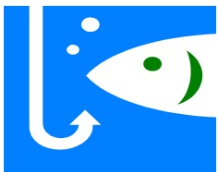


HUMBOLDT AREA SALTWATER ANGLERS

A VOICE FOR SALTWATER SPORTSMEN



WINTER 2010
NEWSLETTER



The mission of Humboldt Area Saltwater Anglers is to represent North Coast fishermen's historic and ongoing right to sport fish along the Northern California coast; advocate reasonable and rational sport fishing seasons and regulations; educate our members and the general public about the economic and cultural contributions of sport fishing to our local economies; and promote sustainable stewardship of the resource.

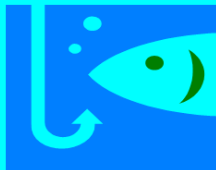
President's Message

By Jim Yarnall

As I write my first President's Message and reflect upon HASA's brief history, I am humbled by the progress and accomplishments of this group. I recall when several fishing friends contacted me a few years ago to see if I was interested in forming a formal group to represent ocean recreational interests in a rapidly changing political landscape. I agreed and met with a core group of fishermen who had a vision of maintaining our historical fishing practices on the north coast. Without this vision and commitment of a couple of key individuals HASA would not have been

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formed and I don't wish to think where our fishing opportunities would be now. All of us owe a debt of gratitude to these founding fathers of HASA. I could identify them but they are not involved to seek recognition and they know who they are.

HASA's progress includes filing and obtaining formal status as a non profit group, establishing a membership base of several hundred members, developing of a symbiotic relationship with Humboldt Tuna Club, and effective annual fundraising that not only provides operating funds but also provides a fun evening for all. But its most significant accomplishment has been its coordinated involvement in the political processes that determine the outcome of our fishing opportunities. HASA members are involved with the MLPA, Klamath Management Zone Fisheries Coalition, Groundfish Advisory Sub panel to the PFMC, the North Coast Local Agency Coastal Coordination Committee and others that I can't recall now. Without this coordinated approach and dedication by HASA members we would not have had an effective voice to speak our views. Our representation does not guarantee we will receive our desires, but without representation we will only receive the leftover crumbs.

Please don't perceive that active HASA members all love politics. Rather we realize that it is part of the game if we wish to maintain our fishing opportunities and are committed to reaching the desired outcomes. There are many other avenues to assist and serve HASA without becoming politically involved or traveling to weeks of meetings each year. If you have a desire to become more active, please come to our meetings or contact any board member and state your area of interest. Remember HASA will only be as useful and effective as we choose to make it.

In closing I will commit to you to do my best as president and hopefully achieve the high standard set by previous HASA leaders. I wish everyone a safe and productive 2011 season.

Partnering with the *National Weather Service* for Greater Products and Services

Partnerships with the local marine community have been of vital importance to the National Weather Service (NWS) in Eureka for years. Input into our program is invaluable and has yielded changes that have brought great benefit to the nation on a whole. Here on the north coast, about a decade ago, it was brought to our attention that our local mariners wanted wave periods in the forecast. Through beta testing and development this became reality and eventually spread throughout the nation.

It is this type of collaboration that we at the NWS want to continue to cultivate. While our long time staff member, Troy Nicolini, has developed many great relationships through years, we as a marine team would like to expand our list of those who provide input into the future of the NWS marine products and services. It is because of you that we are here, have been here, and will be here.

Since 1882, the National Weather Service has maintained a presence along the North Coast. It began along Cape Mendocino as an observation station, and then migrated to Eureka in 1886 where observations continued and forecasts began. During the late 1980's into the mid 1990's the National Weather Service went through a "modernization", where radars were installed across the country, new forecast offices were built, the latest computer technology was deployed, and forecast products were overhauled to meet the public's needs. At the Eureka office, this "modernization" was completed with the opening of our office on Woodley Island in 1994.

If you would like to lend us your expertise as fishermen and users of National Weather Service products, please let us know by emailing any member of our marine team (listed below). Please have the subject line read "Marine Team Resource Contact", and be sure to provide your interest, name, phone, and email.

Thanks in advance for your assistance and future partnership as we provide better services here in northwest California and change the country together.

Cheers,
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Exotics

Bob Smith aka RBob

A treasure for many albacore chasers is the rare catch of an "exotic". What is an exotic? Most of us consider an exotic to be anything other than an albacore. Some are true exotics which only occur during El Nino events. Others are probably common but infrequently encountered offshore, especially later in the season as waters warm and become connected to the southwest. Some may be present but occupy a deeper portion of the water column. Here are some of the more common rarities we have encountered.



Bluefin Tuna

Bluefin tuna are only considered exotic if you have just caught one and are in a bet with Jimmy Y... such as what occurred with Colly M and I last year off Charleston. Many in our club have had bluefin encounters... either catching the small 15 to 20 pound school sized fish which often travel with albacore, or witnessing the jumbo garbage can or VW sized monsters crashing bait. Water temperature is not an issue... if there's albacore there could be bluefin. They in fact can be found in cooler 55 to 56 degree water. In spite of their tolerance for cooler temperatures, bluefin are a rarity. Colly M and I have landed two in ten years of fishing offshore. We figure that's about one out of 200 albacore landed. Like many bluefin populations worldwide, the Eastern Pacific Stock is struggling. Some years they seem more common than others.



