

48th Annual Zeke Grader Fisheries Forum – November 4th, 2021

Presenter Biographies

Charlton Bonham – Director, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Charlton “Chuck” Bonham was appointed as Director of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, effective September 6, 2011. Prior to his appointment as Director of Fish and Wildlife, Mr. Bonham served in a number of roles for Trout Unlimited over ten years, including since 2004 as the organization’s California director.

Mr. Bonham was responsible for developing, managing, and implementing TU's programs in California. These programs include the California Water Project, Sportsmen’s Conservation Project, and restoration and watershed projects in both northern and Southern California. In addition, Mr. Bonham was a senior attorney for the organization.

Mr. Bonham also served on the Board of Directors of the Delta Conservancy, whose mission is to conserve, sustain and enhance the cultural, agricultural, recreational, wildlife and natural habitat resources of the River Delta region, as well as develop and promote sustainable protection, management and stewardship programs through research and education.

Mr. Bonham received his J.D. and Environmental and Natural Resources Law Certificate from the Northwestern School of Law of Lewis and Clark College, in Portland, Oregon. Before Trout Unlimited, he was a Peace Corps volunteer in Senegal, West Africa, and an instructor and guide at the Nantahala Outdoor Center, in Bryson City, N.C.

Dr. Mark Gold – Undersecretary for Ocean and Coastal Policy, California Natural Resources Agency

Mark Gold joined OPC in July of 2019. As Executive Director of OPC and the Deputy Secretary for Ocean and Coastal Policy for the California Natural Resources Agency, Mark serves as a key advisor to Governor and the Secretary of Natural Resources and directs policy, scientific research, and critical partnerships to increase protection of coastal and ocean resources in California. Prior to his appointment, he was the UCLA Associate Vice Chancellor for Environment and Sustainability where he led their Sustainable Los Angeles Grand Challenge effort. Prior to UCLA, Mark was the first hire at Heal the Bay, where he served as their President for 18 years. During that time, he worked on ocean and coastal legislation and policy, stormwater, watershed management, and marine conservation and coastal restoration issues, projects and programs. Over the course of his career, his research focused on beach water quality and health risks, as well as sustainable water resources management. Mark received his bachelor’s and master’s in Biology as well as his doctorate in Environmental Science and Engineering, all from UCLA.

Caleen Sisk – Chief, Winnemem Wintu Tribe

Caleen Sisk is the Spiritual Leader and Tribal Chief of the Winnemem Wintu Tribe, who practice their traditional culture and ceremonies in their territory along the McCloud River watershed in

Northern California.

Since assuming leadership responsibilities in 2000, Caleen has focused on maintaining the cultural and religious traditions of the Tribe, and has led the revitalization of the Winnemem's H'up Chonas (or War Dance) and BaLas Chonas (Puberty Ceremony), which had not been practiced for decades. She advocates for California salmon restoration; healthy, undammed watersheds, and the human right to water. She has received international honors as a tireless sacred site protector, and currently leads the tribe's resistance against the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's proposal to raise Shasta Dam 18-feet and inundate or damage more than 40 sacred sites.

She is currently leading her Tribe's efforts to work with Maori and federal fish biologists to return wild Chinook salmon from New Zealand to the McCloud River, the fish's ancestral waters. In doing so, she advocates for the inclusion of traditional ecological knowledge in federal, state and local environmental research and planning.

John McManus – President, Golden State Salmon Association

GSSA President John McManus is a long-time salmon fisherman and salmon advocate. He comes from a varied background that includes ten years of commercial salmon fishing in southeast Alaska, 15 years producing news for CNN and more recently, 11 years doing publicity and organizing for the public interest environmental law firm Earthjustice. Work at Earthjustice included organizing and publicity supporting restored salmon fisheries in the Columbia, Klamath and Sacramento River basins.

A San Francisco native, Muni Pier and Lake Merced were the places where he first learned to tie a fishing line, bait a hook, and cast. He's a long time member of the Coastside Fishing Club and keeps a boat part of the year in Half Moon Bay and part on the Marin, Sonoma and Mendocino coasts.

From the 1970s on he spent a lot of time in the north coast salmon communities of Bodega Bay, Pt. Arena, Fort Bragg and Eureka. As salmon runs declined in the 1990's, he got a front row seat to the demise of these fishing communities, something that fuels his advocacy for salmon and salmon communities to this day.

George Bradshaw – President, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Associations

George is a life-long fisherman based out of Crescent City California. Owner of F/V Swan, he fishes Dungeness crab, salmon, tuna and rock cod. He serves as the President of the Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen's Association and as a member of the statewide Dungeness Crab Task Force.

