We have to recognize that fish stocks are public trust resources. They don't belong to four or five large fish companies. They belong to the public.

-- William F. “Zeke” Grader, Jr.

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20:22/01. PCFFA, IFR MOURN DEATH OF THE LEGENDARY ZEKE GRADER:
William F. “Zeke” Grader, Jr., the former executive director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations (PCFFA) and the Institute for Fisheries Resources (IFR), and a fierce advocate for wild fish and the men and women who harvest them, died on September 7 after a long illness. He was 68.

Zeke was a pivotal figure in the fight to preserve the West Coast’s rivers, estuaries and fisheries, uniting the environmental and commercial fishing communities in common cause. He was a familiar figure in both Sacramento and Washington, and could be confrontational or charming, depending on the situation and audience. Regardless of approach, his support for sufficient and clean water, abundant fish, and a economically sustainable commercial fisheries was unwavering.

“Zeke was a prime example of complete dedication to a cause,” said current PCFFA and IFR executive director Tim Sloane. “Fisheries protection consumed him. Just a few days before he died, he was working on the preface to a book he was co-writing on the history of fishing on the West Coast. His efforts to protect fish and habitat were always guided by his belief that the culture of the fishing community was worth protecting, and he wasn’t afraid of anyone who threatened that culture’s right to exist and thrive.”
Patricia Schifferle, the principal and director of the environmental consulting firm Pacific Advocates, an advisor to PCFFA, and one of Zeke’s long-time friends, described him as “…a great warrior for fishing men and women, salmon, and the ecology of San Francisco Bay and the Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta. What I recall most about Zeke was his ability to cut to the chase and fight against all odds, demanding the water flows essential for the health of our salmon and other species essential to our fishing heritage.”

PCFFA President Dave Bitts said the relatively good condition of West Coast fisheries is a direct result of Zeke’s work: “We have fairly robust fisheries on the West Coast, with mostly owner-operated, family-owned boats. This is Zeke’s legacy. That’s how it’s supposed to work, and it’s up to the rest of us to keep it that way.”

IFR President Pietro Parravano said Zeke was able to explain the connections between the natural world, fishing communities, and society at large in terms that were both eloquent and understandable: “Zeke gave human values to fish, fishery habitat, to ecosystems, to oceans. His vision was embedded in his life-long quest for teaching others the ecological, social, and economic importance of sustaining domestic fisheries. He was a true educator and legend.”

Zeke’s roots in the West Coast fishing community were multi-generational. Born in Bellingham, Washington, he moved with his family to the Mendocino County fishing and timber community of Ft. Bragg in 1950. There, family members helped his uncle manufacture fertilizer from fish scraps. Zeke’s father, Bill Grader, ultimately founded Grader Fish Company, a seafood broker and processor that specialized in local, high-quality salmon and crab. Zeke worked for the family business through high school, unloading the daily catch on the company’s dock.

After graduating from high school, Zeke took his undergraduate degree at Sonoma State University, served in the U.S. Marine Corps, and graduated from the University of San Francisco’s School of Law. He passed the California State Bar in 1975. During his studies, Zeke also managed Ocean Traders Co. in Sausalito, a fish receiving station for his family’s seafood processing business.

At the same time, massive changes were underway in maritime law and fisheries policy. Congress was deliberating on the details of a 200 nautical mile-wide “economic zone” to preclude overfishing by foreign fleets. This ultimately resulted in Magnuson-Stevens Act. In response to concerns about the implications of the Magnuson Act, a group of West Coast fishermen formed the PCFFA and drafted Zeke as executive director. He served in that position until June, 2015.

From the beginning, Zeke demonstrated an almost preternatural aptitude for the persuasion, debate, declaiming, arm-twisting, and cajoling necessary for dealing with policy
makers at both the state and federal levels, says Bill Kier, a Marin-based fisheries consultant and one of Zeke’s best friends.

“One of Zeke’s great talents was his ability to size up each day’s fish habitat and fishing regulation skirmish and figure out how to pluck out a gain for his fishermen - gains the fishermen never could have afforded through normal pay-to-play lobbying,” says Kier. “There’s been a lot said over the years about how Zeke’s boyhood fish dock / Marine Corps-bred fighting skills served the fisheries, but this other side of him, the t'ai chi ch'uan fisheries warrior, intrigued me the most.”