Targeting bluefin off our coast is difficult but not impossible. First and foremost, it's rare to encounter a school of bluefin in our waters. Back in 2004 off Crescent City, Colly M, Mike Nolan and I witnessed schools of large garbage can sized bluefin crashing bait. No one was able to hook up... and thinking back... I didn't have the tackle to whip one of those fish. Bluefin are notorious for being shy and choosy about what they eat. When you attempt to approach... they almost always immediately sound. One key point is try to get around or ahead of the school and be able to present the lures as the fish come onto them. They are notorious for being boat shy. Best lures in our tackle bags are Marauders and cedar plugs as well as any diving lure. Larger lures for larger fish. Southern California anglers have worked long and hard on techniques for targeting bluefin with only marginal success. The smaller bluefin (most common in our waters) are usually taken incidentally on jigs. A fish trap fished way back is said to work. Live bait is good if you can get it far enough away from the boat. Fishing the cool side of a temperature break is also a good strategy for targeting bluefin. A whole article could be written just about bluefin and maybe that's a topic for the future.

Yellowtail

We heard plenty about yellowtail this past season. While they are considered an exotic, I'm beginning to think that they may be more common (especially late in the season) than previously thought. Yellowtail are actually a member of the jack family. They are a staple off southern California and reside year around off coastal kelp beds and the Channel Islands. In our waters, the average yellowtail



typically weighs between 5 and 15 pounds. Targeting yellowtail is easier than actually finding them. Just look for floating debris and especially kelp paddies. You are more likely to find yellowtail residing under a paddy in 62 degree water as opposed to 58 degree water. Many of our club members have had yellowtail encounters. Colly M's quad came from a kelp paddy "troll by". So did Jimmy Y's fish earlier this summer off Charleston. Casting iron, swim baits or live bait will work.

Dorado

Also known as dolphin fish or mahi mahi, dorado are a true tropical water loving exotic that's been found off our coast in recent years. Like yellowtail, dorado are almost always associated with floating debris and kelp paddies. Dorado grow very rapidly with a fish weighing 8 to 10 pounds being less than a year old. Like yellowtail, most dorado caught in our waters usually weigh less than 15 pounds. I would emphasize that as far as water temperatures are concerned, warmer is better. Some strikes are blind strikes, but most come from around floating structure - kelp paddies, weed lines, floating trees or even just garbage in the water. I had two chase a mega bait out of a paddy in 2009 off Charleston - the water temperature was 64 degrees. Some of our members have had dorado encounters - Onokai boated one a few years ago - it was a blind strike. If you see a nice paddy, take the time to investigate, there may be an exotic treasure underneath. Dorado usually tail walk when first hooked up- keep the line tight and enjoy the ride.



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One comment about dorado, yellowtail and other schooling fish. They are all susceptible to becoming "sore mouthed or sore lipped". When one encounters a kelp paddy holding a large school of fish... it's usually the first on the scene that scores. Colly M scored a quad on a paddy full of yellowtail and those were the only fish caught from that paddy, despite a heavy subsequent fishing effort...even with live bait. While fishing off Kona a few years ago, we came up upon a FAD (fish aggregation device) that was teeming with mahi mahi, though none were interested in biting. Our skipper said they were "sore mouthed" - someone else had been there before us and had harvested all of the biters. Think about it, if a school of yellowtail continued to bite until the last one was hooked, there wouldn't be very many yellowtail around. This steep learning curve must be a behavior common with schooling predatory fish. For anglers, that's a tough nut to crack.

Pacific Pomfret

The pomfret is not a true exotic in that they range offshore from the tip of South America to the Bering Sea. They are considered a highly migratory, pelagic fish - rarely seen inshore. Pomfret occupy the upper to middle part of the water column (surface to 600 feet) and their diet typically consists of crustaceans (krill), squid and small fish. Pomfret are probably quite common but aren't commonly caught. They seem to be most often caught at night and also while jigging or using live bait. Onokai and Jimmy Y have both had pomfret encounters. They are said to be delicious eating.



Opah

Opah are another mysterious fish which are widely but sparsely distributed throughout tropical and temperate waters. Little is known about opah, which are an open ocean fish primarily occupying the middle depths. They occasionally make forays to the surface where they become vulnerable. Opah are most commonly taken by longliners and drift gillnetters. National Marine Fisheries Service harvest data shows that opah have been harvested by the drift gillnet fishery in waters north of Cape Mendocino and at times can be relatively common. The preferred water temps are usually on the high side for Opah. They are great eating and very colorful.

There was an opah caught by at least one of our members (stonedcrab) a few years ago out of Eureka. He was on a fish stop and the opah hit a jig that had sunk into deeper water. Opah can't really

be targeted as they tend to be solitary. Occasionally they will school with albacore and bluefin. If you check discussion boards such as Allcoast or Bloody Decks, you find that many southern California anglers end up catching opah deep jigging with mega baits or butterfly jigs on sonar marks. Something to think about the next time you run over some deep marks on your sonar. I also searched Ifish and found narratives for a couple of opah that were landed off Oregon in 2010. One was taken by deep jigging while another hit a Mexican flag tuna clone pulled behind a diving plane. Getting deep is the key to targeting these fish. Hmm...maybe it's time to try downriggers.



Skipjack

The only reason I'm including skipjack is because Mark Cortright caught one a few years ago. They are the most abundant species of tuna, found worldwide in mostly tropical waters. Unlike bluefin tuna, skipjack have an extremely high reproductive rate. If you purchase a can of Starkist chunk light tuna - it probably has at least some skipjack in it.

