

The Adipose

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE WILD STEELHEAD COALITION

April, 2005

President's Run

"Steelhead embody all that is wild and free, They personify what is best among game fish." *"Steelhead Water" by Bob Arnold*

March is here, with April on its heels, and with it the anticipation of a few more wild steelhead in our favorite rivers. I guess we can scrap the old adage that "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb" but as I write it is raining hard with hopes it provides a few inches to our meager snow pack, raises the rivers to aid fish passage, and the hopes of fishermen. In February, I had the opportunity to visit and fish the NF Umpqua in Oregon with my father-in-law, Dave Carlson, and his long time friend, Frank Moore. Fishing was tough in low clear conditions, but of course Frank hooked fish behind me. I was fortunate to briefly hook one fish. We all know the feeling, the great take, singing reel, the lift of the rod, pulse and weight of a good fish and then....nothing, stare to the sky, repeat cast, step down.... But sometimes it's not only about the fish. It was certainly a privilege to fish great steelhead water with a great steelheader willing to share the stories of his river.

Wow! The new Washington Governor decided to make some changes on Washington's Fish and Wildlife Commission. These changes certainly came as a surprise, and it is

very disappointing to see some fine Commissioners lose their positions.

Tuck, Hunter and Schroeder were conservation minded commissioners who took the time to understand the science and listen to our concerns about long-term issues regarding steelhead. They will be sorely missed. It will be interesting to learn about the reasons for these changes when they are brought to light. We can only hope that the new Commissioners will be conservation minded, approachable, work in a public forum, and will not solely focus on allocation issues. In the mean time the WSC Board of Directors is busy composing a letter to the Governor requesting a stronger conservation direction in the Commission and not simple shifts in allocation from one user group to another. We also urge our membership to write the Governor urging her support for a strong conservation focus in our state's wild salmonid management.

I would like to publicly give Board Member Todd Ripley kudos for his work and travels to testify against the proposed raising of the 2% commercial by-catch of ESA listed wild to 6%. To our disappointment Washington's Commission voted to raise the rate to 4%, but Todd traveled to Oregon hooking up with our Regional Rep Shane Stewart and Trustee Bill Bakke and others to help convince the Oregon Commission-

ers not to raise the by-catch impact rate. The good news is that Oregon's Commission decided against raising the impact rate, and Washington was forced to go along with Oregon's decision. **Brian Simonseth** also assisted at the testimonies and we are thankful that Brian is also taking a proactive approach as a new Board Member. A big thanks also goes out to our members and friends who wrote and emailed the Commissioners, thank you!

We have also been busy crafting a letter to Restaurants Unlimited, Inc. requesting that they remove wild Hoh River steelhead from all their restaurant's menus. The WSC has offered (see letter in this issue of the *Adipose*) to meet with corporate officers and explain the plight of wild steelhead in the Northwest and why it is not in their best interest to serve wild steelhead at their restaurants. Special thanks to WSC members **Leland Miyawaki** and **Ryan Petzold** for taking the lead on this activity for the WSC and helping take this issue to the public.

In the mean time we are working on hosting the sixth Steelhead Summit Alliance meeting scheduled for May 14 at the Sheraton in Bellevue, Washington. We look forward to finishing more of the position papers and forging new and stronger

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The WSC was a signer of the following letter.

To: Representative Hans Dunshee
Chair, House Capital Budget
Representative Helen Sommers
Chair, House Appropriations
Senator Margarita Prentice
Chair, Senate Ways & Means

Honorable Chairs:

We, the undersigned members of the Hatchery Reform Coalition, request your support for full funding of the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) capital budget request and for restoring WDFW's operating budget request for implementation of the Hatchery Scientific Review Group's (HSRG) recommendations. The Hatchery Reform Coalition features 20 regional and national conservation, recreation and sports fishing organizations and advocates, with a combined membership base greater than 300,000 (see attached overview sheet).

