



PCFFA has long been one of the leading public voices of the commercial fishing industry in California and nationally. As the largest commercial fisheries trade organization on the west coast, representing local port associations, seafood marketing associations and vessel owners' groups, PCFFA plays an important role in organizing multi-port, coastwide efforts to increase fishing opportunities and find solutions to the many challenges facing our fisheries.

In early 2024 PCFFA hired a new Executive Director. Lisa Damrosch comes from a multi-generational fishing family and has extensive experience working with commercial fishing organizations and advocating for commercial fishing interests. PCFFA has long been seen as an organization that represents the voice of commercial fishermen. As an association of associations, PCFFA is uniquely positioned to access the ideas and expertise of fishermen in every port that are actively fishing in every fishery, using every gear type, and executing every commercial fishing business model.

A top priority of PCFFA is to expand and strengthen membership and the Board of Directors and position PCFFA to face the new realities affecting all fisheries. Through membership expansion we will increase fishermen engagement and unite this fishing fleet to fight for its future. Through additional engagement the PCFFA will expand and be recommitted to representing all port communities. In 2024 PCFFA plans to engage in board development and a strategic planning process to outline priorities and modernize the organization's approach. Communication will also be a priority in 2024 with an updated and interactive website, new PCFFA social media platforms and multiple email newsletter channels to reach fishermen as well as provide educational information to the public about the importance of commercial fishing to our state and nation.

PCFFA and its new Executive Director are focusing on adapting the organization to address the changing conditions and threats to commercial fisheries coastwide, both immediate and long term.

These include:

Working to Keep Dungeness Crab Fishery Accessible: PCFFA representatives have been engaging with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as members participating in the Dungeness Crab Gear Working Group. As the next iteration of RAMP regulations (RAMP 2.0) is released, PCFFA will endeavor to unite the fleet to ensure the outcome results in keeping as much of the valuable Dungeness crab fishery as accessible as possible.

Fighting for more Salmon: PCFFA representatives are also at the forefront of Salmon management, participating on advisory bodies to the Pacific Fisheries Management Council and engaging in the annual process of determining Salmon access, which has been a particular challenge this year.



In addition, PCFFA is strategizing and aligning with inland river fishermen, charter fishermen and working to build a coalition to increase harvest opportunities. This includes engaging in improving hatchery production as well as working on strategies for the long term recovery of wild salmon.

Forcing Mitigations for Offshore Wind (OSW) Development Impacts on Fisheries: National and state policies that aggressively push to greatly expand the extent of offshore wind (OSW) facilities are all too often slated for ocean locations where they may well force closures or interfere with traditional fishing grounds. In 2023, in the California Legislature PCFFA helped draft and then led the push for passage of SB 286, which is now state law intended to require offshore wind energy developers to identify, avoid and mitigate potential damages to ocean fisheries and to our fleet that may result from offshore wind farms in the future – and to compensate our fleet for any damages that cannot be mitigated. PCFFA will continue to support commercial fishing interests in all OSW conversations and hopes to contract with an OSW consultant to help PCFFA navigate this complex issue.

PCFFA, far more than any other commercial fisheries organization, has aggressively used the Courts to force agencies to improve inland salmon habitat protections for many years. Several cases are ongoing including:

Getting More Water Back to the California Central Valley to Restore Damaged Salmon

Runs: In PCFFA, et al. vs. Raimondo (N. Cal. Dist. Court, No. 1:20-cv-004310), PCFFA challenged the current greatly reduced Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) instream water set-asides for salmon in the California Central Valley Project as “illegal, arbitrary and capricious, and not in accordance with the best available science.” PCFFA is the only commercial fisheries trade organization that has ever taken on the federal government in Court to improve Central Valley water allocations for salmon, where we have won many cases. We have several other related cases also ongoing, in both Federal and State courts, to secure more and colder water for migrating salmon survival.

Protecting Forested Salmon Spawning & Rearing Habitat: PCFFA has successfully sued to force federal or state agencies to: (a) better protect salmon habitat from the adverse impacts of poorly-planned logging operations that in the past stripped salmon-bearing streams of much of their riparian shade protections; (b) prohibit the use of a number of fish-killing pesticides in and over streams in which salmon occur; (c) reduce the amount of sediments generated by near-stream poorly controlled farming operations, to minimize sediments getting into salmon-bearing streams, and; (d) securing minimum instream flows for salmon in major river systems during past droughts – and working to make such minimum instream flows permanent. We will continue PCFFA’s efforts to protect and restore damaged salmon habitat through these continuing programs.



Removing Salmon Killing Dams: PCFFA has also been a leading player in negotiating the removal of a number of dams to restore fish access to major salmon streams. We played a major role in the removal of fish-killing dams on California's Butte Creek, Matilija, and San Clemente Rivers. We are also currently working toward releasing blocked salmon habitat by dam removals on Battle Creek, and the Eel River. And most recently, as a result of decades of work by PCFFA to restore damaged Klamath salmon runs, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) formally approved the removal by the end of 2024 of four obsolete hydropower dams on the Klamath River in what will become the largest dam removal project in Human history, unblocking more than 420 stream-miles of once fully occupied and productive salmon habitat.

There are many other ways that PCFFA benefits and helps secure the continued existence of California's commercial ocean fisheries and our fishing way of life. A key component to the re-envisioning of PCFFA is to truly be of the fishermen and for the fishermen and to be adequately positioned to address whatever threatens our industry. Many of the threats to our industry are wide-scale – and must therefore be met by a truly unified, multi-port fishing-industry directed trade association like PCFFA.

Given all the threats to our commercial fisheries that PCFFA is fighting, it is perpetually starved for resources. We are working on processes and policies that will allow PCFFA to be more effective in the long-term for our fleet, our fishing-dependent communities, and the species we depend upon for our livelihoods. We hope the Cable Committee can continue to contribute to our efforts on the industry's behalf.