The story with Mark's exotic encounter (and it's the only skipjack catch that I've heard of



north of Monterey Bay) is that it was hooked on the troll 70 miles off the Cape on tuna gear. Mark has also gotten into a school off Mexico-they can be in large schools just like albacore. Skipjack are not known for their fresh eating table fare unless they are extremely large. They are very oily and your cat will really like them more than you. Colors are brighter than albacore with a brilliant blue stripe.

Bigeye Tuna

Bigeye tuna are mentioned here because there's always a discussion thread or two every year over how to target and catch them. Taxonomists (folks who study how animals are classified and related) had traditionally split tuna into two separate subclasses. One called "tropical" which included yellowfin and skipjack. The second subclass is known as "temperate". This class included tunas that are found in cooler waters such as bluefin, albacore and bigeye. After much debate, this method of classifying tunas is being challenged. Bigeye tuna are stuck in the temperate classification primarily because they pursue prey deep within the water column - down to 1500 feet or deeper with water temperatures in the 40's. However, some taxonomists argue that bigeye tuna are more closely related to tropical tunas. This makes sense - they are rarely caught north of Point Conception and we just don't see them around here except during warm El Nino events.

Bigeye tuna feed on both sides of daylight, so dusk and dawn are the best times to try. Back in September, 1959, a 45 pound bigeye was caught 90 miles west southwest of Cape Mendocino. This is the only record I could find where a bigeye was landed in our local waters. Bigeye can be difficult to ID - so when I see a couple of yellowfin tuna listed as caught off Oregon during the 97 El Nino event, it makes me wonder if maybe they weren't actually bigeye tuna. There's plenty of good reading available on bluewater related discussion boards. Fred Archer has quite a writeup/rant about catching bigeye.

Humboldt Squid

New to our waters but no longer considered an exotic, Humboldt squid appear to be here to stay. Their edibility seems to be debated among those that have caught them. They are great bait for crabbing. Onokai hooked his first squid on the slow troll with albacore gear. Once you know where they are, many deep drop heavy squid jigs. They can be worked close to the surface. Be careful handling these large cephalopods, they can spray when landed and really pack a powerful bite.

How does one catch an exotic? In my experience, there are two factors involved. The first is luck - you never know what you are going to see or what's going to bite. For me, that's the allure of fishing offshore in blue water. The second is experience and time on the water. It's no coincidence that the hard core anglers that spend many hours on the water and are willing to travel up to 200 miles a day are most often the ones that end up with exotics. Mark Cortright (onokai) has probably landed more on his boat than anyone I personally know. It makes sense to me... Mark usually goes farther and stays out longer than most.

Why does it seem that more exotics are being caught? Could it be that we have been in a warm water cycle offshore for the past several years? The most likely explanation is that with bigger and better boats and larger fuel capacity, more anglers are venturing farther offshore with more time on the water. This without a doubt has increased the "opportunity" to run into a treasured exotic. Is anyone ready for 2011? RBob

Editor's note: next issue exotics continue



Contacting the Coast Guard with your Marine VHF radio

By Todd Vorenkamp

Now that all of you HASA newsletter readers are sporting the latest high-tech Marine DSC-equipped VHF radios after reading my article on DSC you find yourself wondering how to contact the Coast Guard in the event of a maritime emergency...

Unlike a walkie-talkie or cell phone, the marine VHF frequency spectrum is monitored by not only the Coast Guard, but also by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). The marine VHF radio is a tool to be used to contact other vessels to pass important information as well as a key piece of emergency gear on your vessel that may be your only means of broadcasting an emergency situation to the outside world.

You may not know it when eavesdropping on ship-to-ship communications on Channel 68, but there are specific guidelines to the content of VHF communications, especially on emergency channels. There are also regulations governing the usage of specific frequencies.

As you know, Channel 16 is the emergency and distress frequency. In less busy areas it is also used as a hailing frequency. In congested marine environments, hailing is done on Channel 9. If you hail another vessel on Channel 16, you should ask them to "switch and answer" on a non-emergency working frequency immediately. Channel 16 is the equivalent to a single phone line 911 dispatch center. If you are using Channel 16 for non-emergency chatter, a boater in distress will not be able to use the frequency to call for help.

When hailing the Coast Guard or other vessels to pass important or distress information on Channel 16, there are three basic types of calls that can be made:

1) "Sécurité, sécurité, sécurité" [Pronounced SAY-CURE-E-TAY - it is French, by the way] is used to broadcast important safety information. Many boaters have heard the Coast Guard issue "sécurité" broadcasts, but any vessel can issue a similar call. Back in my merchant marine days, I could be heard on Channel 13 in San Juan, Puerto Rico saying the following: "Sécurité, sécurité, sécurité...this is the Sea-Land Crusader, WZJF, Sea-Land Crusader, Sea-Land Crusader...leaving the container terminal and heading for sea in San Juan Harbor...any concerned traffic, please contact the Sea-Land Crusader on Channel 13, 16....Sea-Land Crusader, WZJF, standing by channel 13, 16." [Channel 13 is the designated ship-to-ship inter-harbor frequency. "WZJF" is the ship's radio station call sign - only applicable to large commercial vessels.] An appropriate use on the Lost Coast would be seen in this example: "Sécurité, sécurité, sécurité...this is the Fishing Vessel Big Crab reporting large amounts of driftwood near the entrance to Humboldt Bay." Use "sécurité" to tell all those monitoring Channel 16 about something that might be a safety concern.

