

April 26, 1996

Bill Goodyear Daily News

Dear Bill:

SALMON STILL LOSING FIGHT FOR SURVIVAL

After reading the Pacific Fisheries Management Council bulletin, "Council News" April 9-12 about cutbacks in commercial fishing, we find Winter Run Salmon still declining, because of road blocks to a successful spawning cycle.

The reputable Council repeats citations of up river habitat loss in the Sacramento River by the Winter Run Chinook Recovery Team. The Iron Mountain mine and Red Bluff Diversion Dam are also noted, in spite of beneficial watershed work done by Deer and Mill Creek conservancies.

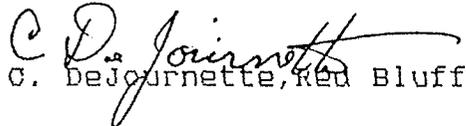
In addition to upstream complaints the Council, in a resolution, has addressed a major delta water flow condition that has been ignored by the State Water Resources Control Board for more than the past 6 years.

Biologist Frank Fisher aptly described the disappearance of marked juvenile salmon into a delta "Black Hole". Since these fish don't take wing and fly to the ocean, it seems plausible that the myriad of predators, fish, fowl and water animals eat their share. If true, an apparent solution lies in sufficient through flows in the Delta. An example is the "Miracle" rain storms occurring at the right time in 1992. These flows gave small fry and smolt a fast ride downstream, diluted pollution and murky waters hid them from hungry creatures. Too bad this life saver flow can't always be counted on.

1995 fish return numbers support the value of 1992 high waters.

The P.F.M.C. in their resolution asked the State Water Resources Control Board to provide sufficient outflow from the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta to protect Winter Run salmon.

The above was presented to the Tehama County Board of Supervisors April 23 with this comment: The Board knows I have not asked for an endorsement or support of through Delta flows including San Francisco Bay. The reason being that we have Tehama County citizens who still believe that even a cupful of fresh water that flows to the ocean is wasted. With due respect to divergent views, most of us understand that Delta waters are of waste water quality. This destroys fish habitat and costs too much to make it potable for urban use. In effect, the Delta is a cesspool everyone uses while many refuse to admit that we must flush this system which maintains the anadromous fishery that is a valuable food source and a very important indicator of the health of our human environment.

  
C. DeJournette, Red Bluff