



FISHING INDUSTRY HATCHERY INITIATIVE

The Fishing Industry Salmon Hatchery Initiative (FISHI) is an industry-led effort to restore harvestable salmon populations by increasing hatchery capacity on the Main Stem Sacramento River.

This is how we bring salmon back to the boats, rivers, and dinner tables of California, reviving the tourism, recreation, and small business activity that salmon season drives across the state.

MORE THAN A FISH

Salmon are more than a fish , they are a statewide resource and cultural icon. They support food systems, family businesses, recreation and communities from river towns to working coastal ports. The collapse of California's salmon fishery is a crisis with broad public consequences, and the solution lies in expanding hatchery capacity to support a future of sustainable, harvestable salmon.

CALIFORNIA'S SALMON FISHERY HAS COLLAPSED

Comercial salmon fishing will be closed for a third consecutive year in 2025. Recreational and charter sectors have already faced two years of full closures, and 2025 will offer only a very limited twelve-day season for recreational anglers to fish.

IMPACTS

- Commercial landings have dropped more than 96 % from 7 million pounds to less than 240,000 pounds by 2022.
- Inland river guides have dropped 90% from more than 119 to just 12 full-time operators.

Charter trips declined by 70% from 82,000 to 26,000 per year,

Recreational Boaters on thousands of private boats no longer add millions of dollars into the economy.,

• Estimated statewide economic loss **exceeds 1.4 billion dollars**

THE SOLUTION

The Fishing Industry Salmon Hatchery Initiative (FISHI) calls for investment in hatchery infrastructure that can increase salmon production and support the recovery of harvestable populations. The goal is to establish capacity on the Sacramento River that can consistently produce one million adult fall-run Chinook salmon to the ocean each year, regardless of water conditions or environmental variability. This effort is industry-led, science-informed, and aligned with the priorities in Calfiornia's Salmon Strategy.



COMMERCIAL

An active Commercial fishing fleet sustains working waterfronts and food systems, contributing between

20 to 40 million dollars per season



CHARTER

Charters of recreational anglers drive coastal tourism and support local businesses contributing up to

up to 20 million dollars annually



RIVER GUIDES

Bring recreation, strengthen rural economies, and support inland communities with **3.2 million dollars annually**

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Lisa Damrosch-PCFFA James Stone-NCGASA Michael Rescino -GGFA (650) 255-2063 (530) 923-9440 (650) 619-6629

lisa@pcffa.org jstone@ncgasa.org mike@lovelymartha.com



www.pcffa.org www.ncgasa.org www.ggfa.net



THE PATH FORWARD

The river system cannot currently support the number of salmon needed for a durable recovery. This effort combines industry leadership, agency coordination, and infrastructure investment to bring salmon back to the people of California. The following steps outline a strategy to move from collapse toward long-term abundance.

THE GOAL

Establish hatchery capacity on the Sacramento River to produce one million adult fall-run Chinook to the ocean each year. This target supports commercial, recreational charter, and inland fisheries, as well as conservation escapement targets, regardless of drought or environmental conditions.

THE APPROACH Coordinate with agencies and legislators to build a new hatchery or expand current infrastructure on the mainstem of the Sacramento River to support large-scale fall-run production. Diversified release strategies and water management coordination will improve survival while complementing existing conservation priorities

THE OUTCOME

Rebuilding salmon production means bringing back abundance. Fish on boats, in rivers, and on the lines of charter trips. It means renewed opportunity for harvest, revitalized communities, and a return to consistent wild, domestically caught seafood rather than farmed imports.



Lisa Damrosch-PCFFA James Stone-NCGASA Michael Rescino -GGFA

(650) 255-2063 (530) 923-9440 (650) 619-6629





lisa@pcffa.org

recover

jstone@ncgasa.org mike@lovelymartha.com



www.pcffa.org www.ncgasa.org www.ggfa.net

MORE THAN A DECLINE

The Sacramento River has lost its naturally spawning Fall Run salmon. The species relies on hatcheries for the mitigation and enhancement production for survival. Adult returns have dropped 87% in river despite zero fishing pressure in 2 years.

Existing hatcheries cannot solve this alone given current location, and capacity limitations. New main stem infrastructure is needed to rebuild harvestable salmon runs while continuing conservation work for ESA listed stocks.



across all sectors

How This Moves Forward

- Support federal investment in expanded hatchery capacity on the Sacramento River
- Accelerate permitting and interagency coordination through CDFW, USFWS, BOR, and NOAA
- Champion infrastructure funding in upcoming recovery and resilience packages
- Ensure long-term federal support for hatchery operations tied to salmon access and food security



Fishing Industry Salmon Hatchery Initiative (FISHI)

Declining Chinook salmon populations in California's Central Valley have forced coastwide closures of commercial harvest as well as inland and ocean recreational fishing in 2023-2024. All **CA** Commercial Salmon Fishing has closed for the **3rd year** and limited 12 days season for recreational/charter fleets.

