

Chum Line



Good Sportsmanship is Worth More Than all the Fish in the Ocean FEBRUARY 2026



73rd Dan Felger Annual Awards Banquet
February 15, 2026
Porter Valley Country Club
Northridge, CA

What's On My Mind

By John Ballotti

Final Thoughts

As my term as president ends this month, I have been reflecting on what has been an important chapter in my life's journey. I clearly remember my first charter with the club, a Q105 skiff trip. As Sue dropped me off in the parking lot, she said, "This is the first time I've felt comfortable because you are fishing with friends." The friendships formed, the friendships lasted, are what's important. Charters come and go, dinner meetings fade into history, fellowship remains. Conflicts are inevitable, and disagreements are bound to happen. Our club members have strong personalities that often clash. How those conflicts and disagreements are conducted is critically important.

Working together, respecting others, and disagreeing with grace are fundamental principles that foster healthy relationships, productive collaboration, and a harmonious club. These values are essential in personal interactions, enabling individuals to achieve common goals while maintaining dignity and understanding.

Collaboration is a powerful tool for achieving complex tasks and solving problems. When club members work together, they combine diverse skills, perspectives, and experiences, which often leads to more innovative and effective outcomes than working alone. Teamwork encourages mutual support, shared responsibility, and collective creativity. It builds trust and strengthens bonds, making challenges easier to overcome. Without cooperation, progress is limited, and conflicts tend to escalate.

Respecting others is the foundation of any successful interaction. It means recognizing the inherent worth of every individual, regardless of their background, opinions, or status. Respect involves active listening, empathy, and valuing different viewpoints. When people feel respected, they are more likely to contribute openly and honestly, creating an environment where ideas flourish. Respect also reduces misunderstandings and prevents hostility, paving the way for peaceful coexistence.

Disagreeing with grace is a crucial skill that complements respect and collaboration. Differences of opinion are inevitable, but how they are handled determines whether relationships strengthen or fracture. Disagreeing with grace means expressing dissent calmly and constructively without resorting to personal attacks or dismissiveness. It involves acknowledging the validity of others' perspectives, even

when you do not share them, and seeking common ground or compromise. This approach promotes dialogue rather than division and encourages learning and growth.

Together, these principles create a positive cycle: working together fosters respect, respect makes disagreements manageable, and graceful disagreement enhances collaboration. In contrast, ignoring these values can lead to conflict, alienation, and stagnation. Embracing cooperation, respect, and courteous disagreement builds a resilient club capable of facing challenges collectively.

Working together, respecting others, and disagreeing with grace creates environments where people feel valued and heard. These values enable effective teamwork, enrich relationships, and transform conflicts into opportunities for understanding and progress. Cultivating them is essential for personal fulfillment and our club's well-being.

Let's go fishing!



Tribute Opportunity

Tribute Cards are available when you want to send your thoughts or feelings for

- Congratulations • Graduation
- Anniversary • Illness • Appreciation
- Best Wishes • New Home
- Baby Announcement
- Bar/Bat Mitzvahs • In Memoriam

Your LARRC Foundation is a charitable organization. Donations maybe deducted. Tributes will be posted in the Chum Line. Tribute cards will be sent to recipient.

Information Request and Donations may be addressed to:

Tammy Steinman
tammysteinman7@gmail.com

GETTING YOUR GEAR DIALED IN FOR THE ROCKFISH OPENER

By Wendy Tochihara

As winter winds down and the calendar inches toward the rockfish opener, this is the perfect moment to shake off the rust, dust off the gear, and make sure you're truly ready to drop in on day one.

Rockfish season always feels like the unofficial kickoff to our saltwater year, a chance to get back on the water, reconnect with friends, and put some delicious fillets in the freezer. But the anglers who start the season strong are the ones who prepare early.

Here's a practical, no nonsense tune up guide to make sure your gear, and your game, are ready when the gates open.

1. Inspect Your Rods and Reels

Months of storage can do sneaky things to your equipment.

