



For Immediate Release

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Contact

Nina Erlich-Williams, nina@publicgoodpr.com

C: 415-577-1153, O: 510-336-9566

See end of press release for additional contact information

Agencies, Farmers, Fishermen, Water Suppliers and Conservationists Announce Partnership to Support Recovery of Central Valley Salmon and Steelhead

Diverse partnership signals new era in effort to return native fish to self-sustaining levels

Sacramento – California Secretary for Natural Resources John Laird hosted a signing ceremony today on the steps of the Capitol with a broad group of stakeholders to officially launch the [Central Valley Salmon Habitat Partnership](#). The Partnership includes state and federal water and wildlife agencies, farmers and water suppliers, fishermen, and conservationists working together to restore and protect vital salmon habitats.

“The successful recovery of any threatened species requires cooperation from many parties,” said Secretary Laird. “I’m confident that the remarkable range of stakeholders working together in this Partnership bodes well for the future of salmon and steelhead in the Central Valley.”

Central Valley rivers and their tributaries have been, historically, the second most productive region for salmon on the West Coast (not including Alaska). However, native salmon runs and steelhead populations have declined drastically here. Today, two of the four distinct runs of Central Valley Chinook salmon, as well as steelhead, are listed as threatened or endangered.

These fish migrate between inland rivers and streams and the ocean for different parts of their lives. In the process, they face challenges including blocked access to spawning grounds, a lack of cold water at critical times of year, a dramatic reduction in a variety of habitat types such as wetlands and floodplains, and predation. Quality habitat is vital for providing food and shelter for young salmon to grow, and for adult salmon to spawn. The Partnership will use its combined expertise to improve salmon habitat and support widespread recovery of Central Valley salmon and steelhead.

The Partnership’s first order of business will be to identify, find funding for, and execute the best opportunities to improve salmon habitat. The group is modeled after the highly successful Central Valley Joint Venture, through which a similar group of stakeholders has been working for decades to recover native and migratory bird populations. Partnership members provide expertise on a broad range of issues, from scientific study to securing permits for habitat restoration.

“This group will take meaningful, decisive action to restore the types of habitat – in the right places – that these fish need to survive and even thrive,” said Curtis Knight, Executive Director of the conservation group California Trout.

“There have been significant efforts over the past decade to improve conditions for viable salmon—the collaboration through the Partnership will build on these efforts and help align priority actions for salmon recovery in the Central Valley. We’re ready to roll up our sleeves and make this happen,” added David Guy, President of the Northern California Water Association.

By approaching habitat restoration in a collaborative, outcomes-based manner, the Partnership hopes to see meaningful improvement in habitat conditions relatively quickly. An implementation plan will highlight

measurable, geographically-specific goals within a set timeframe to improve the prospects of these fish. Because both public agencies and private organizations are currently involved in habitat restoration, this unified approach ensures that the most important projects will be implemented first, maximizing the opportunities for these native fish to recover and thrive.

"I'm hopeful that although we may not always agree on water decisions we can all work together to restore some of the river bank, side channel, and floodplain habitats in the Central Valley which are crucial to rearing baby salmon," said John McManus, Executive Director of the Golden Gate Salmon Association.

"Salmon recovery happens one stream mile at a time," said Scott Rumsey, NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region Deputy Administrator. "By spurring restoration efforts, this group will, ultimately, help bring back the economic and environmental benefits of salmon to California communities."

For more information about the Central Valley Salmon Habitat Partnership, go to <http://salmonpartnership.org>.

Founding members of the Central Valley Salmon Habitat Partnership include:

- American Rivers
- The Bay Institute
- CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
- CA Dept. of Water Resources
- CA Natural Resources Agency
- California Sportfishing Protection Alliance
- California Trout
- Ducks Unlimited
- The Golden Gate Salmon Association
- The Nature Conservancy
- NOAA Fisheries
- NOAA Habitat Conservation - Restoration Center
- Northern California Water Association
- Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations
- Institute for Fisheries Resources
- River Partners
- State and Federal Contractors Water Agency
- The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Conservancy
- Trout Unlimited
- US Bureau of Reclamation
- US Fish and Wildlife Service

Additional Press contacts:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife:

Kevin Shaffer, Chief of Fisheries, (916) 327-8841, Shaffer, Kevin.Shaffer@wildlife.ca.gov

California Department of Water Resources:

Maggie Macias, Public Affairs Office, (916) 653-8743, mmacias@water.ca.gov

California Sportfishing Protection Alliance:

Chris Shutes, FERC Projects Director, (510) 421-2405, blancapaloma@msn.com

California Trout:

Jacob Katz, PhD, Senior Scientist, Central California, (707) 477-9978, jkatz@caltrout.org

Golden Gate Salmon Association:

John McManus, Executive Director, (650) 218-8650, john@goldengatesalmon.org

Institute for Fisheries Resources:

Noah Oppenheim, Executive Director, (415) 561-5080, noah@ifrfish.org

NOAA Fisheries:

Jim Milbury, Public Affairs Specialist, 562-980-4006, jim.milbury@noaa.gov

Northern California Water Association:

David Guy, President, (916) 442-8333, dguy@norcalwater.org

Trout Unlimited:

Rene Henery, PhD, California Science Director, (415) 640-0927, RHenery@tu.org