History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.

----- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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20:13/01. FISHING GROUPS REQUEST STATE LEGISLATORS TO PROTECT SALMON AGAINST DROUGHT, MANAGERS AND MARIJUANA: The California Legislature’s Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture held its annual oversight hearing on 1 July, with the aim of discussing the impact of illicit marijuana growing operations and drought on salmonid populations. Illegal marijuana cultivation typically requires illegal diversion of water and increased sediment and pollutant loads into salmon streams, which has a devastating effect on the ability of those streams to support incubating and rearing baby salmon.

However, it was the drought impacts on the fisheries, and specifically state and federal agencies’ management of scarce water resources in the Sacramento River that had PCFFA and the Golden Gate Salmon Association fired up at the hearing. “The blood of Central Valley Chinook will ultimately be on someone’s hands. And as the salmon go, so go the fishermen,” Tim Sloane, PCFFA Executive Director told the Legislators on hand, who were lead by
Committee Chair Senator Mike McGuire. “And when it happens, we hope you can say that you did everything in your power to prevent it.”

Sloane also touched on the possibility of a complete closure of the commercial salmon fishing season in 2016, and the mismanagement of water supplies at Shasta Dam by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Regarding the illegal marijuana grows, he argued that illegal water diversions should be considered “public enemy number one” during this historic drought, and that any illegal agricultural operation should be regulated and penalized accordingly.

**For more information**, see video of the hearing from the California Senate, and this 1 July *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* article on the hearing.

**20:13/02. CALIFORNIA FARMERS LOOK AT URBAN WASTEWATER AS A NEW IRRIGATION SOURCE; WESTLANDS OBJECTS:** Deep in drought, California’s farmers are beginning to look at urban wastewater as a potential source of water supply to their farms near Modesto. The North Valley Regional Recycled Water Program would be recycle, treat and disinfect City of Modesto wastewater, then send it to farms within the Del Puerto Water District for irrigation. It would mark the largest urban-agriculture water-recycling project in California. The District has no rights to rivers, lacks groundwater, and has been cut off from federal reservoirs for two years. The wastewater is currently cleaned and discharged into the San Joaquin River. Many farmers are willing to pay high prices for the recycled water. If the program is approved, as it is in Sonoma and Monterey counties, Del Puerto Water District could see the recycled water within three years.

However, the program is facing protests from two other water districts, including Westlands Water District, the largest irrigation district in the country. Westlands claims to be concerned about the program’s effect on the San Joaquin River, which is used so heavily by Westlands that it has run completely dry in some years. Though Modesto only makes up a small amount of the river flow in the San Joaquin, Westlands would like to see the City’s wastewater enter the river so that it could be used later on. Turlock Irrigation District would like to see the wastewater used to replenish groundwater systems, as Turlock relies on groundwater for its supply. They see recycled water as the main source of water available to achieve groundwater sustainability.

**For more information** see this 29 June *KQED* article.

**20:13/03. CALIFORNIA LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, DEPARTMENT OF FISH & WILDLIFE DIRECTOR, EXHORT UNIVERSITY TO SAVE SALMON HATCHERY PROGRAM:** California Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom and California Department of Fish & Wildlife Director Chuck Bonham have now entered the fray surrounding the intended closure of the Tiburon Salmon Institute, a Chinook salmon hatchery and research and education facility located on the premises of the Romberg-Tiburon Center, which is operated by San Francisco State University (SFSU). SFSU President Leslie Wong evicted the Institute and removed baby salmon that were rearing in its hatchery over a lease dispute in June. Newsom and Bonham urged SFSU to rescind the eviction because of the Institute’s value to the public in terms of salmon produced and harvested, as well as the educational opportunity it provides. Bonham and Newsom joined a growing coalition of Institute supporters, which includes PCFFA, IFR, Golden Gate Salmon Association, U.S. Representative Jared Huffman, California Assemblyman Mike McGuire, and the Marin Board of Supervisors.

