

SMELT WORKING GROUP Monday, June 4, 2012

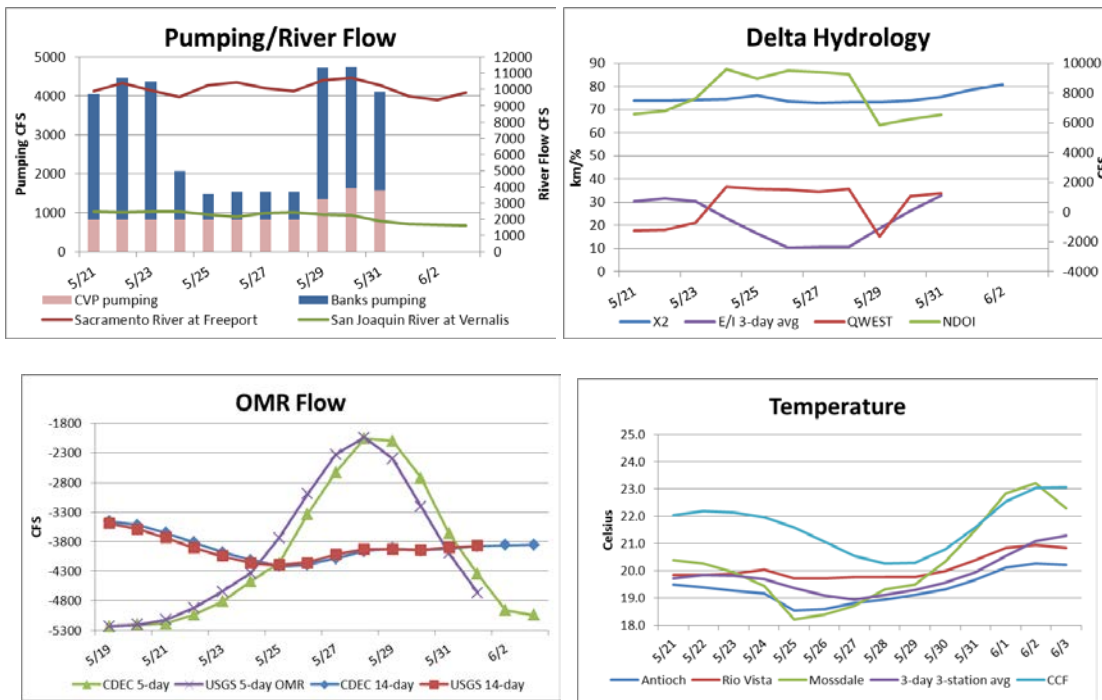
Meeting Summary:

The Working Group recommended no change in projected operations based on a review of delta smelt distribution and salvage data, current Delta conditions and projected operations. The Working Group also agreed that given their present distribution, existing constraining conditions was sufficient to protect longfin smelt. The Working Group will continue to monitor smelt salvage, larval smelt survey data, and delta hydrological conditions and will reconvene June 11, 2012, at 10 am.

Reported Data:

1) Current environmental data:

- **Water temperature** for the 3 station average is 21.3°C.
- **OMR:** USGS tidally-averaged OMR 5-day and 14-day averages as of June 1 are -4,662 cfs and -3,870 cfs, respectively. CDEC 5-day average and 14-day averages as of June 3 are -5,042 cfs and -3,858 cfs, respectively.
- **Flow:** Sacramento River inflow is 9,803 cfs and San Joaquin River is 1,609 cfs. X₂ calculation from CDEC is east of 82 km. The graphs below show the most recent trends in Delta hydrology and water quality that were evaluated by the Working Group.



