



The Adipose

The Newsletter of the Wild Steelhead Coalition
Volume 3, Issue 4

June 2003

The President's Forum

Many of you have probably already heard the good news that the WSC successfully hosted Steelhead Summit II at the REI building in Seattle on Saturday, May 3rd. Representatives attended from the following organizations: Washington Wildlife Federation; West Coast Trout Unlimited Office; Northwest Marine Trade Association; Washington Trout; American Rivers; Greywolf Flyfishing Club; Puget Sound Anglers; Evergreen Flyfishing Club; Federation of Fly Fishers Steelhead Committee; Washington Fly Fishing Club; Northwest Women Flyfishers; Fidalgo Fly Fishers; Washington Council of Trout Unlimited; Sierra Club Northwest; Overlake Fly Fishing Club; Izaak Walton League; and, Washington Council of the Federation of Fly Fishers. The WSC was represented by Dave Bailey, Dick Burge, Dee Norton, Rich Simms, Todd Ripley, Peter Dorn, Don Peterson, and myself.

Several of the ad hoc committees established at Summit I presented their preliminary reports and received input from those in attendance. Reports were given on the following issues: river flows; passage barriers; hydropower; harvest management; riparian zones; educational research support; and education and public outreach. Those in attendance agreed to continue working on those reports not yet completed and to revise the ones presented. It was also agreed to establish an email communication system so timely issues could be brought before the various groups. This "alert system" will continue to expand as more and more groups become associated with future Summits. We are planning Summit III for Saturday, November 8, 2003 and the WSC will continue to coordinate the event through the efforts of Dave Bailey and Dick Burge.

The WSC is also in the midst of electing a few new individuals to the Board of Directors. Members Jeff Johnson and Bob Young have stepped forward to be considered for a position. Don Peterson will be stepping down as Treasurer and will not continue as President. Rich Simms, Peter Dorn, Dick Burge, Dee Norton, Nate Mantua, Todd Ripley, and Richard Hunt will stay on. I will assume the newly created and approved Past President Board position. We

anticipate the new Board of Directors to be in place following our June 24th meeting.

The final very important event having significant importance for the WSC are the public hearings and the opportunity to provide input to the Department of Fish and Wildlife in preparation for the upcoming “major cycle” year for alterations in the sportfishing rules. Public hearings will be in Mill Creek on June 18th and in Spokane, Wenatchee, and Mt. Vernon on June 19th. The final one is in Kennewick on June 24th. Most importantly however, is the written suggestions which are due in Olympia no later than July 18th. The WSC recommendation thus far is mandatory release of all wild steelhead at all times statewide. There has also been talk of imposed bait bans on all anadromous “fish highways,” but we have not yet heard the details. If true, this would likely be something the WSC would support.

We will not have a General Membership Meeting the month of July and have not yet decided on August. However, we will have a guest speaker for our September meeting. For our October meeting on Wednesday the 1st, our Vice President for Fundraising, Peter Dorn, is planning a chili feed and auction. He already has some great prizes and will put them up for bid and as raffle items. Plan ahead for this event and invite all of your friends.

Sincerely, Jack Berryman, Ph.D. WSC Board President



Jack Berryman & Dave Bailey Open Steelhead Summit 2

photo by Rich Simms

June 03 Wild Steelhead Coalition Meeting Report

Kamchatka Steelhead

Guest Speaker: Nick Gayeski

Presentation Title: "Steelhead Life History and Population Persistence: Thoughts From Kamchatka".

Nick Gayeski presented a wealth of information collected from recent studies done on steelhead rivers on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula. This work is part of the Wild Salmon Center's ongoing field program, funded in part by anglers willing to take part in "research fishing" projects organized by the Wild Salmon Center.

