

Smelt Working Group
June 12, 2017

Meeting Summary

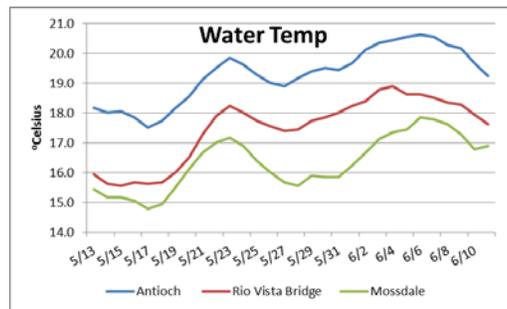
The Working Group reviewed current Delta conditions, survey data, expected exports, and forecasted weather. The SWG indicated that the anticipated negative OMR flows later this week are sufficiently protective of Delta Smelt.

The Working Group is following guidance for entrainment protections from Action 3 (larval/juvenile Delta Smelt). The Working Group will continue to monitor Delta Smelt survey and salvage data and Delta conditions, and will meet again on Monday, June 19, 2017 at 10 am.

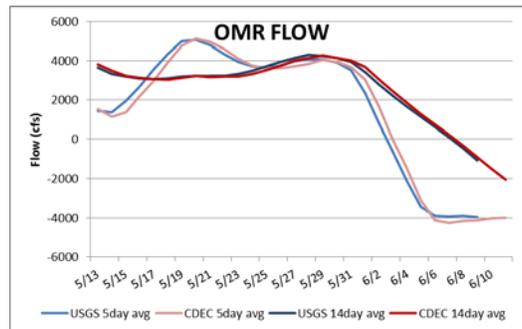
Reported Data

1. **Current environmental data**

a. Temperature

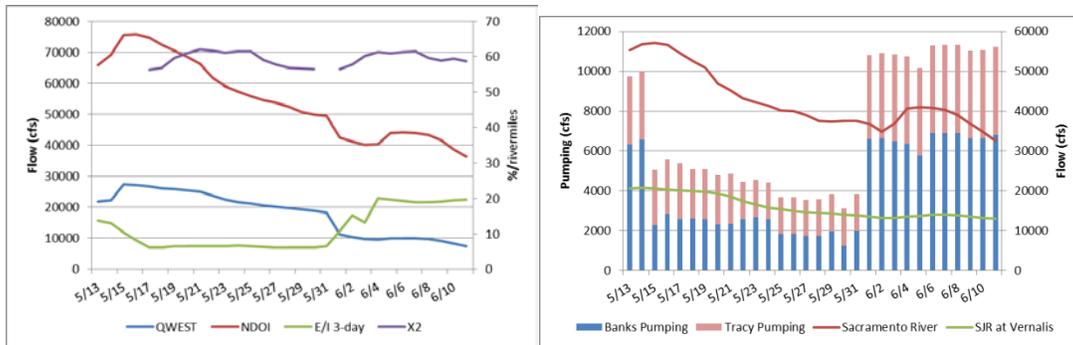


b. OMR flow



c. River flows and pumping

Sacramento River at Freeport flow for June 11 was approximately 32,600 cfs. San Joaquin River at Vernalis flow for June 11 was approximately 13,100 cfs. X2 was approximately 58.6 km as of June 11.



2. Delta fish monitoring

The 2016 FMWT Index is 8. The 2017 SKT Index is 3.8. Both indices are the 2nd lowest on record.

20mm survey #7 was in the field last week. Processing of samples is 32% complete. Central and south Delta stations have been processed; no smelt were detected at those stations.

20mm survey #6 processing is still at 50% completion. Some Delta Smelt were collected at station 719.

Enhanced Delta Smelt Monitoring was in the field June 5 through 7. One Delta Smelt (11.9 mm) was collected from western Suisun Bay. Samples are still being processed.

3. Modeling

No new PTM runs were requested.

4. Salvage

No Delta Smelt salvage has occurred since March 16. Cumulative adult Delta Smelt salvage for the season remains at 56.5.

No larval or juvenile Delta Smelt have been observed in salvage so far this season.

No Longfin Smelt of any life stage has been observed in salvage so far this season.

5. Expected Project Operations

Combined pumping on June 12 is 11,080 cfs and expected to remain constant for the week. Index OMR values are expected to remain at approximately -5000 cfs for the week. Vernalis flow is anticipated to drop this week followed by an increase, depending upon upstream demands. These flow changes could potentially result in pumping decreasing to ensure OMR flow values remain more positive than -5,000 cfs.

Higher temperatures are anticipated to arrive late this week and remain for the following week. Some rain is expected in the Sierras today, but dry after.

6. Delta Conditions Team

The DCT has ended regular meetings for the remainder of the water year.

7. Biological Opinion Background:

RPA Component 2, Action 3: “The objective of this RPA component (which corresponds to Action 3 in Attachment B), is to improve flow conditions in the Central and South Delta so that larval and juvenile Delta Smelt can successfully rear in the Central Delta and move downstream when appropriate” (page 282).

The ITL for adult Delta Smelt in WY2017 is 151, as amended in the Service’s April 10, 2017 memo to Reclamation addressing targeted reinitiation of the adult incidental take number. The ITL for juvenile Delta Smelt is 448 fish with a concern level of 298 fish.

8. Assessment of Risk Discussion

Delta Smelt Detections

Recent surveys from the EDSM and 20mm survey have not picked up any fish near the central or south Delta in the past several weeks. A single Delta Smelt was detected in western Suisun Bay last week and the Napa River the week before, suggesting that a portion of the population may be further out west than in a typical water year, having been pushed out by higher outflows. The absence of larval smelt in salvage also suggests that the number of fish present in the south Delta is low. However, with the record low population and only one fish detected each week of the past two weeks’ survey efforts, members cautioned that there is a high degree of uncertainty regarding the distribution of the population.

General discussion

The majority of members indicated that the anticipated OMR flow rate of -5,000 cfs should be sufficiently protective of Delta Smelt for the remainder of the week.

A minority of members indicated that -5,000 cfs OMR provided too great a risk to the larval Delta Smelt in the lower San Joaquin River, if they are present. Members indicated that recently emerged larvae are expected to be present within the Delta this week. Assuming some proportion of the population remains in the lower San Joaquin River, -5,000 cfs OMR flow likely will direct some of those into the Old and Middle River corridors.

The Working Group will continue to monitor conditions and Delta Smelt distribution and will meet again on Monday, June 19, 2017.