2) Delta Fish Monitoring:

20-mm Survey #6 was in the field the week of May 21. Processing is ongoing. A total of 395 delta smelt larvae have been counted so far, 15 of which were from the central Delta on the lower San Joaquin River. Size ranges from 8 to 36 mm. A total of 437 longfin larvae have been counted so far, with sizes ranging from 11 to 30 mm. See “WEEKLY ADVICE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME FOR LONGFIN SMELT” for additional details. The annual FMWT Delta Smelt Index for 2011 is 343 (sum of all four months). The 2011 Delta Smelt Recovery Index (based on September and October) is 55. More information on the Recovery Index can be found on the Bay-Delta Office’s web site at <http://www.fws.gov/sfbaydelta/> under “hot topics.” Results from CDFG surveys are available online at: <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/delta/>.

3) Salvage:

The cumulative total for adult delta smelt for WY 2012 is 203. The table below details daily estimated juvenile delta smelt and longfin smelt salvage for the season:

Table 1: Estimated daily juvenile delta smelt and longfin smelt salvage (≥ 20 mm) for WY2012

Delta Smelt (YOY > 20mm)				Longfin Smelt (YOY > 20 mm)			
Date	CVP	SWP	Total	Date	CVP	SWP	Total
4/27	6	0	6	February total	8	0	8
4/28	4	0	4	March total	257	1484	1741
4/29	8	0	8	April total	605	1052	1657
5/1	4	0	4	5/2	8	0	8
5/3	4	2	6	5/3	4	16	20
5/4	16	2	18	5/4	0	6	6
5/5	16	10	26	5/5	0	16	16
5/6	16	0	16	5/6	0	24	24
5/7	0	12	12	5/7	12	16	28
5/8	4	60	64	5/8	0	4	4
5/9	0	102	102	5/9	0	8	8
5/10	12	104	116	5/10	4	24	28
5/11	40	52	92	5/11	0	0	0
5/12	0	48	48	5/12	0	0	0
5/13	0	232	232	5/13	3	0	3
5/14	4	100	104	5/14	0	6	6
5/15	4	104	108	5/19	20	0	20
5/16	4	0	4	6/1	8	0	8
5/17	20	0	20				
5/19	8	0	8				
5/20	4	20	24				

5/21	0	348	348				
5/22	0	152	152				
5/23	4	64	68				
5/24	8	0	8				
5/29	4	140	144				
5/30	11	91	102				
5/31	4	108	112				

Preliminary results indicated that juvenile delta smelt were salvaged during the period from June 1 to June 3. Larval or prejuvenile (< 20 mm) delta smelt were observed in daily larval fish samples. No larval or juvenile longfin smelt have been observed in salvage or larval fish samples during this same period.

Current delta and longfin smelt salvage information can be downloaded from DFG’s salvage FTP site at <ftp://ftp.dfg.ca.gov/salvage/Daily%20Smelt%20Summary/> or queried from DFG’s salvage web page at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/delta/apps/salvage/SalvageExportCalendar.aspx>

4) Expected Project Operations:

Combined CVP/SWP exports are approximately 3,200 cfs as of June 3. Combined exports are presently curtailed to comply with the SWRCB D-1641 minimum outflow requirement for June of 5,000 cfs.

5) Particle Tracking Modeling:

No PTM runs were requested for this week.

6) Assessment of Risk:

Background:

The collection of a spent female in the SKT Survey #2 on February 15 indicates that delta smelt spawning has begun. The temperature criterion of 12°C was confirmed on February 28. The Working Group discussed the risk of entrainment for larval delta smelt and any discussion of a recommendation was intended to protect larval delta smelt (B.O., p 282). The Working Group will follow the guidance for Action 3 of the B.O. (pp. 357-368).

Combined incidental take levels for State and federal fish facilities are based on the most recent FMWT abundance index. The 2011 FMWT index for delta smelt is 343. This means that the authorized incidental take of adults is 2,487 (estimated) and the concern level is 1,862 (estimated), cumulative for the December through March period.