Washington has the world's largest salmon hatchery system, providing for over 70% of fish harvested in the state. Thus, Washington's hatchery system is the linchpin in an \$854 million dollar annual recreational fishing economy (eighth largest in the nation), for meeting tribal harvest obligations, and for providing commercial fishing opportunity. However, as better scientific data has become available, outdated hatchery practices have been identified as one of the reasons for the decline in the naturally spawning populations.

The HSRG has concluded that successful hatchery programs require healthy wild populations and the habitat upon which those populations depend. Hatchery reform means operating a science-based system that results in more healthy, fit fish returning to both maintain natural populations and provide harvest opportunities.

The HSRG is the independent scientific panel established and funded by Congress to provide an independent evaluation of the hatchery system as part of the Puget Sound and Coastal Washington Hatchery Reform Project (see attached project update sheet). The HSRG is composed of five independent scientists (selected from a pool of candidates nominated by the American Fisheries Society) and four agency scientists designated by WDFW, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC), NOAA Fisheries, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Like the independent scientists, the agency scientists are responsible for evaluating scientific merits and are not to represent agency policies. The nine scientists serving on the HSRG have a broad range of experience and expertise.

After four years of evaluation, the HSRG produced a widely-praised report (see attached editorial) that included more than 1,000 recommendations for change at individual hatcheries, 18 system-wide recommendations, and three principles to guide future hatchery management. WDFW's budget requests related to hatchery reform are crucial to implementing these recommendations and principles. Full and proper implementation would help bring Washington's hatchery system into compliance with state and federal law for water quality, Endangered Species Act issues, and reducing the hatchery footprint on the natural runs that are of great pride to the citizens of this state.

WDFW obtained approximately \$14 million in capital funds for hatchery reform during the 2003-2005 budget cycle. The Department's requests regarding hatchery reform for the 2005-2007 budget cycle include:

□ *\$16.55 million capital budget request.* This was fully funded in Governor Locke's 2005-

2007 capital budget request. The funds will facilitate the renovations and upgrades to existing hatchery complexes in the areas of water quality and fish health, along with the removal of barriers that currently restrict natural stocks from reaching their spawning areas.

□ *\$1.1 million operating budget request.* This was not included in Governor Locke's 2005-2007 operating budget request. The funding request will support the implementation of changes to broodstocks used in hatchery production, which will bring the programs closer to replicating the natural runs using the affected watersheds, and for monitoring the interaction between hatchery and natural fish.

The Hatchery Reform Coalition is dedicated in assisting in any way to obtain full funding for WDFW's hatchery reform request, and implement reform as described by the HSRG. If you have any questions, needs or concerns please contact Michael Kern of Long Live the Kings at 206-382-9555 x 25 or mkern@lltk.org. More information on the Hatchery Reform Project is available at www.hatcheryreform.org. Thank you for your willingness to serve the State of Washington and your district in the Legislature.

Sincerely,

Add Coalition Signers Here

Cc: Committee Members
Governor Christine Gregoire
Jeff Koenings, Director, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Lars Moberg, Chair, Hatchery Scientific Review Group
Barbara Cairns, Executive Director, Long Live the Kings

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networking relationships with other organizations to create a stronger voice for steelhead conservation. Also please join us at our new venue for the General Meetings at the Center for Urban Horticulture, University of Washington. On April 6 Larry Wasserman, will join us to discuss the issues surrounding Skagit River Basin steelhead habitat restoration efforts, and why more steelhead anglers should get involved.

In closing I would like to thank all our members who have supported the WSC Mission. Thank you for sticking with us as we have moved forward in our short four years working to make changes to benefit wild steelhead. Soon many of our members will receive membership renewals in the mail asking once again for your support. I hope you will continue to support us in this journey as we work to improve the future for our wild steelhead and steelhead fisheries, and to educate decision makers about why "*wild steelhead embody all that is wild and free, they personify what is best among game fish.*"

Sincerely,
Rich Simms, President
Wild Steelhead Coalition

Steelhead Summit 6 Coming Up

The WSC, along with some financial help from the Northwest Women Flyfishers, is hosting the 6th Steelhead Summit Alliance meeting on Saturday, May 14th, at the Sheraton Hotel in Bellevue. Questions and suggestions should be directed to Dick Burge, co-chair, at fskibum@olypen.com or 360-765-3815. Our other co-chair, Dave Bailey, is handling invitations and logistics. He can be reached at captain@olypen.com or 360-681-7043. We expect another good turnout from representatives of a variety of groups and organizations with specific interests in steelhead management.

