



Salmon Fishing Industry Opposes California Drought Rider in WRDA

6 December 2016

Dear Honorable Members,

The undersigned commercial fishing industry groups strongly oppose Mr. McCarthy's California water language inserted in the House version of the Water Resources Development Act. King salmon was once the West's most important fishery. It now hangs in the balance, as what should be an infinitely renewable resource has consistently lost political battles in the war over California's water. This last-minute rider is a knife in the gut of the thousands of commercial fishermen and fishery-dependent businesses that harvest and supply local, wild-caught seafood to millions of American consumers.

The language purports to offer drought relief, but in so doing, it picks drought winners and drought losers in California and beyond. The winners are the handful of industrial irrigators of the San Joaquin Valley that stand to benefit from rollbacks of the Endangered Species Act and other salmon protections, and the politically (not scientifically) mandated operation of the federal water system in California. The losers are the fishery-dependent businesses, such as commercial and charter-for-hire fishermen, seafood wholesalers, ice docks, fuel docks, shipwrights, manufacturers, restaurants, hotels and direct-to-consumer seafood purveyors that make a living on the availability of salmon. It's a policy choice to sacrifice a naturally sustainable food system for a food system that requires government subsidies, massive publicly-funded infrastructure projects, and continual litigation. It is the wrong choice for the small businesses and families that harvest this resource on the West Coast.

West Coast salmon fisheries are in crisis. The salmon fishing communities in all three states have requested or are considering the need for fishery disaster declarations for the 2016 due to extremely low productivity. We are a proud community that wants to work, not resort to government handouts. We ask that you do everything in your power to prevent this language from becoming law.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mike McCorkle for Southern California Trawlers Association (Santa Barbara)

Stephanie Mutz for Commercial Fishermen of Santa Barbara

Bill Ward for Port San Luis Fishermen's Marketing Association

Lori French for Morro Bay Commercial Fishermen's Organization

Mike Ricketts for Monterey Fishermen's Marketing Association

Tom McCray for Moss Landing Commercial Fishermen's Association

Joe Stoops for Santa Cruz Fishermen's Marketing Association

Lisa Damrosch for Half Moon Bay Seafood Marketing Association

Larry Collins for San Francisco Crab Boat Owners Association

Don Marshall for Small Boat Commercial Salmon Fishermen's Association (at-large)

Lorne Edwards for Bodega Bay Fishermen's Marketing Association

Bill Forkner for Salmon Trollers Marketing Association (Ft. Bragg)

Dave Bitts for Humboldt Fishermen's Marketing Association

Tim Sloane for Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations

Joel Kawahara for Coastal Trollers Association (Washington)