Table 2: Incidental Take Levels for the larval/juvenile life stage (cumulative)

	Concern Level	Take Limit
April	101	151

May	4,471	6,705
June	11,327	16,991
July	12,851	19,276

Discussion: The Working Group reviewed and discussed all relevant data from fish surveys, Delta monitoring, salvage, and planned Project operations. The first larval delta smelt were salvaged at the CVP on April 26 and the SWP on April 24. The seasonal cumulative total of salvaged juvenile delta smelt is 2,007. Qwest is now approximately 1,000 cfs, X2 is east of Collinsville, and the 5-day OMR flow is at -5,042 cfs. The data from the 20-mm Survey # 6 indicate low levels of detection in the central Delta and none in the south Delta.

Following the adaptive process parameters in the RPA for Action 3, the SWG agreed that current numbers of salvaged juvenile delta smelt do not reach the level of concern requiring a change in operations, for the following reasons: total cumulative salvage has not reached the total concern level for June of 11,327, as outlined in the OCAP BiOp and the center of delta smelt distribution appears to be out of the south and central Delta. Combined exports are curtailed to comply with the SWRCB D-1641;-5,000 cfs OMR is within the OMR range under Action 3 of the RPA.

7) Longfin Smelt:

Longfin smelt larval distribution (Smelt Larva Survey 1, January 9-10) exceeded the criteria for advice from the SWG under the SWP's 2081 permit; CDFG therefore requested that the Working Group discuss entrainment risk for longfin smelt. The 2081 identifies OMR flow between -1,250 and -5,000 cfs as the range to select from in determining a level adequately protective of longfin larvae. With no detections in the central and south Delta for 20-mm Survey #6 and ~~only one day of salvage~~ **no salvage reported** since May 19, the risk is currently low.

(TFCF staff later today retracted the previous report that 8 juvenile longfin smelt were salvaged on June 1)

WEEKLY ADVICE FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME FOR LONGFIN SMELT

Advice for week of June 4, 2012:

The Smelt Working Group believes that planned exports for this week resulting in -5,000 cfs or less negative OMR will be protective for larvae and juveniles remaining in the Sacramento River and the lower San Joaquin River because the current risk of entrainment into the south Delta is extremely low at that OMR.

Summary of risk: Risk of additional entrainment into the south Delta is currently extremely low given the delta smelt BO limitation of no more negative than -5,000 cfs OMR. Operations are targeting a combined export of about -3,200 cfs during the coming week. Larva/juvenile catches were zero in the central and south Delta based on 20-mm Survey #6 results. At the fish facilities, detection of larvae or salvage of juveniles has been zero since May 19. Few additional

longfin smelt are expected to be salvaged for the remainder of the season regardless of export level.

Basis for advice:

The 2009 State Water Project 2081 for longfin smelt states that advice to the DFG Director shall be based on:

1. Adult Salvage – total adult (≥ 80 mm) longfin smelt salvage (SWP+CVP) for December through February > 5 times the Fall Midwater Trawl longfin smelt annual abundance index.
2. Adult abundance, distribution or other information indicates that OMR flow advice is warranted.
3. Larva distribution in the Smelt Larva Survey or the 20-mm Survey finds longfin smelt larvae present at 8 of 12 Central and South Delta sampling stations in 1 survey (809, 812, 815, 901, 902, 906, 910, 912, 914, 915, 918, 919).
4. Larva catch per tow exceeds 15 longfin smelt larvae or juveniles in 4 or more of the 12 survey stations listed.
5. For Barker Slough exports only: After January 15 through March 31 of critically dry or dry water years (Sacramento River), based on abundance and distribution and detection at Station 716.

Discussion of Criteria and Conditions

Review of past information: Longfin smelt larvae were collected in the Smelt Larva Survey #1 (January 9-10, 2012), so adult salvage and distribution are now informational and can be viewed as suggestive possible future larvae distribution. As of March 5, 2012, no ≥ 80 mm longfin smelt have been salvaged for the water year, but larva sampling began at both facilities on February 16, and longfin smelt larvae were detected by the State on February 19 and at both facilities on February 20. The Fall Midwater Trawl longfin smelt annual abundance index for 2011 is 477. The total adult salvage level threshold for advice is 2,385 (see criterion in #1).