Jack Berryman

Reminder!

New licenses required in Washington on April 1st.



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NEW RESEARCH ON STEELHEAD:

Jennifer McLean, Paul Bentzen and Tom Quinn conducted a study on Forks Creek in southwest Washington to evaluate hatchery and wild steelhead reproductive success. Hatchery steelhead diverge in characteristics important to their reproductive success in streams. This study, like so many others, confirms the fact that wild steelhead produce more offspring than hatchery steelhead.

A major concern for conservation of native salmonids is the introduction of non-native fish, fish that originate from somewhere else, or strays that interbreed with native salmonids in streams. The scientific literature has confirmed that non-native salmonids have lower reproductive success than native fish returning to their home stream.

In a previous work, McLean demonstrated that both smolts and adult progeny per spawning female were higher for wild fish than for hatchery fish in nature. But this new study builds on her first work by determining the “mating patterns” and “traits associated with reproductive success of individuals.” She said, “In this study, we used multilocus micro satellite genotypes to link individually naturally spawning steelhead of both native wild and non-native hatchery origin to their smolt and adult offspring.” Some of their findings are listed below, but I encourage you to read the full study referenced at the end of this note.

“A total of 424 adult steelhead were sampled at the weir and released upstream in BY (brood year) 1996 and BY 1997. Brood year 1996 produced 365 smolt progeny and 81 adult progeny. All smolts spent two years in freshwater. Of the 81 adults, two fish spent one year at sea and returned in 1999, 74 fish spent two years at sea and returned in 2000, and five fish spent three years at sea and returned in 2001. Brood year 1997 produced 285 smolts (all freshwater age 2); none returned after one year at sea, and 77 returned in 2001 after two years at sea.

“A total of 240 individuals (56.5% of the 424 adults) that spawned in BY 1996 and BY 1997 produced offspring. Of these 240, the sex or origin was unknown for four. Of the remaining 236, 82 were hatchery females, 18 were wild females, 106 were hatchery males, and 30 were wild males.

“The mean number of smolts produced per individual was highest for wild males, followed by wild females, hatchery males, and then hatchery females.

“The coefficient of variation for reproductive

success (i.e., number of smolt offspring) was higher for males in the male-female comparison and for hatchery steelhead in a hatchery-wild comparison. The number of adults produced per individual ranged from zero to 10, and the pattern for mean adult production was the same as for smolt production: highest in wild males, followed by wild females, hatchery males, and hatchery females.

“The timing of reproduction, estimated by the date that adults migrated past the weir up Forks Creek, greatly affected reproductive success. Adult body size did not appear to affect the number of offspring produced at either the smolt or adult stage.

“Both hatchery and wild jacks contributed offspring to the smolt and adult samples. All offspring of jacks spent two years in freshwater, and returned after two years in the ocean (i.e., the jacks did not produce any jack offspring).

“Mean per capita smolt and adult production were higher for wild steelhead than hatchery steelhead in both years.

“Examination of parent pairs revealed no relationship between size of males and females that mated and produced progeny. We also found no relationship between upstream migration dates and male and female fish that mated.

“Of the 48 pairs identified, 13 (27%) were between hatchery and wild individuals. Of these 13, eight (62%) were hatchery females mating with wild males, and five (38%) were wild females mating with hatchery males.

“Both male and female steelhead mated with multiple partners as inferred by the number of offspring each produced that were not full siblings. This is consistent with other genetic studies of salmonids.

