

Ed HENKE

Historical Research

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December 17, 2003

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Dear Ken:

I received your package of professional works on 12/6/03 and immediately started perusing the documents. You must remember, I'm not a recognized researcher or expert in your field, just an old Ventura River Rat. However, I grew up in Ventura in the 1930s and '40s and had a hell of a lot of on-the-job training and practical experience catching and observing steelhead and their progeny in both Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties.

I started my historical research project in 1994, a year following my retirement from the business world. The core subject matter of the research is anadromous salmonids in southern California waterways. I ultimately confined my research to Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, with touches on San Luis Obispo and Los Angeles Counties. There is some additional referencing involving what I determine to be relevant subject matter obtained from numerous sources, locations, etc. Today, I have completed over 400 manuscript pages for Ventura County and another 400 for Santa Barbara County. I hope to complete the entire project by the end of 2004.

The presentations (two volumes, one for Ventura County and one for Santa Barbara County) are to a great degree compendiums involving quotes, writings, studies, etc. taken from numerous sources, many of which are/were recognized professionals within their various disciplines. My own contributions are what I had personally catalogued along the way, with a major portion obtained through the generosity of approximately 80 oral history subjects (sessions were tape recorded) who had lived in the counties involved, a number of them over the age of 90, and all of whom in some way had utilized the resource within the timeframe of the early 1900s to the 1950s. Some of the information gleaned was what their elders had passed along to them. Additionally, I developed and used an extensive waterways questionnaire that describes in a few sentences the geographical location of each waterway. The descriptions and locations were taken from U.S.G.S. Water Supply Paper 297, 1913, and from U.S.G.S. topographical maps. I divided the waterways into six geographic regions for Santa Barbara County and nine geographic regions for Ventura County, referring to them as individual and numbered habitat areas. I asked each participant to check the appropriate box next to waterways where they had taken, observed, or had knowledge of steelhead, salmon, and/or native resident trout. They all were very conservative in their assessments.

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And now to add my anecdotal, empirical type of documentation to what you have so professionally presented, I would just roll out the following abbreviated findings for your perusal and evaluation—this to, I hope, help fortify beliefs that historically, even after the arrival of our European ancestors in the nineteenth century, there were in fact salmon frequenting all waterways of consequence south of San Francisco. If you find anything of value and significance in the following that will supplement and support your present archeological findings and efforts, please advise me and we'll do some more thorough documenting. Everything discussed here is part of my manuscript.

We'll take off on the following lead-ins, and I have also identified additional aquatic life-forms in the accountings to add further credibility to the already accepted exceptional historical fecundity of southern California waterways—supplemented with off-shore documentations of journeying anadromous fish.

“...No salmon remains of any kind have been found south of San Francisco.”

SANTA BARBARA AND SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTIES

- Fifteen salmon caught at the mouth of the Santa Ynez River, some over 15 pounds. (*Lompoc Record*, January 24, 1891)
- At the turn of the century Coho Salmon may have utilized all coast-accessible rivers as far south as Santa Maria and the Santa Ynez Rivers. (Greg Bryant, National Marine Fisheries Service Publication, April 1994)
- Chinook Salmon in Lopez Creek, San Luis Obispo County. (Jordan, 1894; Evermann and Clark, Calif. Div. of Fish and Game, 1931)
- “Coho Salmon probably occurred in central coast rivers and streams from the Santa Ynez River northward.” (*State of California Resources Agency Bulletin 215*, 1982)
- (Quinnat/Chinook) Salmon were first stocked in the Santa Ynez River on July 14, 1914; again, on July 8, 1915. Future documents state only Santa Barbara County where salmon were stocked for the years 1917, 1918, 1919, 1920, and 1921. One would assume they were also stocked in the Santa Ynez River. All stocks came from the Sisson/Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery. (State of California Fish and Game Commission 24th, 25th, 26th, and 27th Biennial Reports; State of California Fish and Game Commission Biennial Reports 1916, 1918, 1921, and 1923))
- His father told him a different kind of fish came up the Santa Ynez River—that was a salmon. His father was born in the 1800s, (Oral history subject, early 1900s-1930s)

