



A Pacific Northwest Coastal Conservation Association Publication | Issue 9 | April-May 2009 | www.CCAPNW.org

# CCA Welcomes Brett Larson and Nello Picinich

In less than two years, CCA has quickly grown to nearly 10,000 members and 23 chapters in the Pacific Northwest, creating a need for more staff. To help us successfully continue our membership, fund-raising and advocacy efforts, earlier this year we welcomed two new members to the CCA team.

Brett Larson and Nello Picinich were hired as Assistant Directors for Oregon and Washington. Both are based out of the Pacific Northwest regional office in Vancouver, WA, allowing for greater efficiencies in our region.

Brett has been hired as the Assistant Director for Oregon, and just across the border to the north, Nello has taken on the role of the Assistant Director for Washington. Their primary responsibilities will be to provide

support for each chapter's annual fund-raising banquet, grow CCA membership and provide a consistent level of communication within and between the various state chapters. The first banquet of the year, Oregon's Willamette Falls chapter, occurred on March 5 and both Brett and Nello will be busy supporting 16 more banquets over the next four months!

Brett brings a wealth of outdoor, fund raising and management experience to CCA, with a background in retail management. For the last eight years Brett has worked for Sportsman's Warehouse in the Pacific Northwest. Most recently he managed the Vancouver, WA store for three years, and prior to that Brett managed the Salem, OR store for five years. During his time at Sportsman's, Brett was involved with literally hundreds of fund-raising events and has already made a positive

impact on structuring banquets here in the Pacific Northwest.

For the past three years Nello served as the Operations Director at the Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group, a volunteer-based, non-profit organization focused on salmon and steelhead restoration projects. Prior to that, Nello worked for almost seven years as a project manager for a consulting firm in the airline industry. His business background and fisheries expertise have already proven to be of value in his new role at CCA. Born and raised in West Seattle, Nello and his family now reside in Southwest Washington.

Please join us in welcoming Brett and Nello to CCA Pacific Northwest. 📍



CCA PNW welcomes new State Assistant Directors, Brett Larson (left) and Nello Picinich (right).

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# Catching Up With Our Growth

**Bryan Irwin**  
PNW Executive Director

In less than two years CCA-PNW has developed into a very significant organization in the Pacific Northwest with thousands of members and professional staff, including lobbyists in both states. We are fast becoming the one thing our region has lacked in the past, a unified voice for recreational anglers standing up to protect our fish.

But there's one problem: We don't have enough oars in the water. I can't say enough about the people who have stood up and become involved in the leadership and development of CCA. But, there aren't enough of them. The critical need for CCA in the PNW has resulted in fast membership growth, but the number of leaders has not grown in the same manner. Over the past 12 months our membership has grown by 40%, but we have virtually the same number of leaders doing an ever-increasing amount of work.

I've spent hours pondering the difference between the type of person that gets involved and takes responsibility and those who do not. I don't think I'm any closer to the answer, but I can tell you what it's not. It's not how busy you are or how much you like to fish. We have leaders that love to fish and those that hardly ever go. We have leaders that run multiple companies and are among the busiest people on the planet and others who are retired and have significant "free time".

I know it's not easy to figure out how to get involved. That's why it's going to be my goal to make that easier for our volunteers by focusing our ongoing efforts on providing members with specific actions or activities that could benefit from their time and efforts. For example, at our chapter meetings we provide a lot of great information, but we don't do enough to provide our members with the actions they can take to help us advance our cause.

If you are reading this and thinking, "How can I get involved?" I've achieved my goal. The first step is asking yourself where you can help the most. There are four aspects that make CCA successful, they are: Membership, Advocacy, Communications and Fundraising. Consider which of these areas are the most appealing to you, and get involved with your local chapter. If you are interested in opportunities outside of your local chapter, or are interested in starting a chapter, call our CCA office and ask for Brett in Oregon, or Nello in Washington and let them know where you want to get involved. They can help provide direction and CCA will benefit from your involvement. Remember, you are CCA. ☺



## CCA 2009 Spring Banquet Calendar

CCA Spring banquet season is nearly upon us! Please mark your calendar with the following important dates and plan to attend the banquet(s) in your area. Oregon and Washington banquets that will take place this Spring are listed in the chart below.

