

Save California Salmon Responds to the Third Consecutive Year of California's Commercial Fishing Being Shut Down

April 25, 2025



Eureka, California- Yesterday the Pacific Fishery Management Council's (PFMC) recommended a full shutdown of all commercial fishing in California and extremely limited recreational ocean salmon fishing opportunities, through the end of 2025. This marks the third year in a row of no commercial fishing allocation in California and the state's first recreational salmon season since 2022. Tribal subsistence fishing allocations will also be limited. This decision was made due to extremely low returns of fall, winter and spring run Chinook salmon in the Sacramento and Klamath Rivers for the third year in a row.

While the reopening of recreational fishing offers a small ray of hope for salmon communities, the continued closure of commercial fishing underscores the ongoing, severe impacts on California's salmon populations caused by water mismanagement, pollution, habitat degradation, and climate disruption. Many scientists

have stated that California salmon runs are now facing an extinction level crisis and have little hope for recovery unless major management changes are made.

“Three years without a salmon season is devastating, as is the prospect of California losing its iconic salmon runs. However, it’s not the end of the story,” said Regina Chichizola, Executive Director of SCS. “We know that salmon come back when we give rivers a chance to recover. Just last fall, we saw an unexpectedly strong response from spawning salmon just weeks after the completion of Klamath dam removal. Governor Newsom must act now to protect flows and support Tribal and fishing communities, jobs, and drinking water quality. This is a critical moment for real change.”

Kasil Willie, Staff Attorney at SCS, added, “For Tribes and fishing families, the loss of salmon fishing for another year is a total crisis, not just a closure. Salmon are collapsing because of water mismanagement, not overfishing. Closing the fisheries is a short term solution which doesn’t address California’s major water quality issues. We need more than temporary band-aids; we need a commitment to restoring our rivers.”

Save California Salmon is calling for immediate and long-term solutions to protect and restore salmon habitats, prioritize sustainable water management, and support the communities that rely on healthy rivers and fisheries. The survival of salmon in California depends on decisive action to restore ecosystems and secure, clean, reliable water for all. The organization is also hosting trainings for Tribal communities and the public on how to engage effectively in water related decisions. These lessons and trainings can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/@SaveCaliforniaSalmon/playlists>