- Check guides for cracks using a Q tip, if it snags, it cuts line.
- Tighten reel seats and hardware; corrosion loves quiet time.
- Service your reels or at least give them a fresh wipe down, oil on the bearings, and grease on the gears.
- Test your drags, rockfish may not be tuna, but sticky drags cost fish.

If you haven't used a setup since last season, assume it needs attention.

2. Refresh Your Line

Rockfish opener is not the day to gamble on old line.

- Braid: Check for frays, sun fade, or flat spots. Replace if questionable.
- Mono/fluoro topshots: Replace them. It's cheap insurance.
- Knots: Practice your go to knots and connections now, especially if you're tying braid to mono.

A clean, fresh connection means fewer surprises when you're fishing 200–300 feet down.

3. Rebuild Your Terminal Tackle Kit

Rockfish fishing is simple, until you're missing the one thing you need.

Make sure you're stocked with:

- Assorted torpedo sinkers (8–24 oz depending on depth and current)
- Swivels or Romar sleeves and three way setups if you use them
- Circle or J hooks in the 1/0–4/0 range
- Pre tied double dropper loops or the gear to tie them quickly

- A few jigs and swimbaits for those days when the fish want movement

Organize everything now so you're not scrambling on deck.

4. Check Your Regulations

Every year brings small changes, depth limits, species restrictions, and area closures can shift. Before you fish:

- Review the current CDFW regulations
- Confirm open depths for your region
- Know your sub-bag limits (vermillion, lings, etc.)
- Make sure your license is current

Being prepared keeps you legal and protects the fishery we all depend on.

5. Prep Your Boat or Charter Bag

Whether you're fishing your own boat or hopping on a sport boat, a little prep goes a long way.

- Replace rusty pliers and cutters
- Pack extra sinkers, they disappear fast
- Bring a working headlamp for early mornings
- Toss in a small towel, sunscreen, hat, sunglasses and a spare pair of gloves

A tidy bag means more time fishing and less time searching.

6. Tune Up Your Technique

Rockfish may seem straightforward, but small adjustments make a big difference.

- Keep your rig straight up and down, that's how you stay in the zone
- Learn to feel the difference between bottom, current, and bites
- Practice smooth lifts instead of jerky motions
- When using jigs, experiment with slow-pitch style lifts and falls
- When using swimbaits, make sure you have a heavy enough lead head to slow roll your swimbait along the bottom

The more dialed in you are, the faster your limits come.

7. Get Your Mindset Ready

Rockfish opener is more than a date, it's the start of a new season, new stories, and new memories. It's a chance to shake hands on the rail, share a sandwich, and feel that first thump of the year.

Preparation isn't just about gear. It's about showing up ready to enjoy the day, fish hard, and appreciate the fishery we're lucky to have.

CCA California

Happenings

CCA California is currently working on two main programs, among other things.

The first is the California MPA Decadal Review. There are 20 petitions with over 80 modifications to the existing MPA network being considered by the California Fish and Game Commission. Please go to the www.ccalifornia.org for information on all the petitions, CCA recommendations to accept or reject, and a letter to sign on stating your support for the CCA position.

The second is CCA California's involvement in the California 30x30 initiative, which aims to durably protect 30% of the coastal waters by 2030. With the recent inclusion of the Chumash National Marine Sanctuary, the Ocean Protection Council now recognizes about 22% of the coast as durably protected. CCA California is working to have other coastal National Marine Sanctuaries included to reach the target of 30%.

The Foundation Acknowledges this
Tribute Received to Honor

In Memory of their son, Marc Blasetti

Fred and Lorraine Blasetti

Health and Happenings

Linda Simon is our contact for
"Health and Happenings"

Please contact Linda either by phone
(818-980-7470) or email

(simonmurphy08@gmail.com)

for any information about our club
members/ family -

i.e., happy or sad news; health issues;
graduation or congratulations, etc.

CALENDAR

Board Meeting

February 16, 2026

Via Zoom • 7pm

Please email the Club President for link information if you
would like to attend the Board Meeting.