Washington Banquets .....	Banquet Date
Kitsap Chapter .....	April 11th
Lewis County Chapter .....	April 25th
North Sound Chapter .....	May 9th
North Snohomish Chapter .....	May 14th
Southwest Washington .....	June 6th
Oregon Banquets .....	Banquet Date
Tualatin Valley .....	April 17th
Salem .....	May 30th







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# Play Chess and Fish... or Go Bowling

**John Stec**  
Oregon CCA President

March seems to have been full of "teaser" days. You know them when you see them... blue sky, temperature in the mid-to-high fifties, light breezes. They take our minds off the fact that there are still blustery days ahead, and give us incentive to inventory our gear, clean up our reels, and try to forget that the world around us seems to be completely out of our control. Reports of early springers and the occasional steelie increase our anticipation; some of us take to the water in spite of temperatures still running on the cold side. After all, someone is going to get into the first fish; why not you or me?

CCA Oregon has also seen a fair number of teaser days lately. One of the first was our extremely visible and successful legislative outreach with respect to the ODFW Commissioners' spring allocation decision that left nearly everyone stunned and angered. Following that, we took a stand on budget cuts proposed for the Oregon State Police Wildlife Enforcement Division that would have greatly impaired fish and game law enforcement capabilities statewide.

Another important and exciting development was the emergence of a candidate for one of the seats on the ODFW Commission who truly understands selective harvest reform and the need to place conservation before allocation. Stan Steele is tremendously qualified to bring intelligence and balance to complex issues such as the ODFW budget and Marine Reserves – all elements of our legislative agenda. Additionally, there is not one but three bills related to selective harvest heading to committee review in this legislative session. Representative Vic Gilliam introduced one of these bills – H2749 – on behalf of CCA Oregon. We have also declared our support for other legislation, Senate Bill S472, introduced by Senator Jason Atkinson. This bill requires ODFW to utilize hatch boxes on the Rogue and other Oregon rivers and is consistent with the objectives of CCA Oregon's position on hatchery reform.

I choose to refer to these specific actions as "teasers" because the legislature has yet to act on any of them. This is because the session has really just begun and the processes of budget review and approval, administrative appointment, and law enactment, are by design slow and methodical. In the days ahead, our lobbyist, Shawn Miller, will be instrumental in working with our legislators on behalf of these important issues, for all of us.

Recently, CCA members were on the move in Salem as well. On February 24<sup>th</sup>, many of us had the opportunity to visit the state house and our local legislators. Shawn and Ken Chambers (CCA Oregon Salem chapter and state Vice President), and Bryan Irwin (CCA PNW Executive Director) spent many hours in coordination and collaboration to make CCA Legislative Day an extremely educational and productive event. Shawn presented the attendees with an excellent refresher course on the legislative process. Senators Fred Girod and Jason Atkinson generously took time away from their hectic schedules to provide further perspective and insight. There was no mistaking their passion and commitment to correcting the flaws in our fish management policies and practices. After a good discussion of our legislative agenda, we fanned out to the house and senate offices to meet with legislators from our local districts, leaving each of them with a copy of the agenda.

Here is a couple of impressions from this event. First, as I noted earlier, the legislative process is slow. That this is so should come as no surprise to anyone. For those seeking change it can be a source of deep frustration. Yet, the elaborate process of drafting, introducing, and reviewing legislation is painstaking by design. The path through house and senate is loaded with checks and balances to require our legislators to perform due diligence before a law is passed. Part of the process must include

the gathering and evaluation of information and consideration of multiple points of view, and this takes time.

Secondly, although it may seem that whoever shouts the longest and loudest gets the attention of our legislators, that approach is more likely to have an opposite effect. Ideally, decision making ought to be based upon fact and logic. This is why CCA places so much emphasis on science in determining its positions and priorities. It is also why the quiet presence of forty or fifty CCA members adorned in CCA shirts and hats, sporting CCA buttons as they move to and from legislative offices, has potentially more impact than three hundred shouting, banner waving "activists."

Finally, know that we are all being well served by Shawn Miller. Not only is he a very visible and recognized presence in Salem, but he continues to provide us with solid advice on tactics and strategy. As we move deeper into the legislative session he will let us know when and where the presence our membership can be most effectively rallied. We are indeed fortunate to have him as an advisor and ally.

I would like to leave you with one more thought. At some point during the year, most of you will receive a membership renewal notice. Around twenty percent will not renew, and the reasons will vary. Some will have moved away or simply lost interest. Some may find themselves forced to make a hard choice between groceries, health care or housing, and membership renewal. We all pray that there are few of us so affected. And some will hesitate to renew, asking first, "What has CCA accomplished so far?"