2) "Pan pan, pan pan, pan pan" [Pronounced PON or PAN] is used to transmit an urgent emergency where the vessel or lives are not in immediate danger. Having said this, if you feel that the situation is dire, do not hesitate to broadcast a "Mayday" message (see #3 below). The Coast Guard uses "pan pan" broadcasts when they issue Urgent Marine Information Broadcasts (UMIB). An example is: "Pan pan, pan pan, pan pan...this is United States Coast Guard Group Humboldt Bay, United States Coast Guard Group Humboldt Bay, United States Coast Guard Humboldt Bay...there has been a report of a missing kayaker in the vicinity of Cape Mendocino. All mariners in the area are requested to keep a sharp lookout, assist if able, and report any sightings of distress to the United States Coast Guard."

Again, vessels may broadcast a "pan pan" message themselves. This would be appropriate if you are reporting damage to the vessel or something like an engine failure. If you are not in danger of drifting into rocks after you lose an engine, a "pan pan" broadcast is appropriate. If you lose an engine and are in danger of being washed into the surf zone or onto a shoal, broadcast a "mayday."

3) "Mayday, mayday, mayday" is used when broadcasting a critical emergency - the marine VHF equivalent of a 9-1-1 call. This is what you use when the stuff is about to hit the fan (or maybe it already has). When a

"mayday" call is received, those people with short hair that drive helicopters and boats with a red slash on the side start moving very quickly to those same boats and helicopters.

Let us look at the anatomy of a good "mayday" call. Depending on the situation, your first "mayday" call might be your last. Therefore it is important to get as much important information out over the airwaves as you can. In order of importance, the "mayday" call should contain the following:

- 1) "Mayday" repeated three times. [Mayday, mayday mayday.]
- 2) Name of your vessel.
- 3) A GPS position of your vessel, or, if there is no GPS, a reference to a known geographical point (i.e. - "five miles west of the Eel River.")
- 4) Nature of the emergency.
- 5) Number of people on board the vessel.
- 6) Critical amplifying information.

An example of a good, informative, initial "mayday" call is: "Mayday, mayday, mayday. This is the Big Crab at position 40-41.5 North, 124-12.4 West...On fire and sinking...4 persons on board...Abandoning ship into an orange life raft."

The Coast Guard has the capability to play back and digitally scrub all radio transmissions on Channel 16. However, as the situation allows, if there was ever a time to be deliberate and articulate when on the radio, the "mayday" call is just that situation.

In the May 1st case of the F/V Sea Clipper, the captain only had time to pass a quick "mayday," but it was enough to get the Coast Guard responding to his exact position. Listen to the call at the following link: Sea Clipper MAYDAY http://cgvi.uscg.mil/media/main.php?q2_itemId=847568 [The Coast Guard was dispatched, but the caption for that sound file is inaccurate as no one from the Sea Clipper needed to be rescued.]

After broadcasting the "mayday," be sure to release your transmit button and, if the circumstances allow, wait for the Coast Guard, or another vessel to reply. Again, if further communications are possible, the Coast Guard will ask for more information about your vessel and situation and begin moving assets towards your location. You may also be asked to switch to another frequency if possible, to clear Channel 16 for the next emergency.

For reasons unknown to researchers and scientists, many VHF users become tongue-tied the moment they key the microphone on a VHF radio. These same people have no problems talking on the telephone or citizens-band (CB) radio in their cars. Knowing this might happen to you, when making a routine or emergency transmission on VHF, having something in mind before you key the microphone might be the key to a successful broadcast on a VHF radio.



Salmon 2010 and 2011

By Jim Yarnall

The salmon season within the Klamath Management Zone (KMZ) for 2010 was a mixed blessing. We had the opportunity to fish prior to Memorial Day through Labor Day. While I did not expect a wide open season due to the forecast number of fish in the ocean, the season was a disappointment to me and most others. I fished just a handful of days for salmon not having the patience to fish all day for the chance to catch one or two fish. When the season's total catch for one long time charter operator out of Eureka was 44 salmon, you know it wasn't a lack of ability. I targeted other fish such as Pacific halibut, bottom fish, and tuna and had an outstanding season.

As the fall rains began, we saw the return of salmon to their spawning grounds. Local streams appear to have had good runs of large healthy fish. While this is great news and provides hope for the fish in upcoming years, the 2011 season is based upon the returns to the Sacramento and Klamath River systems. Throughout the fall partial data was available from various hatcheries from both river systems. The returns on the Sacramento were up from the record lows of 2009, however they were not anywhere near the 2002 banner high returns. The Klamath appears to have had lower returns to certain hatcheries. The total return numbers for each river system are composed of both hatchery returns and stream surveys of natural spawners. The stream survey information is not typically available while it is developed. At this time it is really too early to "guesstimate" what the total returns were and how that relates to our season options for 2011.

Our ability to estimate our chances for a 2011 season will become much more apparent in late February when the states of California, Oregon and Washington hold their respective Salmon Information Meetings. At the California meeting in Santa Rosa, Fish and Game will release the total returns for both the Klamath and Sacramento River systems. At this time we will be able to see if each system reached the escapement goal of 40,500 for the Klamath and 180,000 for the Sacramento. Just as important as the total returns to each river are the compositions of each run. We are particularly focused upon the returns of two year old fish (Jacks) because they indicate the number of fish currently in the ocean. From this information we are able to at least speculate if we will have a season, how long it will be open, and how good the season may be. Following the Salmon Information Meetings, the PFMC will meet in March and develop options for 2011. These options will be released for public comment. At their April meeting the PFMC will select an option for 2011. Individual states then typically confirm the PFMC's decision and the seasons are set. The art of accurately predicting salmon numbers is not an exact science. However, I do believe the biologists who compile these numbers and then forecast the abundance are doing their

absolute best.

