



Rx Fly Fishing!

Extra! Extra! Special Edition

Volume XLII

Number II

Special Edition

Jerry Neuburger, Editor

Stockton, California

January is the DFF Conservation Month!

Conservation by Ron Forbes

A time for reflection on the 2018 Delta water wars

"Be patient and calm - for no one can catch a fish in anger."

Herbert Hoover



Barbara Barrigan-Parilla, Executive Director, Restore the Delta. RTD photo

Last year the fight to protect the Delta was, once again, chaotic. In retrospect however, it was a positive year for pro-environmental groups including Restore the Delta (RTD). In December RTD's Barbara Barrigan-Parilla wrote a letter of appreciation to the members of RTD for their outstanding concern and activism. Barrigan-Parilla noted that we are "holding our own in the fight for the San Francisco-Delta estuary and sustainable California water management." She outlined five significant areas where RTD has had a major impact in the fight against Governor Brown's ill-advised California Water-Fix project. They are:

1.) From the first of 2018, Governor Brown promised that we would "break ground" on his Twin Tunnels Project. He has not. RTD and our coalition partners have effectively exposed the pseudoscience, lies, half truths, and blatant ille-



Grass roots in action. I have one in my front yard. RTD Photo

gal acts of Governor Brown and those with special water interests. Brown is doing everything he can do, and in many cases in secret behind closed door meetings, to push his water agenda forward.

(Continued on page 2)

Annual Dinner: Almost \$7,000 in Raffle and Silent Auction Prizes

Only five days left to order dinner tickets by mail, 7 days online by CC

It seems that the days are flying by this month. Our general membership meeting comes around this Wednesday and the annual Installation Dinner (as of Sunday the 6th) is only 13 days away.

Time is getting short for those who plan to attend to order their tickets. Several e-mail notices have been sent out as well as a USPS mail out with dinner order forms and a return envelope.

This year's dinner looks to be exceptional with a number of guests, an update on the Chinook salmon returns on the Moke-lumne by Michelle Workman EBMUD, a

short presentation by Chris Shutes, CSPA on the state's water wars, a special award presentation, and of course the club awards for Fly Fisher of the Year, the President's Club Service Award and the sought after Incomplete Angler Award.

This year's menu has been upgraded with offerings of prime rib, stuffed chicken breast and eggplant parmesan. And the raffle/silent auction has almost 80 articles ready to be taken home by lucky winners/bidders.

However, you must be there to appreciate all of the above. To order your tickets, go

to the club website,

www.deltaflyfishers.com, and page down to the area on the right side to order dinners. You can purchase your dinners right on line using your credit or debit card or print out the dinner order form and mail it in. Mail ins should be posted by this coming Friday, online orders by Sunday evening.

Come join your fellow members to welcome in the new officers and directors, have a fun and informative evening and go home with some real bargains in the way of new gear. I hope to see you there.

(Continued from page 1)

His latest attempt has been coined a "Surrender Dorothy" agreement. It would give state water rights to the federal government and jeopardize California's water rights for future generations. As Barrigan-Parilla points out (and I believe with great pride), "We survived Governor Brown."

2.) We won a major victory at the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). Both state and federal science has repeatedly shown that the Delta needs to have 60% of fresh water flow to maintain the health of the Delta, its fisheries, and to prevent salt intrusion from the ocean. We did get an increased fresh water flow to 40% not the 60% desired. Although it was not a perfect win, we did stop the special water interest groups from preventing increased fresh water to flow through the Delta and diverting that water to the south instead. This is a good start in restoring the Delta.

3.) We had a major win at the Delta Stewardship Council (DSC). Because of the testimony of activists from RTD and our coalition partners, the California Dept. of Water Resources (DWR) suffered a major embarrassment and set back when, first the staff, and later the entire board of the DSC rejected the DWR's request for approval of its Certification of Consistency of Brown's WaterFix. The consistency determination is required to prove that the tunnels project will benefit the Delta and not harm it. The loss of DSC's certification is a major, possibly insurmountable, barrier for the WaterFix!

4.) We advanced our position at the Joint Budget Legislative Committee (JBLC). Because of RTD's and other pro-environmental groups input, The DWR is now required to have further public input sessions for the WaterFix financing. At

this point the WaterFix financing is, at best, nebulous. It is amazing that after at least 8 years of talking about his proposed tunnels, Governor Brown has consistently avoided any attempts to determine their real cost. At present, somewhere between only 10-15% of the project has been planned in any detail. As we have consistently seen, state projects usually cost us 5 or 6 times their original estimated cost. To date we have no real idea of the WaterFix's true cost. Once again Governor Brown and his advocates are trying to deceive us with their on-going game of smoke and mirrors.

5.) Changing board members positions about the WaterFix within the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) of Southern California and the Santa Clara Water Districts (SCWD).

