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Subject: SUMMARY OF DAT CONFERENCE CALL WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1999
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SUMMARY OF THE DAT CONFERENCE CALL WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1999

Participants: Perry Herrgessel, Deborah McKee, Steve Foss,
Marty Kjelson, Roger Guinee, Mark Pierce, Gary Stern,
Michele Simpson, Bruce Herbold, Sheila Greene,
Leo Winternitz, Dave Robinson, Pete Rhoads, Rick Sitts,
Victor Pacheco, John Burke, Paul Fujitani, Greg Gartrell,
David Briggs, Tom Boardman

CHINOOK MONITORING

Mill Creek - 2 yearling spring run Chinook were caught last week. 4 were caught in December, none in November, and 18 in October. The season total is 26.

Deer Creek - No yearling spring run Chinook have been caught in December so far. 27 were caught in November, and 60 were caught in October. The season total is 97.

GCID - catch of all sizes of in-river Chinook remained low this week. 25 adipose fin clipped Chinook were caught between 12/11 and 12/13. They are likely from the Coleman late fall 12/9 release. It is usual to catch them at GCID within 3 days of release.

Butte Creek - 5 yearling spring run Chinook were caught last week. The size distribution of the total catch shifted to predominantly young of year.

Sutter Bypass - 2 yearling sized Chinook were caught in the West side borrow ditch in December. Due to low flows, the rotary screw trap was not efficient until early December.

Lower Sacramento River

Tisdale - 4 yearling sized Chinook were caught on 12/8.

Knights Landing - 1 yearling sized Chinook was caught 12/7. DFG reported 8 coded wire tagged Chinook were caught last week.

Beach Seines - The first yearling sized Chinook was caught in the lower Sacramento Beach Seines last week at Knights Landing.

Delta

Sacramento Trawl - No yearling sized Chinook were caught last week. The last one was caught 12/4.

Beach Seines - 3 more yearling sized Chinook were caught last week near Sacramento. The first four of the season were the week

before.

Chippis Island - 5 yearling sized Chinook and 2 adipose fin clipped Chinook from the Coleman late fall hatchery release of 11/12 were caught last week. Only 6 tows were completed 12/14 due to Delta Smelt take. The level of take is 170/day during the Delta Action 8 Smolt Survival experiment. FWS in Stockton is consulting with FWS in Sacramento regarding flexibility in take. 11 yearling sized Chinook have been caught in December so far, 9 in November, and 3 in October.

SWP and CVP Exports - No Chinook were caught last week. The last one was caught 12/6. 7 have been caught in December so far and 2 adipose fin clipped from the Coleman late fall release of 11/12. 8 were caught in November and 3 in October.

A Delta Smelt was salvaged 12/8.

No Splittail or Steelhead were salvaged last week.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

There was no change in the salinity profile since Monday's DAT call. Rock Slough is at 225 mg/l chlorides and in the area outside the pumping plant 230 mg/l. Chlorides are expected to exceed 250 by the weekend. EC in Clifton Court forebay and at Tracy PP continue to increase and chloride are expected to exceed the standard early next week if the gates remain closed. Jersey Point is at 1000 ec and Antioch is at 1500 ec. Sacramento flow is effecting Jersey Point and Antioch, but not the interior or south Delta.

Oroville Outflow was increased last week from 2350 cfs to 3500 cfs to increase Delta Outflow for water quality. DWR is recommending gradually reducing releases to 1700 cfs if there are no exporting opportunities.

The tide is at the peak of the neap cycle and is transitioning to the spring cycle. The peak of the spring will be 12/22 and 12/23.

The Cross Channel Gates were opened for 6 hours Tuesday, 12/14. Most of the opening was on the ebb. On 12/15 the opening will encompass more of the flood tide. The USGS UVM data indicated the greatest flow through the Cross Channel occurs during the flood tide.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The DAT discussed the options of opening the gates more hours per day, timing the opening during the flood tide, operating them to avoid periods of maximum Chinook activity. The projects have less than 20 more days through January to have the Delta Cross Channel Gates open according Water Resources Control Board Order 98-9.

They want to operate them optimally to control water quality.

The DAT also discussed changing the Sacramento area beach seine effort to the Cross Channel gates area to monitor Chinook activity closer to the Cross Channel gates area.

From the fish biology perspective, keeping the Cross Channel Gates closed provides the best protection for Chinook. From the water quality perspective, opening the gates fully will provide the best protection for water quality in the interior and south Delta.

DWR presented an operations schedule for 12/15 through 12/22 if the Cross Channel Gates were opened fully today, 12/15. The pumping schedule is based on circulating fresher water into the interior and south Delta.

- 12/15 - open Cross Channel Gates
- 12/18 - if water quality at either Jersey Point or interior Delta allows, ramp SWP exports from 800 cfs to 1600 cfs to circulate fresher water into south Delta. Combined exports would be 2300 cfs.
- 12/19 - If water quality allows, ramp exports another 500 cfs to combined exports of 2800 cfs.
- 12/20 - If water quality allows, ramp exports another 500 cfs to combined exports of 3300 cfs.
- 12/21 - If water quality allows, ramp exports another 500 cfs to combined exports of 3800 cfs.
- 12/22 - If water quality allows, ramp exports another 500 cfs to combined exports of 4100 cfs.

This schedule is optimistic and the maximum exports would not exceed 4100 cfs by Wednesday.

After a long discussion of water quality and Chinook biology, the DAT made a consensus recommendation to open the Cross Channel Gates fully starting immediately to improve water quality. When water quality allows, the SWP will begin ramping exports by 500 cfs/day increments to optimize circulating fresher water into the interior and south Delta. The maximum exports will be 4100 cfs by next Wednesday, 12/22. The fish regulatory agencies recommended closing the gates 2 days prior to increasing the combined exports beyond 4100 cfs. This consensus recommendation allows the projects to operate to improve water quality for the next week while both the water project operators and fish biologists develop fish criteria and water quality criteria to indicate when the Cross Channel Gates could be closed for fish protection. This discussion will be continued on the NoName Conference Call at 2 pm.

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