



## ***Monthly Newsletter of Water4Fish.org***

***August, 2008***

### **Salmon Recovery - Good and Bad News**

First the bad news. Since the season was canceled, the only positive activity towards rebuilding the runs is the trucking of 22 million hatchery salmon smolts around the delta to acclimation pens in San Pablo Bay. Other than that, the collapse of our salmon fishery is mostly being ignored. No emergency declaration, no funding for projects and no announced plans. Only more water pumping from the delta.

The good news – The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) working with Water4Fish and other fishery groups including ASA, CSBA, CSPA, Coastside, PCFFA and The Northern Calif. Council of Fly Fishers has assembled a comprehensive plan for the recovery of the Central Valley Chinook salmon. The plan focuses primarily on reversing the negative impacts that delta diversions have had on the fishery. The problems and solutions are documented in the 36 page report. NRDC proposes a water development plan for the future that not only will provide the water needs for salmon but will also meet the needs of agricultural and municipal water users. The report can be called up on line at: [www.nrdc.org/water/conservation/salmon/contents.asp](http://www.nrdc.org/water/conservation/salmon/contents.asp). You can also Google “NRDC Fish Out of Water” to get it. We encourage your strong support of the plan. It will be opposed heavily by those who want water plans that ignore fish.

### **Newsletter Now Goes To All Online Supporters**

The Water4Fish program continues to have positive impacts with policy makers. Your steering committee is working to further upgrade the website and our ability to have greater impact. Monthly updates will now go to all of you who signed up and wrote letters online. By the end of July 62,000 letters and petitions were sent to politicians. Please help us reach our goal of 100,000 letters by year end. Forward the newsletters and requests for help to all your friends and associates and ask them to go online. Water4Fish.org is still the best way fishermen and wildlife supporters can organize to have an impact. We are working closely with supportive fishery groups that use our grassroots data with legislators.

### **Legislative Effort for Mitigation Fails in Senate**

After months of effort, on August 13th the California Senate rejected legislative provisions in AB 1806 by Assemblywoman Lois Wolk that would have required the state and federal Delta pumping facilities to fully mitigate for the fishery damage they have caused. The Senate vote on the version of the bill including the mitigation provisions was 18 for, 21 against.

This is an unfortunate setback. These facilities have caused untold damage to the fisheries and they have gotten away with it. Mitigation funds should be the primary source of money to implement hundreds of projects needed to recover salmon and other species.

This bill was supported by virtually every fishery group. At every step through the legislature, the grassroots Water4Fish petitions signed by you helped move the bill. Over 7,000 constituent names were furnished to the Senators. Do we give up? Absolutely not. We come back next year, better organized and with all the additional grassroots firepower we can muster. This is the right place for water fees to be placed and we won't give up until we get the funding and fish recovery. If you are as mad as we are, take the action that will help the most. Get everyone you know to sign onto Water4Fish.org. Click and send letters to the politicians and give us the powerful proxy ammunition we can use.

Following the vote, Assemblywoman Wolk said, *"I want to thank everyone in the fishing community who worked so hard to move this legislative effort forward. We knew we had a tough battle going in, as we were up against powerful vested interests, primarily southern California Delta water exporters. It's encouraging that the legislation got as far as it did, and that would not have happened without the grassroots support of the fishing community. I hope that you will continue to be actively engaged in efforts to save the Delta and its fisheries. The public and the legislature are just now awakening to the crisis of our fisheries. This legislation has served an important purpose as part of the wake up call. Let's not be discouraged. We can't give up."*

We moved this bill further than any fish funding proposal in decades. We have a lot of people to thank. First, Assemblymember Lois Wolk. Her insight, political savvy and pure dedication to protections for fish is unmatched in the legislature. We can't thank her enough. Second, Senator Tom Torlackson carried the bill to the Senate floor. He has been a leader in Delta issues and fishery protections for years. A special thanks also to John Beuttler of CSPA for his outstanding technical analysis and guidance. Last but not least, we thank you, the Water4Fish supporters who gave us the grassroots political ammunition to gather a mountain of momentum.

Thanks for your continuing support  
Dick Pool - Editor

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