

Introduction to the special fisheries issue from the California State Senate

One hundred years! How many journals of any kind have been around that long? Only a few can make that claim, which is why I'm particularly proud to introduce this issue of *California Fish and Game*, the scientific journal produced by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

This fourth issue in the centennial volume is focused on our fresh water fisheries and ecosystems. This topic is appropriate—or perhaps ironic—in this third year of severe drought, when fresh water supply is a critical issue for all Californians. The drought's effects may be even more severe on wildlife than on humans, since fish and animals can't store, import, pump groundwater, or buy water in bottles. They live or die with what nature (and sometimes we) can provide.

Since 1914, *California Fish and Game* has kept its managers, scientific researchers, students and the public up to date on the science of environmental conservation. That year the department—then called the Fish and Game Commission—created a new branch, the Bureau of Education, Publicity and Research. The need for more scientific research and to share it with the general public must have been obvious by then, since California's natural resources had been severely damaged by both Gold Rush activities and industrialization. Compiling the latest research and publishing the results in a scientific journal was an excellent way to turn the tide toward conservation.

Despite the public's growing support for environmental protection, California has lost approximately 95 percent of its wetlands to development. All but one of our major rivers has been dammed, thus blocking the natural passage of anadromous fish to their historic spawning streams. The diversion of water from natural drainages for human use has left numerous stream and lake beds as dry as a bone in the desert. All of this has had tremendous adverse effects on California's native aquatic organisms.

Yet, against tall odds, CDFW has found ways to address these challenges and worked to maintain healthy populations of most fresh-water-dependent species. For 100 years, research published in *California Fish and Game* has helped guide fisheries programs and habitat conservation, and to support beneficial government policies and legislation.

I heartily congratulate every researcher who has contributed to this respected publication, as well as CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham and the staff who put it all together, on *California Fish and Game's* 100th anniversary. May you continue publishing this valuable scientific information for another 100 years!

Fran Pavley, Chair
Senate Natural Resources and Water Committee