



## **History of the Wild Steelhead Coalition 2000-2012**

### **Nov 2000**

A group of anglers meet at Ted's Sporting Goods, in Lynnwood, WA, to discuss the announced catch and release season closure of North Puget Sound streams by WDFW because of forecasted low escapement numbers. The group wanted to understand how we got to this situation and becomes determined to form an effective organization for wild steelhead conservation.

### **Jan 2001**

First formal meeting by an organizing group called the "Wild Steelhead Coalition" is held at American Legion Hall in Bothell, WA with featured speaker, Curt Kramer, WDFW District 4 Head Biologist to hear and discuss the reasons and justification for the closures of the North Puget Sound streams.

### **2001**

An Interim Board is formed and work begins in establishing a new organization, including a planning strategy for proposing a wild steelhead release, no exceptions regulation. Paper work is filed with the state and organizational by-laws established.

The Board includes:

Duggan Harman

Rich Simms

Ryan Petzold

Todd Ripley

Dee Norton  
Carl Ostberg  
Dave Bailey  
Les Johnson  
Jim Starkes  
Kevin Kent

Trustees include:

John McGlenn  
Jim Tuggle  
Jim Lichatowich  
Frank Amato  
Dennis Dickson  
Bill Bakke  
Jack Berryman

### **April 2001**

The Wild Steelhead Coalition registers as a nonprofit 501c3; Work starts on the WSC's first white paper titled "**The Biological and Economic Benefits or Wild Steelhead Release**" and is developed to support a regulation proposal for wild steelhead release in the state of Washington.

### **Dec 2001**

The WSC white paper titled the "Biological and Economic Benefits of Wild Steelhead Release" is published and delivered to WDFW Department Staff, Washington Fish & Wildlife Commission and is presented as the WSC's formal testimony and argument for "wild steelhead release, state wide, no exceptions" at the Commission hearing in Vancouver, WA. Authors of the paper include, Carl Ostberg, Jim Starkes, Felton Jenkins and Todd Ripley.

### **Feb 2002**

Commission and WDFW announce final ruling for annual sport limit; From 30 wild steelhead per year on rivers deemed "healthy" enough to support harvest to 5 per year. At this time there were 15 rivers in the state that were deemed healthy enough to support harvest, since then it has been reduced.

### **March 2002**

Jack Berryman elected as President of the board. Dick Burge also joins the board with Nate Mantua, Richard Hunt, Don Peterson. Work begins planning the first Steelhead Summit. The goal is to bring conservation and sportsmen's groups together as a unified voice for wild steelhead The WSC begins work with WSC member Larry Doyle to develop and deliver charts to graph the run trends of wild steelhead across western Washington to visually illustrate the plight of wild steelhead.

### **Nov 2002**

The WSC sponsors the Steelhead Summit, the first of its kind, which brought both angling and conservation groups together with a goal to build a broader, unified coalition and create a stronger voice for wild steelhead conservation by bringing solid science and ideas for management for regulation changes. Over 80 participants attend and over 30 organizations are represented at the inaugural summit. Committee organizers include Jack Berryman, Dick Burge and Dave Bailey with Lou Gellerman hired as a facilitator for the event. The organization goes on to sponsor and support the agenda for future summits on a biannual basis, American Rivers also partners with the WSC to develop summits in Portland, OR.

The WSC also publishes editorial article, appearing in Salmon, Trout and Steelheader titled "**Why Wild Steelhead Matter**" This provided a response to dispel another editorial regarding there is no difference between hatchery fish and wild fish.

### **Oct 2003**

The WSC holds its first fundraiser at the Bothell American Legion Hall. The Chili Feed and Auction nets the organization approximately \$5,000. The event is successfully organized by VP of Fundraising Peter Dorn.

### **Nov 2003**

The WSC Board establishes two new awards to support wild steelhead research work and recognition in conservation towards wild steelhead. The "**Conservation Award**" will be presented to an individual or group that, through their actions and/or accomplishments, have made significant and noteworthy contributions to the protection and propagation of wild steelhead.

