

West Valley Bass-Masters of Tracy

Your new officers for 2008 are,

President	Steve Hunger
Vice President	Chris Bartling
Treasurer	Mike Lofstedt
Secretary	Camryn Wiggins
Tournament Director	Jim Gondal
Member @ Large	Jessie Ochoa
Conservationist	Cliff Rich
Awards Coordinator	Brittyn Wiggins
Event Coordinator	Cameron Cardoza*

*Subject to change

Next officers meeting will be Tuesday Jan. 15th @ Steve Hungers House 7:00 pm

Reminder to all that signed up to go to the holiday party, it is at Cattlemen's Restaurant in Livermore Saturday Jan. 19th at 7:30 PM.

Our 2008 Schedule is completed & will be available at the next meeting Jan. 9th at Perkos.

Date	Place
01/13/08	Rivers End
02/17/08	New Melones Res.
03/30/08	Holland Riverside
04/13/08	Ladd's
05/17-18 08	Clear Lake * 2 day Sat. & Sun. " BBQ " ?
06/14/08	Rivers End * Sat 6 hour Tournament "AM"
07/13/08	Tracy Oasis * Sun. 6 hour tournament "AM" " BBQ " ?
08/16/08	Orwood * Sat. Night tournament 4:30-10:30 PM
09/28/08	Rivers End

* NCCC 10/12/08 Russo's Marina *

10/26/08	Sugar Barge
11/09/08	Holland Riverside
12/08 "TBD"	Tracy Oasis "Turkey-shoot"

It has come to the Board of Directors attention that we need to implement a point system for selecting NCCC participants.

This said we are currently looking into options from other clubs & input from the board to come up with a fair system to select our 2008 NCCC team. More info to come as the Board finalizes their decisions.

Since several members have not provided their FLW membership numbers, we are investigating the cost of finding insurance from an independent agency. Initial estimates are \$400-500.

We are getting close to starting our new year & everyone needs to be paid up in full by Wed. April 9th to fish the April 13th Tournament. The Board of Directors have is also reviewing the possibility of reducing dues to \$150, by doing this the club may not have the funds to pay for it's members to have a holiday party dinner, which means everyone would have to pay for their own dinner. If we do well in the fund raising dept this year, that could change & the club may still be able to pay for its members. Keep this in mind we will discuss this at the next meeting.

Results for our 8 Boat December Tournament were as follows:

1st Place went to Brittyn Wiggins & Ron Webb with 10.84 lbs & Big Fish of the Tournament with a 4.75 lb Big Fish. "4 fish "

2nd Place went to Jim Gondal & Chris Hunger with 6.51 lbs for 4 fish.

3rd Place went to Jessie Ochoa & Brad Estes with 5.30 lbs for 4 fish.

4th Place went to Brent V. & Guest with 1 fish for 4.14 lbs.

Steve's Corner:

On January 6th, the respective presidents of NCCC participants will meet at Country Kitchens in Lathrop to discuss the future of this event and the NCCC as an organization. It appears there is some demand that the NCCC take on the duties of the BBAC. Regardless of how you feel about the BBAC, it's important that you recognize the significance of this organization and the importance of representation of this type. The articles at the end of this newsletter are a good indication of what a "voice" can do and why we need it.

There are a lot of guys in this club that just want to fish, but I assure you, if we don't stand together on some of these issues, we'll be spending a lot more time in our vehicles driving to MotherLode Lakes. The other clubs in Northern CA are very aware of this and are in strong support. I'm asking that you take an interest as well.

I'm also very concerned about the direction and attitude this club has taken. I'd like to see the fun and camaraderie that we once enjoyed return as the foundation of why we do this. In conversations with a recent fishin' partner, it's occurred to me that since so many of us fish Tracy Bass, that we no longer share information or have an interest in helping the next guy out. Coincidentally or consequently, I'm seeing fewer WVBMoT guys on the top of the money list from Tracy Bass.

I'm not necessarily asking that you share specific water, but you can certainly discuss patterns, colors, depths, techniques, and other things that make you a successful angler, and why you feel they work. You can also stop by to say "Hi" when you see a fellow member on the water.

More and more local "Pro's" are charging clubs to stop by and lay a little of their wisdom on them. Given the price of fuel, I can understand this to a certain extent. As a result, we've not had many speakers in the past year. Willingly sharing this kind of information will make this a much stronger club.

