HUMBOLDT AREA SALTWATER ANGLERS

A VOICE FOR SALTWATER SPORTFISHERS

2013 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

President's Message – Summer 2013

I hope everyone's fishing season is ripe with good fishing and great memories. Me personally, I have been fortunate enough to take my two kids out on the ocean for some wide open salmon fishing and flat seas. The fishing addiction is starting to spread to them at their young age, and it has been an incredible experience that I will value forever. I'm sure other HASA members can relate. Seeing your kids eyes get big with a big "wow" when that fish hits the deck is priceless. We are so fortunate to live here on the north coast, whether it be exploring the inland rivers to being out on the big blue chasing salmon, lings, or tuna. Just having the opportunity and access to explore these areas with my family is enough, but being able to catch such a wide range of species is an added bonus.

HASA is your voice for fishing issues on the North Coast, and we will continue to be engaged in all saltwater fishing related issues. I continue to be impressed with how the California Department of Fish & Wildlife and the Pacific Fisheries Management Council seek out our input on fishing issues, and that is an example of how the HASA founding fathers have established a good rapport with these agencies. I have learned that these relationships are extremely important if we're to have any chance in affecting our fishing seasons, and our representatives do a great job. I would like to say thank you to the past and current representatives who have taken time away from their families to help be our voice. And thanks to Casey Allen for putting together these newsletters, as I truly believe they are our "sword" and message to all of how important HASA is here on the North Coast.

If you haven't renewed your HASA membership or invited a friend, now would be a good time. We could use all the support we can get. And, don't forget to take a kid fishing and create a smile.

Cliff Hart
"Hart Attack"

The mission of Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers is to represent North Coast fishermen's historic and ongoing right to sport fish along the Northern California coast; advocate reasonable and rational sport fishing seasons and regulations; educate our members and the general public about the economic and cultural contributions of sport fishing to our local economies; and promote sustainable stewardship of the resource.

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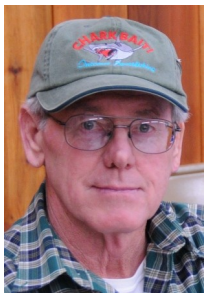
Groundfish Update – Summer 2013

By Tom Marking, Groundfish Representative to the PFMC



The summer is coming to a close and fishing on the coast has been terrific. Salmon are plentiful, rockfish, lingcod, tuna and halibut fishing has been very rewarding to those making the effort. Anglers have been very cooperative to avoid taking overfished species and the barotrauma studies continue with more information to be presented to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) this fall. The Statistical Science and Technical Committee along with the Groundfish Management Team will make recommendations to the Council on what mortality percentages could be attributed to rockfish caught at varying depths with recompression devices. When this information is provided, it will be passed on to you in the next newsletter if a decision by the Council is made this fall.

HALIBUT is the main topic of this report to you. Over the past several months the CDFW, the South of Humbug Ad Hoc Halibut Committee, and the technical review committee have met to discuss the management controls methods that have been suggested to reduce the harvest of halibut in the area south of Humbug Oregon and all of California. At the June meeting seven alternatives were proposed by the technical review committee to be discussed and considered. Most of these alternatives were presented at a public meeting in July to the general public for consideration and public comment.

At the Eureka meeting with CDFW, the 25 members of the public suggested a range of alternatives to be considered. All present were in agreement that the control line at Humbug, Oregon should be moved down to the California State line. Further, since the Council wants the harvest to be reduced up to 73% of present average take over the last five years, time on the water has to be restricted. To accomplish that several alternatives were presented which included block closures of months, restricted days of the week, non-allowance of combined halibut and salmon trips and loss of opportunity due to the Marine Protected Areas. Block closures starting with August, followed by July, then June was suggested by the local HASA Board Representatives. They believe that summer month closures would provide the most days on the water in the Spring and Fall since summer is the time of highest effort. That was supported by a few Charter Boat Operators as it keeps the shoulders of the season open and the summer provides lots of opportunity for salmon, rockfish and tuna.

As the California Sports Rep I don't agree with that position for a number of reasons. I proposed a system of closure of days of the week rather than block closures (although the SOH Ad Hoc Committee doesn't want to deal with the complexity of days of the week closures). My reasoning is that Shelter Cove has a relatively short rockfish season ending just after Labor Day, therefore shutting down the summer would be a hardship on the Charter Fleet and local anglers in that area. Trinidad also starts to remove moorings after Labor Day and shutting of summer months will be very detrimental to their business operation. Much of their summer business is for halibut specifically. As a compromise position, I suggested the closure of August with any further closures to be days of the week over the remainder of the entire season. This alternative was also proposed by the Council as an alternative. (Since Oregon reports weekly and not daily on their harvest, they do not have the data to support day closures.)