- Heard his father talk of getting both salmon and steelhead out of the Santa Maria River. (Oral history subject, 1920s and prior)
- Catching hook-bills, dog salmon (big red sides) caught at Ocean Park (estuary) of Santa Ynez River. (Oral history subjects, 1920s-1940s)
- His father told him two kinds of fish came into the Santa Ynez River in addition to steelhead. Dog salmon was a term for one. (Oral history subject, 1920s-1950s)
- Gaffed some salmon in the Santa Ynez River. Fish were 12-14 pounds and over 30 inches long. Remembers hooked bills, red on the body, and some black in the mouth area. Very husky and deep. Definitely salmon. There were 10 to 15 in the school and in a big pool approximately 15 miles upriver from the ocean. (Oral history subjects, late November circa 1929-1930)
- Hooked-jaws and more side color. Males uglier, deeper than females. Santa Ynez River fish. (Oral history subject, 1930s-1940s)
- A 13-pound, 36-inch long salmon, biggest he knew of out the Santa Ynez River. (Oral history subjects, 1930s-1940s)
- Salmon in Zanja/Santa de Cota Creek (tributary to the Santa Ynez River). Roman nose, real snout, black and real pink/red flesh, big tail. (Oral history subject, circa 1935)
- Santa Ynez River fish that looked different were thought to be salmon. Hooked-jaw looked deformed, larger fish, big tails. Those fish were bright silver. (Oral history subject, 1935-1940s)
- Biggest fish discussed among fishermen coming out of the Santa Ynez River was 40-48 inches long. Didn't see the fish—conversation and talk. (Oral history subject, 1935-1945)
- Four or five boys 14 to 15 years of age ventured over to the Upper Santa Ynez River during the early summer to go swimming. Location was near where Los Prietos Boys Camp is presently located and approximately 100-200 yards above the lower Oso Canyon Road crossing. After swimming two or three hours, numbers of rotting, dead salmon started floating by. Pink looking, 12-15 pounds. Deep, large girth, real red, teeth and big hooked jaws. (Oral history subject, circa 1937)
- Near Mitchell Ranch on the Santa Ynez River two boys captured a big salmonid. It was a uniformly dark colored fish, very deep in girth, wide, 35 inches long, and weighed 17 pounds. Looked similar to a male steelhead. (Oral history subject, circa January 1938)
- Claimed that he and his brothers caught salmon that weighed 12-13 pounds in the Santa Ynez River near Lompoc. Remembers big hooked bills and red sides. Recalls it was the spring of the year. (Oral history subject, circa 1947)

- Silver/Coho Salmon caught off Stearns Wharf in Santa Barbara by William Schenk. (*Santa Barbara News-Press*, June 1991)
- "We've caught them (Silvers/Coho) right down off of East Beach [Santa Barbara] and in Carpinteria off Rincon Island...." (Per sport fishing party boat operator Mike Finucan, quoted in *Santa Barbara News-Press*, June 1991)
- Quite a few lamprey eels in the Santa Ynez River. (Oral history subject, 1930s-1940s)
- Toward the end of the Santa Ynez River steelhead run, would see many lamprey eels on rocks and attached to big fish. (Oral history subject, 1930s-1940s)
- Santa Ynez River lamprey eels 15-18 inches long. Lots of dead ones observed. (Oral history subject, 1935-1940s)

*Results of Steelhead, Salmon, Native/Resident Trout Questionnaires to Date for Santa Barbara County (Some San Luis Obispo County Draining into the Santa Maria/Cuyama River).

Tallied the following for the historical presence of salmon (35) in county waterways geographically described in the questionnaires.

- Nine coastal creeks draining off the south/west slope of the Santa Ynez Mountains
- The Santa Ynez River and 18 of its tributaries
- The main Sisquoc River, its south fork, plus two tributaries
- The Santa Maria/Cuyama River and one tributary

*Not all of these were recorded during oral history session accountings.