I would like to recognize two HASA members who have been representing our ocean salmon interests within the KMZ for the last five years, Ben Doane (Sumoco) and Tim Machado (Colly M). Each spring they have attended the multiple meetings of the Klamath Management Zone Fisheries Coalition, CA Fish & Game and Pacific Fisheries Management Council (PFMC) donating months of their time to work diligently for the best ocean seasons possible within the KMZ. I can honestly say without the efforts of these two individuals we would not have had the recreational seasons we have had during the last years. For the last two years I have had the pleasure of shadowing these two during this process. I cannot think of a better team to have learned from. I certainly appreciate all their efforts and patience attempting to educate me. They have paid their dues and they are passing the torch. I hope that I am able to accomplish even a fraction of what they did. We all owe them a debt of gratitude for their service.

Reef Update

Casey Allen

The progress of our artificial reef project is in the hands of David Hull at the Humboldt Bay Harbor, Recreation, and Conservation District. Hull is scheduling meetings with the Department of Fish and Game to ensure the one square mile site off the North Jetty they approved in 1991 is still a viable location today. Once that is done he plans to visit Sacramento to hand walk our lease application through the State Lands Commission as far as he can in 2-3 days. During this time, HASA will be asked to take on some tasks like meeting with stakeholders and others. Much of our fundraising efforts will be focused on our reef project as it has been estimated HASA's cost could be as much as \$100,000.

Tim Klassen and Jim Yarnall met with Assemblyman Wesley Chesbro who is now interested in our project. Based on their conversation, Tim and I met with Pete Nichols of Baykeeper. Nichols was previously unaware of our project and after we gave him an overview and answered his questions, he agreed to support the project.

Hull cautions us to be patient. The approval process could be lengthy as there are multiple permits to obtain from multiple agencies. The Shelter Cove Breakwater project took many years before construction could start last September. The best way to shorten that time frame is to talk about the project with as many folks as possible. The more popular the project the more help we'll get in removing roadblocks and opening doors.

The most common question I get about the reef project is "will it happen in my lifetime?" That question is a testament to the hope people hold for the future of saltwater sport fishing.

GROUND FISH UPDATE

By Tom Marking, HASA Board Member and GAP Representative

This past year was a busy one for the PFMC and the groundfish committee. On January 1, 2011 the IQ (individual quota) system allocation was put in place for the trawl fishery. While preparation, policy and rules were promulgated for years, it all is happening now. There have been many unintended consequences. The trawl history was tracked for about ten years and the by-catch history for a few years in this past decade. The proportion of by-catch was then applied to the IQ allowance for each permit and boat. What has occurred is that yelloweye, and recently halibut, by-catch have had dramatic affects on the fleet. Of the 160 permits on the west coast, over a hundred cannot catch more than one yelloweye rockfish or they will find themselves shut down for the remainder of the year. Scary stuff for the trawl fleet. That same affect is being seeing in other overfished species like canary, dark blotched and cowcod in particular. Emergency action is being implemented to try to soften the blow this will have on the fleet. Trailing amendments are being put forward at the March meeting to help alleviate some of this angst.

California Recreational Opportunities

As you will recall, through close cooperation with DFG, public input and work at the Commission, some changes were made last year to provide more opportunity. Except for the Point Arena to Cape Mendocino, all other areas of the state were going to see expanded seasons for 2011 and 2012. The North Coast was going to get an extension of another six weeks of the rockfish season. Ling Cod numbers have surged back so that population is in excellent condition. That Ling Cod season was expanded for the Open Access guys and the commercial fisheries. Our problem is that as we fish deeper waters for lings we also tend to pick up yelloweye (YE). The southern areas don't seem to have this problem as the YE is not a concern down south (although cowcod and canaries and blues are). The southern area was to have some increased fishing areas by moving the depth contours out in the cowcod restriction area. The DFG held public hearing and posted the new regulations for this next two year period and we were all feeling terrific until the Senior Counsel at the NMFS threw a wrench into the process. He was concerned the annual analysis for the darkblotch, YE and cowcod wouldn't pass muster, so that put a freeze on everything. What this means is the YE by-catch allowance would be kept at 14 metric tons (MT) instead of the 17 MT we had all planned on. This rolled back all the new regulations to the existing 2010 regulations until the March meeting, where this will all be discussed again. If the SPEX analysis for these three species is approved we probably will have all the new regulations implemented. We'll have to wait and see. For us on the North Coast we could fish rockfish until November 1, along with our halibut season, if this works out in our favor.

New Control Line at Viscaino:

The new management control line established by Viscaino will isolate the Shelter Cove area from the North Coast above the 40 degree 10' line. In effect, if that area exceeds their YE by-catch quota, the northern area will not suffer a curtailed season should that area get shut down early. That is good news for us north of Cape Mendocino. We catch very few YE up here if we avoid the sharp drop off areas at Cape Mendocino, Redding Rock and Pt. Saint George. It is critical we avoid these areas and if you do pick up a YE, PLEASE use a release device that puts the fish back down at depth where it has an excellent chance of survival. HASA has bought release devices with some public information and will give you one of these devices to release your by-catch.