The SOH Ad Hoc Committee held a webinar meeting on July 30th at the Harbor District Office (with 7 in attendance) that the public could listen to and provide public comment. A computer slide show was presented for those in attendance to view. Here was what was

proposed by the Committee after many hours of discussion.
The harvest reduction was proposed to be in the 45 to 50% range, down to 12,000 to 13,000 pounds of harvest from the current 23,000 pound harvest rate. (Our allowance is only 6,056 pounds) The movement of the current control line from Humbug Mountain area down to the California Border was strongly considered, but needs further consideration. The Committee was very concerned about the total closure of the June, July and August months due to effect on Charter Businesses, Launch Operators and tourism. As a compromise they suggested a first attempt at a mid-July and August closure. The option to not allow salmon/halibut combo trips was not high on their list but was discussed as an alternative. Law Enforcement is not keen on this option.

Further analysis on monthly closures, combo trips and moving the control line will be done over the summer prior to a recommendation by the Committee to the Council in September. No one really knows the effects of any closures due to effort shift and change of behavior. Only time will provide these answers.

The CDFW then followed up with another teleconference on July 30th for more public input. The positions by the four persons listening in were split between monthly closures and day closures. California intends to offer up an August closure only, with two more weeks in July as a back-up, along with the Control line moved down to the California border. Our officials are shying away from day closures as an alternative.

Also, the IPHC has completed the first survey of halibut in our area this summer with 15-17 stations. The results of the survey will not be known until December of this year. The Council will have taken action by November.

Conclusion: If you have an opinion or preference on the proposed recommendations by the SOH Ad Hoc Committee to the Council you had better make your opinion known with a letter to the Council. Go to pcouncil.org and write a letter expressing your opinions and views. Ultimately, if the survey looks promising, we hope to increase our allocation for a higher poundage, but that is a much more complicated process at the Council level. If you care about this issue, do not delay in writing your letter.

Finally, I would like to thank Liz Perkins, a graduate student at HSU, working on a Master's Project. Liz is measuring, weighing and removing the ear otoliths from halibut for age studies. Her field data will be completed this fall for age/weight analysis of halibut caught in our areas. This should prove to be very interesting.

Count Your Blessings at the Ramp

This has been another great salmon season. Some days the boat ramps are clogged as we all want to get out early. However, be glad you don't launch someplace like Bodega Bay. The terrific fishing has extended all the way down the coast, and The Fish Sniffer reports that some mornings arriving at ramps at Bodega Bay around 5:00 am will put you into a two-hour wait for access to the launch ramp. Reports indicate that some mornings the line for the ramp is a mile long, and the nearest parking spot available after launching is a mile away! So, if you arrive and there are a few boats in line ahead of you, spend the time ensuring you are ready to float, and greeting the others in line around you. And congratulate yourself for living behind the redwood curtain!

Local Pacific Halibut Age, Growth, and Maturation Study Update

By Liz Perkins

As I write this, I am proud to say that I have sampled 176 Pacific halibut this summer and am well on my way to my goal sample size. In July, I had the opportunity to visit the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) age lab to learn to read otoliths from the very best. Otoliths are crystalline structures, sometimes called "earbones," that grow as a fish ages and that can be used to determine its age by counting the annuli– very similar to counting tree rings. During my time at the IPHC age lab, I aged the 102 otoliths that I had collected up until that point and found all of them to be between 7 and 19 years of age. I was fortunate to be able to use the IPHC's microscope camera to capture photographs of some of my especially good-looking otoliths. I have included a photograph of half of the otolith from sample 69, with dots marking each annulus to show the final surface age reading (Figure 1). Figure 2 shows the cross section of this same otolith (sample 69), after being prepared using the "break and bake" method. The annuli, especially the older years, generally become easier to read with increased contrast after the otolith is prepared with this method, allowing a more accurate reading of the age. This halibut was aged at 8 years old.

