Everyone has to be able to envision a future.

-- Nat Bingham

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20:28/01. TUNNEL COMMENT PERIOD DEADLINE NEARS; RALLY PLANNED AT STATE CAPITOL ON 30 OCTOBER: The comment period on draft environmental impact statements for “Cal Water Fix,” the rebranded Delta Tunnels Plan, comes to a close on Friday, 30 October. Tunnel opponents, including IFR and PCFFA, are planning a media event at the California State Capitol to coincide with the end of the comment period, to call attention to this massive project that could potentially decimate salmon populations in California’s Central Valley. Those Central Valley salmon runs support commercial and recreational fisheries in California and Oregon, and contribute some fish to catches as far north as Washington.

The Tunnel Plan is a proposal to build two massive tunnels with the capacity to suck a huge portion of Sacramento River water underground, and covey it to pumps at the southern edge of the San Francisco Bay Delta Estuary, where it would be shipped into the San Joaquin Valley to support industrial-scale irrigation. The loss of even more freshwater flows in the Sacramento River would contribute to the further decline of the Delta-Estuary ecosystem, which depends on a careful balance between freshwater inflows from rivers and saltwater inflows from the San Francisco Bay. The Tunnel Plan is budgeted at $15 billion of taxpayer money to create additional conveyance infrastructure that will not add a single drop of water to California’s already overtaxed water system.
For more information, see this [21 October Daily Kos article](#) describing the Tunnel Plan and discussing Los Angeles water ratepayers’ opposition to the project.

To Take Action, join us at the rally on 30 October, 11:00 AM, on the steps of the State Capitol, Sacramento, CA. You can also sign the [change.org petition opposing the Tunnel Plan](#), and there is still time to submit your comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statements by emailing [BDCPComments@icfi.com](mailto:BDCPComments@icfi.com).

**20:28/02. WASHINGTON STATE ARGUING BEFORE 9TH CIRCUIT: NO OBLIGATION TO RESTORE SALMON STREAMS:** The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals heard oral arguments on 16 October as to whether the State of Washington should be compelled to replace hundreds of aging culverts and other water diversion infrastructure, which currently prevent the passage of salmonids and other species to their historic spawning grounds, with more viable alternatives.

The appeal comes in the wake of a 2007 District court ruling by Judge Ricardo Martinez, who determined that existing treaty obligations guaranteed Washington Native American tribes not merely the right to take salmon, but imposes an obligation on the State to maintain healthy salmon habitat and populations. PCFFA filed a friend of the court brief in the case arguing that upgrading the streams to allow for free fish passages would greatly benefit Washington’s economy, more than offsetting the estimated $2 billion price tag the infrastructure improvements would cost.

For more information, see this [16 October article by Gene Johnson of the Associated Press](#), or find the case listed as [USA v. Washington, US Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, Case No. 13-35474](#).

**20:28/03. NMFS OPENS DRAFT RECOVERY PLAN FOR OREGON COHO FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:** The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has opened a draft plan for the recovery of Oregon’s ESA-listed Coastal Coho salmon populations for public comment by 14 December. The proposed plan comes after years of legal and procedural struggles to gain recognition of Oregon Coho as an evolutionarily significant unit (ESU), the technical term for a subpopulation warranting government protection.

The Oregon Coastal Coho ESU is distinct from the southern Oregon population, which is designated as the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coho ESU and protected under a different recovery plan. The territory of the Oregon Coastal ESU ranges from the area of Sixes, Oregon in the south to the mouth of the Columbia River on the Washington border.

The public comment period on the draft plan closes at 1700 HRS Pacific time on 14 December. PCFFA encourages fishermen and interested parties to comment on the plan.

For more information, the Executive Summary of the [draft recovery plan can be found here](#), while the proposed plan in its entirety is available on the [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s website here](#). You can also find the official notice of the draft plan in this edition of the [Federal Register](#).

**20:28/04. STUDY DESCRIBES CHANGES IN DISTRIBUTION OF LARVAL FISH, IMPACTS ON ADULT DISTRIBUTION:** A new study published in the online research journal *Plos-One* seeks to explain the impact of changes in the geographic distribution of larval fish, caused by climate change or long-term climate variability, on the geographic distribution of adult fish species. Over the course of the study, which lasted two decades and focused on the
Northeast United States, 43% of the species sampled experienced changes to their larval distribution, with the trend being a move northward. That shift is consistent with the expected migration patterns resulting from climate change – as water warms, fish are expected to migrate toward cooler, more northerly waters. The study suggests that changes in the location of larval fish of a given species may ultimately impact the productivity of that species, as the life history and recruitment of that species will necessarily take on different features in new habitats. The study supports existing evidence that changes to fisheries on the North East Shelf ecosystem are at least in part due to a changing climate.

For more information, see the study, published 23 September in Plos-One.