VENTURA COUNTY:

- Some young boys wading around in the mouth of the Ventura River with a fish spear killed a salmonid and brought it home. It was identified as a salmon weighing about 7 pounds. "The fish was not a steelhead...." (The term *steelhead* was first used in Ventura County in 1899, some four years prior.) (*Ventura Free-Press*, May 1, 1903)
- Said there were King Salmon in the Ventura River per his father, who was born in the 1800s. Claimed they'd come in, not spawn, and go right back out because there was lots of water then into and out of the estuary/mouth of the Ventura River. Also, some Dog Salmon were caught. (Oral history subject, early 1900s)
- Jack Selby, a long-time rancher in Santa Ana Valley advised a close ranching friend they'd caught steelhead that were over 40 inches long out of Coyote Creek (tributary to the Ventura River) near the ranch. (Oral history subject, early 1900s)

- The Ventura River system was first stocked with Quinnat (Chinook) salmon in 1914. Subsequently, it was stocked with salmon in 1915, 1917, 1918, and 1919. All stocks came from the Sisson/Mt. Shasta Fish Hatchery. (State of California Fish and Game Commission 24th, 25th, and 26th Biennial Reports, 1916, 1918, and 1921 respectively)
- Two young friends captured a 42-inch salmonid in the Ventura River downriver from the Foster Park Bridge and approximately four miles from the ocean. They thought it was a giant steelhead (circa 1922). Also, his father, born in the 1800s, used to fish out of a boat in the Shell/Cliff Hole approximately three miles upriver from the ocean, and occasionally caught a salmon (circa 1898). (Oral history subject, 1898-1922)
- Witnessed family members spear a large salmon trout out of the lower Coyote Creek (tributary to the Ventura River) near Foster Park, and it was at least three feet long. (Oral history subject, summer 1922)
- Pink salmon taken in the ocean off of Santa Monica, 1927. (In California Division of Fish and Game Publication 1928)
- When I asked an old-timer about his knowledge of salmon, the subject responded that he had knowledge of Chinook Salmon being caught in Malibu Creek. Decker Canyon carried his family name and Malibu Creek is in close proximity to where he grew up. (Oral history subject, 1920s-1940s)
- Anadromous salmonid species with prominent black spots caught in the surf off the mouth of the Ventura River. Considered it a common salmon. Also heard talk of Dog Salmon in the Ventura River. Caught one, big, heavy fish out of the surf that had black spots all over it and was 26-27 inches long. Observed 30-40 of them upriver one mile the next day. (Oral history subject, early 1930s-1940s)
- Old-timers used to catch a few salmon. Didn't know what kind. Not big fish, and mainly in the estuary/mouth of the Ventura River. (Oral history subject, 1930s-1940s)
- Chinook Salmon in the Ventura River. (Jordan and Gilbert, 1881; Evermann and Clark, in California Division of Fish and Game publication, 1931)
- His father caught a salmon approximately one mile up the Ventura River from the mouth of the Old Highway 101 Bridge. It was already darkening up, and identified to be a Silver Salmon/Coho, 5-6 pounds. (Oral history subject, late 1930s-early 1940s)
- Coho Salmon 9-10 pounds taken off Los Coronados Islands June 20, 1937. (Robert D. Byers, in California Division of Fish and Game Publication, 1942)
- A statement that at the last meeting of the Pacific Fishery Biologists it was mentioned that the Ventura River was the southernmost spawning area for Silver Salmon. No documented, previously written-up evidence was produced, but this information came from exchanged correspondence between the various parties. (Written correspondence to and from Leo Shapovalov, Natural History Museum, Stanford University, May 18, 1939.)