Dinner Meeting

NO DINNER MEETING

73rd Dan Felger Awards Banquet

Porter Valley Country Club

February 15, 2026

Lou Berke Fishing Derby

April 17, 2026

Hanson Dam

Lake Sherwood Family Events

May 9, 2026

Twilight Trip

June 20, 2026

Betty-O Sportsfishing

Surf Fishing Crew Expeditions

TBD June-August 2026

Earl Warren Memorial

Kids' Trip

Marina del Rey

July 6, 2026

King of the Club

July 30, 2026

1 day Navegante Sportsfishing

Navegante Overnight

August 9, 2026

Navegante 1.5 day Trips

September 29, 2026

October 29, 2026

CONSERVATION MATTERS

February 2026

By Theresa Labriola, President, Wild Oceans

A Mysterious Salmon-Killing Affliction is a Mystery No More

In California, scientists tracked the source of a severe vitamin deficiency that's killing endangered fish. Scientists have conclusively identified the cause of a lethal vitamin deficiency that is driving the demise of one of California's unique salmon populations. Research shows that a severe, widespread vitamin B1 deficiency plaguing the winter run of Sacramento River chinook is linked to an extreme dietary imbalance caused by the spread of northern anchovy up the coast. Before 2014 or so, Sacramento River chinook dining in the Pacific would gorge themselves on a diverse diet of forage fish. But from 2014 to 2021, the population of northern anchovy in their feeding grounds surged. It likely has to do with changes that are taking place closer to the base of the food chain—perhaps driven by physical or chemical changes in the California Current Ecosystem. At the same time, species that young salmon would otherwise eat—including krill, squid, and rockfish—declined in the same region.

<https://www.biographic.com/a-mysterious-salmon-killing-affliction-is-a-mystery-no-more>

US Lawmakers Introduce Legislation to Better Map Whale Habitats, Reduce Vessel Strikes

A group of U.S. lawmakers has reintroduced legislation designed to improve the federal government's ability to map whale habitats and help reduce vessel strikes. The Whale Conservation Habitat Analysis, Research, and Technical Strategies (CHARTS) Act directs NOAA to improve its mapping of whale habitats while also developing predictive maps that estimate how whale populations might change their habits in response to environmental conditions. The legislation would require the agency to create high-resolution maps showing where whales are now and where they may be in the future. Critically, the maps must be usable for commercial and recreational mariners to help them avoid collisions. "With a thriving global maritime industry, it's critical that vessels can travel alongside whale populations without risking dangerous collisions," U.S. Representative Vern Buchanan (R-Florida) said in a release. The Whale CHARTS Act strengthens NOAA's ability to map baleen and sperm

whale habitats using better data and modern technology, protecting marine wildlife while keeping recreational and commercial boaters safe.

<https://www.seafoodsource.com/news/environment-sustainability/us-lawmakers-introduce-legislation-to-better-map-whale-habitats-reduce-vessel-strikes>

Massive Bluefin Tuna Reeled in by Kaua'i Fishermen Only Second Recorded Caught in Hawaiian Waters

Kaua'i fishermen were trolling about 12 nautical miles from shore when something massive struck the daisy-chain lure at the end of their center line. The two fishermen knew they had not hooked a typical ahi, but what was it? A 45-minute battle with the large animal ensued before they wrestled it onto Light's boat and discovered it was a giant bluefin tuna. On shore, the fish proved to weigh about 309 pounds and measure about 6 feet 6 inches long. It was only the second bluefin tuna caught on record in Hawaiian waters.

<https://bigislandnow.com/2026/02/01/massive-bluefin-tuna-caught-off-kaua-i-only-second-one-recorded-in-hawaiian-waters>

Seabed Mining: NOAA Moves to Enclose the Commons

In a move that may reshape the geopolitics of ocean resource governance, the United States has quietly introduced a new fast-track permitting regime for deep-sea mining, drawing sharp attention from legal experts and international observers. NOAA published the final rule, "Deep Seabed Mining: Revisions to Regulations for Exploration License and Commercial Recovery Permit Applications," in the Federal Register on January 21, 2026, making the consolidated application and review process operational. The rule permits companies to apply simultaneously for exploration and commercial recovery licenses for seabed minerals, with decisions possible in as little as 100 days. The shift is raising alarms in legal and diplomatic circles. By asserting national licensing authority over the international seabed, the U.S. risks undermining long-standing multilateral frameworks and potentially igniting disputes over the legitimacy of unilaterally claimed extraction rights in the high seas. <https://www.wttlonline.com/stories/untitled,14755>