December Fall Midwater Trawl and Bay Study surveys collected adult longfin smelt in the San Joaquin River just downstream and just upstream of the Antioch Bridge. In early January, Bay Study collected adult longfin smelt as far upstream as San Andreas Shoals on the San Joaquin River. The first Smelt Larva Survey of 2012 caught longfin smelt larvae at 9 of 12 criteria stations in the central and south Delta (criterion #3, Figure 1) triggering the need for advice. Larva catches (densities) were very low during Survey 1 and hydraulic conditions at the time posed little risk to longfin smelt larvae. Larvae numbers increased in Smelt Larva Survey 2, and then declined slightly in Survey 3 and again in Survey 4 followed by a substantial drop in survey 5.

Review of new and current information: The 6th 20-mm Survey (May 21-24) detected no longfin smelt larvae or juveniles in the central and south Delta (Table 1). The risk of additional

longfin smelt entrainment into the south Delta is believed to be extremely low. Longfin smelt juveniles were not salvaged in the past week, and have not been salvaged since May 19. Similarly, no larvae have been observed in fish larval samples at the Delta export facilities since May 3. It is unlikely that many additional longfin smelt will be salvaged during the remainder of the month given the -5,000 OMR limitation based on the delta smelt BO (i.e., longfin smelt juveniles in the Sacramento River would be at risk if OMR substantially more negative than -5000 cfs was allowed).

Combined state and federal exports are targeting 3,200 cfs for the coming week to maintain OMR no more negative than -5,000 cfs as stipulated by the delta smelt Biological Opinion.

The longfin smelt incidental take permit restrictions for Barker Slough exports concluded for 2012 on March 31. Although longfin smelt larvae remain in the vicinity, exports remain sporadic and low, and should not entrain larvae.

Table 1. Longfin smelt catch per station from 20mm Survey #6, 2012 (partially processed).

Year	Survey	Station	Date	# Tows Processed	Species_	Total Catch	Min Length	Max Length	Avg Length
2012	6	323	23-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	1	15	15	15
2012	6	340	23-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	1	28	28	28
2012	6	342	23-May-12	1	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	343	23-May-12	1	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	344	23-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	1	23	23	23
2012	6	345	23-May-12	1	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	346	23-May-12	1	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	405	24-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	2	22	28	25
2012	6	411	24-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	1	27	27	27
2012	6	418	24-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	3	27	27	27
2012	6	501	22-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	28	15	29	23.75
2012	6	504	22-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	164	12	29	21.1727
2012	6	519	22-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	68	13	28	21.5735
2012	6	602	22-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	42	18	28	24.4762
2012	6	606	22-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	4	18	22	20.25
2012	6	609	22-May-12	1	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	610	22-May-12	1	Longfin Smelt	3	16	24	19.3333
2012	6	508	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	29	16	30	21.5172
2012	6	513	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	48	11	25	18.1667
2012	6	520	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	1	13	13	13
2012	6	801	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	13	13	24	19
2012	6	804	23-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	703	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	21	11	24	19.0952
2012	6	704	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	4	14	23	19.25
2012	6	705	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	706	23-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	2	15	19	17
2012	6	707	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	711	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	716	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	718	21-May-12	3	Longfin Smelt	1	21	21	21
2012	6	719	24-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	720	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	723	24-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	724	24-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	726	24-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	809	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	812	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	815	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	901	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	902	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	906	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	910	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	912	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	914	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	915	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	918	21-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			
2012	6	919	22-May-12	3	No Longfin Catch	0			

Suisun Bay & West

Confluence

Sac. River System

Central & South Delta

Processing complete through 6/1/2012

*Decreased tow time