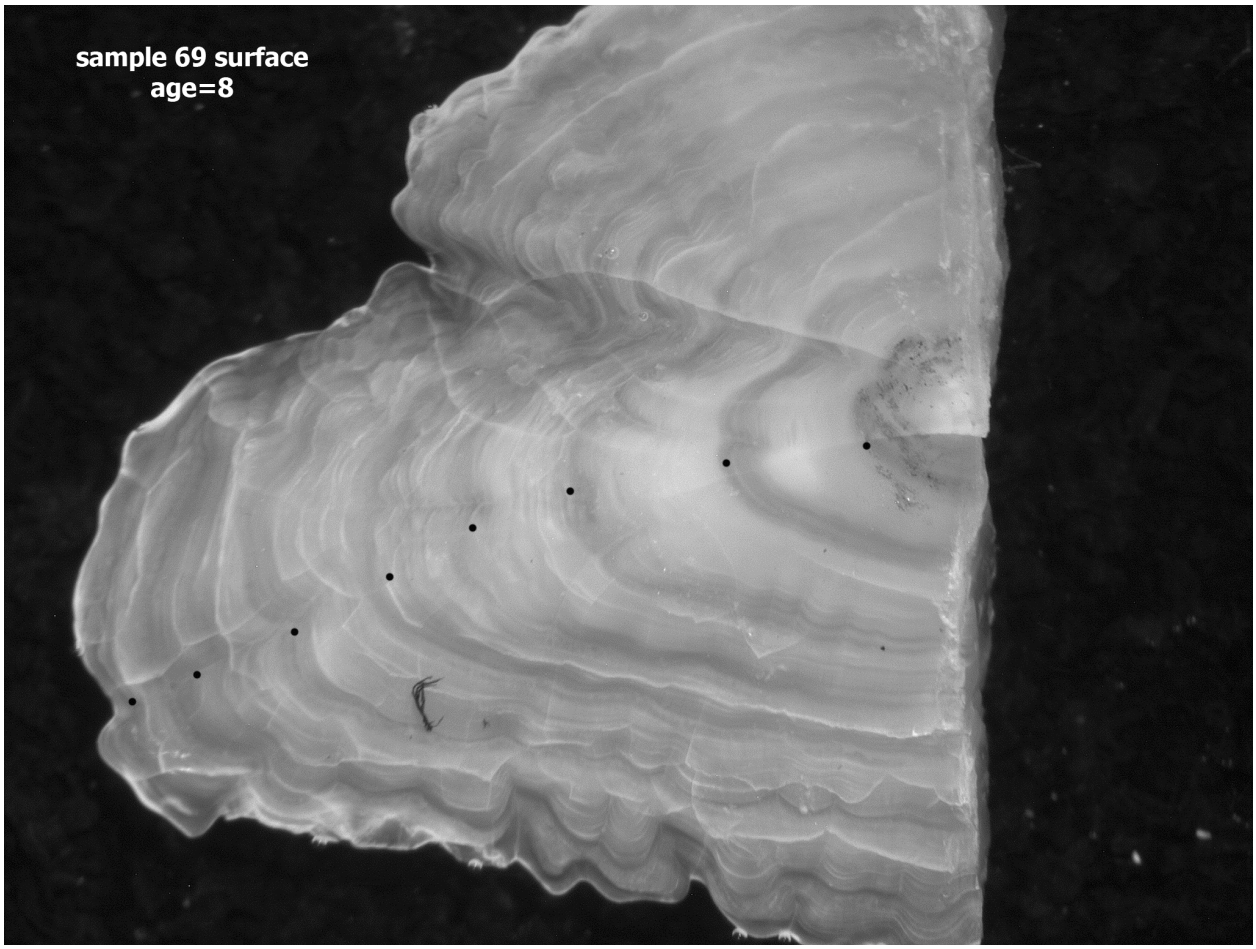


Figure 1. Surface photograph of otolith sample 69. Dots mark annuli counted.

My preliminary results suggest that the length-weight relationship of Pacific halibut caught off Northern California is nearly identical to that from more northern waters (Figures 3 a & b). However, it also appears from my preliminary results that for a given age, the size (average fork length) of Pacific halibut caught off Northern California may be larger than those caught during a NMFS survey trawl in the Bering Sea in 2011 (Sadorus et al. 2012). This relationship is obviously more important than the length weight relationship, however I'll need to collect more samples and do further analysis before I reach a

strong conclusion about this. I plan to collect my last samples by October 31st and will then write up my final results and conclusions in a report by December. I look forward to sharing more complete results then.

I am extremely grateful for the generous support HASA and California Sea Grant have provided to fund this research project. I would also like to thank everyone who has allowed me to sample their halibut catch or donated a carcass. So far I have sampled fish from 60 different, known donors and 30 carcasses have been anonymously donated in the halibut tote at Woodley Island. This study would not be possible without all the support and continuing carcass donations from so many fishermen. Keep the halibut coming my way!

If anyone would like to donate a carcass or let me sample their fish before fillets are removed, give me a call at (612) 597-6144.

Figure2. Break and bake cross section of otolith sample 69. Dots mark annuli counted.

Liz Perkins removes an otolith from near a halibut's brain, files the sample, and documents the measurements. Cooperation from sport fishers and charter captains has been essential in what appears to be a successful and meaningful study.