According to Nick, the unusually pristine state of much of the Kamchatka Peninsula (KP) is like that of the Hanford Reach of the Columbia River, put off limits to the public during the cold war because of the then Soviet Union's national security concerns over military activities. Petropavlovsk is the only large city on the KP, the remainder being largely unlogged, without roads, mining or oil drilling operations. Over 2 dozen active volcanoes are on the KP, and many of its rivers have never been floated. The steelhead rivers are located on the western side of the KP, emptying into the Sea of Okhotsk. The KP is home to perhaps 20,000 Kodiak Brown Bears. In the early 1980's Russian scientists detected alarming changes in some steelhead populations, both in terms of population sizes and fish morphology. The scientists didn't understand the causes for the changes they observed, but were concerned enough that they listed the entire rainbow/steelhead taxa as "endangered" in Russia's Red Book of Endangered Species (only in rivers where resident rainbows and steelhead co-exist). Where steelhead have not been documented but rainbow are present (as on most rivers on the eastern side of the KP) rainbow are not listed. This means that no harvest has been allowed for KP steelhead for the past 20 years. Pete Soverel later brought a proposal to the Russians to establish a "research fishing" program, where guided fly fishermen would pay to fish and aid in collecting data on the stream ecology of KP rivers. It was approved, has been extremely successful, and has grown into a major international effort to among other things establish Salmon Biodiversity Reserves along the Pacific Rim (see the Wild Salmon Center's web-site for more details: <http://www.wildsalmoncenter.org>). This latter program is supported in part by contributions from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Foundation, the Turner Foundation and the WEM Foundation.

Probably the most remarkable result of the KP steelhead studies revolves around the observations of steelhead population and life-history diversity. A 22lb 39" hen caught (and was released after scale samples and a tissue sample from the adipose fin was taken) in the Sopochnaya River in 2001 was and 11 year old on its 7th spawning run! There appear to be very high numbers of repeat spawners in the KP rivers, typically 10-45%, with ~20% of those repeat spawners having already spawned at least two times. Within individual river basins, they have documented 5 to 6 different life history types of steelhead/rainbows, including fish with typical anadromous behavior, some with a life-history like that of sea run cutthroat in that they spend summers at sea but over winter in the rivers, two different estuarine life history types, half-pounders, and what appear to be pure resident rainbows. Even more remarkable is the fact that these different life history types appear to intermingle on the spawning grounds. Genetic analysis shows that there is more genetic diversity between different river basins than between different life history types within the same basins, and that reproductive interactions between anadromous and non-anadromous steelhead types are common. This conclusion is backed up by careful analysis of otoliths.

Their data also shows that sex ratios in both anadromous and resident types are highly skewed. Anadromous type fish are ~70% hens, while the resident rainbows are around 80% males. KP hen steelhead have very high fecundity (though with the large number of eggs per hen, egg size is relatively small), with 7,000-9,000 eggs per hen being common, and some hens carrying up to 13,000 eggs! This fecundity is 2nd only to that found with Thompson River hen steelhead. The life history of repeat spawners is remarkable in that the adults typically enter the rivers in early September, winter over under the iced-up rivers, then spawn in late May to early June just after the ice breaks up. Soon after spawning they go back to the Sea of Okhotsk and spend just about 3 months in the marine environment before returning to spawn again.

Nick showed slides of some impressive features of the KP landscape and its rivers. There are enormous cottonwoods in places, lots of fallen trees and woody debris that make for some scary rafting situations. This is particularly true for the many rivers on which Wild Salmon Center team members have made "first descents". The river beds and channels are highly dynamic in space and time, offering what Nick called "a shifting habitat mosaic" for salmonids. The back channels they've sampled are typically full of juvenile salmon, with steelhead, rainbows, 2 species of char, chinook, coho and riverine sockeye in high density and often-times mixed assemblages. There are clearly active connections between the subsurface and surface flows, the river is much more than the flowing water we see on the surface. Based on their surveys, the floodplain habitat is key for chinook and coho rearing, and there's little indication of "habitat partitioning" by species. Instead the coho and chinook juveniles mix frequently. They haven't found many steelhead in the floodplain backwaters. And finally, the salmon-derived nitrogen and phosphorous concentrations in the rivers are enormous by Pacific Northwest standards. In fact, nutrients are so high in many KP rivers that they'd be classified as polluted in the US.

