

Salmon fishing off California's coast banned for second year in a row

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Salmon fishing off the coast of California will be banned for a second consecutive year, authorities said Wednesday, citing lower fish stocks

impacted by drought and wildfires.

The heavy blow for the state's salmon sector—which one industry group says supports 23,000 jobs—comes as salmon have struggled to successfully reproduce in low or warm waterways.

It is hoped the ban, announced by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), will help the state's Chinook salmon stock recover.

CDFW director Charlton Bonham said that, despite [wet winters](#) this year and last, the salmon likely to benefit from these conditions were not expected to return to California until 2026 or 2027.

"The current salmon for this year's season were impacted by the difficult environmental factors present three to five years ago," Bonham said in a [press release](#) on Wednesday.

California has been particularly affected by drought over the past 20 years, which has been aggravated by [global warming](#).

This has meant freshwater streams are often too low or too warm for salmon—making it hard for them to swim upstream to reproduce, and for their offspring to survive once born.

Only 6,100 salmon were counted in 2023 in the upper part of the Sacramento River—normally a major reproducing spot. Between 1996 and 2005, there were typically more than 175,000 counted per year.

Some in California's fishing sector have accused Governor Gavin Newsom of poor water management, criticizing the heavy use of water by the state's agriculture sector.

"We can't sugarcoat it or lay the blame solely on drought," said Scott

Artis, head of the Golden State Salmon Association.

"Our water, our natural resources, the resources every Californian and the entire salmon industry rely on, are being stolen on Governor Newsom's watch," Artis added.

In a media release on Thursday, Newsom said he had asked the [federal government](#) for [financial support](#) to compensate for the disruption to [salmon fishing](#).

More than \$20 million was allocated to California to compensate for last year's fishing season, which was subject to similar restrictions.

Salmon fishing in California typically generates around \$1.4 billion each year, according to the Golden State Salmon Association.

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