



Party boats are reporting early limit fishing on most days

Salmon Season Breaks Out Up and Down the Coast

Now that sport fishing has opened in the ocean off the coast north of Pigeon Pt, fishing has been very good with lots of boats getting early limits. Many of the fish appear to be big three year olds in the 12 to 20 pound range. There's also a very good showing of smaller two year salmon of various sizes, leading some to speculate that many different water basins may be contributing to what we're seeing in the ocean.

The wet springs of 2016 and 2017 no doubt greatly helped deliver Central Valley and coastal salmon to the ocean in large numbers.

The Half Moon Bay net pen operated by GGSA coalition member, Coastside Fishing Club, is likely another major contributor to the bounty, as is the two day on, five day off hatchery release strategy mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter. The fair number of fish over 25 pounds could well be fish from the 2015 drought trucking releases GGSA won. ■



Feather River hatchery salmon released into Sacramento River

GGSA Teams with Fishing Guide Bob Sparre to Save Feather River fish

Sacramento River fishing guide Bob Sparre called GGSA in late April to alert that a pending release of a million hatchery fall run salmon into the lower Feather River scheduled for May 2 would be a disaster. Sparre reported that guides were catching lots of striped bass in the lower Feather and the river was running low and clear, perfect conditions for predators. This is the opposite of the high, turbid flows needed to safely get baby salmon past predators.

In the weeks prior, GGSA and others had been asking the Dept. of Water Resources to release a small amount of extra water from Oroville timed to increase turbidity, flow, and survival of this group of salmon. DWR refused. Earlier in April, DWR did provide a small pulse flow to aid the out migration of the small group of hatchery spring run salmon which showed that they understand the benefit and need for pulse flows for baby salmon.

Together, GGSA and Sparre contacted the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and requested that the state move the release location downstream to the Sacramento River to give these baby salmon a fighting chance. CDFW agreed to the move but cited the open Delta Cross Channel, which entrains fish into the deadly interior Delta, as the reason. Whatever the reason, the move was made, and no doubt fewer fish died as a result.

The press coverage of the release included DWR's refusal to release a pulse flow as part of the reason CDFW changed the release location.

Reports surfaced weeks later that DWR was unhappy to have been called to task in the press for their refusal to share a small amount of water with stressed salmon stocks. Maybe next time they'll think twice before turning down a request to help the salmon fishery. ■

Experimental Coleman Release Strategies Considered



An experimental release site for Coleman hatchery fish near Butte City is being reviewed

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Salmon released at the Coleman hatchery near Redding have over 250 miles of downstream travel before reaching the Delta, Bay and ocean. Most don't survive the long and dangerous trip except in years with heavy rain and snow runoff. Fast, muddy flows in those years speeds the trip and cloaks the baby salmon from predators. But with wet years being few and far between, Coleman generally contributes the least number of adult salmon on a percentage basis, to the ocean and river fisheries.

GGSA and others have suggested modifications ranging from trucking and

releasing the fish at a site somewhere downstream of the hatchery on the Sacramento, to growing them out downstream and trucking them to SF bay.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has expressed an openness to discussing a pilot project that might test some of these ideas in an effort to improve survival without sacrificing the homing of the fish back to the Coleman hatchery.

The goal is to increase survival without appreciably increasing straying of returning adults. Stay tuned. ■

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OUR EVENTS



Ladies, make sure to bring your boots August 17 and prepare to bring home the salmon

GGSA Fish Like A Girl Salmon Fishing Trip August 17

Tickets sold out quickly to GGSA's inaugural all women's fishing day on Friday, August 17th aboard the Salty Lady charter boat out of Sausalito. The women will experience a comfortable charter boat fully equipped with all rods, tackle, nice restroom, and plenty of space and help on board to fish. Women who have caught many salmon will join others experiencing the thrill of catching a salmon for the first time in what is sure to be a great day out the Gate. ■



GGSA Santa Cruz fundraising dinner set for September 21

GGSA to Hold Santa Cruz Fundraising Dinner September 21

GGSA will hold a fundraising dinner in Santa Cruz on September 21st at the Elks Lodge. It will be a great night featuring hors d'oeuvres, craft beer and wine, a great dinner, silent and open auctions, and the chance to compare fish stories with all the folks we share the water with, all while raising funds for salmon restoration.

Joe Donatini, owner of Johnson Hicks Marine Electronics in Santa Cruz, and a GGSA director, is hosting and chairing this year's dinner.

Tickets, at \$85, are available by visiting our website. www.goldengatesalmon.org.

Table Sponsor packages are \$700.00 for a table of eight and include reserved seating and \$120 worth of raffle tickets. A GGSA membership is included with each ticket purchase. More info on tickets can be had at 855-251-4472. Beverages are generously donated by Lost Coast Brewing Company and some of Northern California's best local wineries.