Nick finished with a few concluding remarks about how the KP studies might relate to steelhead conservation in our region. He noted that our rivers now lack the huge salmon-derived nutrient subsidy that currently exists in KP rivers, and that there is very high and complex life history diversity for the KP steelhead/rainbow populations that we see only fragments of in most PNW rivers. Our rivers have also lost most of the dynamic floodplain habitat that makes the KP rivers so incredibly productive.

Nick hopes to explore some modeling experiments to better understand the role that skewed sex ratios (in both the freshwater and anadromous rainbow types) play in maintaining the long-term productivity of the KP steelhead/rainbow populations. His hypothesis is that the anadromous populations are subsidizing the resident populations, and vice-versa. Finally, he noted that the typical driver to extinction in populations is a low growth rate and high variability. Clearly, there is high variability (droughts, floods, El Nino's etc) for salmonid habitat. Nick believes that life history and population diversity like that they've documented with KP steelhead/rainbows is a key evolved response to damping that habitat variability and avoiding extinction.

Speaking for all those in attendance, we offer a very appreciative Thank You to Nick for his terrific presentation.

Nate Mantua, WSC VP Education/Science



Upstream from the Elbow Hole NF Stilly

photo by Rich Simms

The following is the published meeting minutes from Steelhead Summit2

Summit 2 Minutes, May 3, 2003, at REI Building in Seattle.

Summit Opening

The meeting was called to order at 8:45 a.m. by Jack Berryman, president of the Wild Steelhead Coalition. He introduced Dave Bailey, event chairman, who welcomed everyone and got things started. Bailey urged everyone to work in support of the Wild Sky bill now in Congress again. He asked everyone who did not attend the first summit to introduce themselves.

Berryman reviewed Summit 1 and said the National Wildlife Federation is now involved. "Ok, we have done all this work. What do we do with it now? Sign on or not, not everyone agrees with everything. More meaningful if everyone in room says yes, I support this. Question is where do we go from here. Why can't we take all of these draft reports and put together something like the white paper. How can we continue to keep this going, continue to make an impact, keep this unified voice going. We are not trying to take over anything, just trying to get people together," Berryman said.

Rob Masonis, chairman of the habitat committee, said there are three issues: water flow, barriers to fish passage and habitat. He said these issues came from a report drafted by American Rivers scientists and we modified them to fit our needs. The question now is whether it is worth the effort to do more research. We think enough is already known.

Seeing a shift in the arena to in-stream flow figures, shows no variation that we all know happens through the year. Scientists now trying to determine how to better show what the flow should be at any given time of year and the needs of the eco system. You can't just set minimum flow figure and declare it good, he said.

Frank Urabeck said extreme low flows at times encourage responsible people to back off on diversions. Minimum flows will be there year around but we need to make sure. Masonis said there is a major effort going on to relax water regulations. Districts are claiming rights to water they have never used and there is enormous political muscle behind it.

Greg Stephens, Little Bear Creek says there is so much development going on, storm water retention systems along with various pipes are in themselves destroying the habitat and flash flooding is destroying streams and never gives in-stream inhabitants a chance to adjust and recover.

Brian Simonseth said the state came out with storm water regulations last month.

Norm Ploss said that in California most counties have regulations for flow and pollution. First sentence of our policy statement covers that.

Masonis said we should look at the problems caused by impervious surfaces. Maybe we need a separate policy statement on development. Urabeck said we should refer to it as ground water recharge.

Bob Johnson of the Washington Wildlife Foundation said this is a focusing vehicle and allows organizations to come together and find things to talk about. Berryman said we could insert language to improve it and make it stronger.

Doug Schaad said we should speak to the mission of improving river systems. "I don't think anyone disagrees with the life cycle of a river. Is there a particular way we can have a policy on the shelf ready to pull out when a river such as the Methow starts to go dry?"

Masonis said "we don't want to lose sight of other fish while focusing on steelhead. We need to have something that is general enough so that every time a flow issue comes up, it is covered."

Ramon Vanden Brulle said we "need to manage rivers for diversity so that overall species have the ability to deal with it. Riparian zones and it comes again from American Rivers scientists. The fundamental recognition is that you need to have buffer zones that effect natural regeneration of species."