I would reply by returning to the developments outlined at the top of this commentary. Each of these "teasers" can be likened to a move in a game of chess. Each is a deliberate step in a complex sequence of activities. At any given time a single move may appear to be random and unimpressive, even though it is part of a broader winning strategy. Watching the game unfold may be rather boring as there is no real time limit on the moves. Along the way, the strategy may need to be rethought in the face of opportunities and threats. There will also be temptations to abandon the strategy in a bold and dramatic move in response to an opponent's cleverly set trap. In the end though, a patient, well-played game leads to an inevitable conclusion.

So if you're not sure if you should renew, here's where we stand. The chess board has been set and the play initiated. This is not a game for the restless and impatient, who might be better suited for a good string of bowling. There the results are immediate and obvious. There is simple and instant satisfaction in the crushing delivery of a heavy ball, followed by the thunderous impact and chaotic scattering of pins. Score keeping is very easy – you just count the number of "survivors."

I ask you, then. Would you rather go bowling? If the answer is yes, you'll probably want to save your membership fee. On the other hand, if you would care to play chess, renew your membership now. Better yet, sign up for the next level of membership. And after the game is over, let's go fishing. 🐟

## Supporters of CCA from the beginning!

*Salmon & Steelhead Journal* continues to donate time and money to further the cause of CCA. While other magazines sit by and watch the momentum build, *Salmon & Steelhead Journal* is committed to making sure CCA doesn't lose momentum. If you don't already subscribe, do it today. Together we'll work together to ensure salmon runs improve and thrive in the West.



[www.salmonandsteelheadjournal.com](http://www.salmonandsteelheadjournal.com)

## Legislature Hostile Toward Conservation and Citizen Oversight

**Ed Wickersham**  
*Chair, CCA Washington GRC*

CCA Washington kicked off the 2009 legislative session with a positive effort to promote the need for mark-selective commercial harvest gear. Not surprisingly, commercial friendly committee chairs make progress in this area difficult and together with commercial fishing interests have launched an attack on our Fish & Wildlife Commission seeking to dislodge it from the principled conservation stance it has taken in recent years.

Despite the rhetoric of our detractors, CCA Washington actively supports commercial fishing for salmon and sturgeon in the Pacific Northwest, as long as it remains sustainable, safe to marine resources and is mark-selective. Unfortunately, destructive indiscriminate gear such as the gillnet is virtually the only gear permitted by law for salmon harvest. To support development of selective gear, your Washington GRC with the expert assistance of Heath Heikkila and our top flight lobbyist, Mike Ryherd crafted HB 2266, a bill compelling WDFW to authorize commercial salmon gear that is designed for the live capture and sorting of salmon before harvest.

The bill provides a five year period for Washington fisheries to become mark-selective, and it directly supports HSRG and Governor Gregoire's conservation directives. You can see our bill online at <http://tinyurl.com/ablz9d>. While it is unlikely that pro-commercial Rep. Brian Blake's committee will consider the issue during this session, it represents an important first step towards changing the debate. Proponents of the status quo will always seek to delay, but awareness of the need to retool Washington's commercial salmon fishery for a sustainable, selective future is gaining momentum.

We have turned our energies toward an urgent struggle to protect the infrastructure of our citizen Fish & Wildlife Commission. By standing up for conservation in Puget Sound and Columbia River fisheries, the Commission has drawn fire from commercial fishing interests in the form of SSB 5127, a bill that would gut the current citizen Fish & Wildlife Commission and effectively undo the 1995 mandate of Referendum 45. Our contract lobbyist, fisheries director and many members of the GRC have rallied to attend meetings with legislators and have helped develop two rounds of action alerts. We are bringing the grassroots power of CCA to bear against this hostile attack on the Commission.

HB 5127 is our main concern now, but we are active on many fronts in this session. Other bills we are tracking on your behalf are HB 5421 concerning recreational salmon and steelhead fisheries in the Columbia River and the WDFW's budget proposal concerning a 10% increase in sport and commercial license fees. We seek and receive many opportunities to carry your message to elected officials and the public. Ed Wickersham, Andy Marks, and Frank Urabeck joined lobbyist Mike Ryherd at a reception at the Governor's mansion where we briefed several key legislators and Commissioners on the dangers of SSB 5127. Andy Marks gave an hour long interview about the bill on KJR 950 AM's "NW Wild Country" radio show on March 6<sup>th</sup>. He explained CCA's position and alerted citizens that without their concerted action now, they might lose the Washington Fish & Wildlife Commission as they know it.

