

Delta Smelt Scoping Team Meeting (11/17/20)

Attendees: Brycen Swart, Chuck Hanson, Erica Fleishman, Erin Cole, Erwin Van Nieuwenhuyse, Eva Bush, Larry Brown, Mike Eakin, Noble Hendrix, Pat Coulston, Sam Luoma, Scott Hamilton, Shawn Acuna

Action Items

- Bruce – follow up with Erica re: Fall Outflow Study administrative issues
- Bruce – coordinate with Erica and Noble to schedule Fall Outflow Study presentations at DSST, CAMT, and Policy Group meetings in 2021
- Bruce – determine what would be required to publish Population and Volume reports

Discussion

- Fall Outflow Study Update (Erica, Noble)
 - Have been making progress on additional occupancy models – none outperformed the top two models.
 - Using algorithm to look at predictive performance – results: two models with non-zero weights. Identified three different wet cases (wet Decembers in wet years) and dry cases (dry Decembers in dry falls) to see spatial variability across conditions.
 - Little progress to date on abundance work (since start of new contract)
 - Hope to submit manuscript for occupancy work to a journal by the end of the year (mostly written, co-authors still need to review) – not clear if there will be time/budget for a manuscript related to abundance work.
 - Questions/Comments
 - When will DSST have a chance to review occupancy manuscript?
 - Could provide it as a report at the same time that it's being submitted. No proprietary information from SWCs, so there shouldn't be a hold up.
 - At the end of this contract will there be a draft document regarding abundance?
 - Not sure how far we can get with abundance modeling. Need to have a discussion regarding pursuing abundance report/manuscript
 - Would appreciate an oral presentation on findings
 - Happy to provide a presentation but it will be basically be the same as the last presentation we delivered (no significant changes).
 - A reiteration could be helpful, especially prior to reading manuscript.
 - Haven't shared with CAMT/Policy Group – will need to refine presentation to be more high-level based on audience. Would be ideal to share before manuscript is released.
 - Probably best for us (Noble and Erica) to deliver presentation. Plenty of time (six months from manuscript submission to publication)
 - Would prefer to have a presentation at DSST before CAMT/Policy Group
 - Would like to read report before presentation
 - Draft manuscript or technical report would be ideal, won't be a review (i.e., up to Erica/Noble what to do with any comments received)
 - It will be the same document

Facilitator Notes, Not Reviewed or Approved by Meeting Participants

- After the report, would like to have a discussion about follow-on work (e.g., variables that weren't tested)
- Entrainment Study 3 Discussions (Shawn)
 - Had a call with Pete and Josh (call notes available): Pete has continued work out of his own interest
 - Addressing some of the comments but not using multiple years (only has hydro data for one year)
 - Report will be ready by end of the year
 - Would like to discuss after circulating draft
 - Will be classified as USGS drafts – means they can't be publicly viewable/referenced
 - Publishing three reports (volume, population, PEL) would require additional funding and time (to shepherd through administrative process)
 - PEL report would require 3 more years
 - Questions/Comments
 - USGS restrictions feels odd – has CSAMP been in this situation before?
 - No, though we have encountered some restrictions in MAST reports (e.g., try to avoid using unpublished data so that readers can evaluate data themselves). USGS has gotten really strict about this over the last four years.
 - Draft reports would need to be published (as USGS report or journal publication) in order to be cited, if it's just data there's another (easier) pathway.
 - Likely too much interpretation for it to be viewed as a data report.
 - There are at least one or two USGS co-authors on each of the reports
 - What would it cost to run reports through USGS publication process? Probably not a huge amount of money but may take some time
 - Do we want the PEL report out (or are the results already covered elsewhere – e.g., by Josh's work)?
 - How is the population report different than USFWS's population estimate?
 - Different methods. Numbers will likely be different but variance will be similar.
 - I thought the volume report was really good and would like to see it made public. Not as interested in population report (other good work has been done on this). The PEL report sounds like it's too far from the finish line.
 - Various investigators approach these topics differently and we don't really know who is right/wrong. It's instructive to see what people did and what they came up with – hate to see this work die on the vine. This was a large undertaking, there's value in getting the pieces out and explaining what we did (in a timely fashion).
 - Agreed. Don't like the idea of only publishing some but not all of the reports. At a minimum would like to have CAMT hear about it.
 - Might DSP solicitation be a potential source of funding?
 - Potentially – for three years of additional work (not just for getting it through USGS publication).
 - Worth having discussion about additional research at that point – could reach out to investigators to do some additional modeling.

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- Like the idea of waiting to see Pete's update at the end of the year and re-having this discussion then.
- Modeling efforts are complicated because fish are moving to more optimal ranges for salinity/turbidity that change as they mature. Need a better simplistic understanding of what the fish are doing before detailed modeling.
- Sounds like the plan is to wait for Pete's update, determine what it would take to publish Population and Volume reports and look into additional behavior modeling.
 - Might also be a good idea to check in with CAMT/Policy Group for direction
 - do they want us continuing to look at entrainment?
 - Along the same lines, does Policy Group want us to vet any of the SDM questions? What is the future role of the DSST? Where does the DSST fit into adaptive management framework?
 - Strategic conversation needed in coordination with CAMT
- Next Step Decisions:
 - Are we okay with not having access to citing the reports as they will not be public?
 - Assuming we just try to get USGS to approve the drafts so they can be cited and publicly available then we as a group need to find funding to do this. Is anyone interested?
 - Knowing that significant funding and time needs will be required to address the rest of the comments, is MWD still interested in providing the funding?