

# Chinook Salmon Found in Los Gatos Creek Could Be Trapped By Drought

By [Len Ramirez](#) April 19, 2022 at 6:00 pm Filed Under: [California Drought](#), [Chinook Salmon](#), [Conservation](#), [Drought](#), [Los Gatos Creek](#), [salmon](#), [South Bay](#), [Wildlife](#)



LOS GATOS (KPIX) — Concerns are being raised over what the drought might be doing to an ancient salmon run that goes through the heart of Silicon Valley.

Roger Castillo doesn't look after the rivers and streams and their wildlife in Silicon Valley because it's his job. He does it because he loves it.

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"What are we going to leave our children you know?" Castillo said.

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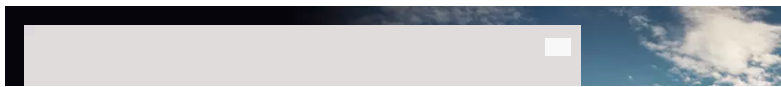
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The mostly self-taught citizen-naturalist is a former truck mechanic who just discovered thriving schools of Chinook salmon fry in Los Gatos Creek.

But because of reduced water flows due to the drought, they're likely to become trapped in pools of warm water upstream with no way to swim out to sea when they mature.

"The salmon cannot tolerate 75 degrees. They can barely tolerate 75 degrees. So what will happen in the summer is we'll cook fish here. We have habitat for them to rear them, but if we let them stay here, we'll end up cooking fish," Castillo said.

Castillo has a well-documented history of working to improving fish habitat since the re-emergence of salmon in San Jose's polluted urban streams 40 years ago.

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Last December he documented spawning salmon jumping in Los Gatos Creek that made Campbell look like Alaska. On Tuesday, he was counting the salmon fry and will turn over the numbers to California Fish and Wildlife and the Valley Water district in hopes the salmon can get a human helping hand.

"We want to relocate these salmon here to a lower point in the river where some up wells occur. We'd have to trap them and move them in tanks," he said.

Castillo hopes to organize an emergency rescue soon, since the fry are also in danger of getting eaten by carp and bass which also live in the streams.

He says it's worth the effort to support the salmon which were all but wiped out by pollution decades ago.

"That is really one of the most endangered species that we have," Castillo explained.

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Wildlife biologists are trying to determine the origin of the salmon in Santa Clara Valley streams to find out if the fish are naturally reproducing on the river or hatchery-raised fish that may have strayed.



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