

Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture October 1, 2025 Hearing Background

[Senator Mike McGuire](#), Chair of the [Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture \(JCFA\)](#) is hosting the 50th Annual [Zeke Grader](#) Fisheries Forum. The hearing will be held Wednesday, October 1st at 1 P.M. in Room 2200 of the Capitol Swing Space. The hearing will be livestreamed, and members of the public are encouraged to attend. Access information can be found on the [JCFA website](#).

Presentations and discussion will focus on California's fisheries and aquaculture industries, the processes that involve and impact them, and the coastal communities they support. The agenda features presentations by state agency and Tribal leaders, commercial fishing industry representatives, researchers, and conservation advocates. This year's hearing will focus on the challenges facing salmon and kelp along with examining the outlook for the upcoming Dungeness crab season in California.

[Wade Crowfoot](#), California's Secretary of the [Natural Resources Agency](#) and [Charlton Bonham](#), California's Director of the [Department of Fish and Wildlife](#), will headline this year's slate of California agency leaders. The Committee is honored to welcome Barry McCovey Jr., Fisheries Director of the [Yurok Tribe](#).

The hearing will also include testimony from the [California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout](#), the [Ocean Science Trust](#), and the [Dungeness Crab Task Force](#).

Senator Barry Keene was a freshman Assemblymember [in 1973 when Bill Grader, Zeke's father, approached him about holding a meeting between fishermen and legislators](#). According to Senator Keene, "the first Forum was open warfare. Now many of the issues that separated people have been resolved through the process, although the Forums still get heated. The fishermen often say they are not great orators, but in fact, their colorful prose descriptions make them wonderful storytellers. Eventually we learned a powerful lesson from the Forums – that if you can get together on issues you can multiply your political leverage." The Forum eventually led to the formation of the [Joint Legislative Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture](#) via [Senate Concurrent Resolution in 1981](#). Now nearly 50 years later, the traditional hearing continues to be a vibrant venue for cross-cutting discussion of ocean and coastal issues that impact virtually every Californian.

Additional information including links to: the agenda, press releases, articles about the hearing, live stream links, and presenter biographies can be viewed at the [committee web site](#) under the "2022 hearings" heading.

Please contact Christopher Nielsen (Christopher.Nielsen@sen.ca.gov), Consultant, Joint Committee on Fisheries and Aquaculture for more information.