



July 2024

Member Newsletter of the Golden State Salmon Association

[goldenstatesalmon.org](https://goldenstatesalmon.org)

## GSSA and Partners Shut Down Delta Tunnel Until DWR Complies With Law

In response to GSSA's argument that geotechnical work for the Delta Tunnel would harm salmon, other fish species and fishermen, the Sacramento County Superior Court issued an injunction on June 21 that effectively shut down the project until the Department of Water Resources (DWR) complies with the law and the Court's order.

In May, GSSA and partners filed a motion to stop DWR from performing invasive investigatory geological work the agency deemed necessary before building the Delta Tunnel. GSSA argued that by creating many boreholes, some of which will be over hundreds of feet deep, the dredging of several massive trenches, and multiple vibration tests would stir up the sediment at the bottom of the Delta and thereby expose salmon and other species to pollutants that have settled on the Delta floor. Once those pollutants are absorbed by fish and bioaccumulate in the fish species caught by fishermen and women, our fishing community would be harmed.

"The fixation on the Delta Tunnel paints a damning picture of the state's commitment to environ-

mental stewardship, fisheries restoration, and the tens of thousands of jobs that rely on healthy salmon populations," said Scott Artis, executive director of GSSA. "The Department of Water Resources attempting to rush through the project's geotechnical work before getting legally required approvals not only fast-tracks disruptions to our fisheries but also erodes public trust. It's time to prioritize the needs of California's people and ecosystems over corporate interests and shortsighted, fish-killing projects."



*"The other doctors say low flows and lethal temperatures are killing you. I could do something about that. But why don't you just eat a few almonds and call me in the morning?"*

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SCOTT ARTIS

## Temperatures Below Shasta Better This Fall

During the recent drought, temperature conditions below Shasta Dam were catastrophically bad – leading to the loss of a large percentage of juvenile fall and winter run salmon. High Temperatures and the low survival of the remaining juvenile salmon as they out migrated down the Sacramento River, played a major part in the current season closure. The past winter was reasonably wet, and the 2022-2023 winter was very

# WE'RE FIGHTING

## Shasta Temperatures (continued)

wet. GSSA and our allies have been meeting with the Bureau of Reclamation regularly to push for a better approach to temperature management at Shasta Dam. In fact, we even filed oppositions to the Draft Shasta Temperature Management Plan in early June.

It looks like our work, pressure, and ample precipitation will pay off for salmon this fall. The Bureau of Reclamation recently completed a Final Temperature Management Plan for Shasta Dam for this year which projects that temperature dependent mortality will be 0.4% for Sacramento River winter-run – with similar high survival for fall-run. The estimate prepared by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is higher. NMFS estimated 2% Sacramento River winter-run juvenile losses from temperature. If these estimates prove to be correct, this fall should provide good conditions for Sacramento River runs to start rebuilding. The Bureau is also working to develop a new way to estimate Sacramento River fall-run temperature survival. Sacramento River fall-run suffer along with the Endangered Species Act listed winter-run when temperature conditions are bad. However, the fact that fall-run spawns after the winter-run can make predicting fall-run temperature mortality a bit of a challenge. Fall temperatures are less predictable, and rainfall in the fall can change the situation for fall-run. GSSA continues to push the agencies to develop improved tools to help them better protect salmon.



## GSSA Backs FISHERIES Act to Expedite Fishery Disaster Relief

In a move to help expedite the deployment of federal fishery disaster relief to fishing industry businesses, GSSA worked with Congressman Donalds' office and signed-on with organizational support for the bipartisan FISHERIES Act. The introduced legislation would improve the federal process associated with delivering fishery disaster relief and seeks to expedite the distribution of federal disaster relief following fishery disaster declarations.

"The California salmon fishery is in its second year of closure and that means fishing families have lost most of their income. The impacts are personal, as well as economic, and they are desperately waiting for disaster relief funding that can often take more than a year to receive," said Scott Artis, executive director of Golden State Salmon Association. "The FISHERIES Act is a critical lifeline for fishing businesses and will ensure much needed funding is quickly distributed to thousands of families who struggle

to put food on the table, make mortgage payments, and keep their boats from being repossessed during fishery disasters."

In April, the 2024 California salmon fishing season was closed for the second year in a row while fishing families impacted by the 2023 closure continue to wait for emergency disaster relief funding – now more than 15 months after a disaster was declared by the State of California in 2023.



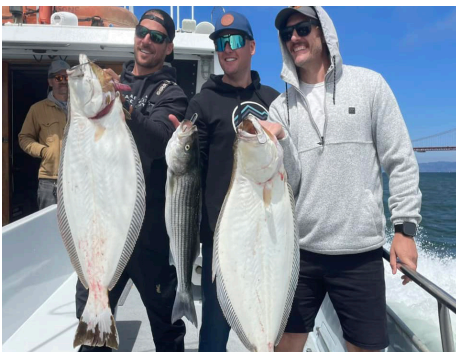
Andy Guiliano of Fish Emeryville speaks about the salmon season closure and the impacts to the fishing industry during an April 2024 GSSA press conference

# FOR SALMO



## **We might not be fishing salmon, but opportunities to fill the freezer are still out there**

Live Bait in the Bay: Halibut and Striped Bass fishing is in full swing within the San Francisco Bay as the live bait fishery opened at the end of May. Fishing quickly picked up as anglers switched from trolling to drifting live bait and the big ones have started to show up. Halibut over 30lbs and large Stripers have been caught within the last couple weeks and the bite seems to be holding steady.