“The complex mating system of Forks Creek steelhead may have prevented us from observing evidence of size assortative mating if it occurred, although other genetic investigations of reproduction in natural salmonid populations also failed to find this pattern.

“The most important fitness-related factor for steelhead in Forks Creek was the timing of reproduction...although wild fish outperformed hatchery fish in smolt and adult production in direct comparisons, this effect can be explained by the difference in spawning date between the two forms.

“Individuals with the highest reproductive success spawned either early or late in the season. This

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pattern was observed for both males and females, but was only significant for females, perhaps because the date when they passed the weir better represented their actual spawning date than did the date for males.

“The late peak of reproductive success corresponds with the typical timing of wild steelhead in this system. This optimal date probably reflects physical factors, chiefly water temperature and flow, affecting both adults and their progeny., and density dependent factors such as competition among females for redd sites and among progeny for food and space. In this case, the dominate factors are probably the risk of embryo mortality form floods and scour in mid to late winter and the need to spawn early enough to give progeny a chance to grow during the summer. It is unclear what factors permitted reproductive success among some very early fish of both wild and hatchery origin.

“Wild fish produced, on average, more offspring per capita than did hatchery fish in Forks Creek. This result strengthens the argument presented by a number of authors that non-native hatchery fish are less productive than native wild fish when spawning sympatrically.

“In many cases the factor(s) creating differences between wild and hatchery fish are unknown; however, the main reason that hatchery fish did so poorly in Forks Creek may have been their inappropriate timing of reproduction. The early reproductive timing of most hatchery steelhead in Washington is a result of deliberate selection...artificially propagation of salmonids often advances the reproductive timing of a population by making use of the earliest available broodstock, thus divergence in timing between wild and hatchery fish is common. Timing has presumably evolved to maximize reproductive success, so it may depress the productivity of the wild population that interbreeds with hatchery fish.

“The high overall variance in reproductive success of the spawning populations in BY 1996 and BY 1997 reduced their effective population sizes to less than half of the number of adults present each year. In BY 1996, 197 adults ascended the stream to spawn. Their effective population size, estimated from the variance in reproductive success, was 43, less than 22% of the census population size. Brood year 1997 produced similar results with an effective population size of 120, 49% of the number of adults present in the stream.

“We did not confirm the hypothesized importance of parent body size on reproductive success. This was surprising, given the correlations between female size and egg production, and male size and dominance.”

Reference:

McLean, Jennifer E., Paul Bentzen, and Thomas Quinn. 2004. Does size matter? Fitness-related factors in steelhead trout determined by genetic parentage assignment. *Ecology*, 85(11), 2979-2985.

Steve Raymond Speaker at February Meeting

One of the region's most well known writers, Steve Raymond, was the WSC's speaker for our February 2nd meeting at the Center for Urban Horticulture on the campus of the University of Washington. Our largest crowd ever, heard Steve read excerpts from several of his books. He began with a chapter on the Hoh River from YEAR OF THE ANGLER and followed with "Quality of Courage," his most widely quoted and reprinted piece, also from the same book. He then read from STEEL-HEAD COUNTRY and his most recent book, BLUE UPRIGHT. He concluded with "The Perfect River," which appeared in RIVERS OF THE HEART. The audience loved the passages and several people brought personal copies of Steve's books to be autographed. Before leaving, Steve also made a personal donation to the WSC and praised the group for their accomplishments and hard work on behalf of wild steelhead.

