



NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S SECOND SENATE DISTRICT

SENATOR MIKE MCGUIRE

MEDIA



RELEASE

For Immediate Release: July 23, 2021

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Senator McGuire holding hearing on drought devastation, dead baby salmon, and why repeating the mistakes of the past could lead to extinction

Sacramento, CA – California's historic drought is impacting the livelihoods of Golden State residents, the sacred identity and traditions of Native American Tribal communities, farmers and ranchers and those who depend on healthy watersheds and the Pacific for their livelihoods.

River conditions wherever salmon are found are so bad here in California that baby fish are being cooked alive or wiped out by heat-driven disease. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife [estimates](#) that 100% of the endangered winter-run Chinook salmon could die off this year.

To make matters worse, the policies of the previous federal administration are still in effect on Central Valley rivers and the Delta. The [Trump Water Grab](#) started in 2019, but the nightmare is still alive today and will be responsible for an expedited salmon apocalypse. The Water Grab essentially allows Central Valley water managers to ignore the lessons of previous droughts and it steers our state on a course towards salmon extinction.

All of this and more will be discussed by State Agency officials, distinguished Tribal leaders, and fishery and watershed experts during a Senate and Assembly joint committee hearing, ***“California Salmon Fisheries in Crisis: Historic Drought, Low Flows, and Dead Fish”*** this coming Tuesday, July 27 at 10:00am at the State Capitol in Room 4203. The hearing can also be watched via livestream at: www.senate.ca.gov.

“The alarm couldn't be louder. We are on the brink of a total species collapse due to the historic drought and arcane federal water policy”, said Senator McGuire, Chair of the Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture. “This is a failure of our own making, with poor water management motivated by politics instead of science, blind to the lessons of the past. Tuesday's hearing will be critical: we will discuss current conditions, how we've been ignoring lessons learned from the last drought, and what we can do as a State to save endangered species that are on the brink of total collapse.”

Four short years ago Senator McGuire held a hearing entitled *“Where Have all the Salmon Gone?”*, at which Tribal leaders, fishery and water agencies, watershed experts, and stakeholder representatives spoke about how the drought of 2014-2017 and poor water management was causing environmental devastation and federal fishery disaster declarations. Since then, California's salmon and the communities that depend on them have contended with the Trump Administration's devastating water grab, challenged in court by the State of California, and a stalled Voluntary Agreements process.

Today, during the worst drought in decades, the legacy of the disastrous Trump policies lives on in Central Valley flow management.

The hearing will be headlined by presentations from:

- Chuck Bonham, director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Eileen Sobeck, executive director of the State Water Resources Control Board

- Joseph James, Chairman of the Yurok Tribe
- Russell “Buster” Attebery, Chairman of the Karuk Tribe
- James Stone, president of the Nor-Cal Guides and Sportsmen’s Association
- Mike Conroy, executive director of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations
- Barry Nelson, policy representative for the Golden State Salmon Association
- Kate Poole, senior attorney for the California’s Natural Resources Defense Council
- Patrick Samuel, Bay Area regional director for California Trout
- Mark Bransom, CEO of the Klamath River Renewal Corporation
- Don McEnhill, executive director of Russian Riverkeeper

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