



# YUROK TRIBE

190 Klamath Boulevard • Post Office Box 1027 • Klamath, CA 95548

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Matt Mais (707) 482-1350

## For first time in 54-years, salmon will not be served at festival

For the first time in the event's 54-year history, the Yurok Tribe had to remove salmon from the menu at this year's Klamath Salmon Festival, because of the record low fish run.

"This was a very difficult decision. We hope that all festival attendees understand that this was the only responsible option," said Thomas P. O'Rourke Sr., Chairman of the Yurok Tribe.

The Yurok Tribe puts on the annual Festival to provide an opportunity for the whole community to unite in celebration of the Klamath River. The famous chinook salmon lunch, a highlight of the long-standing event, has always been a part of the festivities. Sharing this best-quality salmon, cooked the traditional way over an open fire, is a point of pride for Yurok people.

"Salmon and hospitality are both traditional Yurok values," Chairman O'Rourke explained.

Despite the lack of a salmon lunch, the Yurok Tribe would like to invite everyone to the festival for fun times with friends and family. The community-oriented festival is happening on Saturday, August 20 and typically draws about 4,000 people. Like every other year, the 2016 Salmon Festival will feature live music, games for kids and about a 100 vendors selling high quality, handmade gifts. A dozen fabulous food trucks and stands will be dishing out a diverse selection of fresh-cooked cuisines, ranging from tasty tri-tip to sumptuous sweet treats. There will also be a Classic Car Show, softball tournament, a parade and cultural demonstrations. Indian Card Game and Stick Game Tournaments will be going on throughout the day.

"This is always a very special day on the Yurok Reservation," said Chairman O'Rourke.

The shortage of fish for this year's festival is largely due to poor water management practices. In 2014 and 2015 almost all of the juvenile Klamath River chinook and coho salmon died from a deadly parasite known as *Ceratonova shasta*, formerly called *Ceratomyxa shasta*.

"There are not enough fish to feed our families, many of which will need food assistance, as a result of this manmade catastrophe," Chairman O'Rourke said.

Chinook salmon is a primary part of a seasonal diet that has served the Tribe since time immemorial. The downturn in fish numbers has coincided with an increase in health issues, such as diabetes, among the Tribal membership. Cancelling the salmon lunch is just one of the sacrifices that the Tribe has had to make this year. The Yurok Tribal Council decided that there will be no commercial fishing this season.

**The Yurok Tribe resides on the banks of the Klamath River in Northern California and is the largest federally recognized tribe in the state. The natural resource-based Tribe is best known for its award-winning river restoration, language preservation and cultural protection programs.**