The overfished species, particularly YE in our region, are having a very constraining effect on our fishing opportunities. We are limited to 20 fathoms or less for short seasons and until the YE population begins to improve we will be restricted. The entire west coast is experiencing this problem. Oregon is facing dramatic halibut reduction for recreational anglers since they are catching more halibut and catch effort has increased dramatically over the past few years. They have a short ten-day derby type halibut season at present.

Petrals and Black Cod:

Some of our members have asked about being able to keep the occasional catch of black cod and petrale while fishing for lings, rockfish and halibut. At the present, neither can be kept by recreational anglers. DFG is actually working on an incidental catch allowance, but with petrale now being in an overfished status this puts a damper on that process. I think it will happen eventually, but it may be a few more years before this can be implemented. But, it's something to keep in mind for the 2013-2014 seasons.

Have a good winter and loosen those drags and clean up all your gear if you haven't done so already.

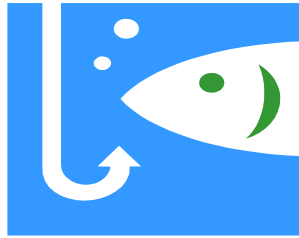
Quote of Note

Calling fishing a hobby is like calling brain surgery a job

Unknown

HUMBOLDT AREA SALTWATER ANGLERS

A VOICE FOR SALTWATER SPORTSMEN



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME: _____

ALIAS, BOAT NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ ST. _____ ZIP: _____

E-MAIL: _____

PHONE: _____

_____ Associate membership - no fee - you receive e-mailed copy of the newsletter

_____ Premium Individual/Family membership \$20.00 Annual Fee (tax deductible)

Please list your interests, talents, and affiliations for participating in committee functions

All HASA members will receive timely updates on all club and committee functions including a quarterly e-newsletter. Premium members without e-mail will be sent a hard copy of the newsletter.

All HASA members will be invited to the Humboldt Tuna Club semi-annual pot lucks.

More information is available at humbolddtuna.com

HASA PO BOX 6191 Eureka, Ca. 95502

2011 MEMBERSHIP

Now is the time to either renew your HASA membership for 2011 or become a voting member by paying just \$20 a year for an individual or family. It is very simple. Just send your check to HASA at PO BOX 6191, Eureka, CA 95502. Please include your name, address, phone and cell phone number and email address, also a boat name if you have one. If you just want to be an associate member (non-voting) there is no fee. Just send your information and we will include you in our email. Your support of HASA allows the Humboldt area sports fishing community to have a voice in the future of salt water angling. Thanks you for your continuing support and helping make HASA a strong voice in fishing politics. *Mary Marking*

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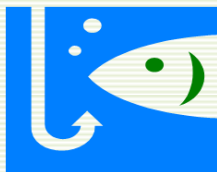
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MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

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“JUST A NOTE TO SAY THANK YOU TO THE HASA GANG. I HAVE HAD THE HONOR OF WORKING WITH A LOT OF GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS ON COMPLICATED FISHERY ISSUES. THE FOLKS I WORKED WITH ON THE MLPA WERE GIVEN LITTLE OPPORTUNITY TO WORK OUTSIDE VERY DETAILED STATE INSTRUCTION. IN SPITE OF THE OVERWHELMING THRUST FROM WELL FUNDED GROUPS WITH TREMENDOUS POLITICAL INFLUENCE, THEY GENERATED A PLAN BETTER THAN EXPECTED. TIM KLASSEN AND BEN DOANE EXHIBITED PATIENCE BEYOND BELIEF AND GAINED GENUINE RESPECT FROM THE OTHER COUNTIES. HASA CONTINUES TO BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE WITH GREAT CREDIBILITY, SOMETHING OUR AREA NEEDS TO MAINTAIN. THANK YOU TO TIM, BEN, GENE, JIMMY Y, LONNIE, CLIFF H, CLIFF F, TIM M, MIKE H, PHIL G AND ALL THE MEMBERS WHO MAKE US STRONG. REMEMBER, WE DIDN'T ASK FOR THE MLPA, IT CAME LIKE A FAST MOVING FREIGHT TRAIN BUT THE TEAM MET IT HEAD ON. ALSO, REMEMBER WE NOW HAVE AN EARLY CRAB SEASON, AN EXTENDED HALIBUT SEASON WITH NO SIZE LIMIT AND A LONGER ROCKFISH SEASON FOR NEXT YEAR. WOULDN'T HAPPEN WITHOUT THE HASA TEAM. MUCH TO DO SO STAY STRONG.”

JIMMY SMITH

**SAVE THE DATE—SATURDAY APRIL 16—
FOR HASA’S FUNDRAISING DINNER AT
REDWOOD ACRES. MORE INFORMATION
IS COMING. IF YOU CAN VOLUNTEER OR
HAVE AUCTION ITEMS TO DONATE PLEASE
CONTACT A BOARD MEMBER. WE EXPECT
TO HAVE A GREAT CATERED DINNER AND
PROMISE TO HAVE A GOOD PA SYSTEM.**

All photos and articles are donated by HASA members and interested parties. HASA would like to expressly thank our friends at the US Coast Guard and the US Weather Service for their contribution to our newsletter and more importantly their role in fisherman's safety. This is issue #8.

Efforts to Restore Salmonid Populations and Habitat

By Laura Bridy

In continuation of last season's newsletter article introducing Pacific Coast Fish, Wildlife and Wetlands Restoration Association (PCFWWRA), we would like to describe our endeavors to help restore salmonid fish populations by restoring vital habitat in Salmon Creek Estuary within the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge. PCFWWRA has worked extensively the last ten+ years with upstream landowners, primarily the Bureau of Land Management and Green Diamond Resource Company, to reduce sediment loading in Salmon Creek. This Salmon Creek effort has clearly been a "Headwaters to tidewaters" approach.

