



## California's Salmon and Steelhead: The Struggle to Restore an Imperiled Resource

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Millions upon millions of salmon and steelhead once filled California streams, providing a plentiful and sustainable food resource for the original peoples of the region. But over the years, dams and irrigation diversions have reduced natural spawning habitat from an estimated 6,000 miles to fewer than 300. River pollution has also hit hard at fish populations, which within recent decades have diminished by 80 percent. One species, the San Joaquin River spring chinook, became extinct soon after World War II. Other species are nearly extinct.

This volume documents the reasons for the decline; it also offers practical suggestions about how the decline might be reversed. The California salmon story is presented here in human perspective: its broad historical, economic, cultural, and political facets, as well as the biological, are all treated. No comparable work has ever been published, although some of the material has been available for half a century.

In the richly varied contributions in this volume, the reader meets Indians whose history is tied to the history of the salmon and steelhead upon which they depend; commercial trollers who see their livelihood and unique lifestyle vanishing; biologists and fishery managers alarmed at the loss of river water habitable by fish and at the effects of hatcheries on native gene pools. Women who fish, conservation-minded citizens, foresters, economists, outdoor writers, engineers, politicians, city youth restoring streambeds—all are represented. Their lives—and the lives of all Californians—are affected in myriad ways by the fate of California's salmon and steelhead.

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