

Central Coast Forest Association

Protecting our land and our rights

June 30, 2004

Ms. Jodi Frediani, Executive Director
CRFM
Box 167
Boulder Creek, CA 95006

**Subject: CRFM's distortion of NOAA coho salmon
genetic research findings**

Directors

Robert Briggs
Joseph Burch
Charles Burton
Richard Burton
Barbara McCrary
Cate Moore
Eric Moore
Gerald Nelson
David Smelt
Peter Twight

Dear Ms. Frediani,

In article #5 on your website, I believe you have misstated the results of Carlos Garza's genetic study of west coast coho salmon. Your comments are inconsistent with Garza's recent public talks and contradict the extensive body of published history and science concerning Central Coast coho salmon. Your remark:

"His [Garza's] studies have shown that the genetic make-up of Coho from Scott Creek are entirely different from those of coho north of San Francisco."

reflects a lack of understanding (or disregard) of the science. Garza's genetic analysis techniques yield no information regarding differences between one coho population and another. His results identify only the extent of gene flow between two populations but tell nothing about the physical characteristics or behavior of the fish. Garza reports a relatively uniform gene flow among all adjacent populations from south to north along the coast with no distinctive differentiation to indicate they are native. Of course, it is possible to have extensive gene flow or no gene flow between two identical populations, particularly under ubiquitous anthropogenic influence. Gene flow says nothing about the population's phenotypical signature.

You further say:

"This is significant information and does not support the timber industry's allegations that coho in this area are here as a result of transplanted hatchery fish from elsewhere. Our coho appear to have their own distinctive genetic makeup."

Garza's results in no way preclude our hypothesis and I take exception to your term, allegations. We have made no *allegations* on coho salmon in our reports and presentations during our many years of study. In accordance with the time-honored scientific method, we have formulated a hypothesis and sought out data that supports or contradicts it. We have published our analyses and results, identifying all of our sources and references, then subjected our entire body of technical work to professional peer review. A scientific hypothesis, Ms. Frediani, is not an allegation

Thank you for your continued interest in our research. We believe that qualified scientists who take the time to read our reports will support our conclusions but we respect all valid criticism; however, we would appreciate more attention to terminology and facts in your future public comments.

Sincerely,


Robert O. Briggs
Research Scientist