



Wild Steelhead Coalition Membership Talking Points for Commission Testimony of Steelhead Management Plan Feb. 2

Goals of public testimony:

- (1) to convey clearly to the Commission that there is a strong contingent of anglers who want to see major policy and management changes necessary to recover and sustain wild steelhead
- (2) to get the Commission to direct the Department to strengthen the draft State Management Plan to remedy the flaws that will prevent achievement of healthy wild steelhead populations

Proposed talking points: (Express in your own words, do not read verbatim. No need to touch on every point.)

- Introduce yourself and explain why you care about wild steelhead (personal anecdote would be great)
- Explain that you are at the hearing because the need to change course is urgent – the old management model of using hatcheries to replace habitat is a proven failure and we are running out of time to change course
- The science clearly shows that genetic and life-history diversity is the key to healthy wild steelhead populations instead of focusing exclusively on abundance.
- Give the Department credit for making the protection of wild steelhead and their habitat the primary goal, but say that the proposed plan – while a good start – needs to be much stronger if it is to restore healthy wild steelhead populations.
- The Habitat Section needs to be much stronger. The Department has several tools it could use to protect and restore habitat that are not even mentioned (e.g., establishing instream flow requirements).
- The Department's existing authorities are too weak (e.g., the Hydraulic Permitting Process) and yet the plan does not call for strengthening the Department's authorities
- The draft plan continues to rely too heavily on artificial production to provide short-term harvest opportunity at the expense of wild fish recovery.

- The draft plan does not go far enough to reduce harvest mortality. A more conservative management approach is warranted, including a prohibition against killing wild fish in all of the State's rivers.
- We are running out of time to save wild steelhead and we need bold leadership from the Commission and the Department.
- The Commission should lead by not approving the Statewide Management Plan until it is strengthened so it can actually achieve its stated purpose – the restoration of healthy wild steelhead and their habitat.
- Close by thanking the Commission for the opportunity to comment.