

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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Dr. Laurel Larsen, Delta Lead Scientist
Delta Science Program, Delta Stewardship Council
715 P Street, 15-300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: Independent Panel Review of the Methodology for the Spring-run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Production Estimate

Dear Dr. Larsen:

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) requests the Delta Science Program's (DSP) assistance in conducting an external, independent panel review of the subject topic. The 2020 Incidental Take Permit (ITP) for the Long-Term Operation of the State Water Project (SWP) in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta issued by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) requires development of a monitoring plan and methodology to calculate the Spring-run Chinook Salmon Juvenile Production Estimate (CHNSR JPE). The CHNSR JPE is the estimated number of Spring-run Chinook salmon entering the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and its purpose is to inform SWP operations. The 2020 ITP also requires ongoing collaborative science and independent reviews to inform and adaptively manage the long-term operations of the SWP. Since issuance of the 2020 ITP, DWR has convened a multi-agency effort (led by CHNSR JPE Guidance Team) to develop the CHNSR JPE monitoring and data management plans, and to consider and develop calculation methodologies using a Structured Decision-Making approach.

DWR would like to use the DSP's established independent scientific peer review and advice processes to receive feedback from subject matter experts on the CHNSR JPE monitoring plan and calculation methodologies. DWR would like the DSP to convene and facilitate a panel of subject matter experts to review the materials, engage in a public dialogue with DWR and interagency lead staff on preliminary review findings, and provide a final panel report of panel findings and recommendations by late summer 2024. DWR and the CHNSR JPE Guidance Team will use the panel findings to inform the final CHNSR JPE approach, to be submitted to CDFW by September 30, 2024, and implemented no later than March 31, 2025.

If you have any questions regarding this request, please contact Brittany Davis at Brittany.E.Davis@water.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

3/16/2023

Ted Craddock
State Water Project Deputy Director
California Department of Water Resources