During the last several years board members of the SCWD and the MWD have voted their unanimous support of all issues concerning the WaterFix. During recent sessions of public comment, RTD and other Delta water advocates have raised divergent points of view, including issues of water district consumer costs and other financial concerns. Their board votes on the Water Fix are now becoming split, not unanimous. These cost concerns have raised increasing dissent among their board members, and RTD continues to cultivate those concerns. My son lives in Los Angeles and tells me that several years ago people in the southland had no knowledge, or concern, of

any water issues. Now a frequently asked question is, "How much more is my water bill going to be?" We are now getting their attention.

In the early 1980's Jerry Brown pushed hard to build Peripheral Canals around the Delta. In 1983 the project was soundly defeated when 63% of the voters rejected it. But this time he has tried to sneak his project through without voter approval. Once again he has failed to do so. In the last newsletter some of his back door deals were pointed out. Brown is continuing to negotiate behind closed door deals as this newsletter is being written. And he will continue to do so until he is out of office. Governor Jerry Brown is the longest serving governor in California's history. His failed water projects are his attempt to create a legacy to compete with his father Governor Pat Brown. Unfortunately, he has continued to adopt a 20th century water mentality in the 21st century. His legacy will be one of mis-spent, unrecoverable millions of state and federal taxpayer dollars.

ANOTHER GREAT RUN OF FALL SALMON ON THE MOKELU



The Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery below Camanche Dam. Photo by CDFW (Continued on page 3)

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On the third Sunday in November, Elise and I went to Van Essen Park on the Mokelumne River to check out the fall-run Chinook salmon. It was exciting to see what appears to be another outstanding run. There were a lot of salmon visible and active. It is turning out to be another outstanding run this year. Dan Bacher of the Fish Sniffer reports as of December 18, 16,300 salmon have returned to Mokelumne hatchery. According to William Smith, the hatchery manager, the run appears to be behind last year's record run, although the final numbers won't be available until mid-January. Last year's record run recorded 19,954 salmon returning to the Moke..

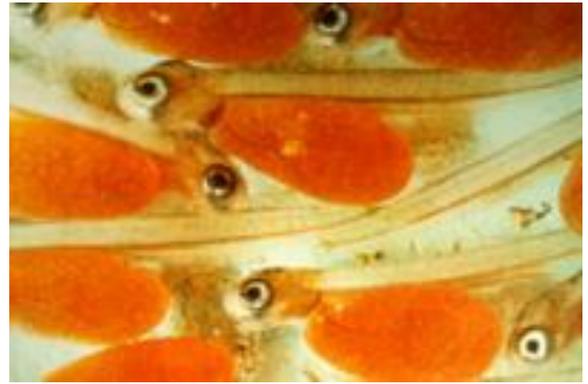
This year a record number of steelhead



The fish ladder at the Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery. It's been busy this year. CADFW photo

have returned to the Mokelumne River also. The hatchery has counted 530 adults and 638 juveniles for a total of 1,168 steelhead. In the not-to-distant past steelhead counts of between 60-90 fish were common. What has made the difference? Last year in January, Jose Setka, the Manager of Fish and Wildlife for EBMUD spoke to us on Conservation Night at the club's meeting. He told us about a variety of techniques that EBMUD has initiated on the Moke. Recent conservation articles in our newsletter detailed EBMUD's innovative approach. We are very fortunate to have EBMUD managing the Mokelumne River. They are the most pro-environmental water district in California and the statistics prove that. Salmon runs on the Lower Sacramento and American Rivers have declined precipitously. On the Moke however, they have increased sharply. Currently the Mokelumne River contributes about 20% of the commercial and 35% of the recreational salmon caught off our states' coast!

Finally, EBMUD is getting the credit they deserve. John McManus, President of the Golden Gate Salmon Association (GGSA) was quoted in the Fish Sniffer saying that the Mokelumne hatchery's staff gets "key support from EBMUD, an organization that has an openness to try new things. There is a recognition of hostile conditions downstream - and they have to get around these hazards to increase fish survival. They have a very good staff that produces super babies - the fish are well taken care of and



Future 12 to 20 pound Chinook salmon at the Mokelumne hatchery. Photo by CADFW

strong."

Setka commented, "The efforts of all stakeholders within the Mokelumne River have resulted in a sustained recovery. The Lower Mokelumne River Partnership agencies, a number of state and federal agencies, along with the California Sport-fishing Protection Alliance, the Wood-bridge Irrigation District, land owners along the river, and the North San Joaquin Water Conservation District have all played a part in restoring the salmon in the Mokelumne."

In the decade from 1976 to 1986, and during the years of 1998 and 1999 no steelhead returned to the Moke. Currently the Mokelumne River is sustaining steelhead runs in record numbers because of the outstanding efforts of EBMUD and others. The Mokelumne hatchery releases 100,000 steelhead yearlings annually. They have shown that with due diligence our salmon and steelhead fishery can flourish.

Ron Forbes

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