



Valadao Bill Threatens the Future of CA and OR Salmon Fishing



United States Capitol. Photo by Martin Falbisoner.

As though it weren't enough to be fighting to recover Central Valley wild runs and delivering to policymakers emergency hatchery recommendations to reopen our salmon fishery, now, Golden State Salmon Association (GSSA) is also fighting a bill in the House of Representatives that threatens the future of salmon fishing in California and Oregon. GSSA's Barry Nelson recently returned from a trip to Washington DC, along with Ashley Overhouse from Defenders of Wildlife, and reports on this threat.

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Become a Critical Part of Salmon Restoration

Thank you for supporting the work we have highlighted in this newsletter. Your commitment fuels our mission to restore California's salmon runs for the myriad of people, businesses, cultures, habitats, wildlife and communities the fishery benefits. As a member of Golden State Salmon Association, every time you make a gift, you are:

- Allowing us to advocate for important water policy changes and fight back against legislation that reduces flows in our rivers to a trickle and raises temperatures to lethal levels for salmon;
- Advancing innovative

and creative measures to strengthen the number of salmon returning to our coasts and rivers; and

- Facilitating practical on-the-ground programs that restore critical spawning and rearing habitat for salmon.

We couldn't do this important work without you. From returning the enclosed envelope with a special gift or membership renewal to making a monthly donation on our website, there are a multitude of ways to give back.

Thank you for contributing to our efforts. ■



Help restore and protect our salmon, coasts, rivers and all our traditions

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H.R. 215 threatens salmon in multiple ways. First, it would lock in the Trump Administration's illegal and scientifically baseless 2019 Central Valley salmon biological opinions (BO) – making those BO's very difficult to amend. The 2019 BO authorized the Bureau of Reclamation to drain all of the cold water behind Shasta Dam and kill 100% of endangered winter run salmon below the dam for three years running – making this a salmon extinction plan. Draining the cold water in Lake Shasta is a dire threat to fall run Chinook as well. In many ways, the Bureau is still implementing that plan – which has played a major part in the current salmon season closure. The National Marine Fisheries Service has acknowledged that the 2019 BO is inadequate – and is in the middle

of a multi-year process to write a new BO. H.R. 215 would stop that effort to write stronger salmon protections.

Second, the bill would overturn state law and authorize construction for the proposed Shasta Dam raise project. The dam raise would largely benefit one water agency – the massive Westlands Water District. That project would further threaten struggling Sacramento River salmon runs by starving them of even more of the spring flows needed for juveniles to survive their migration to the ocean. If the dam is raised, Sacramento River salmon runs would face even more disastrous human caused drought conditions.

Third, the bill specifies water delivery levels from the Central Valley project for certain

Sacramento Valley water users – regardless of actual water availability or impacts to salmon.

Fourth, in a remarkably cynical move given the current salmon season shutdown, low fall run populations, and the risk of extinction for the winter and spring runs, H.R. 215 would declare the Central Valley Project's Improvement Act's salmon restoration effort complete – shutting down further salmon restoration efforts.

GSSA is working closely with environmental and tribal allies to block this dangerous bill. Our recent trip to DC included meetings with sympathetic House and Senate members in California and other states, as well as with federal agencies. Expect to see action alerts from GSSA in the future, when public opposition will be most effective. ■

GSSA, Supporters, Tribes, and Organizations Rally at State Capitol to Save Salmon

On July 5th, 250-300 fishermen and women, Tribal members, environmental organizations and concerned Californians from north to south took to the steps and halls of the State capitol to fight for water justice and our salmon fishery.

As the rally commenced outside, lobbying teams comprised of volunteers and led by Golden State Salmon Association, Restore the Delta, Defenders of Wildlife, San Francisco Baykeeper, Save California Salmon, Sierra Club California and other organizations

met with more than 100 State Assemblymembers and Senators – advocating, in the shadow of the State's 2023 salmon season closure, for the Newsom Administration and policymakers to prioritize the protection of California's water and salmon.

California's 2023 salmon season has been closed, which is

negatively impacting jobs, businesses and families, and could have been avoided. The coalition delivered a comprehensive message that included fighting for the State Water Board's completion of the Bay-Delta Plan and protection of critical in-stream flows and healthy river temperatures.