Every once in a while the good guys win one:

CSPA Advisory - Court Orders Delta Export Reductions!

12-28-07

Below you will find a summary of the recent court ruling that mandated a reduction in Delta exports at certain times of the year to better protect Delta smelt from the impacts of the state and federal water projects. The court's ruling was based on the best science available, a principle the Interior Department neglected to use.

You will also find a statement by Congressman George Miller regarding this decision. Miller's legislation, the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, when passed in 1994 endeavored to prevent fishery populations from ever declining to point where extinction was imminent. By supplying water and money to fix serious problems, it aimed at helping to restore the estuary and doubling anadromous fish populations. While some positive action were taken, a good deal of the water dedicated to the fish and the estuary found administrative escape routes to the agricultural contractors following the G.W. Bush administration's take over of the Interior Department.

Under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) once a species is listed, either the National Marine Fishery Service or the US Fish & Wildlife Service prepares a "biological opinion" that describes the biological status of the specie and the actions necessary to protect it from extinction, based on their best scientific knowledge. HOWEVER, there are the other agency administrators who, knowing this requirement, look for ways to minimize such protections so natural resource development and business activities can continue as usual. They think they are helping the country and campaign contributors, but their actions only make the forces that result in extinction worse. Unfortunately, the Delta smelt have become a clear example of what's wrong with politics trumping science.

In the case of the Delta smelt, and a number of other species listed by the US Fish & Wildlife Service, high level Department of Interior decision makers found ways to minimize protections illegally. It seems abundantly clear that the apple didn't fall very far from the tree. Most of these folks are, or were, appointed Bush administration.

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COURT ORDERS PROTECTION OF DELTA SMELT

Based on his rulings of May and August of this year, U. S. District Court judge Wanger issued a final ruling on December 14th that Delta water export must be substantially reduced to protect the Delta smelt from potential extinction in accordance with its status as an endangered species.

(The judge's entire order in Case 1:05-cv-01207-OWW-GSA is available at http://www.earthjustice.org/library/legal_docs/delta-smelt-final-remedy-order.pdf)

Wanger ruled in May that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service made a faulty estimate of the risk to Delta smelt from the impacts of the state and federal water projects plan to exporting some 7 million acre feet of water out of the Delta (Some 85% of that water goes to agricultural contractors). That biological opinion was made under intense pressure from the federal Department of Interior to permit increases in water export from the Delta. The Wanger court has ruled the biological opinion was illegal and it must be rewritten to properly protect the smelt.

Most people aren't going to understand why such a fuss is being made over this small 3 inch fish. But many of us were around when the Delta smelt was among the most abundant forage fish in the Delta, a food source that helped drive foodweb interactions necessary for ecosystem productivity. It fueled a bountiful web of life for the entire estuary.

Since the Delta smelt are an indicator of the health of the entire Bay - Delta ecosystem, they are representative of a much larger decline in Delta fisheries. Species such as striped bass, longfin smelt, threadfin shad, American shad and sturgeon have also suffered extensive declines that threaten their viability as species. It is hoped that the court decision will not be too late to help save the Delta's fisheries. We know there will be benefits to leaving more fresh water in the estuary to help restore its ecosystem, but we don't know the extent of those benefits.

"We hope this order will help stem the crash of the Delta's fisheries and its ecosystem," said Kate Poole, an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council. "Continuing to destroy the Delta's ecosystem is not just bad for fish; it's bad for people."

The recent decline of the delta smelt and other species coincides with huge increases in freshwater exports out of the Delta by the state and federally water projects. Annual exports in 2005 and 2006 were the first and third highest export levels on record. Exports during the winter have increased by 49 percent since 1994 and springtime exports have increased by 30 percent. Delta smelt are particularly vulnerable during winter and spring, when spawning adults use the Delta for reproduction, and juveniles move downstream to rearing habitat.

To better protect the Delta smelt from the impacts of water export, the water project's must reduce export levels back to those of the year 2000 and halt all plans to increase exports. We commend Earthjustice and NRDC for prevailing in this landmark litigation for a host of environmental and fishery groups!

Let's not forget that the Biological Opinion for those runs of Central Valley salmon listed under the ESA are still in court waiting for a decision that may well further roll back exports. The evidence we are aware of clearly points to politics trumping biological science in this biological opinion as well.