The "**Scholarship Award**" will be presented to an individual or group that, through their research and scholarship, recognizes the significance of wild steelhead for Northwest culture and/or the scientific importance of wild steelhead in the management of all steelhead for optimal propagation and survival. John Honea at the Center for Water and Watershed Studies and College of Forest Resources at the UW is the first scholarship recipient for his work and research on the effects of marine-derived nutrients in salmonid spawning streams.

### **Dec 2003**

At the Public Fish and Wildlife Commission Hearings in Port Townsend, the WSC and others commented on new rules proposals, providing strong points and very compelling testimony stating that the continued harvest of wild steelhead is not acceptable and the wrong direction for steelhead recovery. The WSC presents each Commissioner and WDFW Leadership with David Montgomery's Book "**King of Fish; 1000 Year Run of Salmon**".

### **Jan 2004**

After the Commission hearing the WSC schedules personal meetings with each Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissioner and travel across the state to share charts, data and facts of Washington's declining wild steelhead runs. All data is collected from WDFW data. The goal is to share, visually, with Commissioners the charts of declining runs and spoke about the need for eliminating harvest to assure the wild stocks survive. The data is very convincing and the final vote by the Commission is 5 to 4 to establish wild steelhead release in all of Washington. This information will ultimately be compiled and formatted into the WSC second white paper titled: **"The Status of Wild Steelhead in Western Washington and Their Status"**. Major authors include Dick Burge, Nate Mantua and Jack Berryman.

### **Feb 2004**

The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission votes to impose a two-year moratorium on the intentional harvest of wild steelhead in state waters. The WSC compels that this "cease fire" will allow opportunity for the WDFW to develop more progressive based management plans for wild steelhead. The WSC begins working on developing ideas for a more conservative management plan for wild steelhead, this plan is provide and personally shared with WDFW. The news of the moratorium also provides the WSC much visibility to be interviewed in articles for regional newspapers as well as an Associated Press article that was widely distributed.

### **Feb 2004**

The WSC Composes Steelhead Fact Sheet by VP of Conservation, Dick Burge, that provides statistics and facts of the current plight of wild steelhead in the state of Washington.

### **March 2004**

The WSC develops a Hatchery Reform Policy draft, which is shared with membership and the Summit Hatchery Reform Committee. The WSC also provides review and input to the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) hatchery recommendations, and along with many other organizations we recently sign onto a letter to the state and tribal co- management leadership that supports full implementation of the HSRG recommendations for reform. Nate Mantua, VP of Science and Education, represents the WSC at the hatchery reform meetings and ensures the WSC's input is heard and also develops the WSC policy on hatcheries that parallel the recommendations of the HSRG.

The Board of Directors vote Rich Simms as new President of the Wild Steelhead Coalition and Jack Berryman moves to the office of Past President.

#### **April 2004**

The tribes and harvest minded anglers challenge the Commission and WDFW that the moratorium ruling was done out of process and was not on the rules proposal. The Commission makes a decision to have a special public hearing in Bremerton, WA.

The WSC has become more politically active by forming a political affairs committee led by Todd Ripley. The WSC immediately works on important issues opposing the proposed increasing commercial by-catch of ESA listed steelhead on the Columbia River, the expansion of the Storedahl gravel mine on the East Fork of the Lewis River, supporting slide protection work for the North Fork Stillaguamish. As well as supporting increased protection for in-stream flows in our NW Rivers in partnership with American Rivers. The WSC is also featured in an opinion-editorial piece regarding the importance of establishing in-stream flow protection in the Columbian newspaper in Vancouver, WA.

The WSC awards **Frank Moore** the first WSC Honorary Membership Award.