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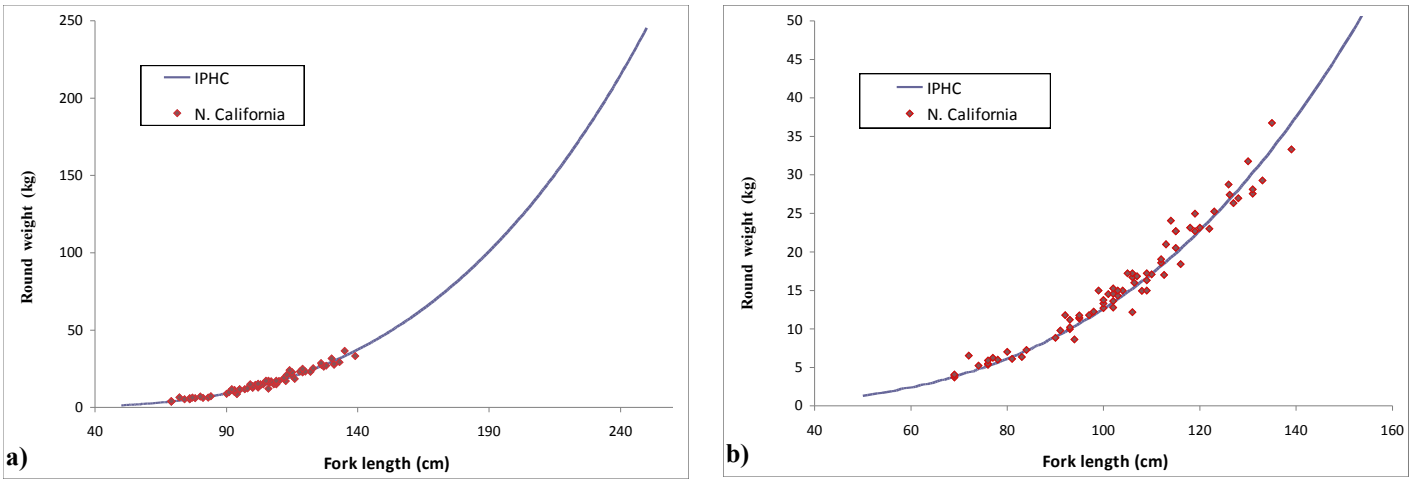

Figures 3 a & b. Length to weight comparisons between Pacific halibut caught off Northern California and the IPHC length/weight chart (IPHC 2003) with (a) showing the full range of sizes from the IPHC chart, and (b) zoomed in to show the sizes of fish seen in this study. *Editors note - a 20 kg halibut is about 45 lbs.*

Citations:
IPHC (International Pacific Halibut Commission). 2003. Halibut Length/Weight Chart (Metric). http://www.iphc.int/publications/bulletins/lenwtmet.pdf.

Sadorus, L. L., R. Lauth, and A. M. Ranta. 2012. Size and age composition of Pacific halibut in NMFS Bering Sea shelf trawl surveys. IPHC Report of Assessment and Research Activities 2012:593-600.

Kids Fishing Derby

By Cliff Hart

We attended the Willow Creek Fire Safe Council's free youth fishing derby up at Skycrest Lake in Burnt Ranch on June 8, 2013, where over 200 kids plus their families attended. The weather was hot and the lake was beautiful. All the kids received free tackle and received some fabulous prizes and donations including fishing rods/reels. There were many other sponsors that contributed to this event. HASA donated the nightcrawlers and some of the rods/reels combos, with the assistance of Phil Grunert of All Sports Supply. B2 Squid once again donated plastic squid baits, and the kids love fishing tackle!

The fishing was slower this year due to the hot weather, but that didn't stop the smiles from all around the lake. Giant frogs, rainbow trout, and activities provided by the vendors kept everyone busy and smiling.

Next year's event will be on June 7th, and all you HASA supporters should bring your kids and grandkids up to this beautiful location in Burnt Ranch for a great time and to enjoy those special fishing moments while they are young.

Mayday, Mayday, Mayday, U.S. Coast Guard – A Guide to Coast Guard Helicopter Rescue

by Brian Edmiston

As in all aspects of life, preparation is always a key ingredient to success. When you hit the water to go offshore in our cold Pacific waters, you must be prepared for more than tight lines and slaying fish. You must consider and be prepared for the possibility that you experience a medical emergency, you hit a submerged log and rapidly start taking on water, get swamped by a rogue wave and end up in the water or any other disaster. Remember, hope is not a plan, so it goes without saying that you should always have well-maintained required minimum safety equipment for your vessel size (i.e. life jacket for each person, current flares, sound producing device, throwable type IV PFD, etc.). As an avid saltwater fisherman and Coast Guard rescue helicopter pilot (not at the same time), I'd like to share some tips to help you deal with a disaster despite your best intentions.

Communication is critical: In order to get rescue resources moving, they must first be notified. There are many ways to do this such as a radio call on VHF channel 16, Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) activation, shooting a flare, or cell phone call. The most reliable and effective method is the VHF radio with the Coast Guard being able to record and play back the call if any part of the transmission was missed or garbled as well as verify your position through a system called Rescue 21 where lines of bearing (LOB) initiating from land-based radio towers cross to fix your position. Another very reliable means is by activating the Digital Selective Calling (DSC) Emergency Button on your VHF radio. All newer VHF radios come with this feature; however, the radio must be connected to your GPS in order for this function to work. The cell phone is the least reliable source due to failing battery charges and inconsistent coverage. If you are truly in an emergency, the words "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY" followed by your latitude and longitude from your GPS receiver or geographical position if land marks can be seen, number of people on board, description of your vessel and nature of distress will trigger an immediate and rapid response by the Coast Guard. Remember to speak clearly and slowly to ensure the information can be copied. Often times, the lack of clear communications can lead to valuable time lost. In a recent Search and Rescue case, a vessel struck a submerged log and rapidly began taking on water. The extremely excited mariner was only able to announce the latitude portion of his position before the vessel sank. However, through the Rescue 21 system and the ability to play back the recorded VHF radio call, the Coast Guard was

able to quickly locate all three people in the water and hoist them to safety. In addition to sending rescue assets to your aid, an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast (UMIB) will be issued on the radio to all mariners to be aware of the situation and assist as possible. Depending on the severity and situation, you may soon have a hovering helicopter over-head.