Historically, fall-run adults spawning in natural areas of the main stem Sacramento River has been the keystone of productive fisheries and a healthy ecosystem. In the past 30 years, we have seen a greater than 96% drop in productivity.

Between 1997-2005, an average of 175,496 adults contributed 438 million green eggs in natural areas of the Sacramento River each year. In 2015-2024, that number fell to an annual average of 23,275 adults contributing 58 million eggs. The long-term average has fallen by 87% (all data, PFMC).



In the past three years (2022-2024), an average of a mere 6559 adults contributed 16 million eggs ABSENT ALL FISHING PRESSURE. Sacramento River fall run stocks are facing an unprecedented collapse that must be addressed immediately to avoid the permanent demise of this iconic fish and the people dependent on them. In the same period, ocean and inland harvests have fallen from an average of 317,705 Sac Fall adults (1997-2005) to 121,715 Sac Fall adults (2015-2024), a 61% decline.

Mitigating for the loss of 400 million eggs requires a new anadromous fish hatchery on the main stem of the Sacramento River.

Sacramento Main Stem Hatchery Project:

- Production of Sacramento River fall-run Chinook salmon, the main contributor to ocean and inland fisheries in California and Oregon
- **Capacity to produce 60 million fall-run Chinook to fry, sub smolt and smolt stage**, which will mitigate for the loss of 400 million fall run eggs in Sacramento River below Keswick Dam.
- Comprehensive release strategies to maximize survival to adulthood, including diversification of release timing, location, life stage, and life history
- Coordination with water managers to take advantage of environmental conditions that will maximize outmigration success and mimic the diverse life history of naturally spawned salmon populations

Specifics:

- Location: identified potential sites between Los Molinos and Anderson with approximately 75-125 acres, water supply, and river access. Below is the Red Bluff property currently owned by BOR with 3 miles of river access and enough space for the state of art hatchery and laboratory.
- Potential construction and infrastructure improvements at Livingston Stone Hatchery would require space and water rights, which could save time for permitting and costs.
- Facilities: all necessary facilities and equipment for spawning, returning adults, incubating eggs, and rearing juveniles for release at various life stages
 - o Natural raceways
 - Fish transportation: fish ladder, transport vehicles
 - Water treatment: ozone treatment, chillers
- Support activities: include laboratories for parentage-based tagging (PBT) and fish pathology
- Permitting: NEPA, CEQA, and ESA consultations with appropriate state and federal agencies

New Mainstem Hatchery is the Best Solution

Existing hatcheries, such as Coleman National Fish Hatchery and Livingston Stone, face geographic, operational, spatial, and biological limitations that render them insufficient for modern production needs. This proposal will:

- Decrease adult stray rates by imprinting juveniles on Sacramento River water
- Increase juvenile outmigration by coordinating releases with favorable environmental conditions
- Increase survival to adulthood by diversifying release strategies
- Increase access to juvenile rearing habitat by utilizing floodplains
- Increase in adult fish available for harvest
- Increase adult returns for long-term species success
- Reduce upstream competition between fall-run juveniles and ESA-listed juveniles, such as Sacramento River winter-run and spring-run stocks

A Sacramento River mainstem hatchery aligns with California/Federal policies, including **Governor Newsom's California Salmon Strategy**, supporting the Endangered Species Act (ESA) while enhancing fishery sustainability.

Modernization of Existing Facilities

Despite recent funding initiatives, Livingston Stone National Fish Hatchery (LSNFH) and Coleman National Fish Hatchery (CNFH) remain inadequate for the large-scale production necessary to revive Sacramento fall-run populations. LSNFH does not have adequate space currently, <u>but LSNFH could be built out for fall-run;</u> CNFH does not have a reliable water supply. Relocating large-scale production of fall-run Chinook to modern facilities will allow CNFH and LSNFH to focus on smaller scale production of other anadromous fish stocks, including ESA-listed stocks. This plan includes an evaluation of the most effective and efficient production strategies for all anadromous species affected by environmental conditions in the Sacramento River. Redundancy of hatchery facilities will minimize the risk of failure at any given location.

Funding Strategy requires identification of lead federal and state agencies, most likely U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). We will pursue federal, state, and private funding from sources such as Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), USFWS, CDFW, Healthy Rivers and Landscapes, California Proposition 4, and private water districts.

Early funding estimates are \$120-175 million to complete full construction within 2 years of funding. Costs vary depending on land acquisition, construction costs, and detailed infrastructure needs such as power and water. Cost specifics will be determined upon scoping and feasibility studies. Funding estimates for adding additional infrastructure at existing hatcheries could be up to \$100 Million but might face spatial challenges needed for raceways and laboratory space for analyzing salmon though parent-based tagging monitoring. Annual operational costs are likely to be \$6-10 million.



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