Jack Berryman

*SUPPORT WILD
STEELHEAD*

April membership meeting

Place: University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture, Isaacson Classroom
Union Bay Campus, 3501 NE 45th Street (see below for driving directions)

Guest Speaker: **Larry Wasserman, Director for the Skagit River System Cooperative Environmental Services Program**

Topic: **Impacts to Skagit River Basin salmon and steelhead habitat, and why you need to get involved**

Description: I will discuss the major factors that are resulting in the ongoing loss of salmon and steelhead habitat in the Skagit River Basin, and the reasons that these losses are taking place. Topics to be discussed include agricultural practices, water withdrawals, both legal and illegal, flood control, logging, WDFW habitat permits, and bank hardening projects. All of these factors are directly related to the lack of concern on the part of County government for fish and fish habitat. My intent is to provide information on the topics that need public support at the local level and to explain how you can help to insure that we continue to have fishable populations of Skagit River fish. There should be a natural alliance between the Tribes and WSC with regard to the protection of salmon and steelhead habitat

Biography: I have lived (and fished) in Washington State since 1978, when I began graduate school at UW in neurophysiology. I ultimately received a Masters degree in fisheries in 1984, studying the effects of Mt. Saint Helens on salmon habitat. For nine years I was Tribal Habitat Director for the Yakima Indian Nation and since 1991 I have been the Environmental Services Director for three (now two) Tribes on the Skagit River. I deal with all issues associated with habitat protection. I began fishing in the Catskill mountains of New York in the 1960's, and fish at least once a week for steelhead. I also enjoy fishing for bonefish and pelagic fish with a fly when I get the chance.

For more information on the Skagit River System Cooperative, see their web-site at: <http://www.skagitcoop.org>

HOW TO FIND THE CENTER FOR URBAN HORTICULTURE : From I-5: Take the N.E. 45th Street exit, follow east through the University District, past the UW Campus, and down the hill (viaduct). At the stoplight at the bottom of the viaduct, turn left to stay on N.E. 45th St. At the next stoplight, (5-way intersection), turn right (south) onto Mary Gates Memorial Drive. Continue south to the bend in the road (where

Mary Gates Drive becomes N.E. 41st St.). The entrance to the Center is on your right, at the large green sign. Merrill, NHS, and Isaacson Halls are in the first complex of buildings, and the Douglas Classroom is in the next complex (the greenhouse complex). From SR-520: Take the Montlake Boulevard exit, and go north on Montlake Blvd. Continue across the bridge and past Husky Stadium, staying right as Montlake Blvd. curves east into N.E. 45th Street. At the intersection of N.E. 45th St. and Mary Gates Memorial Drive (5-way stoplight), turn right (south) onto Mary Gates Memorial Drive. Continue south to the bend in the road (where Mary Gates Drive becomes N.E. 41st St.). The entrance to the Center is on your right. Merrill, NHS, and Isaacson Halls are in the first complex of buildings, and the Douglas Classroom is in the next complex (the greenhouse complex).

News Briefs- What's going on in & around the WSC

WSC Presentation

Rich Simms and Jack Berryman provide a informational overview and a status of the steelhead stocks at Overlake Fly Fishing Club in Bellevue on February 22. Overlake has been a supporter of WSC and was very interested in what is going on with the organization. If you know of an organization or club that would be interested in a presentation from the WSC have them give a call 425-880-4254.

Restaurants Serving Hoh River Wild Steelhead

WSC submitted a letter to Restaurant's Unlimited, which include high profile restaurants around the Northwest. Recently many of the restaurants were advertising "Wild Hoh River Steelhead" on their menus. In the letter the WSC provided a status of Hoh River Steelhead explain how the river has not made escapement levels in many recent years with excessive harvest. We further requested that as a environmentally responsible Northwest business it would not be in their best interest to serve wild steelhead.

New Commission installed by Washington Governor

Governor Christine Gregoire recently announced the appointments of four new members to Washington State's Fish and Wildlife Commission.

"These appointments represent my administration's strong commitment to the sustainable use of our natural resources," said Gov. Gregoire. "The direction set by the commission affects the economic stability of many important industries, as well as the environmental quality of our state. Our new commissioners will help set the right direction."
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The new appointees bring rich and varied experience to the commission, which is entrusted with establishing policy and direction for the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The appointees also represent Governor Gregoire's commitment to include fresh-faced and talented public servants in her administration.