Searching for Bluefin: If history repeats itself, we should start to see Northern and Central California bluefin show themselves along the coast. In July of 2023, Northern California saw one of the most productive stretches of bluefin tuna fishing anglers had ever seen and with the great ocean conditions in mid-July boats began their search to be some of the first fishermen to land one in 2024.



Salmon in Oregon and Washington: If you want to get your fix of some dime-bright Chinook salmon, the coastline and estuaries of the Pacific Northwest are heating up. Kings over 20lbs have been caught at the mouth of the Rogue River and the commercial fleet reported a handful of Kings caught each day with a great average of about 15-18lbs with several fish over 20lbs during the first opener.

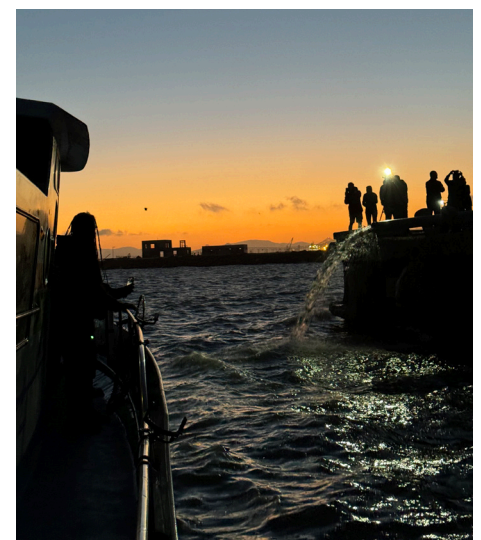


Albacore in Fort Bragg: In July the coast experienced one of the first stretches of flat calm weather and anglers took advantage. A few fishermen made the long run (60 miles) and found Albacore in Fort Bragg. The coast is showing some good signs for tuna and, if the warmer water continues to push its way inshore, anglers from Monterey up to Crescent City will be able to reach the sought-after tuna water.

## **GSSA continues to keep California's youth involved with salmon smolt releases and fishing trips**

One of the most fulfilling parts of our work is helping to get today's youth out on the water to experience the excitement of being on a boat for the first time, learning about the lifecycle of salmon, or best of all, catching their first fish.

On June 12, GSSA worked with the City of Richmond, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Mokelumne Fish Hatchery to get Richmond Police Activities League youth and chaperones aboard the Salty Lady to watch 500,000 juvenile salmon be released. The energetic group asked a lot of questions and took 100s of photos and videos while learning about why we truck baby salmon to the Bay, what size and age the fish are, their incredible lifecycle, and why we do the releases at night. The kids all left hopeful that they will have an opportunity to catch one of those salmon from the Richmond shore in the future.



# NE FAMILIES

## 2024 Involving our youth (continued)

GSSA member and President of the CA Striped Bass Association, Ken Baccetti played deck boss with Captain Don Franklin of Soul-Man Sportfishing and took six Salesian Boys and Girls Club kids out of San Francisco to catch limits of striped bass plus a halibut for each on June 17.

On July 15 and 16, two groups of kids from the San Mateo Police Activities League (SMPAL) saw what the ocean had to offer while fishing aboard the Hog Heaven and the Salty Lady. This is the fourth year that the SMPAL and Salesian Boys and Girls Club have been fishing thanks to GSSA's Roger Thomas funds. Visit us at [goldenstatesalmon.org](http://goldenstatesalmon.org) if you would like to donate to the Roger Thomas Fund to help future generations go fishing.



## GSSA Gets \$25 Million Win for Hatcheries – But Fight's Not Over

GSSA led the successful effort to place hatchery funding in the California Climate Bond with the help of thousands of fishing businesses, associations, and fishermen and women who added their names in support. Over the last couple months, GSSA worked with state Assemblymembers and Senators to ensure funding for critical hatchery upgrades and expansions, which will increase fish production and support the latest technolo-

gies to support populations of Central Valley Chinook Salmon, was included in the bond. Improved and expanded hatcheries as well as increased production are essential to the survival of California's salmon runs, salmon jobs, and commercial salmon fleet.

The final bond, passed by the state legislature on July 3, includes \$25 million for hatcheries, which is less than we were hoping for but is still essential to funding the improved hatchery management efforts that GSSA has made a top priority. Without GSSA's efforts, there would likely have been no hatchery funding in the bond. In addition, the bond includes \$75 million for dam removal, which could help salmon on the Eel River, Putah Creek and Battle Creek. The bond will now appear on the ballot in November where it will be decided by California voters this upcoming fall.

## Golden State Salmon Association Founding Members

Chris Arcoleo, 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 Elie, Yancy Forest-Knowles, Douglas R. Gaebe, Vic Giacalone, Victor Gonella, Zeke Grader, Ren Harris, Eric Holthouse, 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



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