Simonseth said there are two slides on the Stilly and every time we try to do something about them we run into rules from the state and the county. Every time we try to put in a root ball, we can't get any help from state.

Masonis said we need to know how these policies come up. Passage barriers and culverts--they need to be removed where feasible and make sure they have fish passage. The challenge is to get the funding needed to do it.

Kaitlin Lovell said hatcheries actually block passage a lot more than people think they do.

Vanden Brulle said in Washington in-stream features that block passage of fish are a violations of state law.

Masonis said hydropower policies are geared toward non-federal hydropower issues. We probably need to have a separate policy on federal projects.

Simonseth said two issues came up recently - widening of river to 250 feet, was told it was because of dams. (I could not pick up which river he referred to.)

Ploss said we should think about mitigation money, where we want to see it spent and how it would be managed. We need to think about a particular dam.

Bill Redman said we need to make language more specific and that we want money going to habitat rather than power.

Vanden Brulle said there is no standardized method on how to determine which rivers should have steelhead.

HARVEST

Dick Burge, subcommittee chairman, said Vanden Brulle, Simonseth and Todd Ripley contributed a lot. There is not really much research going on in the Puget Sound area, Burge said. Coastal rivers are touted as being in good shape but really only the Quillayute is in good shape., Burge said. Using graphs, he showed in blue all the rivers except the Quillayute. It was shown in red. Both show serious declines. Steelhead have many factors affecting them. All rivers will be graphed in the final report, out to 2002. In 2000 escapement goal was dropped from 11,200 to 6,000 on the Skagit. "We need escapement goals that are higher than this, large enough to bring the runs back quickly." He said these goals are based on models that are 50 years old. If we had a time when nothing varied, no floods, etc., these models would work.

Berryman expressed praise for Larry Doyle for putting the graphs together. "We have never had data like this before." MSY is for maximum yield (harvest).

Burge said the Nisqually is down to 500 fish from 5-6,000 fish and is a candidate for extinction. "When we deplete our runs to this extent, they are in danger of extinction. Almost every river in the state could probably use better management. The MSY doctrine is far too simplistic. We need a new management regime. The state now forecasts runs by taking the last three years' returns and averaging them. They need to use more years." (Other know information should also be factored in.)

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH SUPPORT

Doug Schaad, subcommittee chairman, said \$1,000 is needed as a start up fund, a bridge fund, that allows them (students) to get started right away. When you talk to them, they know recreational fishermen gave them the money.

Bill Redman said don't limit to just northwest, make it the West Coast of North America.

Kaitlin Lovell said to add senior honors students. And there might need for a legal opinion on rights to the published information.

Burge came back and in finishing up on regulations said we must realize all wild fish and all rivers need new models developed to protect early runs through barbless hooks, intensive enforcement, selective commercial gear. The runs need to be protected

with 21-inch minimum size limit, protect parr and smolt during spring through seasons and hook size. This will yield options of managing at maximum freshwater carrying capacity, use of maximum recruitment using Ricker model and adaptive management with escapement at 130 to 150 percent of what co-managers are using today.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Beth Kuhn, subcommittee chair, said lawmakers suffer from ADD. Burge says scientific information is often hidden in reports and they have to dig it out. Three suggestions are a steering committee to talk to legislators, science based seminars at four or five locations to explain latest science, get the public thinking in that mode, and turn report into white paper.

Bob Johnson asked what does it take to reach people? Marketing is the way to do that.

PLAN TO EDUCATE THE MEDIA

Dee Norton, committee member, said "My first thought was to hold a series of press conferences around the state but I have discarded that as too passive. If a reporter is given an assignment his editor believes is more important, we have lost him or her.

Instead, I believe we should meet face to face with the reporter and hopefully with his editor. This will mean a lot more work and travel but it is surest way of getting our message across to the reporter and the public.

[Dee's subcommittee report, and others, are available in full, separately, from him or Dave Bailey.]

Summit Wrap-Up:

Berryman asked everyone to think about planning for the future and we need a steering committee.

