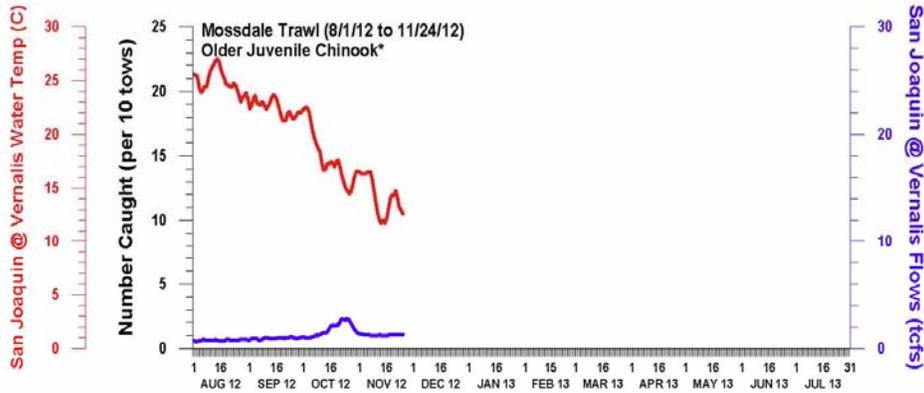
DWR-DES 26 NOV 2012

Preliminary data from FWS and CDEC; subject to revision.

*Older juvenile Chinook defined as all Chinook above the minimum length for winter-run (Frank Fisher model).

**Sacramento area seine route consists of the following seine sites: Verona, Elkhorn, Sand Cove, Discovery Park, American River, Miller Park, Sherwood Harbor, and Garcia Bend. Bars in the graph are stacked if the trawl and seines are sampled on the same day.

NUMBER OF OLDER JUVENILE CHINOOK AND STEELHEAD MEASURED IN THE SAN JOAQUIN RIVER



DWR-DES 26 NOV 2012
 Preliminary data from FWS and CDEC; subject to revision.
 *Older juvenile Chinook defined as all Chinook above the minimum length for winter-run (Frank Fisher model).

Criteria for DCC Closure: Byrne reported on the activities of the past week, with both the Sacramento and Knights Landing catch indices exceeding the NMFS BiOp criteria for Action

IV.1.2 as of 11/23/12. Li-Ming (NMFS) sent an official notification to Reclamation on 11/23/12 that the catch trigger (>5.0 fish/day) had been met and that the DCC gates were to be closed. The gates are set to close today by 10:00 a.m.

Summarized below are the recent catch indices reported on the call:

Sacramento Catch Index (trawl data)

11/23: 9.0

11/26: 42.0

Sacramento Catch Index (seine data)

11/26: 16.0

Knights Landing Catch Index

11/23: 5.4

11/24: 98.5

11/25: 130.7

11/26: 20.1

There are actually three DCC action triggers through 11/30: (1) Water quality criteria per D-1641 are met and either the Knights Landing Catch Index (KLCI) or the Sacramento Catch Index (SCI) are >3 fish/day but ≤5 fish/day, (2) Water quality criteria per D-1641 are met and either the KLCI or SCI is >5 fish/day, or (3) the KLCI or SCI triggers are met but water quality criteria are not met per D-1641 criteria. Water quality is either met or not met; the RPA action does not take into consideration a concern that water quality criteria may not be met. Between now and 11/30, if a catch index trigger is met but water quality criteria are not, DOSS will review the long-term data and make a recommendation to NMFS and WOMT. With the storms forecast for this week, water quality criteria are not likely to be exceeded.

Operations (11/27/12)

SWP		CVP	
Exports (cfs)			
Clifton Court Forebay	4,500	Jones Pumping Plant	4,500
Reservoir Releases (cfs)			
Feather - Oroville	2,400	Nimbus	1,850
		Sacramento - Keswick	4900 (down 100/day to 4,500 cfs by Sat.)
		Stanislaus - Goodwin	275
Reservoir Storage (in TAF, % of capacity)			
San Luis (SWP)	265 (25)	San Luis (CVP)	765 (52)
Oroville	1787	Shasta	2,439
New Melones		Folsom	364
Delta Operations			
DCC	Closed by 10:00 a.m. today	Sacramento River at Freeport (cfs)	13,913
Outflow Index (cfs)	4,600	San Joaquin River (cfs) at Vernalis	1,280

Total Delta Inflow (cfs)	15,731	OMR (daily) (cfs)	
Water Temperature (°F)		OMR 5 day (cfs)	
X2 (km)	81	OMR 14 day (cfs)	
E/I (%)	49.4 (3-d avg.)		

Wilkins Slough was at 6,500 cfs; Vernalis is at 1,280 cfs. Fairly large storms are forecast beginning tomorrow (Wednesday) with 10 inches of rain in the American River basin by next Monday. Sutter Bypass might have flows by the weekend. With the storms forecast through Sunday, there will be no problem meeting the requirement for Rio Vista flows (monthly average). The northern Sacramento Valley will be hit the hardest by the storms; there will most likely be some storm activity in the San Joaquin Basin, but not much.

Smelt Working Group (SWG): Oppenheim reported that Bartoo (FWS) submitted the SWG report to him before the DOSS meeting. SWG had its first meeting of the water year but did not discuss the risk of entrainment. The meeting was to review the roles and responsibilities of the members and group and what SWG can expect as far as the RPA in the coming months. CDFG did report that the November Fall Midwater Trawl index for delta smelt was 12, bringing the total so far to 35. Once the FWS receives the December catch data, it will have its index, which is how it computes the incidental take limit for the export pumps. An index of 35 so far this year is low compared with that of other years.

There was a question about whether there is a danger of having an incidental take issue this year because of the low index. This was not discussed during the SWG meeting; however, some (DOSS and SWG participants) felt that it should be discussed at WOMT. CDFG agreed to expedite compiling the December results. Management should begin to think about this earlier rather than later. It appears now that the index for longfin smelt might also be on the low side.

DOSS advice to WOMT and NMFS: This is an update rather than advice. The DCC gates are closed today and will most likely remain closed until December 1st when a mandatory closure is required per NMFS RPA Action IV.1.2. DOSS noted that the D-1641 water quality criteria in the Delta is being met and that notification of exceeding the fish monitoring criteria that triggered the DCC gate closure was sent to WOMT on Friday 11/23/12.

Next Meeting: The next DOSS conference call meeting is scheduled for 12/4/12 at 9:00 a.m.