

GGSA TAKES RESTAURANTEURS, CHEFS, FISHING ON SALTY LADY

Some of the bay area's best chefs and food industry folks went fishing with GGSA August 18 aboard the charter boat Salty Lady. Many of them regularly cook and serve salmon so they wanted to get an up close look at where salmon come from. Ted Wilson of Fine and Rare restaurant in San Francisco organized the trip which was a great success with everyone taking home some salmon. GGSA was thrilled to help the chefs and food industry leaders get a look at salmon fishing. The day was spent on the Marin coast where the group joined perhaps 100 boats, sport and commercial, big and small, to catch the highly coveted California king salmon. ■



Crista Luedtke, owner of Boon Eat + Drink in Guerneville lands a nice one.

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE PASSES SALMON RESOLUTION

The California Legislature has approved Senate Joint Resolution 7, introduced by Senator Mike McGuire, which urges state and federal departments and agencies to make collaborative, statewide salmon fishery restoration an urgent and high priority. In addition to making salmon restoration an urgent and high priority, the resolution also includes language supporting disaster relief for fishermen hurt by the drought. GGSA worked closely with Senator McGuire's office and Legislature's Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture to get the salmon restoration part of the resolution crafted and approved. GGSA hopes that passage of the resolution will provide salmon advocates a valuable tool in future dealings with state and federal agencies responsible for salmon recovery. ■

GGSA FOUNDER STEPS DOWN

After eight years as President and Treasurer, GGSA founder Victor Gonella has been forced to step down due to family issues. The salmon world owes a huge debt of gratitude for Gonella's vision, leadership, and tireless work to make GGSA what it is today. Most don't know that Gonella's staff from his private business provided the administrative backbone that

allowed GGSA to grow from an all-volunteer organization to one with fulltime staff. Gonella brought years of successful grassroots fundraising experience from his many years working with the California Waterfowl Association to help fund GGSA and grow its membership. Gonella determined to create GGSA after the first-ever shutdown of ocean salmon fishing in 2008 and 2009 following record-setting diversions of Sacramento River water to the San Joaquin Valley and points south in the early 2000's.

Gonella is a bay area native and lifelong fisherman and outdoorsman. He was inducted into the California Waterfowl Association Hall of Fame in 2016 for his contributions to water fowl in the state. He was a driving force behind events that led to state and federal salmon hatcheries trucking virtually all of their fish to safe release sites in San Francisco Bay in 2014 and 2015 after GGSA scientists demonstrated that releasing them into drought-stricken rivers would kill them. This action is almost certainly responsible for there being ocean salmon fishing in 2016 and 2017. ■



FISH • TALES

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Limiting use of trucked fish release sites to two days to minimize predation seems to be working

2017: STATE OF THE SALMON

This season has seen lots of two year old salmon in the ocean, more than have been seen in what seems like years. Sport fishermen, especially on the charter boats, have caught many of these fish. The fish have been widely dispersed and the hope is that many will survive to adulthood for the 2018 season. Where these fish are from isn't completely known yet but greater survival of hatchery fish released from the Half Moon Bay net pen coupled with a new approach used by CDFW to limit

release of trucked hatchery fish in the same spot to two days to minimize predation is believed to be linked. In addition, the good soaking Northern California got during the winter and spring of 2015/2016 almost certainly contributed to higher survival of both natural origin salmon and hatchery fish released at the hatcheries. It will likely be another year or so until we firmly understand the origins of the two year olds. This will provide valuable insight into what is working and why, so we can try to repeat the winning formula. Meanwhile

the damaging effects of the drought continue to be felt in extremely low number of adult spring and winter run that returned to spawn this year. The Bureau of Reclamation's release of hot water from Shasta dam in 2014 and 2015 killed the eggs of most naturally spawning salmon in the Sacramento River three years ago. Of the few adult winter run that returned this year, almost all were hatchery fish which enjoyed cooler water when they were incubating eggs than their wild cousins. ■

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TO DONATE, PLEASE CALL (855) 251-GGSA OR VISIT GOLDENGATESALMON.ORG

GGSA WORKING TO IMPROVE SALMON HABITAT

Efforts to improve habitat by GGSA and various stakeholders abound on several fronts throughout the Central Valley. What follows is an update on some of the efforts underway.

CVPIA RESTORATION FUND UPDATE:

In 2018 over \$20 million from a federal fund will be spent on Central Valley salmon restoration activities. Several of those millions will be used to restore badly needed side channel salmon nursery areas in the upper Sacramento River. GGSA has pushed for this project from the beginning because the side channels provide important feeding and rearing habitat for baby salmon. Another GGSA project to dim some of the brightest night lights along the Sacramento River is also moving forward under the federal fund. Parts of the river lit up at night suffer big salmon losses because baby salmon, confused when they swim into lit areas, become easy targets for predators. Night-lit hotspots have been cataloged and the next step is to contact the owners of the lights, educate them to the damage they cause salmon, and see about getting them turned off, replaced, or redirected away from the water.