All proceeds benefit GGSA's work to restore Central Valley salmon, the Bay-Delta ecosystem, and communities that rely on salmon as a long-term, sustainable commercial, recreational and cultural resource. Salmon recovery is GGSA's passion. ■





Two more tanker trailers are needed to deliver hatchery fish on time

GGSA, Allies, ask CDFW for Two New Tanker Trailers

GGSA organized a letter signed by four other salmon fishing organizations requesting CDFW buy two additional tanker trailers to move hatchery salmon. The extra trailers are crucial to taking advantage of new release strategies that have greatly increased survival.

Earlier in the year, GGSA worked hard at the state legislature to secure state budget funds to acquire the additional trailers.

Tags recovered from hatchery salmon clearly show that fish trucked to the bay survive at much higher rates than those released at the hatchery, in all but a very few circumstances. Fish released at a given bay site survive at high rates the first two days of the release. After that, predators key in on the site and wipe out subsequent releases. In addition, releases timed for an outgoing tide towards dusk, when bird predation drops off, further constrain when and where fish should be released.

CDFW has been trying to rotate release sites after two days but has run into a problem of having enough tanker trucks to accommodate the new schedule. This is why GGSA has pushed hard for acquisition of the two new tanker trailers.

The two day on, five day off release strategy, started in 2016, is one of the reasons we're seeing better fishing this year. The added survival of released hatchery fish probably gives us the equivalent of one new, well-managed hatchery for the price of a few trailers, some extra personnel at crunch time to run them, and possibly a few more net pens. CDFW hasn't publicly responded to the request but there are indications they're taking action to get the additional trailers. ■



GGSA supports efforts by a key southern CA water agency to recycle more water instead of taking Feather River water during drought

GGSA Support for Water Supply Project Moves Forward

Instead of damming and diverting more salmon rivers, one southern California water company is proposing to recycle more of its own water. In return for state funds to help build new underground storage and treatment facilities, the water district would cut its use of water from the Feather River during times of drought. GGSA has advocated on behalf of this proposal before the State Water Commission.

The Commission, which oversees the awarding of state funds for such projects increased the ranking for this project after GGSA pled the case for it. The increased ranking now makes state funding more likely. ■

GGSA Working Overtime to Stop Congressional Threats to Salmon

Right now at least four separate bills are working their way through the US Congress all aimed at weakening salmon protections or taking more water Sacramento Valley water from salmon to give to San Joaquin Valley agricultural barons.

One bill calls for making the planned Delta twin diversion tunnels immune from any legal challenge. Instead, state and federal bureaucrats would have the

last word on how the tunnels would be built and operated. GGSA is opposing this because the current tunnels project, which Californians never got to vote on, would likely drive salmon and other native species to extinction.

Another bill would strip the National Marine Fisheries Service of its authority to protect salmon in relicensing decisions for dams on the Tuolumne River. Salmon runs on the Tuolumne, now sparse, once numbered in the tens of thousands. A major concern is for the bad precedent this would set that could lead to all west coast dams ignoring downstream salmon runs.

Another bill calls for shutting down federal efforts to restore salmon in the San Joaquin River as required by an agreement that followed decades of conflict. Although local water districts gave their word and signed the agreement, their Congressmen are now trying to revoke it.

Another would exempt the federal Central Valley Project and the State Water Project from court review of their impacts on salmon and other natural resources.

All of these bills are aimed at delivering more salmon water to junior water rights

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users (meaning they were last in line to apply for water) in the western San Joaquin Valley. All are an attack on the West Coast's salmon fishing families, our natural heritage, and basic fairness. GGSA is working hard with various legislative offices to make sure none of them become law. GGSA efforts have already resulted in letters from San Francisco's Mayor and Senator Dianne Feinstein opposing the bill related to NMFS authority on the Tuolumne River. ■

Feather River Salmon Rearing/Flood Control Project Moving Forward

Work is scheduled to begin in August on restoration of a prime salmon rearing ground downstream of Oroville Dam. This comes following GGSA work with state legislators and others that succeeded in getting the state Dept. of Water Resources to drop its opposition to the project and embrace it. In addition to providing new rearing habitat to Feather River salmon, the project will also lessen the threat of future flooding. Other allied



Part of Oroville Wildlife Area to be restored for salmon rearing floodplain

groups, including American Rivers and River Partners, worked to get this project up and running. ■

State Orders Increase in River Flows

On July 6 the State Water Resources Control Board called for increases in flows on three of the San Joaquin River's main tributaries; the Merced, Stanislaus and Tuolumne rivers. All of them have salmon runs. GGSA has worked for years at the state board to win this extra



Originating in snow covered Sierra Nevada Mountains, the three main tributaries of the San Joaquin River have important cold water needed by salmon

water for salmon. The announcement is facing stiff opposition from local water user groups that currently divert up to 75 percent of the water.

The additional water is intended to help both salmon runs in the rivers as well as flows through the Bay Delta which have greatly declined in recent years. The state board also laid out a call for reduced diversions in the Sacramento Valley and greater flows allowed to reach the Delta and Bay. It's hard to see how big new water diversion. ■

Founding Members Chris Arcoleo, John Atkinson, Raymond Bonneau, Dennis Burkell, Hugh Chatham, Coastside Fishing Club, Joesph 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 Mlcoch, 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