



Fish Don't Drive . . .

Yuba Salmon Deserve Better!

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the “trap and haul” plan proposed for the Yuba?

On May 7, 2015, representatives of state and federal agencies, along with three conservation groups, announced plans to “trap and haul” Spring-run Chinook salmon in trucks around dams to the North Yuba River above New Bullards Bar Dam. The Yuba Salmon Partnership Initiative (YSPI) released a [term sheet](#) for an agreement that would also restore salmon and steelhead habitat in the lower Yuba River downstream of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Englebright Dam.

YSPI includes the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Marine Fisheries Service, Yuba County Water Agency, American Rivers, Trout Unlimited and California Sportfishing Protection Alliance. (See YSPI’s [press release](#) for more information.)

What is SYRCL’s position on “trap and haul” on the Yuba?

SYRCL supports reintroducing salmon and steelhead to the upper Yuba River watershed as part of the ultimate plan to restore healthy populations. However, SYRCL cannot support YSPI’s current plan to truck wild salmon to and from the North Yuba River. At an anticipated price tag of \$700 million to construct vast concrete and steel facilities in the river and operate a fleet of fish-hauling trucks and boats, SYRCL believes that trap and haul is a highly questionable means of restoring wild salmon and unsustainable over the long term – nor does it do anything to help steelhead trout.

The SYRCL Board has stated that it is premature to endorse “trap and haul” when there are still so many unanswered questions about alternative ways to restore a self-sustaining wild salmon population in the Yuba River watershed. SYRCL does support the portion of YSPI’s plan calling for the restoration of salmon habitat in the lower Yuba River and believes it should commence immediately.

What are the alternatives to “trap and haul” on the Yuba?

SYRCL is advocating for an alternative fish passage plan that details how wild salmon and steelhead would *swim* to the upper Yuba River watershed. This volitional fish passage plan should include a technical and biological analysis of fish passage options at Daguerre Point and Englebright Dams including both dam removal and design for a fish ladder over Englebright Dam.

We recommend that this planning effort be convened by an independent scientific panel. Importantly, this alternative analysis should be completed prior to making any further commitments to “trap and haul.”

Why are we writing to Governor Jerry Brown and US Commerce Secretary Penny Pritzker?

Brown oversees the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Pritzker oversees the National Marine Fisheries Service; both agencies are parties to the YSPI backing “trap and haul.”

Our letter writing campaign urges them to direct these state and federal agencies to develop a long-term sustainable plan for volitional fish passage on the Yuba and immediately support large-scale salmon habitat improvement projects on the lower Yuba River. We’re advocating strongly that decision-makers examine the best available science to develop a fish passage plan that allows salmon and steelhead to get by the dams on their own – one that benefits the health of the entire Yuba River watershed.

Why are we so concerned about Yuba River salmon?

Yuba salmon runs have dropped to an all-time low, and spring-run Chinook salmon and steelhead trout are listed as at risk of extinction under the Endangered Species Act primarily because dams have blocked access to historic spawning habitats above existing dams. This year their situation is dire: only 61 salmon passed up the river by the end of June. Drought, low flows and warm river water are pushing wild salmon to the brink.

SYRCL is the leading advocacy and scientific expert on creating shovel-ready restoration projects for salmon. We’re the first group to implement a salmon habitat restoration project – we planted 6800 willows and cottonwoods at Hammon Bar – and we are working with local stakeholders in the planning of additional projects.

The lower Yuba River presents enormous opportunities to restore salmon and steelhead habitat right away. We should prioritize the construction of on-the-ground salmon habitat improvement projects in the lower Yuba River first.

What can you do?

Join SYRCL’s Yuba Salmon Now campaign by becoming a SYRCL member and supporting efforts to restore wild salmon. Please donate to our campaign and support our efforts. Today, you can write a letter to Governor Brown. In the coming months, we will have other actions that you can help with. Also, don’t miss the opportunity to join us on a Salmon Tour in the fall.

Please go to yubasalmonnow.org for more information.