Helicopter hoisting: Once again, having a VHF radio is critical so the helicopter crew can brief you on expectations. The brief will include a course and speed to steer, clearing the deck of any loose gear, turning off your radar, and a warning to not connect the rescue hook to any part of your boat. As you can imagine, the hovering helicopter can produce winds in excess of 80 mph which can make steering a challenge, but it is critical the vessel maintains a straight line while moving forward. Ideally, one person would focus on driving the boat while a second person worked on deck. If only one person is available, the hoisting will probably be conducted with the boat in neutral not making way with the single person working on deck. When the helicopter team is ready to proceed, they will send down an orange polypropylene rope called a "Trail Line" with a weighted bag attached at the end. This line helps stabilize the rescue basket which is attached to the hoist cable (see photo below).

When the Trail Line is lowered down to your vessel, you should pull on it vigorously as if trying to pull the helicopter from the sky as the rescue basket is lowered to the deck. Be careful to not get your feet or hands tangled in the Trail Line in case your boat or the aircraft shifts out of position unexpectedly. As the basket approaches your boat, don't reach out to grab it. The rotating blades of the helicopter cause static electricity to build on the cable and basket which can cause a substantial shock. For safest results, let the basket touch the deck of your boat which will provide a ground and instantly dissipate the static charge. Once on deck, the injured crewmember or person being evacuated should climb into the basket and keep their feet and hands inside the basket. In fact, there is even a self-explanatory graphic on the end of the basket to show you how to sit. Meanwhile, the person on deck handling the line should give a "thumbs up" to the aircraft to indicate they are ready for the basket to be hoisted. As the basket is lifted vertically off the deck, the Trail Line should be gradually played out as the basket is retrieved back to the helicopter. If this is the only hoist to be completed, once the line is fully paid out, toss the weighted bag overboard and into the water clear of your vessel so as not to get caught in your propeller. If multiple hoists will be conducted, hold onto the Trail Line while the basket is brought into the aircraft, vacated and is then lowered back to your vessel for the next person to be hoisted in the same manner listed above.

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Rescue Swimmers: If you end up in the water or someone onboard your vessel is injured where they can't get into the basket such as a back injury, a rescue swimmer may be hoisted to the water or onboard your boat to assist in evacuating the patient. Coast Guard Rescue Swimmers are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) who can provide medical care and are trained to operate independently from the aircraft.

There are various ways to get the rescue swimmer to you, but the most common way is that they will be hoisted down into the water or directly to your boat using a Trail Line similar to the method listed above. Once they arrive, please follow their directions to ensure your safety and expedite your recovery.

Rescue Pump: If you strike a submerged object which breaches your hull or you unknowingly start taking on water, the Coast Guard can hoist a self-contained dewatering pump to you. The pump will be delivered in a water-tight plastic tote container. Once again, the pump can be hoisted directly to you following the same Trail Line method mentioned above. Depending on your vessel's freeboard and your ability, another method is also available. This technique involves lowering the Trail Line to you on the boat then sliding the aircraft to the side and pushing the pump container out the door and into the water. Once in the water, you can pull the dewatering pump to you and lift it onto your boat for use. Be careful as the plastic container with the pump inside weighs 85 pounds. Once on board, simply open the container and follow the simple step-by-step instructional card.

As our motto states, the Coast Guard is *Semper Paratus* – Always Ready. However, being prepared with the proper safety equipment including reliable communications equipment can literally be a life saver.

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Pending Golden State Water Projects

By Larry De Ridder

On the North Coast we are far enough away from two pending State water projects that we don't hear much of them. Nevertheless, both have the potential to seriously impact our salmon fishing. As to whether the impacts will be positive or negative - that's hard to say. These projects are the Twin Tunnels, and a proposal to raise the height of Shasta Dam.

If you are about forty years old or more, you likely remember the first time Jerry Brown was governor. The apartment instead of the Gov's mansion, his Plymouth sedan, the Peripheral Canal -- maybe it all comes back to you if you think about it. For those of you who don't remember, or are too young, in the early 80's the Peripheral Canal was Governor Brown's pet project to move fresh water around the delta and send it to Southern California. Politically it sparked an intense fight between Southern California cities and water districts against Northern California fishermen, local water users and environmentalists. Ultimately in 1982 the Peripheral Canal was overwhelmingly defeated at the ballot box. A few years later, Governor Deukmejian floated a smaller project often referred to as "Duke's Ditch", which was also rejected. So here we are three decades later. Governor Brown is back, along with his current plan to send Northern California water to Southern California.

The current proposal is to dig two parallel tunnels 150 feet below the delta, wide enough to install a 3-lane freeway, and 35 miles long. After clearing the Delta the tunnels would surface and connect to an existing north-south aqueduct. Getting at the most important facts is hard, because the pro-tunnel government and water district interests make some pretty extravagant claims, and the anti-tunnel forces get a little hysterical at times. Nevertheless, here is some of what I've been able to gather so far.