Approximately 90% of the historic salt marsh and estuarine habitat in Humboldt Bay has been lost to diking and draining. Meandering streams were consolidated, straightened and greatly reduced while marshlands were drained. Recent research and monitoring in Humboldt Bay and elsewhere has increasingly demonstrated the importance of tidal estuaries and connected low gradient freshwater wetlands, side channels, and other slow-water areas in the life history of coho salmon and other threatened anadromous salmonids. See Figure 1 comparing historic and present salt marsh extent and drainage in Salmon Creek Estuary within southern Humboldt Bay.

PCFWWRA is endeavoring to help improve the structure and function of the degraded Salmon Creek Estuary in multiple phases (see Figure 2).

Phase I

As part of the first phase of restoration, PCFWWRA modernized the antiquated tide gate system in lower Salmon Creek on Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge in an effort to improve estuary habitat and fish passage. For example, an additional connection between Humboldt Bay's Hookton Slough and Salmon Creek was restored with the construction of a major new tide gate in an existing levee (see Figure 3). Also, PCFWWRA replaced several small outmoded tide gates with new ones. The new adjustable tide gates are specially designed with larger openings to increase flow capacity, decrease water speed, and allow for unimpeded fish passage. They also greatly increased tidal circulation into and out of the estuary, which is a key to improving habitat by increasing water quality (oxygen content) and flushing sediment. Increased sediment transport to the ocean is expected to restore channel capacity, widening and deepening channels, and decrease flooding upstream. Water circulation improvement will allow additional seasonal rearing in the lower 8,500 foot reach of Salmon Creek. Also, the muted tide cycle will help enlarge the size of this vital South Humboldt Bay estuary. The upper boundary of tidal influence is expected move upstream an estimated 1,700 feet further into the Refuge and increase the acreage of tidal wetlands by another 13.0 acres. Construction and installation of the new tide gates was performed by Nehalem Marine. Funding for this project was provided by the California Department of Fish and Game's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program and California Coastal Salmon Recovery Program, US Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program, Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the California Coastal Conservancy.

Phase II

The objectives of the second phase of restoration are to:

- Realign 2,600 feet of existing channel which currently flows through a linear ditch. The new channel would be in the upper reach of tidal influence and include a stable channel form, complexity, sinuosity, large wood, and efficient routing of sediment and flood waters (continued page 19)

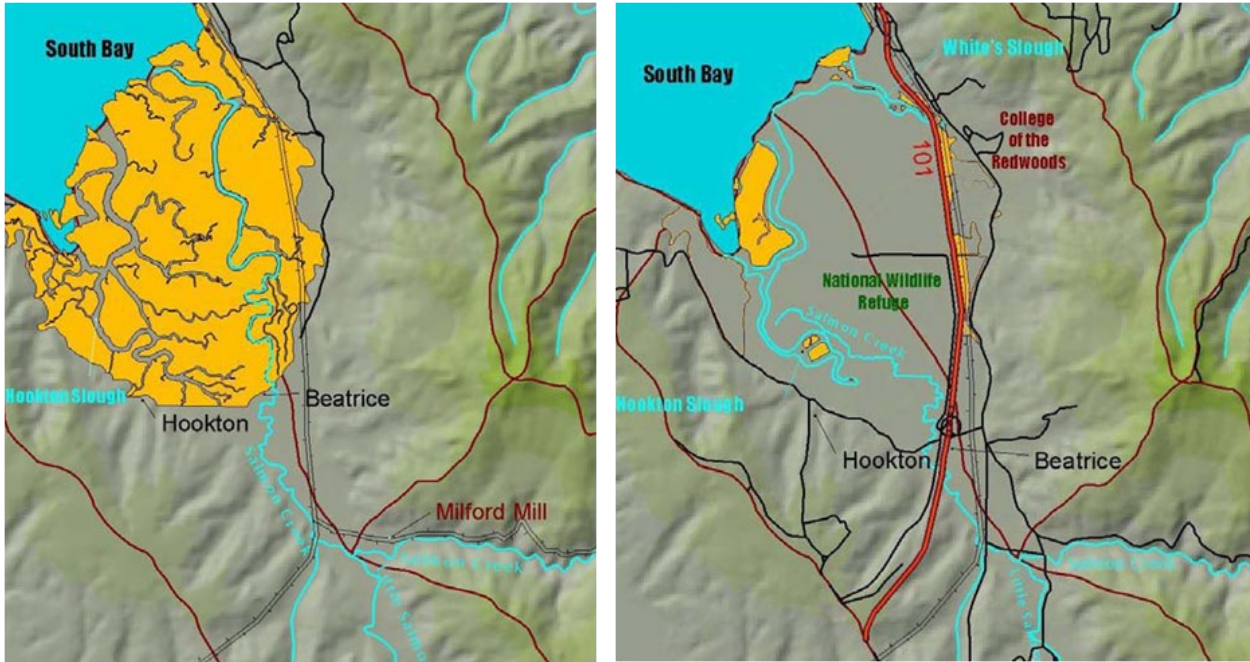


Figure 1. Approximate extent of salt marsh and estuarine channels within the Salmon Creek estuary in 1870 left and 1993 right (adapted from Bartosh and Phelps, 2001).