20:28/05. COAST GUARD ISSUES CLARIFICATION ON MANDATORY DOCKSIDE SAFETY EXAMINATIONS FOR COMMERCIAL FISHING VESSELS: New U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) safety regulations for commercial fishing vessels came into effect on 15 October, the most notable of which is mandatory dockside safety inspections that must be completed at least every five years. Vessels subject to the inspection requirement include those that operate within the Exclusive Economic Zone (e.g. 3-200 miles offshore). Inspections completed on or after 1 January 2013 comply with the new regulation, but be sure to get your next inspection within five years, regardless of whether it was before or after inspections became mandatory. Fishermen can request a no-cost dockside safety exam by emailing your local Coast Guard Fishing Vessel Safety Examiner directly, or via a link on the Coast Guard’s CFV Program website. Failure to obtain a Compliance Certificate could subject vessel operators to civil penalties or fishing restrictions.

For more information, see this 20 October Marine Safety Information Bulletin from USCG.

20:28/06. REPEAT OF LAST YEAR’S SQUID BOUNTY IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA UNLIKELY: Last year, Humboldt County in California and other northern areas experienced an unusual presence of market squid, a species that generally thrives in the warmer waters of Southern California. The bounty even brought many southern California fishermen to the northern reaches of the state to take advantage of the squid abundance. Experts are now saying that a repeat of last year’s strong squid presence is unlikely, despite the persistence of warm water conditions in the region that are at least in part due to a brewing El Niño and the weather patterns responsible for California’s historic four-year drought. The squid simply haven’t presented the same migration pattern as they did in 2014, when the squid haul was worth about $1.6 million ex-vessel at Eureka.

For more information, see this 22 October Eureka Times-Standard article.

20:28/07. STUDY OF MARINE ECOSYSTEMS WARNS OF COLLAPSE OF OCEAN FOOD CHAINS: Reports from a new study published by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) have raised grave concerns about the potential catastrophic collapse of ocean food webs by 2050. The Guardian reports that ocean acidification has increased by a reported 30% and average ocean water temperature has risen by an estimated 1 degree Celsius since pre-industrial times. All of this makes it more difficult for shellfish to form shells, and has changed the conditions of fish habitats and behaviors. Ironically, warming conditions seem to have increased the abundance of plankton, but that appears unlikely to increase the stocks of food species consumed by humans. On the contrary, these trends presage a reduction in species’ diversity and may pose a threat to the survival of several economically crucial fisheries, according to the report.
The Guardian’s article likewise points out that hundreds of millions of people rely on the ocean as a food supply and an economic engine, and that unless human behavior changes, those populations may well start going hungry in the next 35 years.

For more information, see this 13 October article by The Guardian’s Oliver Milman. To see the results of the original NAS study, visit the website of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences here.

20:28/08. STATE REVIEW OF OIL WELL INJECTION SITES IN CALIFORNIA FINDS INADEQUATE OVERSIGHT: A California Department of Conservation (DOC) report commissioned by the California Legislature has determined that staffing and procedures to maintain safe disposal of wastewater from injection oil wells are insufficient to meet State safety requirements. Reuters reports that, according to the Director of California’s DOC David Bunn, the permitting unit was created 50 years ago and has failed to embrace an enforcement process driven by proven research. In conjunction with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the DOC has begun reviewing thousands of injection wells to test for groundwater contamination. Contaminated groundwater can leach through the water table into streams and rivers. Those pollutants can affect the ability of salmon, which rely on freshwater streams for the beginning and end of their life histories, to reproduce. Contaminants can be carried downstream to the San Francisco Bay-Delta Estuary, where they affect water quality, and ultimately are swept into the ocean.

For more information, see this 8 October report from Reuters’ Rory Carroll.

20:28/09. DRINK CRAFT BEER = FIX U.S. ECONOMY: Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR) is promoting the consumption of American craft beer as a way to improve the U.S. economy: "One of the great things about drinking craft beer is you’re helping deal with our trade deficit," said DeFazio. "American-made, American product, homegrown, as opposed to all these other beers, which are foreign-owned and you’re contributing to our trade deficit every time you drink one." But although its true that some of the biggest brews in America, such as Miller High Life and Budweiser, are indeed brewed on U.S. soil, those beer companies are owned largely by foreign investors – a South African company in the case of Miller, and a Belgian one in the case of Bud. This story parallels the plight of the American commercial fishing fleet, which in many cases struggles to compete with large foreign fishing corporations that can import low-cost, low-quality seafood that directs market-share away from superior American products. So next time you’re planning a dinner party, reach for a cold Lagunitas I.P.A., which pairs splendidly with a local, wild-caught King salmon fillet. You’ll be doing your part for the U.S. economy.

For more information, see this 17 October Huffington Post 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.
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