#### **July 2004**

The WSC Develops and provides in-depth Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Proposed Skagit River Steelhead Rearing and Acclimation Facility. The WSC's chief concern with the DEIS is, in fact, its failure to explicitly present clear and convincing evidence that the proposed hatchery acclimation project reflects an effective implementation of main Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) principals for hatchery reform which includes clearly stated goals, scientifically defensible programs and informed decisions.

#### **Aug 2004**

Steelhead advocates converge on Bremerton, WA to testify regarding the two-year moratorium on steelhead harvest set in place by the Fish and Wildlife Commission shaped by information and data supplied by the WSC. Over 80% who provide testimony are in favor to keeping the moratorium in place. The NW tribes complain to the state that they were not consulted by this move as co-managers. The Commission caves in to the tribes, based on the Attorney General's opinion and finally rules "as well to the Forks, Washington Chamber of Commerce, Mayor and Attorney. Final decision is one wild steelhead per year on rivers deemed healthy enough for harvest" But the Commission mandates to WDFW to develop a "comprehensive, conservation base, steelhead plan and science paper that will be the guiding policy for steelhead management in the state. " The WSC is successful as well in convincing the Olympic National Park to enact and stay the course for eliminating intentional wild steelhead harvest in park waters.

#### **Nov 2004**

The WSC second fundraising banquet raises approximately \$9,000 and is a huge

success as Trey Coombs provides a great slide presentation on wild steelhead in Russia. **Bill Redman** receives the first WSC Conservation Award, recognizing his fine work and perseverance as Chair of the Federation of Fly Fishers Steelhead Committee.

## **2005**

The WSC works and partners with American Rivers to develop their annual listing of America's Ten Most Endangered Rivers, which this year featured the Skykomish River. The listing of the "Sky" brings attention to the continuing loss of habitat and run away development in the Skykomish River valley urging the county commission to place stronger regulations in protecting habitat including tributaries and wetlands.

The WSC provides two \$500 scholarship awards; One to Michael Dauber, a doctoral student at the University of Washington. Michael continues the project started by Jennifer McLean on steelhead genetics in Forks Creek, a tributary of the Willapa River. The second scholarship is awarded to Jon Honea, Center for Streamside Studies and College of Forest Resources, University of Washington for his doctoral dissertation: Effect of Marine-Derived Nutrients on Macro invertebrate Production in Salmon Spawning Streams.

Wild steelhead get a benefit from Abel Quality Products, which is offering a collectors' edition of 100 numbered Super 7 reels artistically anodized to replicate the endangered fish. Abel steelhead reels, inspired by author/artist James Prosek, includes his laser engraved signature. A signed copy of Prosek's book, Fly-Fishing the 41st Parallel, will accompany the reel. Abel is donating a portion of the proceeds from the sale of this collectors' edition reel to assist the efforts by the Wild Steelhead Coalition and to further efforts in sponsoring and sustaining the Steelhead Summit Alliance. The organization has produced "position papers" on specific issues directly impacting wild steelhead.

The WSC Donates \$6000 to support acoustic tagging studies for wild steelhead in the Skagit River. This steelhead tagging study is one of several studies planned for Puget Sound and Georgia Basin salmonids and is being done in collaboration with WDFW, Seattle City Light, Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries, UW, Tribes and Pacific Ocean Salmon Tracking project. For more information on the project got to the following website address:  
<http://www.postcoml.org>

The WSC is also very busy with working and travel to testify against the proposed raising of the 2% commercial by-catch of ESA listed wild steelhead to 6% on the Columbia River spring chinook commercial fishery. Even though there was disappointment with Washington's Commission vote to raise the rate to 4%, Board Member Todd Ripley tirelessly traveled to Oregon and hooked up with our Oregon Regional Rep Shane Stewart, Trustee Bill Bakke and others to convince the Oregon Commissioners not to raise the by-catch impact rate. Our strong

resolve convinced Oregon's Fish and Wildlife Commission to decide against raising the impact rate, and Washington is forced to go along with Oregon's decision to not raise the percentage.

