

Staff Summary for June 17-18, 2026

21B. Department Wildlife and Fisheries Division, and Department Ecosystem Conservation Division**Today's Item**Information Action

The Department will highlight items of note since the last Commission meeting for the Department's Wildlife and Fisheries Division and Ecosystem Conservation Division.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)**Background (N/A)****Significant Public Comments (N/A)****Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

1. Department news release: ["California Red-Legged Frog Recovery Reaches 10-Year Milestone in Yosemite,"](#) dated May 7, 2026
2. Department news release: ["Chinook Fishing to Reopen on Klamath, Trinity and Sacramento Rivers After 3-Year Closure,"](#) dated May 12, 2026
3. Department news release: ["A Massive Win': Rehabilitated Black Bears Thriving After Fall Releases,"](#) dated June 8, 2026

Motion (N/A)



CDFW NEWS

May 7, 2026

*California Red-Legged Frog Recovery Reaches
10-Year Milestone in Yosemite*



10,000 frogs released through multiagency conservation effort

The California red-legged frog, a federally threatened species absent from Yosemite National Park for decades, has made a significant comeback after 10 years of coordinated conservation work.

Partners marked the milestone today with the symbolic release of the program's 10,000th frog in Yosemite Valley.

The recovery effort is led by the National Park Service in collaboration with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Yosemite Conservancy and San Francisco Zoo & Gardens.

"This milestone reflects years of focused work to restore a species that plays an important role in the park's ecosystem," said Rob Grasso, aquatic ecologist at Yosemite National Park. "After invasive bullfrogs eliminated red-legged frogs from the area decades ago, we removed those threats and created conditions for recovery. Today, multiple generations of frogs are established in Yosemite Valley."

Invasive American bullfrogs, introduced to the park, drove the species' decline. Elevated raccoon populations, fueled by open refuse sites that remained in use until the 1970s, also contributed to the loss. Park staff spent decades removing bullfrogs, while habitat improvements tied to the Merced River Plan restored wetlands, streambanks and river systems critical to the frog's survival.

"Our partners have been essential to the recovery of the California red-legged frog," said Kim Turner, acting field supervisor for the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office. "We appreciate the progress made over the past decade and remain committed to this collaborative effort."

During the May 7 event, speakers will deliver remarks near Yosemite Falls before releasing several zoo-reared frogs, including the program's symbolic 10,000th frog, nicknamed "Twain."

"The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is proud to have assisted the recovery of California's official state amphibian in Yosemite," said Laura Patterson, amphibian and reptile conservation coordinator for the Department. "Grants administered by the Department, using funds approved by the voters of California, facilitated the habitat restoration necessary for the success of this recovery effort."

A key component of the effort is a dedicated rearing facility established in San Francisco in 2016 through a partnership between the National Park Service and the San Francisco Zoological Society. At the facility, staff raise frogs from wild-collected eggs to one- and two-year-old juveniles in a controlled environment before releasing them into the park.

The program is supported by the Zoo-Park Partnership Program, facilitated by the Wildlife Restoration Foundation, and is considered a model for species recovery in California.

“When the program began in 2016, no California red-legged frogs remained in Yosemite Valley,” said Dr. Rochelle Stiles, director of field conservation at the San Francisco Zoo and Gardens. “Today, every frog in the valley traces back to this effort. Despite drought, severe winters and flooding, the population has proven resilient.”

This year, the zoo plans to release about 830 juvenile frogs into Yosemite while raising approximately 600 eggs for future release.

“Protecting vulnerable species helps preserve the park’s natural balance,” said Cassius Cash, president of Yosemite Conservancy. “This milestone shows what sustained collaboration can achieve.”

The effort also relied on private landowner Diane Buchholz of Garden Valley, Calif., who allowed researchers to collect frog eggs from her property.

*The California red-legged frog gained national recognition in *The Celebrated Jumping Frog of Calaveras County* by Mark Twain. The species, the largest native frog in the western United States, grows 2 to 5 inches long and is known for its reddish underside and soft, short calls. It inhabits ponds, streams and wet meadows.*

About the National Park Service Established in 1916, the National Park Service preserves America’s most treasured natural and cultural places for the enjoyment, education and inspiration of current and future generations. ;Learn more at [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov)([external link](#)).

About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit www.fws.gov([external link](#)), or connect with us through any of these social media channels: [Facebook](#)([external link](#)), [Instagram](#)([external link](#)), [X](#)([external link](#)), [LinkedIn](#)([external link](#)), [YouTube](#)([external link](#)) and [Flickr](#)([external link](#)).

About the California Department of Fish and Wildlife The California Department of Fish and Wildlife’s mission is to protect California’s diverse fish, wildlife and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and enjoyment by the public today and for generations to come. For more information visit wildlife.ca.gov or follow CDFW on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) and [YouTube](#).

