

**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO**  
Parks Department



**DATE:** March 13, 2015

**COMMISSION MEETING DATE:** April 9, 2015

**TO:** Parks and Recreation Commission

**FROM:** Marlene Finley, Parks Director

**SUBJECT:** California Department of Fish and Wildlife Propagation Fund Proposal

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Review and approve funding the Chinook Salmon smolt project at Pillar Point Harbor from Parks Department's California Department of Fish and Wildlife Fund Budget.

**BACKGROUND:**

San Mateo County Parks Department manages the expenditure of funds deposited by California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in the fish and wildlife propagation fund under Fish and Game Code, Section 13100-13104. One half of all fines and forfeitures imposed or collected for fish and wildlife violations are deposited with the County Treasurer. These funds are to be expended for the protection, conservation, propagation, and preservation of fish and wildlife, under the direction of the County Board of Supervisors.

From 1998 through 2002, the expenditures of funds were determined through the County Fish and Wildlife Advisory Committee under the County Parks and Recreation Commission. This advisory committee was abolished on or about 2002-2003.

There is currently a balance of \$74,000 in the propagation account. Last year deposits totaled \$1,300 (also the average for recent years). The Parks Department budgets as much as \$10,000 per year on projects meeting the criteria. For the last few years, the projects funded have been within County Parks. An audit conducted by CDFW last year found that County Parks was not following code by funding projects without approval of the Board of Supervisors.

**DISCUSSION:**

For 2015, I am recommending that the County fund a project meeting the criteria set forth in Fish and Game Code and outside of park boundaries. A very worthy project has been proposed: release of Chinook Salmon smolt in Pillar Point Harbor. This project is

proposed by the Coastside Fishing Foundation of the Coastside Fishing Club. Over the last four years, Coastside Fishing Club has worked with CDFW to transfer young salmon from the Feather River Hatchery to Pillar Point Harbor. The purpose of the project is to increase the survival rate of Chinook salmon. To date the group has acclimated one million Chinook smolt to the ocean environment at Pillar Point Harbor.

Not only does this project meet the criteria for protection, conservation and propagation, but it also has an educational component as the Club invites school classes to visit the holding pens and the release.

The total annual cost of the project is \$31,462 with funds in the past coming from membership dues, donations, fundraising dinner and help from CDFW. These sources are dwindling, so they are seeking additional support from the County propagation funds.

Please see the attached proposal.

I recommend funding this project at \$10,000.

Beginning next year, County Parks Department will develop a competitive process for recommending grants for funding. We currently lack the staff and the time to manage a competitive process for awarding grants in 2015.

## Proposal to seek funds from Fish & Game Propagation Fund

2/15/15

To: San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission

The Coastside Fishing Foundation is seeking funding from the San Mateo County Fish & Game Propagation fund to help support our on going Salmon Smolt Net Pen Acclimation Project. Four years ago Coastside began an effort to enhance our ocean Salmon fishery by joining efforts with California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, to acclimate hatchery raised Chinook Salmon smolt in Pillar Point Harbor. We have completed 3 seasons, and acclimated approximately one million Chinook smolt. The basic idea of acclimation is to save the 3" to 4" fish the hardships of low water, high temperature trips down the Feather and Sacramento River systems with all it's predators, by truck, and then feed and acclimate them in the outer harbor for a week. Salmon will return to the general areas (Pillar Point), after a couple years in the ocean to feed and ready themselves for their spawning journey back up the fresh water systems from which they came. The entire process is very labor intensive, and we count on our many talented volunteers to help vaccinate, assemble the net pen, transfer back and forth from Johnson Pier to the outer harbor (4 round trips per season), feed monitor, disassemble, clean and store pen for the year. Our first year fish did not cost us, as CDFW picked up the tab. Since then we have had expenses around ten cents per fish. \$31,462.00 for 2015 fin-clipped, wire coded tagged smolt. Other expenses include vaccine, net pen up keep, and feed. We have been paying for this from club membership dues, annual fund raising dinner, and member donations. As these sources begin to dwindle, we are looking at every and all avenues available to us. Our project seems to be just what section 13103(d) of the Fish & game code speaks to.

## Agenda Item 6.C-Proposal-2nd part

Project Name: Coastside Fishing Foundation Salmon Acclimation Pen

Organization: Coastside Fishing Foundation (coastsidefishingclub.com)

Contact Person: Doug Laughlin, 746 Sierra Street, Moss Beach, Ca. 94038  
650 207 8712

Net Pen Supervisors: Lead, Bruce MacKimmie (bmackimmie@sbcglobal.net), Rick Sturiza (golffish@aol.com), Doug Laughlin (duglas1@juno.com)

Project Goal: Improve the abundance of fall-run Chinook for recreational and commercial use in California waters.

General Acclimation Plan: Hatchery-raised fall run Chinook, provided by the CDFW from enhancement production, will be received at Pillar Point harbor in San Mateo County and held for five to seven days in a floating net pen moored in the outer harbor. Following acclimation, the smolt will be released into the Pacific Ocean.

Timing and scope of the project will depend on deliveries from the Department.

Coastside anticipates receiving three deliveries, two weeks apart, of between 80,000 to 120,000 smolt at a time.

Current large-scale trucking and acclimation of salmon takes place in San Pablo Bay, with 12 to 16 million salmon smolt released annually. The project seeks to supplement rather than supplant current acclimation activity. The project will provide currently absent redundancy in the necessary trucking and acclimation process.

Species of Fish to be Acclimated: Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), Central Valley fall run

Numbers to be Acclimated:	2012	180,000
	2013	420,000
	2014	360,000
	2015	360,000

Dates of Release: Fish will be released one to two weeks after delivery. We expect to receive deliveries during some portion of the months of April, May and June. The timing is determined by the CDFW.

Release Site: Pillar Point Harbor, San Mateo County

Source of Smolt: One or more hatcheries operated by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. In 2012, 13, 14, and 15, the Feather River Hatchery sourced the smolt.

Project Funding: Coastside Fishing Foundation is currently funding the project with donations and support from the Coastside Fishing Club and the Commercial Salmon Trollers Advisory Committee.