The WSC submits an Op/Ed piece to the media and attends hearings to oppose the issue of NOAA Fisheries and the Bush administration's proposal to lump wild steelhead and salmon together with hatchery fish, which will seriously erode protections for wild steelhead and salmon under the Endangered Species Act. The editorial was picked up Seattle Times, The Columbian and Salmon Trout and Steelheader as well as other regional papers.

The WSC third fundraising banquet is a huge success and brings in \$11,000 with an inspiring reading, written just for the WSC, by renowned angling author Steve Raymond. Jeff Bright designs and provides a beautiful slide show celebrating wild steelhead. Bill Bakke receives the second WSC Conservation Award, which recognizes his life's work and perseverance as a wild steelhead advocate with Bill McMillan providing a reading on Bill's behalf.

## **2006**

The WSC finishes publication of second research white paper titled "**The Status of Wild Steelhead and Their Management in Western Washington: Strategies for Conservation and Recreation**" The paper provides a status of wild steelhead on the West Coast with a focus on the ESU's of Washington. An examination of harvest practices and impacts, considerations for new policies, recommendations by the WSC and a proposed conservation based wild steelhead management plan. Information from this paper is reviewed and shared with WDFW and is implemented into the department's steelhead paper and management plans. Follow up meetings are scheduled to talk face to face with decision makers. The WSC Steelhead Management Plan continues to have tremendous impact for improved conservation for wild steelhead. Authors Dick Burge, Nate Mantua, Jack Berryman and Larry Doyle are publically thanked for their strong resolve in bringing this important document to its completion.

The WSC Board of Directors focuses on many conservation issues benefiting wild steelhead. Some highlights include: Producing letters to Restaurants Unlimited, Schwartz Brothers Restaurants, Red Apple Markets requesting they discontinue the sale of wild steelhead on all of their respective restaurants and markets immediately and in the future. Information with the letter is provided to educate their leadership on the plight of wild steelhead and compelling them not serve a market for wild steelhead. A letter is also sent to GI Joes Sporting Good Stores requesting that they discontinue allowing wild steelhead to be included in their store-sponsored Winter Steelhead Derby. A follow up letter is also sent the following year to remind them not to include wild steelhead in the derby

The organization also signs and financially supports litigation with Earth Justice and other conservation groups concerning the Upper Columbia River ESU Endangered Species Act Listing regarding delisting wild steelhead and allowing

hatchery steelhead to be counted as the same as wild steelhead. Success is achieved with court ruling that hatchery fish will not be counted the same as a wild fish when considering ESA listings as well as future listings.

The Board of Directors also vote and send a \$500 donation to the Friends of Wild Salmon in Terrace, British Columbia in their fight against Atlantic salmon farming expansion at the Skeena River mouth. And a \$500 donation and membership is provided for the Hoh River Trust to support securing land in the Hoh River valley for habitat protection and preserving the valley in public trust.

The WSC also submits conservation editorials and letters to NW Fly Fishing, Salmon, Trout and Steelheader and Salmon and Steelhead Journal magazines regarding the status and plight of wild steelhead with the goal to galvanize more wild steelhead advocates.

The organization continues to battle the Stohrdahl mine expansion proposal along the East Fork of the Lewis River in SW Washington which, allowed to happen, will further degrade habitat along this famous steelhead river. Monitoring also continues on the Columbia River commercial by-catch of ESA listed wild steelhead in the Columbia River spring chinook commercial fishery to ensure that the percentage of wild steelhead by catch is not allowed to be raised.

The WSC also submits comprehensive input to WDFW Major Rules Cycle, which contained some important issues regarding steelhead. And provides the same comprehensive input to the Olympic National Parks rules proposals and requesting the ONP to stay the course on the wild steelhead harvest moratorium, in which we have been successful to keep the moratorium in tact in Olympic National Park.

