



Photographs by GINA FERRAZZI Los Angeles Times

BIOLOGISTS monitor juvenile Chinook and coho salmon in Wooley Creek, a Klamath River tributary, following the recently completed removal of dams as part of a plan to reestablish self-sustaining salmon populations.

The salmon won't be dammed

Now free-flowing, the Klamath River carries hope for threatened fish

By IAN JAMES

SOMES BAR, Calif. — Over the last month, salmon have gathered in clear pools in the Salmon River as they have returned to their spawning grounds. This undammed river, a tributary of the Klamath River near the California-Oregon border, is one of the last remaining strongholds of a type of salmon that is increasingly at risk of extinction: spring-run Chinook. The salmon population here has sharply declined in the last decade. But the recent removal of four dams on



THE STATE is monitoring the river fish as they gradually move upriver over the next 12 to 15 years.

the Klamath is bringing new hope among biologists, environmental activists and Indigenous leaders. “Dam removal couldn’t come at a better time,” said Toz Soto, the Karuk Tribe’s fisheries program manager. “We really need to build this population back before we lose it completely.” Biologists expect that with the Klamath flowing freely, all types of native fish will benefit, including fall-run and spring-run Chinook as well as coho salmon, steelhead trout and Pacific lampreys. The dismantling of the dams will allow salmon

[See Salmon, A7]

Bonta pushes L.A. council to redraw its district lines

State attorney general has concerns about underrepresentation of Latinos, sources say.

By DAVID ZAHNISER AND DAKOTA SMITH

California Atty. Gen. Rob Bonta has begun pressing Los Angeles political leaders to sign a legal agreement that would force them to draw new boundaries for the city’s 15 council districts — a dramatic step that could set off shock waves at City Hall. The draft legal document prepared by Bonta’s office, a copy of which was reviewed by The Times, would require the city to finalize new council district maps in time for the 2026 primary election. Council members would be barred from considering their own political fortunes when approving those maps, the confidential document said. The document does not indicate whether elected city officials have agreed to any of Bonta’s demands — or plan to push back on them. It also does not say whether Bonta’s office found any legal violations or other wrongdoing during the city’s 2021 redistricting process. However, two sources familiar with the discussions

said Bonta’s legal team has voiced concerns in recent weeks that the map approved by the City Council in 2021 does not currently provide sufficient representation for Latinos in parts of the city. Bonta’s office singled out two council districts on the Eastside — one represented by Eunisses Hernandez, the other by Kevin de León — as areas of concern, saying those districts do not have a sufficient number of Latino voters to ensure that Latinos have the opportunity to elect the candidate of their choice, according to the sources, who declined to be named because they were not authorized to speak on the matter publicly. In briefings with council members, lawyers for the city said Bonta’s team also has discussed the possibility of creating a third “Latino” district in the San Fernando Valley — one with a significant concentration of Latino voters, the two sources said. That idea was proposed by the city’s citizen redistricting commission in 2021 but discarded by the council. Bonta has been investigating the City Council’s contentious redistricting process for nearly two years. He announced his inquiry in the wake of a scandal over a secretly recorded conversation [See Districts, A10]

‘Shaken baby’ case vacated amid shift in medical opinion

L.A. man is freed after a decade. Attorneys blame ‘junk science’ in similar convictions.

By SALVADOR HERNANDEZ

There was no evidence of a crime, no witnesses, no sounds of an angry scream or a violent thud, but 3-year-old Isiah Meza was dead and his mother’s boyfriend, Jose Olivares, was the last person with him. Olivares told police he’d stepped into the bathroom for about five minutes that day on Feb. 14, 2011. Isiah was playing with his toys and jumping on the bed. When Olivares walked out, Isiah was on the ground, crying and acting odd. Doctors who treated Isiah at the hospital for

three days, and later — after he died — examined his body, told law enforcement the injuries suffered by the boy — retinal damage, severe hemorrhage and swelling in the brain — could only be caused by someone violently shaking the child, a medical phenomenon called shaken baby syndrome. After a 16-day trial in 2014, Olivares was convicted of assault on a child under 8 years old resulting in death, and sentenced to 25 years to life. Ten years later, a Los Angeles County judge vacated Olivares’ conviction on Sept. 19 after attorneys for the 39-year-old man argued that new evidence suggests his prosecution was based on medical testimony that is now outdated and wrong. For years, medical experts believed injuries such as those suffered by Isiah could

[See Baby, A10]



HASSAN AMMAR Associated Press

PRIME MINISTER Benjamin Netanyahu made clear Israel would press ahead in its offensive against Hezbollah in Lebanon, including airstrikes in Beirut, above.

ANALYSIS

U.S. holds limited sway in ally’s march into Lebanon

Israel appears to have seized on support and lame-duck status of Biden administration.

By TRACY WILKINSON

WASHINGTON — The relationship between Israel and its closest and most reliable ally, the United States, has started to feel like a case of unrequited love. Despite being sidelined repeatedly by Israel over the last year, the Biden administration keeps up its nearly unquestioning support — even as Israel all but ignores American efforts to contain the violence and rein in its behavior.

This week, the U.S. government is publicly backing Israel’s march into southern Lebanon, the first such incursion in nearly two decades. The U.S. also supports Israel’s anticipated retaliation against Iran after Tehran’s bombardment of its archrival this week. Both actions could easily push the region into all-out war, a conflict Washington says it doesn’t want. U.S. officials insist they are working to avert a wider war. But they have little to show for the effort so far. It wasn’t always so hard. The United States gives Israel around \$3 billion a year in aid and much of it in weapons: 2,000-pound bombs, sophisticated air-defense systems, even am-

munition. The two countries have long shared intelligence, political goals and foreign policy agendas, and successive U.S. administrations have had considerable sway over Israel and its decisions that had global effects. That ability appears to have waned in the last year, for a variety of reasons, some less obvious than others. The unprecedented scale — and horror — of the Oct. 7 [See Mideast, A4]

Israeli airstrike kills 9 in Beirut

Military orders additional evacuations as it widens its invasion of Lebanon. **WORLD, A4**

Poll finds majority support for crime measure

As many as 60% of likely voters favor Prop. 36’s stiffer drug and theft penalties.

By ANABEL SOSA

SACRAMENTO — A solid majority of likely California voters support Proposition 36, the November ballot measure that would impose stricter penalties for retail theft and crimes involving fentanyl, according to a new UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies poll co-sponsored by The Times. Imposing harsher punishment on repeat offenders drove that support, far outweighing voters’ desire to increase overall prosecutions or deter future crime, the survey found. Nearly half of those surveyed, however, support rehabilitation and treatment for first-time offenders among other options as the best way to improve California’s criminal justice system. Voters were almost evenly split over whether Proposition 36 would reduce homelessness or drug addiction in California, one of the selling points of the measure’s proponents. “Voters are intent on passing this initiative,” said Mark DiCamillo, director of [See Propositions, A7]

Booze exemption bill rankles voters

Measure aiding Clippers owner’s pet project reeks of favoritism, Gustavo Arellano says. **CALIFORNIA, B1**

Melania Trump’s abortion stance

Her remarks are a blow to the MAGA campaign, Lorraine Ali writes. **PERSPECTIVES, A2**

Weather

Fog to sun. L.A. Basin: 84/63. **B6**

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Dodgers seeking some redemption

They’re eager to face the Padres, who eliminated L.A. from the postseason in 2022. **SPORTS, B10**

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