Partially filled side channel at Anderson River Park is being reopened to year round flows to provide rearing habitat for baby salmon

CENTRAL VALLEY SALMON HABITAT PARTNERSHIP LAUNCHED:

On August 29 the Central Valley Salmon Habitat Partnership was officially launched to get more key Central Valley salmon habitat restored. GGSA joined other fish and conservation groups, water users, agricultural interests, and state and federal agencies in this joint effort. The Partnership is modeled after the successful Central Valley Joint Venture, a coalition of state, federal, conservation and private interests that banded together to restore waterfowl habitat in the Central Valley. That effort is widely credited with rebuilding populations of waterfowl that use the Central Valley.

The Salmon Habitat Partnership expects to focus on several near term restoration projects while the scientists in the group spend the next year and a half developing a long term, comprehensive

restoration plan. We expect much of that plan will mirror the GGSA Salmon Rebuilding Plan although the Partnership is unlikely to work on some of the hatchery issues GGSA works on.



GGSA executive director John McManus addresses signing ceremony as California's Resources Secretary John Laird and National Marine Fisheries deputy regional administrator Scott Rumsey (left) listen.

COURT APPOINTED GROUPS CONSIDER SALMON RESTORATION

In addition to the restoration efforts mentioned above, another group, composed mostly of state and federal agencies, ag and water interests, and salmon advocates is considering investing or supporting salmon habitat improvements. This group was

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convened by the judge overseeing litigation to protect salmon from state and federal water projects. Some of this group's efforts may get folded into the work of the new Central Valley Salmon Habitat Partnership but others (such as those that aid only hatchery salmon) may not. Bottom line: GGSA is involved in or monitoring all of the efforts mentioned above and working for the shortest and quickest actions that will generate more salmon and sustainable habitat improvements. ■



It's all about helping baby salmon grow and survive to the ocean.

NEW DAMS PROPOSED

The late great Zeke Grader once said "I've never seen a dam that was good for salmon". Zeke would be shocked to see how many new dams are being proposed for California. Dam backers are trying to take advantage of billions of dollars provided in Proposition 1 for new water storage. But Prop 1 doesn't say reservoirs behind dams are the only new water storage that can qualify... underground rechargeable aquifers that don't lose millions of gallons to

STATE AGENCY FORMALLY ADOPTS 'MULTI-BENEFIT' FLOOD CONTROL PROJECTS WHICH ARE GOOD FOR SALMON

In last year's record setting rainy season, the huge Yolo Bypass floodplain saved the City of Sacramento from flooding. Anyone driving over Highway 80 on the Yolo Causeway from Davis into Sacramento noticed the huge volume of water on both sides of the highway. The flooded bypass also provided ideal habitat and food for hungry baby salmon. The bigger the baby salmon grow, the better their chances of surviving once they hit the ocean.

In August, the state agency in charge of providing flood protection for the Central

Valley adopted a policy of creating, or reopening, flood plains as multi-benefit flood control structures. These also provide great salmon habitat.

The state agency acted in response to a prolonged advocacy campaign by GGSA and allies. No longer will levees and dikes be the only form of flood control in the Central Valley getting state funds. Now flood plain projects that also help salmon will also be considered and funded. ■

GGSA Founding Members Chris Arcoletto, John Atkinson, Raymond Bonneau, Dennis Burkell, Hugh Chatham, Coastside Fishing Club, Joseph Conte, Crab Boat Owners Association, Tom Creedon, Ron Davis, Jim DeMartini, Joe Donatini, Jacky Douglas, Chris Duba, Kerry Egan, Ken Elie, Patrick Elie, Tim Eli, Yancy Forest-Knowles, Douglas R. Gaebe, Vic Giacalone, Victor Gonella, Zeke Grader, Ren Harris, Humbolt Fisherman's Marketing Association, Paul Johnson, Perry Kerson, Jonah Li, Todd Magaline, John McManus, Joseph Meiswinkel, Mark Milcoch, Galen Onizuka, Rick Powers, Bob Praszker, Queen of Hearts Sportfishing, Randy Repass, Frank Rescino, Jeff Robles, Patty Schifferle, Frank Seghesio, Richard Shears, Ken Stagnaro, Roger Thomas, Edwin A. Tognetti, Aaron Weinzinger, Jay Yokomizo, David Zeff, Thomas Zizzo

evaporation qualify too. A proposed project has to provide some public benefits and help the Delta.

Determining which do and which don't is where things are likely to get interesting. The California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife is expected to issue their initial judgment on these questions by mid-December.

Perhaps most worrisome is the proposed Sites dam in the Sacramento Valley. As currently proposed, it would divert water after the current bare minimum required flows are met (which proved to be

inadequate to protect salmon during the drought).

All of the dam proposals presume there is still extra water in the state that simply isn't being caught and stored.

After any future dams fill, and water is shared with new customers, what happens when drought strikes again? It was bad enough last time. We lost two years' worth of salmon in 2014 and 2015 due to too much water being diverted. Salmon advocates will need to tune in as these proposal move forward. ■