

# Return of the Redwood Creek Coho Salmon

## Preventing Local Extinction

The prolonged drought from 2013-2016, along with many other factors, have brought Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) to the brink of local extinction in Redwood Creek, Marin County. To preserve this population of Coho Salmon, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, in collaboration with the National Marine Fisheries Service, Army Corps of Engineers, National Park Service, State Parks and other entities, has embarked on a short-term rescue mission to prevent extinction of Coho Salmon in Redwood Creek.



## Rescue Rearing

For three consecutive years from 2014 to 2016, the Department collected juvenile Coho Salmon in Redwood Creek and brought them to Warm Springs Hatchery at Lake Sonoma. There, the young salmon were reared to adulthood in a protected environment, so that at age 3 years they could be released back into Redwood Creek to spawn. The first group of 106 adult Coho Salmon were released in December 2016, and the second group of 188 adult Coho Salmon were released in January 2018. Some of the released fish

spawned successfully, and tissue samples collected from juvenile Coho Salmon in the summers of 2017 and 2018 were tested genetically which confirmed that some of the juveniles came from the released adults.

## Winter 2018/19

The third and final Redwood Creek Coho Salmon cohort, collected as juveniles in summer 2016, were successfully released into Redwood Creek on December 18, 2018. Of the 200-fish collected as juveniles, approximately 170 have grown to adulthood, a survival rate of over 85%. Without rescue rearing, fewer than 5% would have survived in the wild. If environmental conditions are favorable, their offspring will migrate to the ocean and come back as adults three years later, perpetuating the Coho Salmon life cycle in Redwood Creek.



Adult Coho Salmon at time of release

To learn more about this project, go to: <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Drought/Projects/Redwood-Creek-Coho>