## **2007**

The WSC fourth fundraising banquet is a huge success with a presentation by Steve Probasco, Editor of Northwest Fly Fishing Magazine. Frank Amato receives the third WSC Conservation Award, recognizing his life's work and advocacy for wild steelhead. The event raises approximately \$22,000 for the organization. Jim Schmitz does a fabulous job to pull together a very successful event.

Dick Burge leads work with WDFW over 8 meetings to review their drafts of a Steelhead Management Plan. Dick writes and provides several sets of comments on the limited information and recommendations in the plan on behalf of WSC. It is this pressure that finally pushes the WDFW to include a chapter on habitat and the organization is also successful in delaying the plan long enough to get a solid set of recommendations (still missing important parameters) stated in the final. Nate Mantua and Dick Burge also send in several sets of comments on the draft WDFW paper of 2006 on steelhead biology and management authored/ edited by WDFW staff, Bill Gill and Jim Scott. The WSC



Science/Conservation Committee continues working with WDFW staff to ‘infuse’ conservation directions in the plan.

WSC proposes and helps pass regulation for no fishing derbies targeting wild steelhead.

The WSC funds two independent scientists to peer review the State’s Steelhead Management plan recommendations and provides a strong analysis of what is missing or what is not being taken into account regarding WDFW’s management plan.

“**Tragedy of Steelhead**” article is published in Wild on The Fly magazine and gains great acclaim as an article that puts the situation all in one place. The article is composed and written by WSC Trustee Dylan Tomine. Electronic rights are secured by the WSC and Dylan goes on to provide readings at various venues to engage anglers in steelhead conservation.

## **2008**

In January the WSC Board and representatives of membership testify at the Commission hearing requesting that conservation points are missing in the WDFW steelhead management plan and demand the points are implemented.

The WSC fifth fundraising and awards banquet is a huge success lead and organized by Ryan Petzold, with a beautiful presentation by Jeff Bright titled “House of Mykiss”. Frank Moore received the fourth WSC Conservation Award, recognizing his life’s work and advocacy for wild steelhead. The event raised approximately \$15,000 for the organization.

Patagonia establishes partnership with WSC in wild steelhead conservation through their support of the organization as a company and through their World Trout Program. The WSC recognizes Yvonn Chouinard, Owner and President of Patagonia and is presented as an Honorary Member.

The WSC provides another \$500 donation to the Hoh River Trust for their continued work to preserve the Hoh River on the Olympic Peninsula. The WSC attends meeting with WDFW staff and begin groundwork to make the conservation case for Hoh River wild steelhead.

The WSC partner’s with American Rivers in Seattle Times, “expose” type story in Pacific Magazine, exploring the question and requesting for more “Wild and Scenic Rivers” designated in Washington and has a vehicle to help gain further protection for steelhead rivers.

WSC supports efforts to eliminate kill on the Umpqua River in Oregon, in which a successful decision is made by the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission to enact that all wild steelhead must be released.

The WSC partners with the Fly Boys in their film **“Raising the Ghost”** which weave an important conservation message in the film with the intent to bring wild steelhead conservation issues to a wider audience. The WSC also participates in the Save Wild Steelhead Festival in Bozeman, MT with WSC Trustee Dylan Tomine, Member Jeff Bright and Trustee Rob Masonis providing presentations on steelhead conservation. WSC President, Rich Simms receives a donation from Patagonia of \$5,000 followed up by a personal donation by Honorary Member Yvonn Chouinard.

Work continues on the Resource Management Plans for wild steelhead in Puget Sound streams with other streams in the state to follow.

A letter prepared and sent to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission regarding Hoh River steelhead conservation and management issues. Along with an issue paper with a more complete description of the problems wild steelhead face with WDFW’s present management practices of Hoh River. The letter is prepared for and signed on by anglers and organizations that seek a change in how WDFW has neglected the 2004 Commission decision for improved conservation to help save Washington steelhead runs from depletion and listing. This letter is intended to rally supporters to testify to the Commission on Dec. 13. Letter is completed regarding the tragedy of the Hoh River, by Dick Burge, which is delivered to the FFF Osprey and Salmon, Trout & Steelheader. Article is also provided to other decision makers.