**For more information**, see this 27 June *Marin Independent Journal* article.
20:13/04. PINK SALMON IN DANGER OF ACIDIFICATION FROM RIVERS AND SEA: A Canadian study from the University of British Columbia found that pink salmon are threatened by water acidification in both the river and the ocean. In rivers, acidification, from greenhouse gas emissions slows early growth. In the ocean, the fish’s ability to smell danger is affected by chemical imbalances. The study, published in the journal *Nature Climate Change*, found that the damage done to pink salmon in fresh water could also affect all other salmonids. In experiments, pink salmon grew 32 mm after 10 weeks in acidification-affected waters, compared to 34 mm in safe waters. The fish also weighed less and lost some sense of smell, leading them to be less fearful of predators. Fish were found to remain in their place longer than usual in tanks affected by ocean acidification. It is unclear how this will affect the salmon in adulthood, or how marine life will adapt or evolve with rising carbon dioxide levels that cause acidification. In addition to pink salmon suffering, rockfish have been found to become more nervous with acidification, clownfish are losing their abilities to detect predators, and brown dottyback are avoiding the smell of injured prey. The study was the first of its kind to study the effects of acidification on freshwater fish.

For more information see this [29 June Reuters article](#) and this [29 June Science article](#).

20:13/05. DUNGENESS CRAB FISHERMEN HIT HARD BY TOXIC ALGAE BLOOM: Due to the closures caused by the West Coast’s current toxic algae bloom, many ocean commercial fishermen are now sitting idly by their boats, hoping for some relief. Crab has been selling at around $10.00 a pound, meaning a fisherman could normally make thousands of dollars per day if fishing were allowed. The local economies of Washington and Oregon have been taking a major hit due to the lack of crab, which would normally be sold to canneries, big-city buyers, tourists, and locals. Many of these restricted economies could have been bringing in hundreds of thousands of dollars in crab money. As of now, there are no plans to re-open the industry anytime soon, due to the deadly threats of toxic algae, which works its way through the food chain through filter feeders such as razor clams.

For more information see this [29 June KUOW article](#).

20:13/06. MAINE CONSERVATIONISTS WORRY OVER GREENLAND SALMON QUOTAS: Maine conservationists have been working to restore Atlantic salmon stocks to the Penobscot River. In the meantime, Greenland salmon annual quotas have been set at 45 metric tons for the next three years, less than last year’s 57 tons. Greenlanders are worried about the economic impacts of the change on small fishing villages, while Americans are worried that the number is still too high. Atlantic salmon have been in decline in the U.S. for years. While the Penobscot River has the largest stock of Atlantic salmon still existing in the U.S., their population last year numbered less than 400. Conservationists worry that even 20-50 fish lost to Greenland ships could be devastating for U.S. wild salmon stocks.
For more information see this 28 June Boston Globe article.

20:13/07. THAILAND CRACKS DOWN ON ILLEGAL FISHING AFTER EU WARNING: Thailand is facing a “yellow card” warning from the EU, representing the threat of a ban on Thai seafood if Thailand cannot fix its illegal fishing problems. As a result, Thailand is beginning to crack down on illegal fishing. New government laws are forcing all vessels to obtain permits and install tracking devices, and any unlicensed vessels must remain in port. Additionally, migrant fishermen working on Thai boats must register in order to prove that boat operators are avoiding illegal servitude. Thai fishermen are complaining about the new rules, stating there are “too many rules and too little time.” Thai fishermen are facing unpaid days and weeks while they wait for the new, stricter permitting process to play out. Currently, around 3,000 Thai fishing vessels have been pulled from the sea while they await permits. However, Thailand has no choice but to clean up their fishing permits and laws, or else it may lose about $1 billion in European sales, which the country cannot afford.

For more information see this 30 June Yahoo News article.

20:13/08. SALMON BUSINESS STRONG IN ILWACO (WASHINGTON): Salmon season is looking up for charter boat owners in Ilwaco, Washington, with the season opener on 13 June. Columbia River spring sport fishing closed 15 June, but summer Chinook and sockeye salmon estimates were above average for both fish. The average size of fish brought to port has been between 18 to 20 pounds. Due to the strong start as well as last year's strong season, August reservation slips for Ilwaco Port have sold out. Officials are expecting an extremely busy August. Sturgeon remains still off-limits in Washington and Oregon, after a decision from the Pacific Fishery Management Council to restrict that fishery.