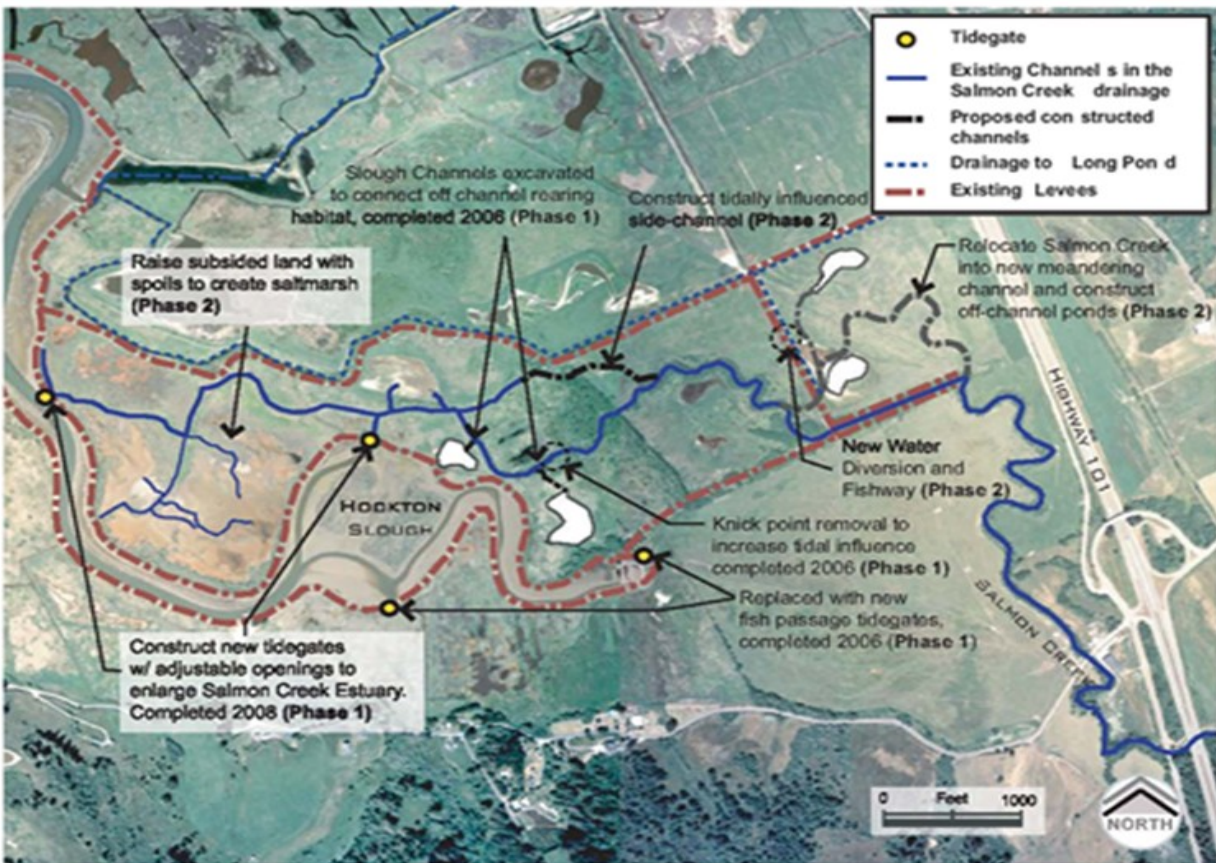


Figure 2. Schematic plan of improvements to Salmon Creek estuary.



Figures 4-7 show the construction sequence, clockwise from upper left, showing a section of field being restored to estuarine channel.



Figure 3. New tidegate on Salmon Creek

- Construct 1,600 feet of new estuarine side-channel
- Restore 8 acres of tidal salt marsh by raising subsided lands with spoils generated from channel excavation.
- Construct four tidally influenced off-channel and side-channel ponds in the Upper and Middle Refuge

Construct a fish passage structure in the Refuge’s passive water delivery system to reduce existing stranding potential and allow access to suitable habitat in the northern part of the Refuge during higher water events

Thus far, PCFWWRA and project partners made significant progress on Phase 2 in 2010 by excavating 1,800 feet of new channel and pond habitat and raising 6.25 acres of subsided lands to salt marsh elevation with spoils generated from the channel excavation. Large wood structures were installed in the new channel to produce complexity in fish habitat. See Figures 4-7 for the construction sequence at one stretch of field being restored to channel and Figure 8 for an aerial photograph depicting the newly constructed channel and pond in the foreground and newly raised lands in the background.

Funding and staff time for this summers work was provided by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Additional equipment was supplied by Wallace Structures of Fortuna. Project Partners also included the California Department of Fish and Game, Aldaron Laird Environmental Planner, Michael Love and Associates, Pacific Watershed Associates, Humboldt Fish Action Council, Green Diamond Resource Company, California Redwood Company, Wayne Bare Trucking, and Wendt Construction.

PCFWWRA has been diligently working the last couple years to secure the remaining funding needed to complete this sizable project. In 2010, additional funding was committed by Ducks Unlimited through a North American Wetland Conservation Act funding and by the National Fish

and Wildlife Foundation. The fate of proposal to the California Department of Fish and Game’s Fisheries Restoration Grant Program for the remaining funds will be known shortly. If the remaining funding is secured, it is anticipated that the project will be completed in 2011.



Figure 8. Aerial photograph depicting the newly constructed channel and side-channel pond in the foreground and subsided lands that were newly raised to support salt marsh in the background. We plan to continue channel excavation in 2011.



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