Letters are sent urging that the Elwha River not to be propagated with hatchery fish once the dams are deconstructed and let it go back to a true wild river and allow this as an opportunity to study how a river can come back on it’s own. A letter is also provided to Rep. Norm Dicks, D-Wash., asked that he intervenes with state and federal officials to ensure that “the upper Elwha River be left in its pristine state and designated as a “Wild Salmonid Management Zone.”

The WSC also works to get wild steelhead off restaurant menus in 2008. Efforts included a formal request to place wild steelhead on the Seafood Watch List, and direct action by Todd Ripley, who visited Chef Tony, a well-known East Coast chef and blogger who once served wild steelhead. Todd took the chef a bottle of wine and sat down with him to set the record straight face-to-face about the status of wild steelhead. The direct diplomatic approach worked, and Chef Tony soon told his suppliers and other restaurants not to serve wild steelhead.

The WSC, with the help of Marianne Mitchell, hosts two Steelhead Summits in 2008, which focused on drafting proposals for state agencies to create Wild Salmonid Management zones on Washington rivers.

Dick Burge and other WSC board members worked diligently to add input to

Washington's Steelhead Resource Management Plans, and target the Hoh River on the Olympic Peninsula for special attention in 2009. In early December, the WSC sent a letter with 67 signatures from conservation groups, professional fishing guides and concerned anglers asking the commission to address three crucial concerns. First, the commission should reaffirm its intent to conserve wild steelhead by allowing sport anglers' unharvested portion to contribute to the spawning population, rather than be commercially harvested by the Hoh tribe. Second, the letter asks the commission to direct the WDFW to focus efforts toward wild steelhead conservation rather than harvest programs. Third, the commission must have signed management plans in place before each fishing season.

## **2009**

The WSC requests that wild steelhead be added to the nationwide list of seafood to avoid eating, which is published annually by Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch program. The diner-friendly list clearly identifies seafood that aquarium researchers believe should be avoided, because eating those foods contributes to the decline of a particular species, such as wild steelhead.

The WSC develops and publishes the "**Five Actions You Can Take to Help Save Wild Steelhead**" The intention is to provide a guide for folks concerned about wild steelhead and turn that concern into actionable advocacy. The Five included:

1. Get involved in your local Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group.
2. Send an e-mail or letter requesting that sport fishers receive 50 percent of the harvestable surplus of wild steelhead, and that any unharvested portion be allowed to contribute to the spawning population.
3. Send an e-mail or letter requesting that WDFW have a written management plan in place with the tribes before any river system in the state is opened for steelhead fishing.
4. Join a conservation organization that protects river habitat, wild steelhead and salmon.
5. Get involved in the WDFW major rules cycle that take place every other year.

The WSC delivers proposals to the WDFW Major Rules Cycle and many are accepted. These included prohibiting wild steelhead retention November through February to add protection to the early run of wild steelhead. There are also proposals provided for additional protection of resident rainbow trout, laying the groundwork for creating Wild Salmonid Management Zones on various rivers. which results into regulation.

The WSC invests in steelhead science and awards Megan Atcheson, a graduate student with the UW School of Fisheries. Megan is conducting research on climate change, feeding habits and growth of steelhead in the marine environment. The organization also provides a scholarship to Sewall Young, a graduate student with UW School of Fisheries, for research on marine distribution and ecology for steelhead environments. The intention of this research is to provide new information on steelhead in their ocean habitat environments.

The WSC partners with “**Rivers of a Lost Coast**” for its annual steelhead benefit. The film’s producers, Justin Coupe and Palmer Taylor, from Sacramento attend, as was narrator, Emmy Award winning actor, Tom Skerritt. Also in attendance were Russell Chatham from Livingston, Montana, a mainstay of the movie and, Penny Sbicca from Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, the daughter of the late Bob Nauheim, another key figure in the film. The WSC’s Jack Berryman is also interviewed in the film. The film tells the story of the demise of the famous rivers of Northern California and the lesson that should be learned regarding the conservation of wild steelhead and salmon.

