



# United States Department of the Interior



## FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Pacific Southwest Region  
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In reply refer to:

January 29, 2013

Subject: Determination of Actions Required Under Component 1 of the 2008 OCAP Biological Opinion

The Service determined that as of January 28, 2013, OMR be set to no more negative than -2500 cfs until entrainment risk abates and/or a new determination is made. Accordingly, OMR flows shall be no more negative than -2500 cfs on a 14 day running average, with a 5-day running average no more negative than -3125 cfs (within 25 percent). An OMR flow limit of -2500 cfs is within the range of allowable net daily OMR flows for Action 2, which is -1250 to -5000 cfs. The Service will continue to review, on a daily basis, new information that may pertain to entrainment risk.

The Service has based this determination on information received from the Delta Conditions Team (DCT) on January 28, 2013, and the Smelt Working Group (SWG) recommendation received on January 28, 2013, and consideration of the likely trajectory of entrainment risk in the future under various operating scenarios.

The DCT reported that daily turbidity averages at south and central Delta gauge stations are below 12 NTUs, indicating the absence of a turbidity bridge into the south Delta. Members of the DCT also discussed several differing conceptual models describing the patterns of adult delta smelt entrainment occurring this Water Year (WY).

The SWG reviewed delta smelt distribution and salvage data, current Delta conditions and projected operations. Forty-six adult delta smelt have been salvaged between January 21 and January 27, 2013, which is a two-fold increase over weekly salvage totals from the previous two weeks. As of January 28, 2013, the preliminary seasonal total of salvaged adult delta smelt was 191. This represents 63% of the total authorized take of adult delta smelt associated with the state and federal water projects for WY 2013. The SWG concluded that the risk of entrainment continues, and that at current salvage rates, the projects have the potential to exceed the total authorized take of 305 adult delta smelt for WY 2013. The SWG recommended that OMR be no more negative than -2500 cfs to reduce the current adult delta smelt salvage rate.

Because of the current hydrodynamic and turbidity conditions in the central and south Delta, the pattern of entrainment this WY, the persistence of adult delta smelt salvage, and the substantial cumulative salvage to date, the Service has concluded that until there is clear evidence that the entrainment risk of operating at higher negative OMR has diminished, OMR flow should be limited to -2500 cfs.