

## Possible effects of endangered listing

**FISHING:** Little effect is projected for commercial and sport fishing in Monterey Bay, as most local salmon live in Morro Bay until mature.

Stream fishing guidelines, however, could require releasing all salmon, prohibit salmon fishing, or close all local streams to both salmon and steelhead fishing.

**AGRICULTURE:** In dry years, minimum stream flow levels

would be set, affecting the amount of water pumped from Scott and Waddell creeks.

**WATER RIGHTS:** The state could re-evaluate water rights if they are proven to have a negative effect on the fish, including stream pumping and shallow wells near the streams.

**LOGGING:** The county claims timbering should not be affected, as existing regulations are sufficient to protect the fish.

# Fight over salmon plan

## North Coast interests unhappy with coho protection proposal

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SANTA CRUZ — Native coho salmon, once plentiful in local streams, may be placed on the state's endangered-species list under a controversial plan to be considered tonight.

Santa Cruz County Fish and Game commissioners will hold a final public hearing on the proposal, then decide whether to forward it to the state Department of Fish and Game.

If accepted it could have far-reaching impacts on land and water use in the Scott and Waddell Creek watersheds, and on sport fishing.

A number of North Coast land and business owners are fighting the proposal, fearful of the power it will give the county and state over use of their property.

"If listed, it involves the government on a

level we don't have now," said Bud McCrary, an owner of Big Creek Lumber. "Any time you get the government mixed up in things you waste a lot of money and effort."

The proposal would affect about 35,000 acres of North Coast land in the watersheds of Waddell and Scott creeks. It would not affect the San Lorenzo River or other areas of the county at this time.

If it is listed as an endangered species, the fish would be given legal priority over activities which might threaten their survival, including agriculture, logging, development and recreation.

McCrary and others are afraid the listing could be used to shut down timbering, farming and other enterprises, and would imperil water rights.

Dave Hope, an employee of the county Plan-

ning Department who was the architect of the plan, said the fears are unfounded.

"We didn't want to proceed (on the proposal) until we were assured by the state on what would happen — that the restoration of the fish is not going to cause the destruction of everybody's lives who lives alongside them," Hope said. "People's activities may have to be modified, but we're not going to destroy anybody or financially affect them. It just won't happen."

But McCrary and others are unconvinced. "They're soft-soaping us," McCrary said of the county's evaluation.

The best way to save the fish, he said, is with the cooperation of the affected landowners and to continue with such projects as the Monterey Bay Salmon and Trout project on Big Creek, which is widely credited with enabling the sur-

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## Salmon

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vival of the fish thus far. In fact, McCrary's support was instrumental in establishing the hatchery and making the coho salmon a priority.

"All the things that can be done are being done," McCrary said.

The hatchery released 10,000 of the native fish in 1988-89, which should mature and return to the streams this year — if there is enough rain, he said.

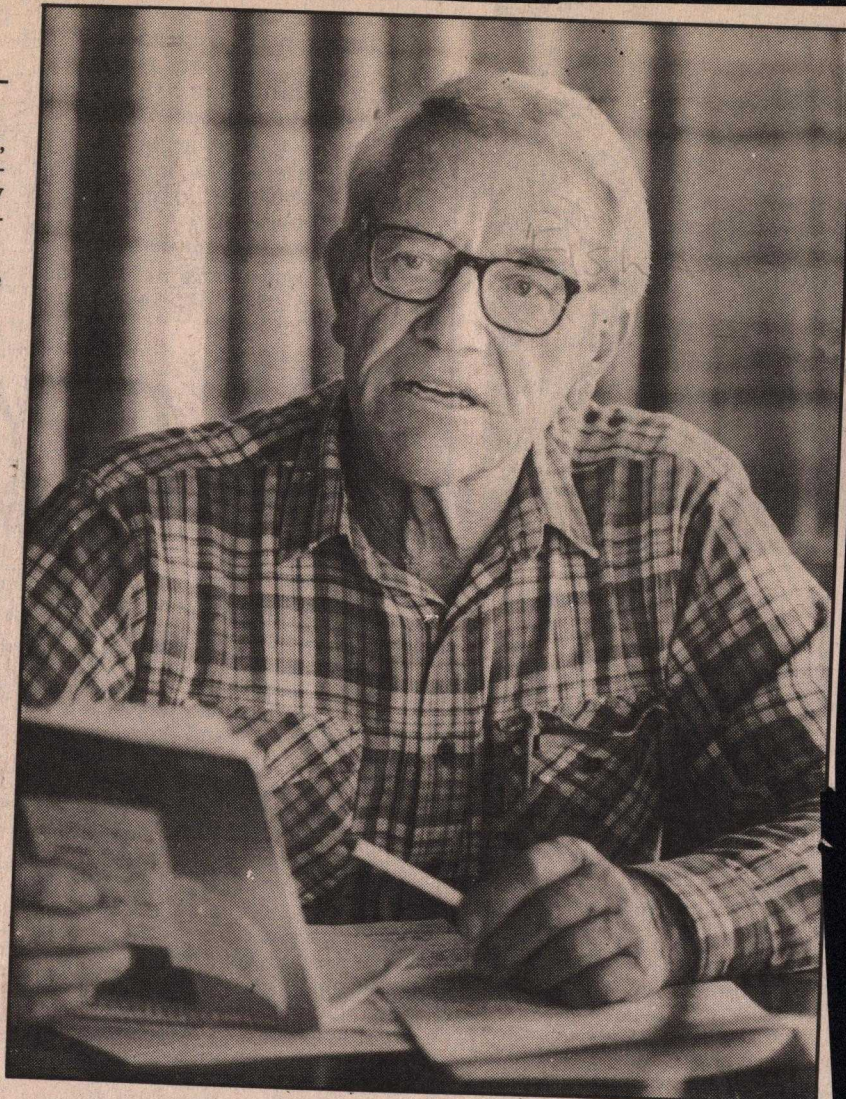
"If we get water this year I'm confident we're going to get a good return of fish," McCrary said.

Hope, however, said that is not enough to ensure the salmon's survival, and that stringent measures are needed.

"Last year there we had a return of five adult males. I don't know what the release (numbers) were but obviously we're not looking at a good return." The North Coast is the southern most range of the coho salmon, and historically has had widely fluctuating populations. The fish are extremely susceptible to droughts and floods which affect the streams.

"Without concerted restoration efforts, in a couple of years they are going to be gone," Hope said.

The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. in the county Board of Supervisors Chamber at the County Government Center, 701 Ocean St.



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Lumberman Bud McCrary is against the salmon proposal.