Jerry Gutzwiler of Wenatchee - As an environmental project manager for The Weyerhaeuser Company, Gutzwiler developed one of the first landowner landscape plans in Washington. He is an active hunter and fisherman, with membership in the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, the Mule Deer Association and the Wenatchee Sportsman's Association.

Miranda Wecker of Naselle - An avid hiker, paddler and fisher, Wecker is a marine program manager for the University of Washington's Olympic Natural Resources Center. She is also a member of the Washington State Bar Association and works as an independent consultant to non-profit groups.

Shirley Solomon of Mount Vernon - She is an experienced manager of environmental and land use projects, currently employed as a project director with Long Live the Kings, a Seattle-based non-profit organization focused on wild salmon restoration, and leads the Skagit Watershed Council.

Charles Perry of Moses Lake - An expert in grazing and rangeland management, Perry is currently a rehabilitation and sustainability consultant in Central Washington. He is also an avid hunter and member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

The Governor's Commission decision came as a surprise to the WSC, it is disappointing to see some fine Commissioners lose their positions. **Tuck, Hunter and Schroeder** were conservation minded, who took the time to understand the science and long term issues regarding steelhead—they will be missed. It will be interesting when statements are made and the reasons for change are brought to light. We can only hope that the new Commissioners will be conservation minded, approachable, work in the public forum, and not solely focus on simple allocation issues.

Further Columbia Wild Steelhead By-catch Thwarted
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission voted not to increase the current 2% commercial by catch rate for listed Columbia River wild steelhead to a increased proposal of 6%. With this decision it reverses Washington's Fish and Wildlife Commission's decision to raise it to 4%. The WSC worked hard, along with other organization to keep the by catch rate at its present level so this was a victory for the wild steelhead. Kudos to Todd Ripley and Brian Simonseth for their hard work on this issue.

WSC Action Plan in Works

The WSC Board is currently developing and updating the organizational Action and Business Plan. If you are a member and have strong feelings on what the WSC should tackle next this is a good time to provide your input. Please feel free to email wscmembership@yahoo.com or phone at 425-880-4254.

WSC Article in STS

WSC was featured as the Guest Editorial in the March issue of Salmon, Trout & Steelhead, providing an article titled "Wild Fish with Hatchery Fish Proposal From a Fisherman's Perspective" offering a perspective on the current debate to list wild fish the same as hatchery fish.

Upcoming SSA Meeting May 14!

The WSC will once again host the Steelhead Summit Alliance Meeting on May 14 at the Bellevue Sheraton in Bellevue, Washington. This will be our sixth summit and continues to build a stronger, unified voice on the various issues that affect wild steelhead in the Pacific Northwest. Clubs and organizations as far as California and British Columbia are attending these summits and support continues to build. Half of the ad-hoc committees have finished drafts for the SSA position paper with the other half soon to be completed.

Letter to the Governor

The WSC board is in the process of drafting a letter to the new governor which will introduce our organization and express our desire to work closely with the WDFW on issues addressing the recovery of wild steelhead.

The Wild Steelhead Coalition would like to acknowledge the following for their generous donations:

A gift from Clark Palmer (a junior)
A gift on the behalf of M. Hart & D. Janerich
Unknown through the Microsoft Giving program
The Evergreen Fly Fishing Club (3)
Steve Raymond

Thank you all.

Wild Steelhead Coalition
218 Main St. Box 264
Kirkland, WA 98033

The Wild Steelhead Coalition (WSC) is an organization dedicated to increasing the return of wild steelhead to the waters and rivers of the Pacific Northwest.



Meeting Announcement

Wednesday,

April 6, 2005 7:00-9:30 pm

Again, this month our meeting place will be at the University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture on the Union Bay Campus. We will be gathering in the Classroom of Isaacson Hall. In addition to the directions included herein, links to maps (as pdfs) with driving directions are on the web at: <http://depts.washington.edu/urbhort/html/info/facilities.html>

Our speaker this month will be Larry Wasserman, Director for the Skagit River System Cooperative Environmental Services Program. For more on Larry and his program, and for directions to the UW meeting location, see page 6.