Doug Obegi – Senior Attorney, Natural Resources Defense Council

Since coming to NRDC in 2008, Doug Obegi has worked on a variety of projects related to water-resource management in California, including the San Joaquin River Restoration Program,

the proposed Bay-Delta Conservation Plan/California WaterFix, the Bay-Delta Water Quality Control Plan review and update, the 2014 California Water Bond (Proposition 1), and other state and federal water legislation. Obegi has also represented the organization in federal court during litigation regarding protections for endangered species in the Bay-Delta estuary. He also serves on the Board of Directors of WaterReuse California. He is a magna cum laude graduate of the University of California's Hastings College of the Law. He is based in San Francisco.

Dr. Clarissa Anderson – Executive Director, Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System

Dr. Clarissa Anderson is a biological oceanographer with expertise in ecological forecasting and remote sensing. After receiving a B.A. in Integrative Biology and Art History at UC Berkeley and a Marine Science Ph.D. at UC Santa Barbara, she completed several postdoctoral appointments, including a National Research Council fellowship and National Science Foundation postdoctoral award, before transitioning into a professional research position at UC Santa Cruz. The majority of her research has focused on the prediction of harmful algal blooms and toxins in estuarine and coastal ecosystems as well as the fate and transport of harmful toxins to deeper waters and sediments. During her time as research faculty at UC Santa Cruz, she worked to establish the California Harmful Algae Risk Mapping (C-HARM) system with NASA Applied Science support. She is now at Scripps Institution of Oceanography serving as the Executive Director of the Southern California Coastal Ocean Observing System (SCCOOS) and continuing to conduct research on phytoplankton ecology in coastal California. She is an elected member of the UNESCO SCOR GlobalHAB Scientific Steering Committee, the UN SCOR Working Group on Observing Air-Sea Interaction Strategy, the Science Advisory Team for the CA Ocean Protection Council (OPC), the U.S. National HAB Committee (NHC), and the Steering Committee for the Harmful Algal Bloom Monitoring and Alert Program (Cal-HABMAP).

Ben Platt – President, California Coast Crab Association

Ben Platt is a second generation California commercial fisherman whose current homeport is Crescent City, California. He started working on his family's commercial fishing boats at the age of nine years old in the summers while growing up in Pt. Arena. Ben worked his way through high school on his family's boats and then college at Humboldt State University between 1980-1985 on other salmon and crab boats based out of Eureka and Ft. Bragg. He left fishing for 10 years after college to pursue a career as a scenic artist in Hollywood, returning in 1997 when his father became ill, taking over operation of one of his family's smaller vessels.

He and his wife started boat ownership with a 17' skiff with an outboard motor fishing nearshore rock cod out of Noyo Harbor 22 years ago, bought their first small salmon troller the next year and have owned two other boats in the ensuing years until this fall launching the Miss Heidi, a 58'x25' steel combination steel combination vessel that is rigged for salmon, tuna, crab, shrimp trawl and tendering salmon in Alaska. In the last twenty years, Ben has spent most of his summers trolling for salmon or albacore from Morro Bay, California to the Fairweather Grounds in the Gulf of Alaska. He has spent fall, winter and spring fishing for crabs out of nearly every port in California. The Miss Heidi and Ben's previous crab boats employ 3-4 crewmen during the

crab seasons.

Ben has long been active in advocacy work for the crab and salmon fisheries. He has served on the California Salmon Council for eight years, and is its current Vice President. He represented the Salmon Trollers Marketing Association of Ft. Bragg between 2005-2010 at the Pacific Fisheries Management Council salmon season meetings. Ben is a founding board member and current President of the California Coast Crab Association, which was formed in the wake of the CBD vs. Bonham out-of-court settlement agreement, to establish strong industry representation for working with CDFW to find workable RAMP guidelines for the interim fishing period while also providing legal, scientific and political cover for industry to achieve fair and practical regulations under the eventual Incidental Take Permit.

Mike Conroy – Executive Director, Pacific Coast Federation of Fishermen’s Associations

In a prior life, Mike pushed paper as a corporate lawyer. Before, and after, Mike has operated fishing vessels in both the commercial and charter boat sectors. From these experiences, he learned how various fisheries are prosecuted and how thoughtful, science-based management can benefit the fleets, buyers and processors, seafood consumers and other interested stakeholders. Mike works with fishermen, fishing associations and other groups, persons and governmental agencies on a number of issues ranging from transactional legal work, fisheries management, fisheries policy development and land and water use elements of Port/Harbor Master Plans. Mike noticed a need, within the fishing industry, for a voice that can bridge the gap between the realities of commercial and charter boat fishing, government agencies charged with managing the fisheries, the non-consumptive voices who enjoy the resources in a different way and the environmental organizations who promote sustainability and minimal impacts on the environment and ecosystem(s) resulting from fishing activities. A Californian since birth, Mike received his undergraduate degree from University of San Diego and a JD/MBA from Santa Clara University.

