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To The State Water Resources Control Board
Attention Rich Satkowski,

Having fished commercially for salmon for fifty-seven years, and being involved with rice farming for forty years, a lot of these contentious issues at hand seem to all have simple answers and cures. In 1979 I was involved with initiating the Salmon Stamp program. A certain percentage of our yearly catch goes back to Salmon Restoration. It goes without saying we will never breach our existing dam structures in California, and there is no need to if we proceed in the proper course.

In the 1960's and 1970's they issued fishermen tagging charts of individual hatchery, river origin, and year class. During these years I fished the waters between Columbia River to below Newport Beach in Southern California. Comparing my physical tags from my catch each day after several years, it was obvious that approximately ninety-five percent of all fish on the West Coast were of hatchery origin. U.S.F.W.S didn't believe this so sometime in the 1990's they began twenty-five percent tagging in all hatcheries. It demonstrated that sure enough, we were right.

At several meetings over the course of the last few years we have heard repeatedly from highly educated biologists that three generations of hatchery fish will be so genetically degraded that the mature fish wouldn't be able to find their way back to the hatchery at their river of origin.

They continually say we must save the last remaining wild fish for spawning propagation. I have asked the super biologists, (whom have never left the office), how do you tell a wild fish from a hatchery fish? They replied, those with adipose fins are native fish. Obviously tagging twenty-five percent leaves seventy-five percent with adipose intact. They could not give me an answer!

Having fished salmon in the ocean my whole life, the fish today still show up at the same place and time as they have for the past fifty years. Their relative size and fighting ability has not changed either. They travel the entire coast of California and Oregon during their two or three years at sea; they do not just hang around the Golden Gate. These so called genetically stupid fish still find their way back to Sacramento River from Oregon and Northern California every year.

I don't think these so called experts every read the history of Sacramento River salmon. From 1895 to 1900 there was hatchery at the mouth of Battle Creek who took up to 50,000,000 salmon eggs each year, and released them into the river. It appears that hatchery homogenization appeared one hundred and twenty years ago.

On May 20th 1930 the Willows Journal published a front page article regarding the scarcity of salmon in the Sacramento River. The Sacramento salmon were decimated by over fishing, copper mining pollution, and water diversions that N.B Scoffield, the head of Bureau of

Commercial Fisheries, ordered the Klamath River eggs to be hatched in the Sacramento River for further homogenization.

Our number one reason for dwindling stocks is hatchery production, which is substantially lower today than in the past. The Bureau was required to mitigate roughly ninety million eggs, or fry, due to losses created by the construction of the Shasta Dam. One hundred and eighty-seven miles of prime spawning ground was lost.

I have read reports by the U.S.F.W.S that somewhere between one hundred and fifty-five million spawners, to sixty million, return yearly to the upper Sacramento River. Another report by the U.S.F.W.S 1984B stated that on average, per run, six hundred thousand salmon returned to the Sacramento River system yearly, prior to 1915. Today, Coleman Hatchery is only one out of a proposed four of five upper Sacramento River hatcheries. It currently raises thirteen million fall run salmon and a handful of winter, late fall, and spring salmon. Roughly speaking, this is approximately fifteen percent of what its mitigation goals were to be. In 1942, Coleman Hatchery was built for 58,000,000 eggs or fry. Twenty-nine million to be raised to smolt size in constructed raceways. This was never done, only thirteen to fourteen million were ever raised in this hatchery. Why didn't they hatch at full hatchery production and release the other forty million as fry into the river? They will disseminate on their own as the staggered hatching proceeds. These young fish will never know that they were hatched in a hatchery. There are very few predators in the upper Sacramento River at this time. A three quarter inch fish is not much of a carrot. By the time their hatchery raised brothers and sisters are released, the river smolts will be adapted to a natural life in a cruel river. The hatchery fish, being more naïve, should at least be fifty percent trucked down river past the majority of predators, either the San Pablo Release Site or Fort Baker at Golden Gate bridge.

Yearly water level releases at Lake Shasta should determine the amount of salmon trucking that occurs. On years when the lake is higher there is more water to release down river to ensure the safety of the salmon heading downstream. On dry years there is less water to push the salmon down river. The lower the Shasta lake water level is; the more salmon should be trucked. Once smolts go to sea, predation drops immensely.

The out migrating river raised fish will do fairly well against predators, but will probably lose fifty percent of the down river school at the Georgiana Slough, which branches off the Sacramento River at Walnut Grove, inlet to Tracy pumps. Smolts only go down river, Georgiana splits off of Sacramento River and it has strong down river pull to the pumps, which are not screened. Losses here are monumental; acoustic tags have proven this.

Pacific Marine Fisheries Commission in Bulletin Z 1951 says ocean harvest is proportional to available fish. It also states the importance of Sacramento River San Joaquin river fish to California ocean harvest. Low in river smolt escapement to ocean equals low ocean abundance!

Straying is an issue the new biologists always bring up, they say trucking has high stray rates. When asked what is normal, they say there were never any studies before the dams. So, obviously, they have played God and fabricated a number. In my eyes, and in the eyes of many others in the salmon business, we feel straying is not only healthy, but it is also what has kept the salmon species alive for eons. Look at the salmon straying around the Mount St. Helens explosion; a tremendous scientific project in the works. Not to mention New Zealand, Chile, and the Great Lakes, which all originated from California stock.

Our salmon should be reclassified, if they go under the Golden Gate Bridge they are all Sacramento, San Joaquin river fish. Let them go wherever they know the best water is. Most years they go North, and sometimes South.

The winter run should be de-listed. It's a hammer that hurts all of us, the farmers and all sport and commercial salmon fishermen. The four hundred and twenty million winter run released in February, with two hundred plus acoustical tags, have reached points down river, that heavy pumping in Tracy could go on now at flood stage to bolster Southern California storage. The next two or three weeks smolt out migration is quite low. This can not be done because the winter run put heavy pumping restriction on Tracy pumps. Another hammer! This doesn't happen very often, but when the stars line up we should be able to capitalize on it.

With those two relationships of bureaucracy gone all of the salmon enhancement work would come to fruition in two years.

Do away with ninety percent of biological teams who thrive on the salmon disaster to receive their lucrative government grants to study the on going disaster. These people could be relocated to the hatcheries that are now built on the upper Sacramento River and other under mitigated rivers. They could help feed and raise the hundreds of millions of salmon that are now heading for the ocean to return in three years. When people are catching salmon in the ocean and rivers, the constant complaining will fade into the distance.

As for temperature control, build me more storage. 1,800,000 acre feet in Sites Dam could be traded for cold water at Shasta. If Shasta Dam was raised eighteen-feet higher it would have filled this week. This would take some of the highs and lows out of the drought years. During severe drought we must all suffer a little, both farmers and fishermen. It will always ebb and flow.

The Delta smelt problem is simple, you either have stripers or smelt; tough to have both. Delta smelt live twelve months a year in heavy striper country, and stripers love all smelt including surf smelt when they are in the ocean. Fortunately, salmon smolts are only exposed to stripers for a couple months.

I would be for the Tunnel Project to send some water South. They could be screened saving millions of salmon if the Tracy pumps were turned off! If they were shut down, all water in the San Joaquin would slowly head to sea leading the lost salmon to the Golden Gate Bridge.

Without the looming winter run listing hanging over our heads, farmers, sport, and commercial groups would happily sit at the same table and work out solutions.

Sincerely,

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