The WSC Conservation Award is presented to Bill McMillan recognizing his life’s work in steelhead advocacy. Bill’s lifetime commitment to steelhead advocacy is recognized and admired through his persistence and success at bringing steelhead issues to the surface, thus building awareness and understanding of the plight of wild steelhead and what we can do to become more conservation minded anglers.

The WSC delivers a letter to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission regarding “**A New Perspective on the Process for Producing a Hatchery Reform Policy**” demanding that hatchery reform should be directly driven by the necessities of recovering our wild stocks, and that a good hatchery reform policy should be contingent on a well framed Wild Fish Recovery Policy.

## **2010**

Sam Wright is awarded the 2010 Conservation Award at the WSC Fundraiser at the Redmond Marriot lead and organized by Brian Bennet. Sam is recognized for his major contributions, which include:

- Initiated adipose fin marking for all hatchery steelhead.
- Developed Washington State’s Wild Trout Management Strategy.
- Primary author for Washington State’s Wild Salmonid Policy.
- Wrote ESA Petition that led to listing Puget Sound wild steelhead.
- Forced WDFW to stop using juvenile steelhead for “trout fishing” in the Puget Sound Basin.

The WSC “**Worried Yet?**” campaign is developed, which include “The 5 Things You Can Do For Wild Steelhead”. Thus bringing awareness to a broader audience and encourages our supporters to distribute information to increase visibility of wild steelhead issues, inspire action and provide a guide what advocates can do individually and collectively to support steelhead conservation.

The WSC hosts and sponsors the Steelhead Summit Alliance lead by Marianne Mitchell and brought together concerned organizations, state and federal experts and staff representative from Congressman Norm Dicks off to hear and focus on recent outbreaks of IHN disease of hatchery fish, demanding action to protect wild steelhead from this depleting disease.

Funding and partnership with Patagonia is established to provide funding for Bill McMillan’s work regarding Columbia River historical abundance research for wild steelhead. The work will be submitted and utilized by NOAA for Columbia River recovery of wild steelhead.

WSC updates wild steelhead escapement chart for wild steelhead in Western Washington and made available on the website. These charts utilize the WDFW data and help to visually show the trends for wild steelhead in their various water sheds.

WSC Delivers Comments to the WDFW 2011-2017 Strategic Plan for Wild Steelhead. The points of the plan included:

- Improve conservation practices to enhance protection and restoration of native fish and wildlife
- Preventing over harvests of wild fish should be a major goal of WDFW
- WDFW will manage hatcheries conservatively to eliminate impacts to wild stocks based on the best available science.
- Develop management programs that protect juveniles and all life history forms of wild stocks
- Investigate and publish the causes for decline of wild stocks.
- Develop a system of Wild Salmonid Management Zones
- Develop a plan to protect and manage wild fish and their habitats in response to climate change.
- Recover damaged habitats that are of high priority and key to wild stock recovery and productivity.
- Establish river corridor preserves on all productive rivers through joint efforts with other state and federal agencies
- Make violations of harvest and gear rules more severe.
- Increase the economic benefits and public participation derived from sustainable fish and wildlife opportunities.
- Expand access for fishing, hunting and other recreational opportunities.

Comments on the Elwha River Fish Restoration Plan and the WA Department of Fish and Wildlife proposal for a five-year angling moratorium delivered to

agencies by Wild Steelhead Coalition, Wild Fish Conservancy, Conservation Angler and FFF Steelhead Committee. These comments refer to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's (WDFW) proposed fishing moratorium on the Elwha River and the Elwha River Fish Restoration Plan, (NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-NWFSC-90, April, 2008) (Plan). Our comments address fundamental issues of concern regarding the plan, including utilizing hatchery fish for recovery.

