

Salmon returning to N. California rivers

By Matt Weiser, Sacramento Bee

Fall in Northern California brings a rustle of leaves and a welcome chill to the air. Nothing's changed about that. What's been missing the past three years is the pulse of salmon returning from the ocean to their spawning streams.

The Central Valley fall chinook run was once the most abundant salmon population on the West Coast. But three years ago, its numbers plunged, hitting a record low in 2009, due to what scientists think is a mix of environmental problems.

Fishing was banned, salmon festivals canceled.

Now chinook are surging back to the American, Feather, Mokelumne and Sacramento rivers.

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