

# **Save Our Wild Salmon: It's Up to You**

Notes to Accompany PowerPoint Presentation by Barbara Hawkins, Education Director  
Central Coast Women for Fisheries, Inc.

1. Eating wild salmon is healthy for you and healthy for our environment. But this fishery will only continue to exist with help from you.
2. This presentation will explain the difference between wild and farmed salmon. It will illustrate the health benefits of wild salmon. You will also learn what wild salmon need in order to survive and what you can do to insure that wild salmon continue to survive.
3. What makes wild salmon unique? These special fish spend part of their lives in rivers and part of their lives in the open ocean. They spawn in fresh water streams, then spend one to three years growing strong enough for their next journey. Smolts, which are adolescent salmon, stop in estuaries to adjust to salt water and to stock up on food. Adult wild salmon spend the next one to even years in the open ocean.
4. Wild salmon don't reproduce until the end of their life and they will only spawn in fresh water. They tend to return to the same stream where they were born. While other fish can spawn many times, salmon only spawn once. They don't eat while migrating back to their birthplace and die shortly after spawning.

5. These journeys across the open ocean and upstream can be hundreds of miles long. The longest known trip to spawn was twenty-four hundred miles inland. Once they reach their destination, the female makes several redds, or nests, which can be ten feet long and four feet wide. A female may lay eight hundred eggs for every pound she weighs.
  
6. There are five kinds of Pacific Coast wild salmon. These are chinook, chum, coho, pink, and sockeye. Masu and Amago wild salmon live off the Asian continent.
  
7. There are several kinds of wild salmon. The two commonly found here on the California Central Coast are the Chinook, or king, and the Coho, or silver, salmon. Steelhead trout are close relatives.
  
8. Most people wonder what is different about the wild salmon that California commercial fishermen catch. As you now know, wild salmon are born in streams, then spend their lives in the open ocean. Their natural diet consists of smaller fish such as mackerel and herring. There are a wide variety of species of wild salmon.

9. Farmed salmon are totally different from wild salmon. Farmed salmon are born in pens. They spend their entire lives in captivity. Their diet consists of manufactured feed. They are often fed ground-up dead salmon. In fact, their flesh is actually grey, so they must be fed red dye in order to mimic the vibrant pink flesh of the wild salmon. All farmed salmon are Atlantic salmon, which is a non-native species. If you see Atlantic salmon for sale at the grocery store or featured on a menu, you know it is farmed salmon.
  
10. Not only are wild salmon a natural source of protein. Eating wild salmon offers many health benefits. First of all, wild salmon are higher than any other fish in omega 3 oils. This wonderful oil lowers cholesterol, decreases blood clotting factors, increases beneficial relation in larger arteries and blood vessels, and decreases the inflammatory process in blood vessels.
  
11. As you can see, wild salmon are heart healthy!
  
12. In addition, there are many other health benefits from eating wild salmon. These fish are naturally high in many essential vitamins, including vitamins E, C, D, and A. Wild salmon are also a great source for adding a wide variety of minerals to your diet, such as zinc, iron, calcium, and selenium. Wild salmon are an excellent source of protein. Even the fat in wild salmon is predominantly healthy unsaturated fat.

13. Not only do farmed salmon lack many of the health benefits of wild salmon, they also pose many dangers to our wild salmon populations. First Atlantic salmon are farmed in rivers home to native species. When Atlantic salmon escape from their pens, they tend to colonize and crowd out the native wild population. These net pen salmon hosts diseases and parasites, which attack wild salmon. The antibiotics and pesticides used by salmon farmers flow into the ecosystem, polluting all fish populations. Each net pen can produce two metric tons of waste, equivalent to the waste output of a small city, which causes even more damage to the river's ecosystem.

14. (No Notes)

15. But farmed salmon are not the biggest danger to wild salmon. The activities of man could drive wild salmon to extinction. The largest threat to wild salmon is diversion of water from the rivers where they spawn. Agriculture, industry, and urban development all take water from rivers home to wild salmon. Without water, wild salmon cannot spawn. Dam, both large and small, also create impassable barriers to returning wild salmon. Construction of homes near stream beds and logging along rivers creates erosion, clogging up these waterways.

16. Large dams on major rivers stop salmon migration. They prevent stream flow to spawning locations. Large dams reduce available habitat for wild salmon.

17. Seasonal dams are often constructed for recreation, irrigation, groundwater recharge, fire suppression, or livestock watering. These dams can also reduce stream habitat and diminish stream water quality.
18. Agricultural, industrial, and household chemicals can kill wild salmon. Urban development can cause runoff water. Runoff water ends up in rivers, polluting water and killing wild salmon. Runoff water causes flooding, eroding stream banks and destroying spawning beds.
19. There are many ways to prevent runoff by changing your habits at home. One important way is to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides and other chemicals in your garden. Be careful when watering. Don't over water. Plant trees to stop erosion. Avoid landscaping plastic so that water can soak into the soil. Limit the use of bark mulch, which further pollutes runoff water. Sweep your walkways and driveways rather than hosing them down. All of these products and runoff water become part of the watershed, ending up in our precious rivers and streams, and ultimately, our oceans.
20. Think about preserving wild salmon habitat when driving your car. Fix oil leaks and other emission problems so that your exhaust is clean. When you wash your car use low phosphate soaps. Patronize car washes that recycle water and lube shops that recycle oil. If you change your oil yourself, be sure to dispose of your crankcase oil at an approved facility.

21. Both commercial and pleasure boaters can also make sure they help to preserve wild salmon habitat. Fix hoses before they leak oil or gas. Repairs, pressure washing, and painting should be done in dry dock, not in the slip or on the mooring. When doing small repairs, use tarps to catch pollutants. Never discharge sewage except at appropriate dump sites. Only fill fuel tanks ninety per cent full. Catch any overflow with fuel absorbent pads. Use fuel absorbent pads in your engine room to mop up oil leaks.
  
22. Join local organizations which work to preserve local wild salmon populations. Participate in creek cleanups to remove barriers for spawning salmon. Buy wild salmon at the grocery store and ask for wild instead of farmed salmon at restaurants. Use less water at home. In your garden, in your car, and in your boat, reduce your contribution to runoff pollution.
  
23. Don't forget that wild salmon can only survive with your help. It really is up to all of us.

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