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Rally on the steps of the State Capitol during Day of Action for Water Justice and Salmon

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GSSA thanks all our members and supporters who attended and volunteered at the event as well as the efforts of all the coalition partners and their dedication to restoring salmon and the Bay-Delta watershed. ■

Quick Bites

With so many meaningful campaigns, actions, and results over the past few months from our GSSA team, here are some quick highlights and figures to know:

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife released approximately 5,365,000 fall-run Chinook Salmon into the San Francisco Bay at GSSA identified release sites Fort Baker and the Romberg Center – increasing survival rates by at least two times.
- Restore the Delta honored GSSA's John McManus and Barry Nelson with the Delta Protector Award for their hard work and dedication to the Delta watershed. Thanks John and Barry for your continued efforts to restore California's salmon runs.
- Reducing salmon toxicity and directing the EPA to partner with the tire industry on identifying environmentally-friendly alternatives to 6PPD-quinone was successfully included in the 2024 House Interior report. GSSA joined the American Sportfishing Association, the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association and other organizations to support the development of chemical alternatives and spark this win for salmon.
- Direct action by GSSA, its supporters, and partners forced key changes to the Governor's Drought and Flood Trailer Bills to deregulate pumping during flood and near-flood flows. Improvements included strengthening requirements as to where water can be recharged to protect water quality, improved requirements for fish screen designs, and a tightened definition of floods. The governor's original proposal could have dramatically increased demand to pump water during high flows that are so important to out-migrating salmon.
- GSSA submitted an official request to the Department of Water Resources to prioritize opportunities to improve conditions for salmon this year on the Feather River. Improving conditions on the Feather is a high priority to begin the recovery of salmon runs and the fishing industry.
- As a result of GSSA, partners, and supporters taking direct action, salmon were given a win when the Delta Tunnels Project was cut from the State's budget deal. The tunnels would have allowed California to dramatically increase pumping from the Sacramento River system and further decrease the salmon population. ■

Creating Future Fisherman and Women, Outdoor Enthusiasts

GSSA continues to carry out the legacy and wishes of the late Roger Thomas by getting kids and youth out fishing.

Over the last four years, several

boatloads of San Mateo Police Activities League, Richmond PAL kids and the Salesian Boys and Girls Club have had days of fishing that they will never forget, plus fish in the freezer. In June, a group of six kids from the Salesian Boys and Girls Club were able to catch fresh halibut and some (very large) striped bass out of Fisherman's Wharf in San Francisco. "Many of these kids have never been on a boat or caught a fish before. They were fishing, dancing, and laughing all day," reported Don Franklin of Sole-Man Sportfishing.

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In July, two different SMPAL groups of 12-16 kids, accompanied by a couple of retired police officer chaperones, fished aboard the Hog Heaven and the Salty Lady out of Sausalito.

"THIS, this is what it's all about!" said captain Jared Davis of the Salty Lady, who had the pleasure of watching the second group of SMPAL youth reel in their own fish. "These kids were all smiles and enjoyed a special day on the water fishing around Treasure Island and getting outside, away from the Xbox," said Davis.

Introducing kids to the outdoors, getting them out on a boat to explore the local waters and experiencing the joy of reeling in fish are just a few of the benefits that the Roger Thomas Fund and

GSSA have offered California youth.

If you are partnered or affiliated with youth groups and would like to be a part of our mission to get kids out fishing, please contact GSSA operations and events director Cat Kaiser at

Cat@goldenstatesalmon.org. ■

Join the Online Conversation - What's Everyone Up to?

It's now summer and what should typically be peak salmon season. The consequences of the closure are heavily felt across the entire state and beyond. From social media "memories" of trophy or even dinner sized salmon pictures captioned 'The good old days', or 'I miss this!' being shared, to current news feeds and fish reports filled with halibut, rockfish, striped



Scan this QR code with your phone to visit the GSSA Facebook page.

bass, and, if you're lucky, bluefin tuna photos – it seems most are making the best of it, yet still dreaming and reminiscing about salmon.

We can't help but wonder, how has everyone been spending their time? New hobbies? What are you fishing for? Let us know and share your photos on the GSSA Facebook page! ■

GSSA 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 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