Ploss said he would like to see both, finishing these statements and we need an architecture thing. We do need a steering committee. Vanden Brulle said it is difficult to get this many groups to agree.

Berryman said the major cycle process in Washington's regulations is one upcoming event in which we should participate, to encourage needed regs changes.

John Calhoun said the official position of FFF is it would hate to see the coalition back away from running the Summit meetings.

One member said he proposes an email tree made up of chairs of the various committees, to get it started.

Lovell said maybe we could hold a meeting in Vancouver or Bellingham outside the Seattle area. She will serve as contact for Oregon TU.

Simonseth said there is an issue besides catch and release and that is float fishing.

Berryman asked if people were interested in a Summit 3. The answer was a resounding yes.

Steelhead Summit 2 Contact list

Attending:

Bob Johnson, WA Wildlife Fed'n
Kaitlin Lovell, W. Coast TU Office
Frank Urabeck, NW Marine Trade Ass'n
Ramon Vanden Brulle, WA Trout
Rob Masonis, American Rivers
Larry Doyle, Greywolf Flyfishing Club
Clint Muns, Puget Sound Anglers
Gordon McKay, Evergreen Flyfishing Club
Bill Redman, FFF Steelhead Committee
Doug Schaad, Washington Fly Fishing Club
Beth Kuhn, NW Women Flyfishers
Brian Simonseth, Fidalgo Flyfishers
Norm Ploss, No. Calif. Council, FFF
Terry Turner, WC-TU
Bill Arthur, Sierra Club NW Ops
Greg Stephens, LBCPA
Rich Simms for Bill McKay, Overlake Fly Fishing Club
John McGlenn, Izaak Walton League
John Calhoun, WA Council, FFF

Wild Steelhead Coalition staff:

Jack Berryman, Dick Burge, Dave Bailey, Dee Norton, Rich Simms, Todd Ripley, Peter Dorn, Don Peterson

Unable to attend Summit2:

Bill Bakke/Dick Kennon, Native Fish Society; Harold Boswell; FFF Steelhead Committee; Jerry Schroeder, Lower Columbia FF; Emily Platt, Gifford Pinchot Task Force; Tom Gilg, Oregon FFF; Frank Amato, STS; Jim Tuggle, WC-TU; Scott Hagen, FFF Steelhead Committee; Corey Freeman, NSIA; John Kober, Nat'l Wildlife Fed'n; Mike Gilchrist, RFA; Terry Davis, FFF Stlhd Committee; John Leary, Wild Washington; Ron Nanney, Willapa Anglers; Scott Hagen, FFF; J.D. Love, Olypen Guides; So. Coast Steelhead Coalition (B.C.)

No response to invitation to Summit2:

Fish First; Dennis Richey, Oregon Anglers; Peter Tronquet, No. Umpqua Found'n and Steamboaters; Olypen Flyfishers; Pete Soverel, Wild Salmon Center; Northwest Steelheaders (OR); Clark-Skamania Flyfishers; Cal Trout; Eyes In The Woods



Searching for a wild summer steelhead, NF Stilly

photo by Rich Simms

Wild Steelhead Coalition June Membership Report

The WSC would like to extend a warm welcome and thanks to its new members:

Robert Schmelzie, Member, Seattle, WA

John Calhoun, Member, Redmond, WA

Shane Stewart, Member, Hillsboro, OR

Rex Maurer, Member, Issaquah, WA

Thank-you this month!

Special thanks to **Washington Council of FFF and Northwest Women Fly Fishers** for their respective donations to the WSC for Steelhead Summit2.

Special thanks to **Twin Rivers Marine Tackle, Kaufmann's Streamborn, Avid Angler and Frank Amato Publications** for the raffle donations at our June Meeting.

Special thanks to WSC's **Dave Bailey** for leading the work pulling together Steelhead Summit2

Special thanks to **Clark-Skamania Fly Fishers** for their recent donation to the WSC.

Special thanks to **Microsoft Giving Campaign**, which included **Kevin Kent James Hance & Anonymous** for their recent donations to the WSC.