- One of our "Ventura River Rat" friends, Victor "Eskimo" Carmona, caught a salmon in the Lumber Mill Hole in the Ventura River in late fall/November. Location—less than two miles from the ocean. Fish was on display (on ice) in front of Shaffer's Sporting Goods Store. Recalled it being 7 pounds. Eskimo said there was a school of approximately a dozen in the pool. He recalls it was a Chinook Salmon. (Oral history subject, early 1940s)
- Remembers talk of Dog Salmon in the Ventura River and recalls seeing a couple of them—big, wide, heavier fish than steelhead. Not colorization like steelhead, more color on them and they were males. Also, one caught in the Santa Clara River. On average, they were bigger than steelhead. Didn't think they got much bigger than 15 pounds. Ones observed were sickly, not steelhead, and they called them Dog Salmon. Big teeth and pronounced jaws, bright color. The Santa Clara River fish weighed 13-14 pounds. The sides and gill plates were red in color. (Oral history subject, early 1940s)
- Experience with salmon was in the surf at the mouth of the Ventura River. Called them Dog Salmon, big, ugly, 10-12 pounds and dark gray color. A lot of them were caught (circa January 1942). Caught Dog Salmon up the Ventura River (1937-1939) near Foster Park, big holes. Big bump on their nose, mouth top and bottom like a parrot beak, 24-25 inches long, heavy fish. (Oral history subject)
- Observed a huge salmonid in the Cable Hole, approximately two-plus miles up the Ventura River lying among others that were in the 28- to 30-inch range. It appeared to have extra large spots on its back. Extra broad head and much bigger than the 8- to 9-pound fish around it. Almost a third longer. Estimated to be 40-42 inches long. Its head was so far from its tail as it lay under the willows that it looked like two fish. Tried to glom it out, and damn near drowned. Couldn't get a grip on the fish near the caudal fin because of its size. (Oral history subject, 1946-1947)
- Pink salmon taken off La Jolla in southern California on September 30, 1945. (Carl Hubbs, Scripps Institution of Oceanography of the University of California, in California Division of Fish and Game Publication, April 1946)
- Green sturgeon taken just north of Pt. Vicente, Los Angeles County, on April 27, 1957. Another had been taken prior between Huntington Beach and Newport Beach. (Kenneth S. Norris, in California Division of Fish and Game Publication, October 1957.)
- Five green sturgeon taken between Ventura Marina and Channel Island Harbor by my brother, E. Ben Henke (fifty-plus years as a commercial fisherman, 1950s-1992).
- Salmon came up Calleguas Creek (through Pt. Mugu Lagoon). (Oral history subject, historically and circa 1984)
- A 14-pound, 12-ounce Silver/Coho Salmon and a 9-pound, 4-ounce Silver/Coho Salmon were caught off Point Loma, San Diego County. Three others were lost. Two years ago another one was caught per party boat captain Jason Diamond. (*San Diego Union Tribune*, April 16, 1995)

- The Ventura County Flood Control District, with heavy equipment, cleaning out Revolon Slough (exiting into Calleguas Creek approximately two miles above Pt. Mugu Lagoon) of debris, moss, etc., killed a Chinook Salmon weighing approximately 10 pounds—other salmon were present. Picture, documentation, etc. acquired. (September 20, 1999)
- Capture of a large eel in the Santa Clara River. (*The Ojai*, 1892)
- A lamprey eel 38 inches long and weighing 2 pounds was caught in the Santa Clara River. (*Ventura Free Press*, June 30, 1893)
- Saw eels and suckers in the Ventura River. As a young man, one of the first fish he caught was a sucker, along with six trout. Had the sucker mouth on the bottom like a sturgeon. Lots of chubs/gila in the Ventura River. (Oral history subject, 1912-1913)

From "Introduction," p. 5:

"...This study updated the findings for fish remains for archeological sites on the California coast and helped to establish the prehistoric presence of salmon and steelhead in coastal streams...."

I feel extremely confident that the preceding information will add value to substantiate beliefs that historically, and even in more contemporary times, anadromous salmonids extensively utilized waterways, both big and small, on the south coast of California and south to the Mexican border. A personal and definitive statement will be made at the conclusion of this presentation relative to the historical population densities of this resource.

Salmonids in California Streams, p. 6:

"...There are no well-authenticated reports of any wild salmon entering fresh water south of Monterey Bay (Swift et al.). Brown et al. (1994) state that Coho Salmon may range as far south as Big Sur River. The San Lorenzo River is the northernmost stream Snyder (1912) surveyed and the only one in which he identified Coho Salmon...."

