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Salmon Advocates Decry Move to Use Drought as Subterfuge to Seize More Salmon Water

Junior water rights congressional representatives at it again

San Francisco – The Golden Gate Salmon Association (GGSA) responded to reports that several San Joaquin Valley Republican Congressmen will join House Speaker John Boehner in Bakersfield Wednesday to call for drought legislation favoring their constituents at the expense of California's salmon industry.

Agriculture operations in parts of the San Joaquin Valley rely on junior water rights which typically supply water in wet years when there's surplus – and far less in times of shortage. Although the current drought challenging most of California is caused by lack of rain and snow, some San Joaquin Valley Congressmen have a track record of trying to use drought to weaken fish and wildlife protections.

Delta pumping restrictions required by the federal Endangered Species Act are not currently limiting water pumping in the Delta.

“Let's get real. Pulling the plug on the Endangered Species Act or turning the Delta spigots wide open is not going to get San Joaquin agribusiness and frackers the water they need; all it will do is destroy Central Valley salmon and the state's salmon fishery,” said GGSA vice-chairman **Zeke Grader**. “What we need is rain and snow not demagoguery on the part of the Speaker and some of his fringe members who deny climate change and drought for their own ideological purposes.”

“Salmon and families that depend on them are the ones we need to act to save now,” said GGSA executive director **John McManus**. “Salmon are dying in the drought-stricken Central Valley rivers and soon that will translate into lost jobs on the coast and inland waterways. This is where the help is needed. If Speaker Boehner would like to understand the full story of California's drought we'd be more than happy to introduce him to our coastal and inland families that rely on salmon to pay the bills.”

Because of in-river threats to salmon caused by drought, GGSA is asking the US Fish and Wildlife Service to release juvenile salmon raised in a hatchery near Redding closer to the

Delta in waters where they can survive.

The Golden Gate Salmon Association (www.goldengatesalmonassociation.org) is a coalition of salmon advocates that includes commercial and recreational salmon fisherman, businesses, restaurants, an Indian tribe, environmentalists, elected officials, families and communities that rely on salmon. GGSA's mission is to protect and restore California's largest salmon producing habitat comprised of the Central Valley river's that feed the Bay-Delta ecosystem and the communities that rely on salmon as a long-term, sustainable, commercial, recreational and cultural resource.

Currently, California's salmon industry is valued at \$1.4 billion in economic activity annually and about half that much in economic activity and jobs again in Oregon. The industry employs tens of thousands of people from Santa Barbara to northern Oregon. This is a huge economic bloc made up of commercial fishermen, recreational fishermen (fresh and salt water), fish processors, marinas, coastal communities, equipment manufacturers, the hotel and food industry, tribes, and the salmon fishing industry at large.

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