About San Francisco Zoo & Gardens Established in 1929, San Francisco Zoo & Gardens connects people to wildlife, inspires caring for nature and advances conservation action. An urban oasis, SF Zoo is home to nearly 1,500 exotic, endangered and rescued animals representing about 150 species. Located at the edge of the Pacific Ocean at Sloat Boulevard, the Zoo is open 365 days a year from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (4 p.m. in the winter). Visit www.sfzoo.org([external link](#)) for more information.

About Yosemite Conservancy For more than 100 years, Yosemite Conservancy has supported the conservation of Yosemite’s natural and cultural resources and helped

people develop a deeper relationship to the park. Thanks to generous donors, in recent years, the Conservancy has provided more than \$180 million in grants to Yosemite for more than 950 projects. In 2026, we are providing \$19 million in total support and funding around 60 new grants to the National Park Service for projects in the park. The Conservancy's guided adventures and art classes, donor events, volunteer opportunities, wilderness services and bookstores help people from across the country and world connect with Yosemite. Learn more at yosemite.org (external link).

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CDFW NEWS

May 12, 2026

Chinook Fishing to Reopen on Klamath, Trinity and Sacramento Rivers After 3-Year Closure



The Following three consecutive years of closure, salmon fishing will return to the Klamath River Basin and Sacramento River for the upcoming summer and fall seasons. More good news comes for inland anglers with a full season on the Feather, American and Mokelumne rivers after a shortened season in 2025. These added fishing opportunities come as a result of an increase in numbers of adult Chinook salmon returning from the ocean to the Klamath Basin and Central Valley.

The California Fish and Game Commission at its May 6 meeting adopted amendments to sport fishing regulations specifying season dates, bag and possession limits for the Klamath River Basin and Central Valley, and a quota for the Klamath and Trinity rivers. The adopted regulations aim to protect salmon as populations are expected to continue to rebound as a result of actions guided by [California's Salmon Strategy for a Hotter Drier Future \(PDF\)](#).

“The California Department of Fish and Wildlife is incredibly encouraged to see our public and private collaborative efforts pay off, allowing us to expand opportunities for California’s dedicated angling community while maintaining a steadfast commitment to long-term population recovery,” said CDFW Director Meghan Hertel. “It is a moment of genuine celebration for everyone invested in the health of our watersheds. CDFW looks forward to seeing anglers return to the Klamath Basin and Central Valley for fishing and fun on the river.”

Increases in hatchery production, investments in salmon research and habitat restoration projects, a series of good water years, dam removals and inland and ocean fishery closures have all aligned to bring Chinook and with that, Chinook fishing, back to the Klamath River Basin and Central Valley.

For the Klamath Basin, fishing will open for late spring-run Chinook salmon July 1 and will continue until Aug. 14 on the Klamath River and Aug. 31 on the Trinity River. Fall-run Chinook salmon fishing will begin on Aug. 15 on the Klamath River and Sept. 1 on the Trinity River and continue until Dec. 31. The fall-run adult quota is 3,248 fish, though fishing for jacks will continue after the adult quota is met. For the late spring-run salmon fishery, the daily bag limit is one fish of any size and the possession limit is two fish. For the fall-run salmon fishery, the daily bag limit is two fish, only one of which can be an adult greater than 23 inches; the possession limit is six fish, of which only three may be adults greater than 23 inches.

For the Central Valley, the general fall-run salmon fishing season will open on July 16 and close on Dec. 16, with some variation for upper and lower stretches of the rivers. For each tributary a daily bag limit of two fish and a possession limit of four fish of any size has been set.

All regulations, season dates and boundaries will be printed in the [Freshwater Sport Fishing Regulations \(PDF\)](#) when available.

The Pacific Fishery Management Council finalized its recommendations for California's recreational and commercial ocean salmon seasons and harvest limits at its April 7-12 meeting. For more information about the 2026 ocean salmon fishing season, see the press release.