Jenn Humberstone – Fisheries Project Director, The Nature Conservancy

Jenn is a Fisheries Project Director for the California Oceans Program at The Nature Conservancy (TNC). In this role she partners with fishermen, community leaders, managers and others to develop and demonstrate climate-ready solutions that support healthy oceans, thriving fisheries, and resilient communities. She leads TNC’s efforts to reduce entanglement risk to marine life off California, driving data driven, cooperative and adaptive management solutions, lost gear recovery and cutting-edge collaborative research. Prior to joining TNC she managed sustainability and traceability evaluations of fisheries worldwide for Marine Stewardship Council certification. Jenn holds a Master of Environmental Science and Management degree from the Bren School at the University of California Santa Barbara and a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from Emory University.

Rachelle Fisher – Administrative Team, California Dungeness Crab Task Force

Rachelle Fisher is Principal at Strategic Earth Consulting, a multi-disciplinary firm that specializes in effectively linking science and policy with community outreach and engagement.

Since 2009, Ms. Fisher has worked with California fishing communities, state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and resource managers to arrive at fisheries management decisions that are informed by robust science and grounded in local and experiential knowledge. She has worked with the California Dungeness Crab Task Force since its inception, and during that time, has provided administrative support, strategic planning, facilitation, and project management support to the Dungeness crab industry. Ms. Fisher is a California Sea Grant Fellowship recipient, and holds a B.Sc. in Biology from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a Masters of Advanced Studies in Marine Biodiversity and Conservation from Scripps Institution of Oceanography at University of California, San Diego.

Randy Lovell – Aquaculture Coordinator, California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Randy was appointed State Aquaculture Coordinator in August 2012, after nearly thirty years in the aquaculture industry. An experienced designer-builder, and operator of aquaculture facilities, and business owner active in the sales and marketing of water quality and life support systems, Mr. Lovell works with growers, regulators, decision-makers, and the general public to enhance the regulatory understanding of, and development opportunities for sustainable aquaculture in California.

Darren Mierau – Chair, California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout

Darren is the North Coast Director for California Trout. Darren is currently leading programs and restoration projects in the Eel River, Humboldt Bay, Mad River, and Redwood Creek focusing on salmon and steelhead recovery, coastal resilience and estuary restoration, water management, and the license surrender process related to PG&E's Potter Valley Project. Since 2017, Darren is the Chair of the California Advisory Committee on Salmon and Steelhead Trout, is appointed to the Fisheries Restoration Grant Program's Peer Review Committee, and participates in CDFW's Restoration Leader's Committee and the Natural Resource Agency's Cutting the Green Tape effort. Darren is a native Californian. He lives in Arcata with his wife and two sons.

Dr. Liz Whiteman – Executive Director, Ocean Science Trust

Liz is the Executive Director of the California Ocean Science Trust (OST), a non-profit organization dedicated to accelerating progress towards a healthy and productive ocean future for California. Created by state legislation, OST bridges the gap between cutting-edge scientific research and sound ocean management. Liz has over a decade of experience working at the science-policy interface in California on topics ranging from marine protected areas to sea-level rise and ocean acidification. Trained as a marine ecologist in the UK, Liz also spent a decade in the Caribbean, promoting science-informed decisions for fisheries and protected area management. Liz received her PhD from the University of East Anglia, UK.

Corey Ridings – Manager, Ocean Conservancy

With over 20 years of experience in public health and natural resource management, Corey's work straddles environmental and community sustainability. She has been with Ocean

Conservancy since 2013 on efforts related to climate change, West Coast fish conservation, and ecosystem-based management. She was a Knauss Sea Grant Fellow for the U.S. House Committee on Natural Resources and worked for the Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington, D.C. She previously observed in the North Pacific groundfish fleet on trawl and longline vessels targeting pollock, pacific cod, and sablefish. She served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in the Philippines where she supported local fishery projects, and was the minority health epidemiologist for the state of Michigan. Corey is on the advisory board of California Sea Grant and prior to her Pacific Fishery Management Council appointment served as co-chair of the Council's Ecosystem committee. Corey holds a BA in biology from Occidental College, a Master of Public Health from Yale, and is pursuing a PhD at the University of Washington under Phil Levin.

Rodger Healy – Commercial Fisherman, Dana Cove Fishermen's Association

Rodger is a commercial lobster and crab fisherman based out of Dana Cove in Southern California.

Sherry Flumerfelt – Executive Director, Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust

Sherry has spent the last two decades working with coastal communities to find the balance between environmental and economic sustainability. She was hired to launch the Monterey Bay Fisheries Trust in 2014, and has been leading the Trust ever since. Before this, she spent eight years as a consultant on a range of fisheries and conservation projects, supporting clients such as the Environmental Defense Fund, CATCH Alaska (halibut charter operators), the Marine Life Protection Act Initiative, Ecotrust, and the California Fisheries Fund. She also spent seven years as a program manager at the Coral Reef Alliance, where she led community conservation programs in Hawaii, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, Micronesia, and the Caribbean. With an MA in Anthropology and International Development from the University of Guelph in Canada, her interests have always centered around the human dimensions of ocean conservation.