As a non-professional researcher, I would not question the validity of any of these statements, all of which were apparently obtained from previous documents. Maybe there were on-site, hard-science, evidence-based studies by Snyder. I can only say that what I have found over the past ten years leads me to believe, without question, that there were wild/indigenous populations of salmon that entered waterways south of San Francisco, and very possibly more than one species: Coho and Chinook Salmon. Harold Franklin's oral history project produced ample evidence of Chinook Salmon running to the watershed extremities of the Salinas River system:

"In my interviews, I learned that a few salmon did come up the Nacimiento River and in the very wet winter of 1941 a measured 42-inch and 48-inch salmon were shot out of Los Tablas Creek as well as several salmon 'longer

than a 32-inch gunnysack' were taken in 1941 in San Francisco Canyon on the headwaters of Jack Creek in the Willow Creek area. A large salmon was seen in Santa Rita Creek about 1941-1942. I believe these were Chinook Salmon." (Harold A. Franklin, retired educator, 1040 S. River Road, Paso Robles, CA 93446, 805-238-4441. Research document consisted of 67 pages, completed May 1999.)

Franklin had numerous accountings of steelhead of all sizes. (Coho Salmon too?)

Methods and Materials, page 10

"Although we assume that remains of large individuals in a coastal site are likely from the anadromous form, we know of no way to osteologically distinguish anadromous (steelhead) from fresh-water (rainbow trout) forms."

Based upon the large size features of salmonids found in the excavation efforts of Indian middens, they are, without much question, the anadromous form of *Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus* (O.m.i.) and can only attain a size in the ocean, whereas my personal experiences have told me that their progeny/resident forms of O.m.i. will rarely get over 10-12 inches, and more like 20 cm., as per Robert J. Behnke's *Trout and Salmon of North America*, p. 75. Obviously, one can't differentiate through DNA analysis, but if there were a way to distinguish their level of fecundity from bones, a small resident-size O.m.i. that had matured would, without question, be the resident form. We caught 8- to 9-inch trout during May in steelhead spawning/habitat areas in the watershed extremity of Coyote Creek (tributary to the Ventura River), and in the main Ventura River that had maturing eggs in them. Also, one of my elderly oral history subjects advised of catching such fish in the main Santa Ynez River that had maturing eggs in them. After spending their first four to five years in fresh water, I assume they would become fecund.

"Discussion"

"Coastal Fishery, San Francisco to San Diego"

"...No salmonid remains have been identified from coastal San Mateo, Ventura, or Orange Counties, even though Skinner (1962) reported steelhead and Coho Salmon in Pescadero and San Gregorio Creeks (San Mateo County) and Swift, et al. (1993) consider Santa Clara and Ventura Rivers (in Ventura County), and San Juan Creek (in Orange County) to be steelhead streams. In other investigations in these counties, neither Follett (1963, 1965, 1966a, 1976) nor Fitch (1967, 1969) found any salmonids."


Even though no archeological remains of large adult salmonids have been located and identified except as noted (until you uncovered the very recent Carmel River expedition discovery of the historical presence of native/indigenous Coho Salmon [*Oncorhynchus kisutch*]), other types of evidence that have been subsequently developed through the

findings of historical written documentation, oral history sessions and questionnaires administered to old-timers indicate that the historical population densities of anadromous salmonids on the south coast of California, and all the way down to the Mexican border, were much more extensive than originally thought. Again, results of questionnaires administered, oral history sessions, my own personal experiences, and contributions from other sources have led me to such a firm belief and conclusion.

**NUMBER OF NAMED WATERWAYS (MAIN COURSE, TRIBUTARIES, FORKS)
THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED TO DATE AS HAVING HISTORICALLY
PROVIDED HABITAT FOR ANADROMOUS SALMONIDS
PER THE FOLLOWING ACCUMULATED RESEARCH RESULTS**

Ventura County

(Includes some waterway courses located in Los Angeles County that are part of the Malibu Creek system, and a small number located in Los Angeles County that drain into the Santa Clara River)

178 
Waterways

Santa Barbara County

(Includes waterway courses within a small segment of San Luis Obispo County that drains into the Santa Maria/Cuyama River)