For more information see this 30 June Chinook Observer article.

20:13/09. WARM WATER MASS OFF WEST COAST TO BE RESEARCHED: OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY: Oregon State University (OSU) researchers are speculating that there is a correlation between three extreme weather factors: climate change, California’s drought, and a large mass of warm water off the West Coast in the Pacific Ocean. The warm water mass – hundreds of miles wide, and as long as California – has been found to have temperatures 5-7 degrees higher than average. OSU researchers claim they have not seen anything like this before, and will be working with researchers from Oxford University, the Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute, and the University of Melbourne, Australia, to examine the phenomenon and determine any correlations. The team is currently recruiting new scientists.

For more information see this 1 July Statesman Journal article.

20:13/10. OREGON SALMON DYING AFTER INTAKE PLUGS AT HATCHERY: Anglers in 2018 are likely to feel the loss of 400,000 baby salmon who perished after a water intake was plugged at a southern Oregon fish hatchery. The water was plugged at Rock Creek Hatchery on the North Umpqua River by a fish carcass. The problem was discovered within an hour of occurrence, but was still too late to save any fish. The carcass responsible for the plug may have gotten into a water line during last month’s power outage, reported hatchery Director Dan Meyer.

For more information see this 30 June KOIN6 article.
20:13/11. FISHERIES AFFECTED BY REFUGIO OIL SPILL RE-OPENED: According to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Office of Spill Prevention and Response, as of 29 June, the Refugio Oil Spill Fishery Closure has been officially lifted. Fishermen will be allowed to resume fishing as usual in the area starting 30 June. An official notice was released from the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment, which stated that no human health threat was present anymore in fin or shellfish in the area following the recent oil spill. However, a quarantine of sport-harvested mussels is still in effect to protect the public from domoic acid poisoning.

For more information see this 29 June CDFW press release.

20:13/12. ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT REGULATIONS TO PROTECT DELTA SMELT ARE NOT LIMITING SAN FRANCISCO BAY-DELTA ESTUARY WATER EXPORTS DURING THE DROUGHT: Members of the mainstream media have been wrongly turning the Delta smelt into a scapegoat over California’s drought problems. The Wall Street Journal recently published such an article, saying the Delta smelt protection laws have caused grief and pain to parched farmers by restricting river flows to farms. Industrial irrigators have been using the Delta smelt as a whipping boy. However, both of these institutions have conveniently failed to mention that during our current drought, the Delta smelt have had no connection to water cutbacks from the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta. The most recent cutbacks during the drought have instead been in the interest of protecting drinking water for Californians and water supplies for farmers themselves. It is imperative to keep a steady flow of fresh water into the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary, or else salt water from the ocean will creep up into the rivers, ruining water resources and fish habitat. One of the reasons the smelt has become a main scapegoat is because unlike the salmon – another cause of cutbacks – the smelt does not have a fishing industry attached to it, and does not provide a source of food for people.

For more information see this 1 July East Bay Express article.

YOUR NEWS, COMMENTS, CORRECTIONS: Submit your news items, comments or any corrections to Editor at: tsloane@ifrfish.org, or call the IFR/PCFFA office with the news and a source at either: (415) 561-FISH (Southwest Office) or (541) 689-2000 (Northwest Office). If you have any trouble subscribing or unsubscribing, contact IFR/PCFFA directly at: tsloane@ifrfish.org. Sublegals is a weekly fisheries news bulletin service of Fishlink. “Fishlink” and “Sublegals” are registered trademarks of the Institute for Fisheries Resources. All rights to the use of these trademarks are reserved to IFR. All photos are by IFR unless otherwise accredited. This publication, however, may be freely reproduced and circulated without copyright restriction. Articles taken from Fishlink Sublegals may be freely reposted or reprinted with attribution to “Fishlink Sublegals.” If you are receiving this as a subscriber, please feel free to pass it on to your colleagues.

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