Over the years, Kier continued, Zeke helped fishermen define and articulate their positions on a wide range of issues that affect fisheries and fish habitat, including offshore oil and gas development, timber harvesting and water allocation.

“His lobbying was largely responsible for the passage of the 1988 Salmon, Steelhead Trout and Anadromous Fisheries Program Act, which called for a conservation plan to double wild salmon numbers,” said Kier. “He then used that legislation as a mandate for reforming the federal Central Valley Project. Due to the work of Zeke and his allies, the Central Valley Improvement Act passed in 1992.”

Along with these two “monument” legislative coups, Zeke also helped modernize the Magnuson-Stevens Act, successfully litigated to accelerate water quality restoration under the Clean Water Act, and helped protect fishing grounds by advocating for effective oil spill prevention and response policies.

He received widespread recognition for his work, including the Environmental Hero Award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

But Zeke also realized that fishermen could not achieve their goals on their own. He was a masterful collaborator, forging alliances with environmental groups, land trusts, conservancies – any organization with agendas that dovetailed with the preservation of fish and fishery habitat.

“There really was no one else like Zeke,” said Carolee Krieger, the executive director of the California Water Impact Network.

“He fought for fishermen and fish, and in doing so, he also fought for the protection of our wetlands, estuaries and rivers, and for the equitable distribution of our water. He was a man for all seasons, a man who was always ready with support or advice. He brought us all together, and made all of us stronger.”

Zeke is survived by his wife, Sausalito attorney Lois A. Prentice; his mother, Geraldine Grader; two sisters, Lindsay Grader and Allison Grader; and a brother, Samuel Grader, also an attorney. A memorial service is pending.

For more information on Zeke’s legacy, see any of the following pieces that illustrate just how many people Zeke made an impression on over the years: video of the California Zeke and House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi
Senate’s 9 September Adjournment in Zeke’s honor (fast forward to 6:12:28) with remarks by Senators McGuire, Nielsen, Leno, and Wolk; this 8 September San Francisco Chronicle article; this 10 September Washington Times article; this 9 September Bay Area Indy Media article; and these tributes from a range of fisheries, food and conservation groups, including the Golden Gate Salmon Association; Earthjustice; Save our Wild Salmon; Recirculating Farms; and Restore the Delta.

20:22/02. COAST GUARD ANNOUNCES FISHING VESSEL DRILL CONDUCTOR TRAININGS IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA: The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) has announced Fishing Vessel Drill Conductor trainings in Monterey, Bodega Bay, Fort Bragg and Crescent City that comply with USCG training requirements for commercial fishing vessels. The trainings are put on by the Alaska Marine Safety Education Association, and cost $75.00 for commercial fishermen, who are eligible for a partial scholarship from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The two-day trainings are scheduled as follows:

- Monterey: 19-20 October
- Bodega Bay: 15-16 October
- Fort Bragg: 12-13 October
- Crescent City: 8-9 October

For more information and to register, visit [www.amsea.org](http://www.amsea.org) or call (907) 747-3287.

20:22/03. POLL SHOWS PUBLIC FAVORS MAINTAINING ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTIONS DURING DROUGHT: A joint USC/LA Times poll this week showed a majority of California voters support environmental protections, even during the worst drought in decades. The pollsters noted specifically that, given a choice between easing safeguards and favoring water supply for municipal and agricultural use, 54% of respondents would choose to protect ecosystems and endangered species rather than human consumption. High numbers of respondents cited antiquated water systems (79%) and people using too much water (79%) as key factors driving California’s water shortage. The fishing community should be encouraged by these numbers, which suggest that a majority of Californians value the economic and cultural contribution of clean water and healthy fish stocks that support the fishing industry.

Read more about the changing opinions of Californians on our water resources in this 11 September LA Times article.