329 
Waterways

**Grand Total for the Two Counties Where Evidence of
Anadromous Salmonids Has Occurred**

507 
Waterways

A tabulation of the anatomical/physical descriptions, as well as the direct term salmon provided by old-timers of large salmonids that they had caught, observed, or heard discussed that differentiated between a typical looking steelhead and another anadromous salmonid, and the numbers of times different subjects used the same terms to describe what they had observed, and how they differentiated between the two species:

Santa Barbara County

- Salmon: 5
- Salmon, larger fish: 1
- Salmon 13 lbs., 36 inches long: 1
- Salmonid 17 pounds, 35 inches long: 1
- Salmon 12-13 pounds: 1
- Salmon 12-14 pounds, over 30 inches long: 1
- Salmon (some black in mouth area): 1
- Dog Salmon: 2
- Salmon (rotting/dead): 1
- Hooked jaw, looked deformed: 1
- Big hooked jaws: 3
- Hook-bills: 3
- Real snout: 1
- Males uglier: 1
- Teeth: 1
- Deeper than females: 1
- Wide: 1
- Deep, large girth: 2
- Very husky and deep: 1
- Big red sides: 3
- More side color: 1
- Real red: 1
- Pink looking, 12-15 pounds: 1
- Uniformly dark colored: 1
- Black: 1
- Bright Silver: 1
- Big tails: 2
- Real pink/red flesh: 1
- Biggest salmonid heard of – 40-48 inches: 1

Ventura County:

- Salmon: 4
- Salmon (common): 1
- Chinook/King salmon: 2
- Dog salmon: 5
- Dog salmon 10-12 pounds: 1
- Dog salmon 24-25 inches long: 1
- Silver/Coho Salmon 5-6 pounds: 1
- Large salmonids over 40 inches long: 2
- Big, ugly: 1
- Big bump on nose: 1
- Mouth top and bottom like parrot beak: 1
- Pronounced jaws: 1
- Big teeth: 1
- Extra broad head: 1
- Wide: 1
- Big, heavy fish: 3
- Dark gray color (out of surf): 1
- Bigger than average steelhead: 1
- Not much bigger than 15 pounds: 1
- Bright color: 1
- More color: 1
- Sides and gill-plates red in color, 13-14 pounds: 1
- Darkening up: 1
- Extra large spots on back: 1
- Prominent black spots, 20-27 inches long: 1
- Sickly: 1

Discussion

It was at the conclusion of the nineteenth century (1899) that the term steelhead was first used. Prior to that, a two-word term was used to describe all: Salmon Trout. Even today a very large segment of fishing enthusiasts cannot distinguish between a Chinook Salmon, a Coho Salmon, and a steelhead of the same size and sex coming directly out of the ocean. The one distinguishing and obvious feature would be the great size/weight attained by the Chinook.

When you review the one- to three-word descriptions that the old-timers used to describe what they thought was a salmon, the most defining features described more directly relate to the Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*), especially if it had been in fresh water for any period of time. There was no documentation/referencing of salmonids over 15 pounds—only reference to the length of fish, which could have been any one of these three species. Perhaps historically (pre-history to early 1900s) there was a genetically unique Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) that had adapted to southern California waterways—adapting to Mediterranean/semi-arid climatic conditions, and through such adaptation did not attain the size of its northern cousins.

As for other unique descriptions, such as “black spots” all over a Ventura River fish, an interesting possibility exists that this species could have been a descendant of the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout (*Salmo mykiss*) stocked in the Matilija River/Ventura River in 1887, and in other county streams in 1894. These fish came from the Lake Tahoe hatchery (*Ventura Free Press*, October 6, 1887 and October 10, 1887; State of California State Board of Fish Commissioners, 13th Biennial Report, 1894), and then were introduced into the Santa Clara River system in Ventura County in 1895 with fry coming from the Sisson/Mt. Shasta state fish hatchery (State of California State Board of Fish Commissioners, 14th Biennial Report, 1896).

