

Memorandum*Colusa Co.
Sacramento R.*

To : Mr. Nick Villa
Senior Fishery Biologist

Date : May 8, 1995

From : Department of Fish and Game - Region 2

Subject : CHIN-SR adult rescue from Moulton Weir pond, April 20-21

On April 20, 1995, a fish rescue was planned for a pond immediately below the Moulton Weir, the uppermost weir spilling floodwaters from the Sacramento River into the Sutter Bypass. This weir is the first to stop flowing as the Sacramento drops. Flow over this weir had ceased at least a week before this rescue was attempted.

We tried to use the Cruise n' Tarry boat ramp as a site to get water for our 250 gallon fish transport tank but there was six feet of debris visible at the head of the ramp. Water for the tank was finally found at the Colusa State Park ramp; water temperature in the tank was 55 on my pocket thermometer throughout our rescue work.

The Moulton Weir pond has an "L" shape with the largest and deepest leg near the River Road. We rescued fish with a 50' by 8' seine and our portable electrofishing boat. Participating were Fred Kopperdahl, Brenda Sweet, Charlie Jensen, Steve Owen, Dave Gardner, Bob Hawks, several sportsmen and me. Collin Jackin, channel 24, Chico collected some film and interviews that were shown on the evening news on April 20. In addition to adult spring-run chinook salmon (CHIN-SR), we observed suckers, threadfin shad, carp, goldfish, squawfish, one bluegill and a golden shiner.

On April 20, we started fishing about 1300 and quit at 1700. We seined 10 CHIN-SR and electrofished 26 for a total of 36. All were released at the Colusa Park ramp; the water here was muddy with 3" visibility. Fifteen were hauled in the first load and 21 in the second. Two salmon died in the first load and three in the second and three were found dead on the ramp the following morning. Known loss was eight therefore potential effective rescue was 28 adult CHIN-SR of ten to twenty pounds each on April 20.

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The Sacramento River was dropping rapidly on April 21, but water and access to the river for rescued fish was still available at the Colusa Park ramp. We seined eleven and electrofished four for the first load; all swam off albeit one on its back. We seined 6 and electrofished 17 for the second load and all swam away. Working from 1030 to 1630, we rescued a total of 38 adult CHIN-SR on April 21 with no observed mortalities. Despite a dropping river level, water temperature at the ramp at 1615 was still 55.

In summary for the two days, we caught 74 adult CHIN-SR of which at least 8 died. There are more salmon in the pool therefore the seine was left with Charlie Jensen for possible further work as the pond recedes. If this sample is any indication, there is a big run of spring-run salmon in the upper Sacramento this year.

The race of the adult salmon was determined by cutting open the mortalities; all were very immature with gonads not over an inch in diameter.

None of the salmon were adipose clipped.



Fred Meyer
Associate Fishery Biologist

cc: Mr. Paul Ward, IFD Red Bluff
Lt. R. Hawks, Region 2
Wdn. Charlie Jensen, Region 2
Wdn. Steve Owen, Region 2
Mr. Fred Kopperdahl, Region 2
Mr. Frank Fisher, IFD

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