I don't understand the politics of this, but it appears that unlike 1982, this project can be done by the State without any kind of vote being put to the general population. In 1982 when the Canal project was defeated, California had 24 million residents. We now have 38 million, and most of the growth has been in the big cities. As always, most of our rainfall is in the north and most of our snow falls in the Sierras, but most of our people live in the Bay Area and far Southern California. Given the location of the votes, it isn't clear whether a popular vote would approve or reject the project. The current timeline projects 2016 ground breaking and 2026 ribbon cutting ceremonies. The current cost estimate is $14 billion. Construction and operational costs are proposed to be billed primarily to those who would get the most water -- specifically the Metropolitan Water District, some cities near San Francisco and Central Valley irrigation districts. Some of those entities could likely make a tidy profit by reselling water to users further south. Residential users as far south as San Diego could see their water bills rise about $6 per month as costs are passed on.

Proponents of the project claim that the amount of water to be sent south won't be any higher than what has historically been available. They claim that the location of the pumps and the design of the screens will actually protect salmon and delta smelt better than the existing pumps. However, the proposal calls for the existing pumps to remain in place and to continue in use, though on a more limited basis. Critics claim that this is just another project to rob the Delta of fresh water essential to the environment, local farming and fishing interests. They further note that this is earthquake country and there is no guarantee that one earthquake won't destroy the whole tunnel project. Proponents counter that many of the Delta levees are aging and could also fail in an earthquake or high water event, and assert tunnels are less likely to fail than the existing aging infrastructure. Proponents claim that the tunnel project would make water deliveries more stable, and benefit vital farming interests which are currently at the mercy of uncertain delivery. Critics point out that much of that uncertainty is

the result of government water agencies committing to deliver more water than they have any business selling. Particularly in dry years, courts have been forced to intervene to prevent some water deliveries in an effort to protect Delta fish populations.

So, that's the bare outline. Would the proposed tunnels benefit fish by killing fewer salmon outmigrants and smelt? Would this simply turn into another water spigot sending vital water south, and ultimately helping to destroy one of the major salmon producing rivers in the state? Will the proposed cost simply prove too high for a state already struggling with massive debt? Will legal challenges in the court system scuttle the whole thing? At this time the governor and his team are going ahead at full throttle.

The second project I mentioned in the opening paragraph is a proposal to raise the height of Shasta Dam anywhere from six to 18 1/2 feet. For those of us who haven't been there, Shasta Dam is the 8th highest dam in the country, and the largest reservoir in California. When full it holds 4.5 million acre feet of water. Shasta holds back water arriving from the Pit, Upper Sacramento and McCloud Rivers. The dam is one of the cornerstone reservoirs for the Central Valley Water Project.

The Bureau of Reclamation claims that the proposal is intended to improve conditions in the Sacramento River for salmon and steelhead, increase our water supply and improve supply reliability for downstream water users. If raised by the highest amount proposed, which is clearly what the Bureau is leaning toward, the lake would hold about 13% more water when filled. One immediate question put forth by opponents is "why bother"? The lake only hits maximum pool about once every six or seven years, and then starts dropping as stored water is sent downstream. If they can't reliably fill the existing lake, making it higher just means it would fill even more rarely. In addition, critics are quick to claim there is a link between this project and the Twin Tunnels described already. The basic argument is that a larger dam will result in less water flowing into the lower river during the wet season so that the dam can be filled higher, and that once full the extra water will be sold to SoCal water interests and shipped south via the proposed tunnels. The assertion is basically that the extra cold water would be shipped south based on farming and business schedules and needs, not on fish population dynamics.

The Bureau admits there are a long string of significant impacts. While the Bureau claims this will help downstream fish, the US Fish and Wildlife Service claims the benefits would be negligible for anadromous fish. US Fish and Wildlife studies indicate no benefit to salmon 90% of the time. However, what if that last 10% of the time the extra water made a significant difference? Other studies indicate

Continued next page

that 5% water conservation by Central valley alfalfa farmers could save seven times as much water as the extra output the proposed larger lake would produce. Another significant impact of raising the water level would be the flooding of thousands of acres of the Shasta-Trinity National Recreation Area. Additional impacts include replacing six miles of public roads, the relocation or modification of five bridges, the destruction of dozens of marinas, campgrounds, utilities and wastewater systems, and flooding areas considered sacred to the local Winnemem Wintu Tribe. The raised lake would flood 1 1/2 miles of the McCloud River, which is protected under federal law and the California Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Curiously, as I was not able to track down the rationale, the proposed lake level rise is projected by some critics to reduce Shasta hydropower output by about 5%. Currently the project is anticipated to cost $1.1 billion, and require $54 million in annual operating costs. The Bureau feels the public would receive 60% of the benefits, and based on that estimate would bill taxpayers for 60% of the costs. The "public benefit" is based on a projected net economic benefit of $18 to $63 million per year. They further estimate the project would generate 1,420 jobs and generate $143 million in income during construction.