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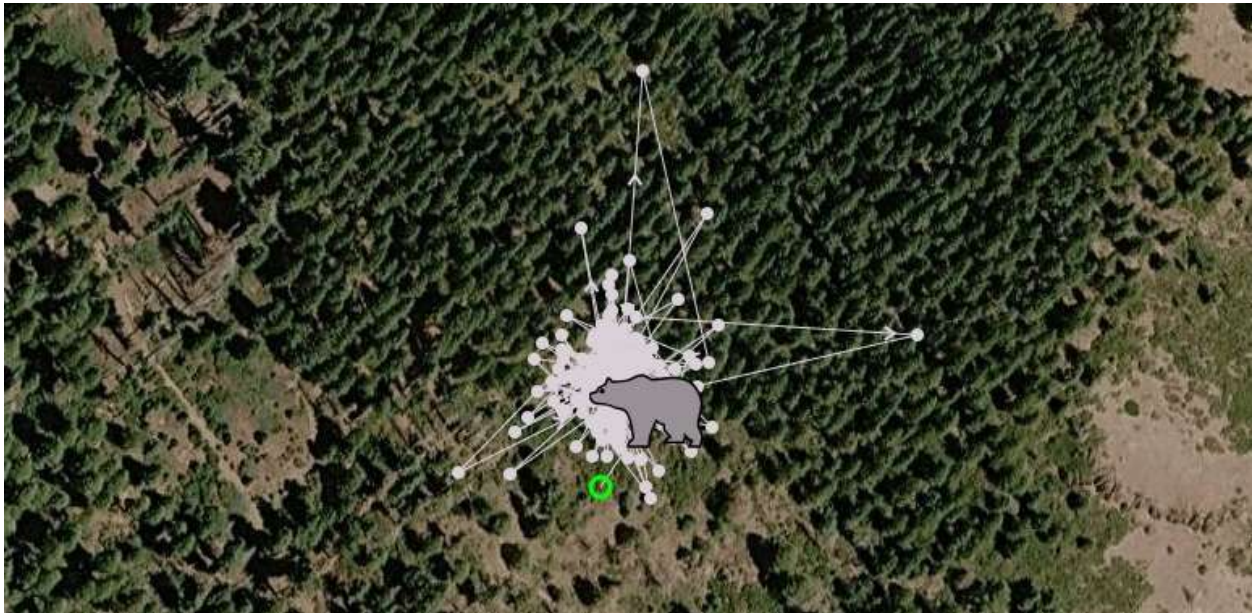
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CDFW NEWS

June 8, 2026

'A Massive Win': Rehabilitated Black Bears Thriving After Fall Releases



Five orphaned black bear cubs that were rehabilitated and released into northern California in November 2025 successfully hibernated through the winter and returned to the landscape this spring healthy and active, according to recent data reviewed by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) scientists.

These bears were part of an experimental effort led by the department's Wildlife Rehabilitation Program, in coordination with CDFW's Game Conservation Program and North Central Region, to test the viability of releasing rehabilitated juvenile black bears back in the wild in the fall versus the typical spring release. This practice – which can be

helpful in mitigating human-wildlife conflict – has been successful in other states but had yet to be tested in California.

All five bears were ear-tagged, microchipped and fitted with GPS collars for scientific study and individual identification. Based on collar data, all five bears successfully established dens, hibernated during the winter, and reemerged this spring back on the landscape.

“This is a massive win. These bears spent their first winter hibernating naturally in the wild as opposed to staying overwinter in a facility, which can be costly and difficult to do. It means less time in rehabilitation and less opportunity to get comfortable around humans,” said Dr. Heather Perry, CDFW’s Wildlife Rehabilitation Program Coordinator. “We were able to work together to release these healthy young animals back to the wild where they belong. It highlights the important and unique role of wildlife rehabilitators – and wildlife rehabilitation by its very definition – in the conservation of California’s native wildlife.”

The releases were made possible by CDFW’s wildlife rehabilitation partners with support from the CDFW Wildlife Health Lab and veterinary staff who provided health assessments prior to release. CDFW decided to test the fall bear releases after noting the success of fall releases in other western states, specifically Nevada and Washington.

“Bears are incredibly resilient. They have an innate behavior to find shelter when snow starts to accumulate on the ground,” said Alexia Ronning, CDFW Environmental Scientist and Tahoe bear specialist. “They teach us all the time that we need to trust their ability to survive on the landscape.”

The five bears include:

- Two female siblings reported to CDFW as orphaned near Nevada City, Nevada County in May 2025. Both cubs were captured and taken to the Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue for rehabilitation then returned together to suitable habitat in Nevada County.
- One male cub reported to CDFW as abandoned in South Lake Tahoe, El Dorado County in July 2025. The cub was captured and taken to Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue for rehabilitation then returned to suitable habitat in El Dorado County.
- Three male siblings reported to CDFW as abandoned in Arnold, Calaveras County in July 2025. The cubs were captured and taken to the San Diego Humane Society’s Ramona Wildlife Center for rehabilitation. One sibling arrived sick and was humanely euthanized. The remaining two cubs were transferred to Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue then [returned together to suitable habitat in Calaveras County\(external link\)](#).

CDFW provides year-round education, outreach and community support on living responsibly with black bears and recreating in bear country through its affiliations with the [Tahoe Interagency Bear Team \(TIBT\)\(external link\)](#) and [BearWise\(external link\)](#). Preventing black bears from accessing trash, human food sources and other attractants is key to preventing human-bear conflicts.

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CDFW Image: A cluster of GPS points overlaid on satellite imagery over a three-month period in winter shows very little movement and indicates to CDFW biologists that the GPS-collared Calaveras County bear wearing the collar found a den and hibernated.