20:22/04. ‘MONSTER’ EL NINO COULD ENDANGER SALMON FISHERIES: Data from several sources, including weather models from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), indicate that this winter’s weather will be extreme. The cyclical weather phenomenon known as El Nino is already making itself known through weather and water temperature data, and scientists agree it’s likely to be extraordinary. According to NOAA, forecaster modeling is unanimous that this year’s El Nino will be very strong, with temperature of surface waters approaching 2 degrees Celsius above the average for this time of year. A mass of warm water, dubbed ‘the Blob’, in the central Pacific promises to have an impact on Pacific coast fisheries for the winter of 2015 and possibly into the spring of 2016.

Salmon runs are particularly vulnerable to variations in water temperature, with slightly warmer water in spawning streams often to blame for skimpy runs or massive die-offs. This year has already seen some signs of that, with outbreaks of bacterial disease among young salmon, delayed runs of Coho while they wait for cooler water, and, most alarmingly, approximately half the expected July run of sockeye dying in the Columbia river basin.
Find out more about the coming El Nino and its possible effects through NOAA’s 10 September El Nino/Southern Oscillation report, and this 8 September Chinook Observer article.

20:22/05. NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE INSTALLS NEW WATER TEMPERATURE MONITOR BEHIND SHASTA DAM: The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (Bureau) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), partly at the urging of PCFFA and our allied organizations, announced the installation of new water temperature monitoring systems behind Shasta Dam this week. The monitoring equipment is essential to maintaining accurate outflows of cold snowmelt supply impounded by the dam, which feeds the Sacramento River system and is part of the precious supply of cold water needed to protect salmon and other fish populations downstream. Salmon populations and new spawn are imperiled by drought conditions, and warmer water often hinders or kills the growth of fish eggs and hatchlings. By carefully releasing Shasta’s colder water, NMFS officials can help protect future runs of critically endangered species like Chinook and Coho.

PCFFA was one of the leaders in the fight to force the Bureau to more carefully manage cold water reserves in Shasta Lake reservoir after losing 95% of the winter run and 98% in the fall run naturally spawing Chinook salmon below the Dam last year, due in large part to a failure to control temperature of water releases from the Dam into the Sacramento River. Though the full extent of damage caused by the drought to salmon populations remains to be seen, this new monitoring system is a major step forward in managing our imperiled salmon fisheries and in maintaining temperature control at the Dam.

Read more about the new temperature device in this 8 September NMFS article.

20:22/06. CALIFORNIA GOVERNMENT STILL FAVORS BIG OIL OVER ENVIRONMENTAL INTERESTS: In the latest act of California’s long history of pandering to fossil fuel interests, Governor Jerry Brown’s office has shown its inclination yet again to let environmental concerns take a back seat to the goals of big oil. A series of Brown Administration decisions this week all favor the oil industry, which wields disproportionate political power in both the state and the US at large. Fossil fuel industries have spent over $250 million to influence the state’s regulatory and legislative apparatus over the last ten years.

In the development perhaps most vital to the interests of fisheries workers, a lawsuit was filed alleging racketeering on the part of the Governor’s office in collusion with lobbyists representing oil industries. The lawsuit alleges that lobbyists worked with the Brown administration, essentially supplying the ‘interim plan’ submitted by Brown’s office to ease waste water restrictions on the oil industry, thus contaminating the state’s already endangered water supply. The EPA has been investigating state groundwater protections since 2011.

In related developments, oil lobbyists celebrated the gutting of Senate Bill 350 this week, which proposed reductions in fossil fuel use in cars and trucks, 50% renewable energy supply, and greatly increased energy efficiency standards by 2030. The amended bill now does not include more stringent standards on vehicles. Likewise, the California Senate appropriations committee recently tabled Senate Bill 788, which would close a loophole that currently allows offshore oil drilling off of California’s coast in certain situations.

It is these kinds of decisions that harm California’s environment, its reputation as a leader of the new sustainable economy, and the families and workers who depend on our state’s natural resources. PCFFA is working to protect all three, and we reject the state government’s hypocrisy in lauding sustainability one day while pandering to oil interests the next.
Read more about the suit against Governor Brown’s office in this 3 June Nasdaq Global News Wire article, this 29 July East Bay Express article on big oil’s influence in the California legislature, or the ongoing status of SB 788, the California Coastal Protection Act.

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.