The increased holding capacity of the proposed dam would be an estimated extra 133,000 acre-feet of water, all of which would be sold to water contractors, mostly south of the Delta. Interestingly, the last time there was a serious government push to raise the level of Shasta Lake was about the same time Brown was pushing the Peripheral Canal. Critics who sense collusion between this project and the Twin Tunnels may be on to something.

We are currently in the 90-day public comment and review period for the Environmental Impact Statement. If you wish to see the documents directly, go to http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=1915. Written comments on the Draft EIS may be submitted through midnight, September 30, 2013. Comments must be directed to:

Katrina Chow, Project Manager
Reclamation Planning Division
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825-1893

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Please list your interests, talents, and affiliations for participating in committee functions

_____

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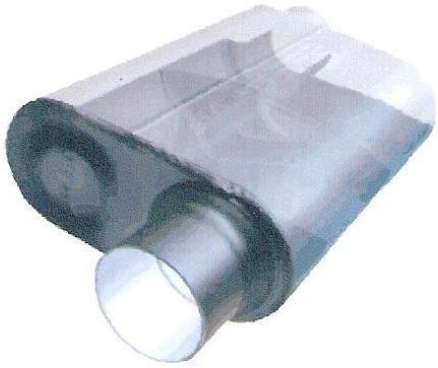
All HASA members will receive timely updates on all club and committee functions including a quarterly e-newsletter. Premium members without e-mail will be sent a hard copy of the newsletter.

All HASA members will be invited to the Humboldt Tuna Club potlucks.

More information is available at humboldttuna.com

HASA PO BOX 6191 Eureka, Ca. 95502



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Mad River Hatchery Needs Our Support

By Karen Brooks

It's the ole, "Damned if you do, damned if you don't," Catch 22. EPIC is suing USFWS, CDF&W, and just about everyone in-between for raising wild fish for the Mad River. When the hatchery uses wild fish to raise and release baby wild fish that eat other baby fish then expect a lawsuit. Haven't fish been eating other fish since time began? Well it is alleged that when wild hatchery fish eat other baby fish then the "take", according to EPIC, violates ESA. Guess who is on the hook (pardon the pun) to defend this lawsuit? Yes, you and I, the taxpayers.

What is truly sad about this whole story is the money that will be needed to defend the hatchery could be used for the operation and improvements of this 1971 facility. Prior to the lawsuit, local folks were talking with hatchery officials to collaborate on maintenance and improvement projects. As HASA members may recall, The Friends of the Mad River Hatchery organization was dissolved several years ago and the need for a tax-exempt organization exists to receive monetary contributions related to the upcoming work. HASA members will be kept in the loop as projects are prioritized and work is planned. As yet specified expertise and related helping hands will need to be mobilized. Stay tuned.

Editors note ~ the term "take" does not only refer to predation but to any competition by hatchery raised fish for food or space against any ESA listed species. A draft Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan exists for the Mad River Hatchery but has not been approved by the USFW Service. Below is the first paragraphs of the actual lawsuit.

Re: Notice of Intent to Sue for Violations of Endangered Species Act
Dear Sirs and Madam:
I write on behalf of Environmental Protection Information Center (EPIC) to respectfully request that you remedy ongoing violations of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), 16 U.S.C. §§ 1531-1544. As EPIC establishes below, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has funded or authorized, and continues to fund or authorize, the illegal take of wild California Coastal Chinook, Southern Oregon/Northern California Coastal coho, and Northern California steelhead in the Mad River in California, by funding or authorizing the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) to operate the Mad River Hatchery. FWS has also violated the ESA by failing to consult with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as to its funding or authorization of the hatchery. For its part, CDFG has violated and continues to violate the ESA by capturing listed wild fish and operating the hatchery to release hatchery fish that cause take of listed wild fish without an approved Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP) or other federal exception to the prohibition on "take" under the ESA.

EPIC is a non-profit conservation group based in Arcata, California, that works to protect and restore ancient forests, watersheds, coastal estuaries, and native species in northern California. EPIC uses an integrated, science-based approach, combining public education, citizen advocacy, and strategic litigation. EPIC focuses in part on preserving and restoring wild salmon runs in northern California.

Humboldt Currents

by Casey Allen

The **Humboldt Bay Artificial Reef Project** has not shown any real progress this summer except for the public outreach. It appears the principles in the project are either busy fishing or on vacation. It is always hard to get things done in the summer. Reef presentations have been conducted for various Kiwanis, Rotary, and other organizations. All were very supportive but the common theme in response was ,"who is against it?" Because of this, it seems our next step is to seek out those who may oppose the project. No one has stepped forward against the reef so far and the fear is that after spending a great deal of time and money an 11th hour lawsuit will appear.