TROPHY CONTENDERS 2026
as of January 31, 2026

| SPECIES | LINE TEST | ANGLER | LBS. | OZ. | SPECIES | LINE TEST | ANGLER | LBS. | OZ. |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------|------------|
| MEN'S OCEAN WATER | | | | | WOMEN'S OCEAN WATER | | | | |
| MEN'S SALT WATER RELEASED | | | | | WOMEN'S FLY ROD | | | | |
| MEN'S FLY ROD | | | | | WOMEN'S FRESH WATER | | | | |
| MEN'S FRESH WATER | | | | | Bass, Lg Mouth | 8 | Wendy Tochiara | 3 | 8* |
| MEN'S FRESH WATER RELEASED | | | | | WOMEN'S FRESH WATER RELEASED | | | | |
| | | | | | WOMEN'S OCEAN WATER RELEASED | | | | |
| | | | | | JUNIOR MEMBERS | | | | |
| | | | | | FIRST GAME FISH OF THE YEAR | | | | |
| | | | | | FIRST ALBACORE OF THE YEAR | | | | |

Chum Line Editor: Sophia Huynh

**If you would like to submit pictures, articles, recipes for publication
please contact me via email**

fishnsoph@gmail.com

Share your experiences with your fellow club members!



Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club
c/o Tami Shepphird

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION
Contact Email:

Chum Line

Published by the Los Angeles Rod & Reel Club @ www.larrc.org
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/LosAngelesRodandReelClub
 Editor: Sophia Huynh (fishnsoph@gmail.com)

2026 OFFICERS

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| President | Tami Shepphird |
| Vice President | Carol Chow |
| Secretary | Dustin House |
| Treasurer | John Ballotti |
| Historian | Dustin House |

2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

| | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| Greg Cohan | Dave Goske |
| Sophia Huynh | Dustin House |
| Scott Schiffman | Carol Chow |
| Tami Shepphird | |

2026 FOUNDATION TRUSTEES

Keith Heerd - Chairperson

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| Ron Glider | Toby Williams |
| Paul Varenchik | Andrew Ratsky |
| Michael Herrera | Jonathan Gunther |

2026 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

| | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Family Event | Mike Hartt |
| Apparel | Wendy Tochihara |
| Awards Banquet 2026 | Tami Shepphird |
| By-laws and Legal | OPEN |
| Charters | Dustin House |
| Chum Line Editor | Sophia Huynh |
| Communications | Scott Schiffman |
| Dinner Meetings | Tami Shepphird |
| Dinner Speakers | Wendy Tochihara |
| Elections | Greg Cohan |
| Environmental Affairs | John Ballotti |
| Events: | |
| Earl Warren's Memorial Kids' Trip | Paul Varenchik & John Ballotti |
| Lou Berke Fish Derby | Ted Feit & Carol Chow |
| Bill Alpert King of the Club | Sophia Huynh |
| Frank Polak Marine Mentors' Trip | Andrew Ratsky |
| Fishing Records | Joel Steinman |
| Fly Fishing | Rob Baldwin |
| Hall of Fame | John Ballotti |
| Health and Happenings | Linda Simon |
| Membership | OPEN |
| Public Relations | Ron Ballanti |
| Raffles | Scott Schiffman |
| Surf Fishing | Keith Heerd |
| Tackle Management - maintenance | OPEN |
| Tackle Management - storage & donations | Tami Shepphird & Sophia Huynh |
| Tax Consultant | John Rhind |
| Tributes | Tammy Steinman |
| Veterans' Trips | Steve Simon |
| Trophies | Sophia Huynh |
| Website | Scott Schiffman |
| Yearbook | John Ballotti |