## **2011**

The WSC Hosts and sponsors a Steelhead Summit Alliance again lead by Marianne Mitchell conference on the "**Future of Native Fisheries on the Elwha River**". Participants and speakers included representatives from NOAA, Olympic National Park and noted author Bruce Brown of "**Mountain in the Clouds**"

Lead by WSC VP of Communications, Jonathan Stumpf, a new, information-rich and user-orientated website is introduced with new identity for the Wild Steelhead Coalition.

WSC efforts to secure important protection for early winter steelhead on the Olympic Peninsula is finally achieved; Regulation is enacted to eliminate intentional sport harvest of wild steelhead from November thru February 16<sup>th</sup> in efforts to protect the depleted early component run of wild steelhead.

WSC expand its reach by adding Alaska Regional Representative, Dave Little.

WSC develops and provides "**Steelhead Endangered Species Status**" The intention was to develop an information graphic that tells the situation of wild steelhead on the West Coast, simply, on one page.

WSC recommends the termination of the Snider Creek Steelhead Supplementation Program on the Sol Duc River. Dick Burge and John McMillan write a scientific paper showing the potential of significant loss of the wild steelhead population from this wild brood stock hatchery. The WSC also provides a lengthy set of comments on reasons to eliminate the hatchery. Success is achieved in the creation of a wild steelhead gene bank on the Sol Duc River and is the first river to be managed as a Wild Steelhead Management Zone for the Olympic Peninsula Region.

The WSC develops and provides comments to NOAA regarding Puget Sound Steelhead Critical habitat designation. And also provides comment on Snohomish County Wild Steelhead Recovery Plan.

The WSC hosts a presentation by Dave Pflug titled "Impacts of Hatchery Steelhead on Wild Steelhead in the Skagit Watershed"

The WSC partners with Wild Fish Conservancy, Conservation Angler and FFF Steelhead Committee and serves WDFW, NOAA, Olympic National Park, US Fish and Wildlife and Representatives of the Lower Klallam Elwha Tribe 60-Day Notice to litigate over hatchery use for wild fish restoration on Elwha and in violation of the Elwha Act.

The WSC, lead by Jonathan Stumpf, partners with Emerald Water Anglers to premier the film "Connect" in Seattle and collects \$5,000 in donations to support litigation on the Elwha River.

Orvis is established as partner with WSC in wild steelhead conservation.

## **2012**

Dick Burge represents the WSC on the Hatchery Action Advisory Committee to review the Puget Sound Hatcheries and species they culture including Steelhead, King salmon, Silver Salmon and Chum Salmon. These meetings (over 10 at this point) continue. Along with Nick Gayeski, we are able to show the others the value in eliminating the steelhead production of the Marblemount Hatchery on the Skagit River and gain a 6 to 2 vote for making the river a Wild Steelhead Management Area. Discussion continues for five other rivers recommended for Wild steelhead Management Areas, which include The SF Nooksack, the Samish, the Sauk and the Tolt.

The WSC provides testimony to Washington Commission requesting stronger conservation measures for rainbow trout, the resident form of wild steelhead in our anadromous rivers and streams and more wild steelhead managed streams.

Litigation is filed with WSC partners Wild Fish Conservancy, Conservation Angler and FFF Steelhead Committee regarding hatchery use on the Elwha River. Initial promise is achieved with the Lower Klallam Elwha Tribes stipulation to stop planting Chambers Creek stock steelhead. However, concern remains regarding wild brood stock hatchery production still being released to the river.

The WSC, led by Josh Mills of the Chucking Line, Chasing Tail blog and Silver Bow Fly Shop, premier the film "Connect" in Spokane and collect over \$2,000 in donations for the WSC.

Gig Harbor Fly Shop sponsors the Fly Fishing Film Tour with Patagonia and donates proceeds to the WSC.

To be continued...