HASA has endorsed two **MLPA Baseline Study** proposals in conjunction with Humboldt State University. The first proposes to (quote):

> "Develop a socioeconomic baseline characterization for the North Coast MPA network and adjacent areas that includes both consumptive and non-consumptive uses. This baseline will serve as a benchmark in which to assess future changes.
> Conduct an assessment of initial socioeconomic changes for the North Coast MPA network and adjacent areas that documents short-term net socioeconomic benefits or costs following MPA implementation, and that utilizes historical and contextual sources of knowledge. "

A Fisherman Advisory Council would be formed in each North Coast port, representing commercial, charters, and recreational interests to assist in all aspects of the project, from design, review of data, and community support.

The second baseline study proposal (and again I quote):

"To characterize the baseline status of nearshore rocky reef fish assemblages in the North Coast study region (Point Arena to the Oregon border), including newly-created marine protected areas (MPAs), we will conduct collaborative fisheries sampling by partnering with charter fishing captains and volunteer anglers. This quantitative baseline will describe the species composition, size structure, and relative abundance of fishes inside and outside of MPAs in the North Coast Region for use as a benchmark against which to evaluate future MPA performance."

This one includes a rockfish tagging program that has been a long talked about goal. The movements of rockfish are a mystery and that data will be valuable in improving management practices which will sustain a recreational fishery.

Award decisions will be made by California Sea Grant, CDFW, and the California Ocean Protection Council and will be announced in October.

The Flea

By Matt Goldsworthy

The Flea pictured here is a 1 inch spoon trailing behind 4.5 inch teasers (see boat rail)

I am not sure I have ever heard of this term (in the world of fishing), but I like it. The flea. Elephants eat popcorn. I think you get the drift? Most of us probably know all about the flea already. Ever use a fly behind a dodger for salmon? There's the flea. In the world of tuna fishing, anglers have also used small lures or jigs for many years. Most of the time when anglers use smaller lures, they are trying to "match the hatch" and offer something similar to what the fish are eating in nature.

I believe (or theorize) that a Flea will work on any given day, even when a flea sized offering does not "match the hatch". Case in point was this past Friday (August 16), when we were out tuna fishing about 45 miles southwest of Eureka. Most boats were reporting that the fish were full of squid. We were fishing in a different area than most, and our fish were full of large sized saury and gigantic (Crescent City style) herring. Yes, we used Rapalas and cedar plugs to match that hatch (to imitate the large saury and herring). But, we also trolled some tiny lures (the "fleas"). The fleas drew a lot of interest, even though it seemed pretty clear that the fish were chowing down on XL sized prey.

The Flea applies heavily to the world of multiple lure fishing. Multiple lure fishing is a term that applies to using more than one lure on each line (like daisy chains, spreader bars, or dredges). These lures have an artificial school of teasers chased by something else to imitate a scenario that the fish expect to see in nature. There are basically two schools of thought on how to arrange a multiple lure: (1) a school of bait with a wounded straggler bait of the same size falling behind the school, known as the "bait configuration"; or (2) a school of bait being chased by a larger critter, known as the "predator configuration". Fred Archer invented these terms and to this day, multiple lure fishermen adhere to these rules.

Enter the third rule of multiple lure fishing: the flea. Unlike the other two scenarios discussed, the flea scenario mimics another scene often observed in nature: a school of bait with a little tiny follower trying to keep up with a school of a different species for protection and safety.

The flea. I have been experimenting with the Flea Configuration on my salmon dredges and spreader bars for tuna this season. All season long

A Flea (one inch spoon) behind a Redwood Coast Krill Dredge

salmon have been caught on Redwood Coast Dredges with tiny little 1.5 inch spoons as chasebaits. This is the "Flea Configuration" at work: a school of bait, with a smaller critter (different species) trailing behind the school trying to keep up.
It seems like the fish are programmed to remove that flea from the school. The fish know the flea doesn't belong there… and leave it to nature to keep things in order. When all else is even… the flea just might give you a little edge. Stack the odds in your favor, and present a situation to the fish that they are programmed to correct (remove the flea that doesn't belong in the school). Your Flea can be anything: a shrimp fly behind a dodger… a tiny spoon behind a dredge… or a fly behind a tuna spreader bar. Try it… you might like it! It has been working well for me this year. The Flea Configuration is something commonly observed in nature. Fleas are annoying little critters. What do you do when your pets get fleas? Not many fish will pass up a chance to get rid of one!

Article correction

Last issue we had an article regarding the Beaufort Scale for estimating ocean conditions based on wind speed. Software incompatibility resulted in a confusing chart. Below for those interested is the corrected list of the lower end of the scale.

Force	Wind Speed	Description	Sea Conditions	Waves
0	0	calm, smooth	like a mirror	none
1	1 – 3 knots	light air	small ripples	3 – 6 inches
2	4 – 6 knots	light breeze	short, small wavelets, no crests	6 – 12 inches
3	7 – 10 knots	gentle breeze	large wavelets, some with crests	2 – 3 feet
4	11 – 16 knots	moderate breeze	larger small waves, some white caps	4 – 5 ½ feet
5	17 – 21 knots	fresh breeze	white caps and light foam	6 – 8 feet
6	22 – 27 knots	strong breeze	large waves, some spray	8 – 13 feet

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