



The mission of the California Fish Passage Forum, one of 18 nationally recognized fish habitat partnerships in the United States, is to protect and revitalize anadromous fish populations in California by restoring connectivity of freshwater habitats throughout their historic range.

BACKGROUND

Forum Member Organizations

- Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission
- Caltrans
- California Coastal Conservancy
- California Dept. Water Resources
- US Forest Service
- 5 Counties Salmonid Conservation Program
- US Army Corps of Engineers – San Francisco
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration – National Marine Fisheries Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- California Dept. Fish and Wildlife
- Caltrout

California's historically bountiful anadromous fishery depends on the ecological integrity of dozens of streams and rivers that flow into the Pacific Ocean along the state's 1,100-mile coastline. These streams provide the habitat that salmonids and other anadromous fish require during the spawning and juvenile phases of their life.

During the 19th and 20th centuries, as roads, bridges, and dams were built on public and private lands along waterways, and as water was diverted by various means, thousands of barriers were erected, blocking the passage of anadromous fish. These barriers impact both adult and juvenile fish by preventing full use of available habitat or altering habitat and hydraulic conditions. Consequently, many salmon, steelhead, cutthroat trout, lamprey, and sturgeon populations have experienced significant declines, and the sport and commercial fisheries that depended on some of these populations have, in many cases, vanished.

Man-made barriers to fish passage include road/stream intersections, pipeline or other infrastructure crossings, erosion control/flood control structures and dams that block or delay migration. In some cases, previously installed fish passage structures, such as fish ladders, act as barriers because of poor design or construction as well as lack of maintenance.

The California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) initially convened a group of interested state, local and federal agencies, fisheries conservation groups, researchers, restoration contractors and others to discuss ways to improve fish passage at man-made barriers. The success of this initial coordination led to the establishment of the California Fish Passage Forum, of which many agencies and organizations are currently members.

MISSION

To protect and revitalize anadromous fish populations in California by restoring connectivity of freshwater habitats throughout their historic range.

OBJECTIVES

1. Remediate barriers to effective fish migration.
2. Facilitate coordination and communication among agencies, agency staff, and other entities that may propose, review, or promulgate fish passage criteria within California.
3. Identify, assess, and prioritize the removal of fish passage barriers.
4. Disseminate guidelines and design criteria for replacement of barriers.
5. Coordinate funding mechanisms to remove fish passage barriers.
6. Promote State and Federal permit coordination and streamlining.
7. Facilitate plans to monitor and evaluate fish passage restoration effectiveness to ensure accountability.
8. Promote state and national policy that supports fish passage improvement in California.
9. Implement education and outreach activities, targeting both the general public and fish passage practitioners.

