

Determination of Actions Required Under Component 1 of the 2008 OCAP Biological Opinion
February 22, 2010

The Service has determined that OMR flows be no more negative than -5000 cfs on a 14-day average (no more negative than -6250 cfs on a 5-day average), as allowed under the RPA.

Delta temperatures have exceeded 12⁰C and egg sizes in salvaged and survey females are approximately 0.9mm in diameter. This suggests that the spawning is underway and the juvenile protective phase of the biological opinion (RPA Component 2; Action 3) should now be implemented. This action will continue until June 30 or when the 3-day mean water temperature at Clifton Court Forebay reaches 25⁰C, whichever occurs earlier.

The Service's determination is based the Smelt Working Group (SWG) recommendation made on February 22, 2010. The SWG recommended OMR flows of no more negative than -5000 cfs. The group considered the relatively low salvage rates and evidence that suggests that while spawning is underway few larvae are yet present in the system. The risk of entrainment for delta smelt is considered to be low at this time.

Delta water temperatures have now exceeded 12⁰C, indicating that conditions are now appropriate for spawning. However, given incubation rates at 12⁰C, the Working Group does not expect that larvae will enter the water column for one to two weeks.

The projects have been advised to initiate larval monitoring.

If salvage increases or if larval smelt are detected, the Working Group will reconvene later in the week for further discussion.