“Ojai man shoots Lake Tahoe trout 29¾ inches long and weighed 6¼ pounds.” (No doubt a kelt, and approximately 5½ years since the *Salmo mykiss* were introduced into the Ventura River system.) (*Ventura Free-Press*, April 23, 1893)

The Pyramid Lake Lahontan Cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki henshawi*), thinking in geological terms of time, had evolved with a penchant and propensity for anandromy. So is there a possibility that this species could emigrate and adjust to ocean conditions, returning to the Ventura River system as adults? “A distinctive biological trait of Lahontan Cutthroat trout is their tolerance for high levels of alkalinity” (Dr. Robert J. Behnke, *Trout and Salmon of North America*, p. 212). Another one for Dr. Behnke and the experts. The previous stated findings have led me to believe that such a possibility exists.

With all the various rainbow trout they started dumping into Ventura County waterways beginning in 1896, no doubt McCloud River Rainbows and Upper Klamath River Redbands became part of this group. Now again, we bring in Dr. Behnke and his Redband Steelhead Trout

(*Oncorhynchus mykiss gairdneri*) in pp. 82-83 in *Trout and Salmon of North America*. These colored-up spawning males with lots of spots fit well within the old-timers' descriptions.

The only documentation on Silver/Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) being stocked in southern California waterways from the late 1800s through 1950 was contributed by the Forest Home Fish Hatchery: 1936 in Los Angeles County, 1937 San Bernardino and Los Angeles Counties, 1938 in San Bernardino and San Diego Counties. (State of California Department of Natural Resources, Division of Fish and Game, 35th Biennial Report, 1938)

I believe the preceding documentation indicates that indigenous Coho/Silver Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) were more likely historically present than not in viable southern California waterways from the Santa Maria/Cuyama River system south through San Diego County. What we see today are only remnants of once viable waterway systems and we can only speculate as to their actual original character and historical viability. Water diversions and uncontrolled groundwater extractions started early, and by 1952 all southern California waterways of any consequence had been completely subdued. And what did they look like originally? The following makes some strong statements in this regard:

"On July 14, 1769 Don Gaspar de Portolá left San Diego to extend his explorations northward to the long coast of Monterey. On this trek he camped on the banks of the Santa Clara River near Castaic, Piru Creek, Sespe Creek, and the Ventura River during the months of July and August, and reported crossing streams of considerable size near each camp." (Henke emphasis. From: Vernon M. Freeman, *People-Land-Water, Santa Clara Valley and Oxnard Plain, Ventura, California*, p. 138, quoting Dr. Robert G. Cleland, *The Place Called Sespe*.)

"Fr. Juan Crespi, accompanied Don Portolá on the trek and his diary records in some detail the crossing of the Ventura River on August 15, 1769. 'At two in the afternoon we set out taking the road toward the west along the seashore. On leaving, we crossed the river, which caused some hardship on account of the rocks and the large quantities of water near them.'" (Vernon M. Freeman, *People-Land-Water, Santa Clara Valley and Oxnard Plain, Ventura, California*, p. 138, quoting from Fr. Zepherin Englehardt San Buenaventura Mission, 1930)

The heart of all California waterways, big and small, has been inflicted with a most pernicious form of embolism—the destruction of invaluable in-stream values and other through the building of dams/diversions, and through uncontrolled groundwater extractions.

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CONCLUSION

The following statement encapsulates what my ten years of research, coupled with practical experience, has led me to believe. I stand firm in my belief that:

All freshwater waterways, both big and small, from the Santa Maria/Cuyama River system south through San Diego County, historically having their flood-flows discharging directly or indirectly into the ocean—and even if in more contemporary times they consistently have intermittent, interrupted segments during summer months but perennial segments in their watershed extremities—historically provided spawning and rearing habitat for anadromous salmonids, most specifically, the Southern Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*, Haplotype V). - Ed Henke, 2000

I may have gotten carried away a bit with the presentation here, but I'm sure you can sense the passion I have for this precious and most invaluable natural resource, which is fast heading toward extirpation unless already established public policies are immediately implemented and enforced to their fullest extent.

Thank you for including me in your historical evaluations process of anadromous salmonids south of San Francisco—and for your most concerted efforts directed toward determining the historical presence of Coho/Silver Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*).

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,



Ed Henke

cc: Robert J. Behnke