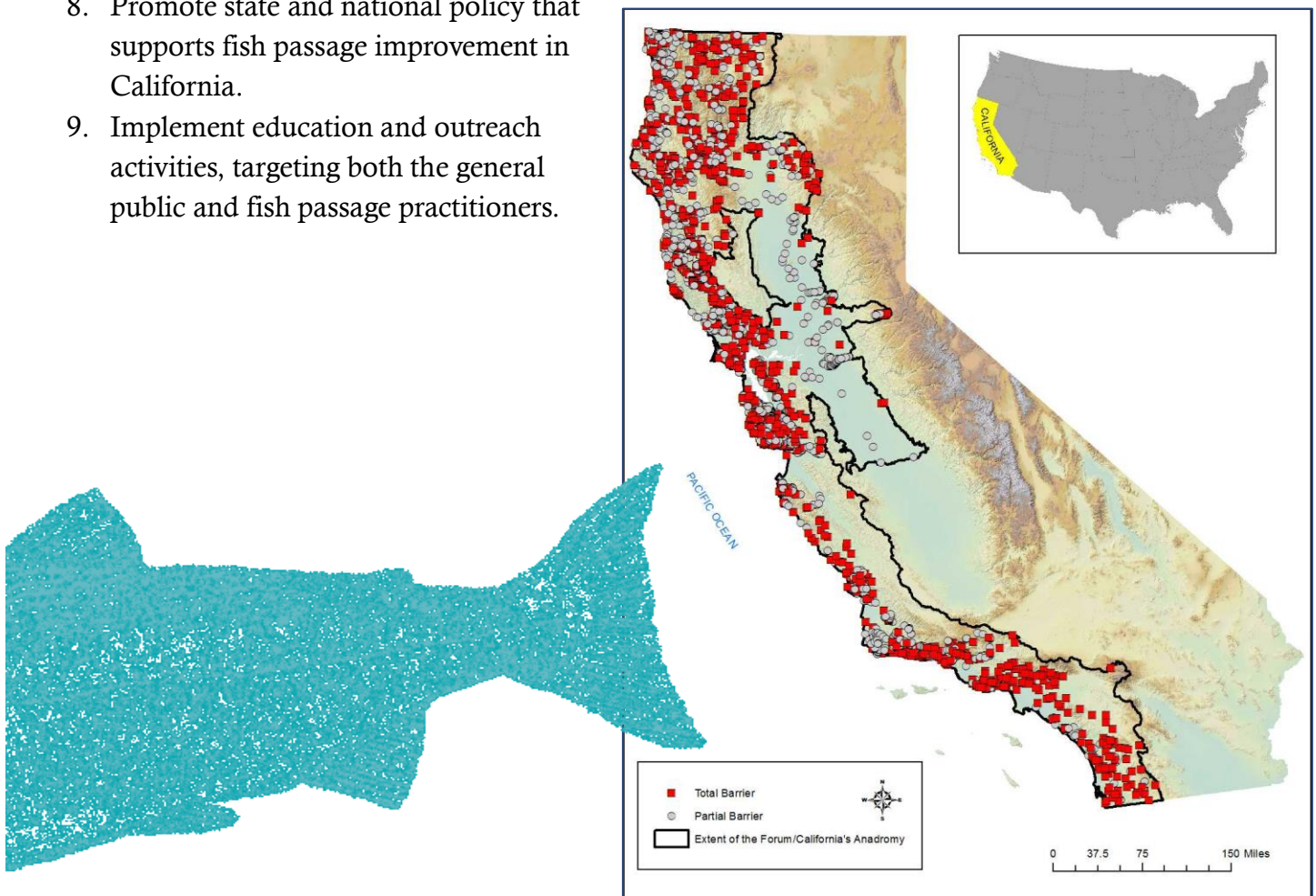
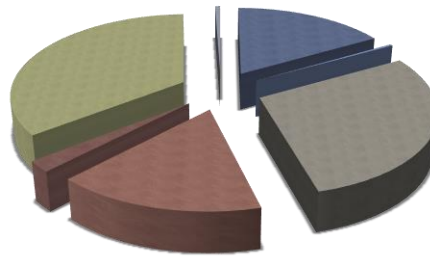


Figure 1. Man-made fish passage barriers within the Forum's geographic scope documented in the Fish Passage Assessment Database (PAD) as of September 30, 2013.

Figure 2. Fish Passage Barrier Types Common in Anadromous Watersheds in California.

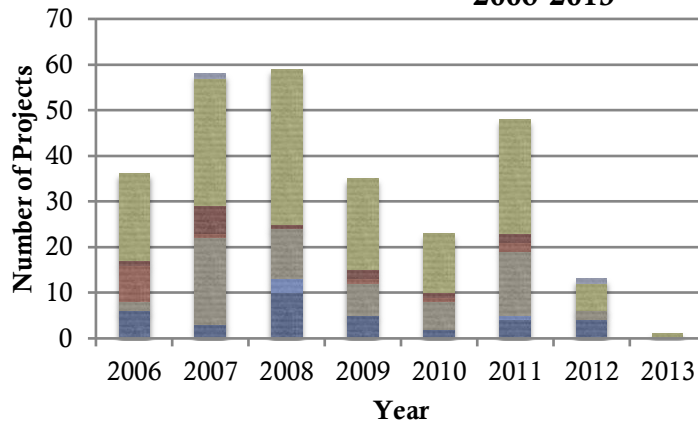
Figures 2 and 3:
 *Includes non-structural (waterfall, grade, temperature, insufficient flow, landslide, velocity, etc.) and log jams.
 **Includes flood control channels, grade control, flow measurement weir, gravel/borrow pits, tide gates, fish traps and other barrier types.
 ***Includes road (culvert, bridge, low-flow, etc.) and utility crossings.

Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Passage Assessment Database, September 30, 2013 version (www.calfish.org).



- Dam (3,228)
- Fish Passage Facility (63)
- Fish Screen/Water Diversion (5,641)
- Non-structural (3,172)*
- Other Site (411)**
- Stream Crossing (6,830)***
- Unknown (105)

Figure 3. Fish Passage Improvement Projects Completed 2006-2013



- Unknown
- Stream Crossing***
- Other Site**
- Non-Structural*
- Fish Screen/Water Diversion
- Fish Passage Facility
- Dam



“Before” view of Conner Creek at Conner Creek Road prior to removal of the two culverts. Photo credit: Caltrout.org.



California Steelhead. Photo credit: Caltrout.org.



The Conner Creek Project will provide full passage for all life stages of coho salmon and steelhead by removing two culverts. Conner Creek flows directly into the Trinity River, a tributary of the Klamath River. Photo credit: Caltrout.org.