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

WDFW Rules Proposals- This is a reminder to get involved and send in your input on major cycle rules proposals you would like to see implemented. The WSC is currently developing its proposals plans based on input from the BOD and Membership. Also the WSC Board of Directors strongly urge its membership to attend one of the WDFW public proposal meetings listed below requesting statewide release of all wild steelhead no exceptions and other regulation which will help out wild steelhead!

NEWS RELEASE

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

May 23, 2003

Contact: Pat Michael, (360) 902-2628

Public invited to propose changes in fishing rules

OLYMPIA -- Like to see a change in next year's sport fishing rules?

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is now accepting proposals from the public for changes in next year's sport fishing rules.

The agency also is inviting the public to participate in a series of meetings scheduled around the state in June to discuss the rule-change process and regional fishing issues.

"If people have ideas about ways to improve our fishing seasons, we'd like to hear them," said Bob Gibbons, WDFW inland/anadromous fisheries manager. "We recognize that most anglers are focused on this year's season right now, but this is also the time to think about changes for next year."

WDFW will accept proposals from the public through July 18 for agency review. Those changes approved by the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission next February will appear in the fishing pamphlet published May 1, 2004.

Information about the rule-change process and forms necessary to submit a rule change can be downloaded from the WDFW website at <http://www.wa.gov/wdfw/>. Or call (360) 902-2700 to request a rule-change packet by mail.

Included on the website and in the packet are instructions on how to participate in the rule-change process, information about current seasons and background information on season-setting processes such as the North of Falcon salmon season forum.

Steelhead Summit 2 – On May 3 the WSC hosted Steelhead Summit 2 at REI in Seattle. The WSC would like to publicly thank all the organizations and clubs that attended and participated. We are truly developing a coalition! What was witnessed at the summit was truly a working together/collaborative relationship by diverse organizations such as PSA, Trout Unlimited, FFF, WT, American Rivers, NW Marine Trade Ass'n, Overlake Fly Fishing Club as well as many other fine groups. The WSC would also like to acknowledge the NW Women FF and Washington Council of FFF for their respective donations for Summit 2. Dave Bailey, once again did great job planning/coordinating as well as support from Dick Burge and Jack Berryman. Also thanks to all the other WSC board

members who participated and helped out. Dee Norton once again was our reporter on the spot. We are truly developing a strong voice for steelhead! phone Dick Burge @ 360-765-3815, email:fskibum@olypen.com or Dave Bailey @ 360-681-7043, email: captain@olypen.com

WSC 2003-2004 Membership Renewals- WSC Membership Renewals have been processed and thanks to all who renewed their memberships, your support is appreciated. If you have not renewed, please send them in.

WSC Board of Director Candidates- WSC is in the process of updating it's board membership. New candidates for the BOD include Jeff Johnson of Redmond, WA and Bob Young of Seattle WA. Board members staying on for another term include Rich Simms, Todd Ripley, Richard Hunt, Dee Norton, Nate Mantua, Dick Burge, Peter Dorn and Jack Berryman holding the new office of Past President.

WSC October Fundraiser- The WSC is currently planning it's first fundraiser for the October WSC meeting. The fundraiser will include a chili feed and combination raffle and auction. If you have items or services you would like to donate to the WSC for the fundraiser please contact Peter Dorn at 425-451-3133 or email at peter.dorn@morganstanley.com

WSC Presentations- The WSC presented to Four Corners Fly Club in Bellingham on June 26. If you know of a club or organization that would like to hear more about the WSC contact Jack Berryman at 425-821-1774.

C&R Project- Initial planning and design is taking place on developing a step by step pictorial process of correct C&R procedure for wild steelhead. If you would like more information regarding this project or would like to help out contact Rich Simms at 425-880-4254 or email at wscmembership@yahoo.com.

WSC Meetings Take the Summer Off- There will be NO WSC Membership Meetings scheduled in July and August. The membership meetings will reconvene beginning September 3rd with some great programs in store for more information please contact Jack Berryman at 425-821-1774

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Face to face, NF Stilly

Photo by Rich Simms

Thanks For Supporting Wild Steelhead!

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.

Wild Steelhead Coalition

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