Coalition work with almost 20 other former and retired law enforcement officers led to a comprehensive appeal by to end to night gillnetting and impose effective commercial catch reporting regulations for the gillnet fleet. Sparked by the \$150,000 plea bargain

of the Heuker brothers after being caught red-handed in over 50 violations of these lax catch-reporting rules, our letter has made significant waves in both capitols. We sent it to the Commissioners and Governors of both states and gained significant positive coverage of this effort in the Columbian, The Reel News, and Bill Monroe's blog. See our letter online at <http://tinyurl.com/bu48uv>.

Harry Barber and Ginny Ross continue their ongoing advocacy with the Department to re-implement mark-selective fishing for Upper Columbia River Summer Chinook. The four major indicators suggesting that mark-selective fishing is key to restoring this run are clearly outlined in a power point presentation they developed and have been presenting to the Commission, to WDFW officials and CCA Chapters. At one hearing, the Colville tribal delegation was pleased to see their live capture purse seining project highlighted and endorsed in our testimony. Watch for an article on our Summer Chinook restoration project in an upcoming issue of TIDE.

Besides testifying at key hearings and leading our Puget Sound group, Andy Marks continues to ably lead our efforts in the 2009 North of Falcon process now underway. He has attended key meetings with WDFW leaders, lobbyists, and citizen advocates to hear WDFW's priorities for Puget Sound. Here is a sign that our efforts are bearing fruit: WDFW has proposed significant increases in mark-selective fishing in Puget Sound including converting non-selective areas to mark-selective areas and increasing season length in those areas. After many discussions and meetings, our team is now set for active engagement in this year's North of Falcon process and ready to carry CCA's banner of conservation, recovery, and selective harvest by all fishers. ☺

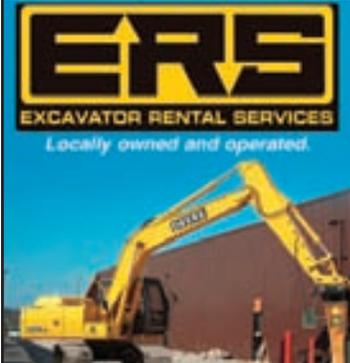
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# Spring Bonneville Sea Lion Circus Continues

**Brad Damm**  
*CCA Oregon.*

In a sure sign of spring coming back to our region; the Bonneville Dam annual spring sea lion circus has started again. Fisheries managers, wildlife biologists, tribal officials, and the Corps of Engineers hosted a media event at the dam to update the public on sea lion monitoring, hazing, and removal operations. Officials also intended to showcase new precautions designed to avoid an incident similar to the one in 2008 where six sea lions died in the traps over a weekend as an unintentional consequence of problems with release mechanisms on the trap doors. Trapping could restart as soon as March 2nd, 2009.

The event today had the beginnings of all the drama of years past. Officials only invited members of the accredited media into the secure area of the dam to answer questions and take a close look at the new trap modifications. ID's were checked and hard hats were issued. A serious safety briefing was held.



Under sunny skies and snowcapped hills the tour started. Several California sea lions tossed a Sturgeon back and forth for the cameras. The new electronically triggered doors on the traps wouldn't work properly for the officials, and an animal rights activist (posing as media) snuck into the event and interrupted the various official briefings and interviews. Protesters waited outside the



The Sea Lion/Salmon conflict at the base of Bonneville Dam continues as the Spring salmon arrive.

gates and holding signs to save the sea lions. Yup, spring is almost here and all the signs point to salmon coming soon.

According to the US Army Corps of Engineers, there were 103 different sea lions identified in quarter-mile area at the base of the dam last year, and those sea lions ate or killed the highest number of salmon and steelhead ever recorded in modern times. Several Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed stocks of these fish migrate past the dam each spring, and the hazing and removal operations are a part of a larger overall effort by state, federal, and tribal authorities to recover these endangered fish.

Despite the spring circus at the dam, it seems likely lethal removal operations will move forward. The Humane Society of the United States had sought an injunction to stop the removal operations that was denied on February 26<sup>th</sup> by the US Ninth Circuit Court of appeals. No further litigation is pending. The traps are currently in place and the sea lions are using them. Although a zoo in Chicago has offered to take the first two animals trapped, it seems wildlife managers have limited options to send the problem predators into permanent captivity.

Several animals were relocated to zoos and aquariums last year, but there are simply not enough facilities and too many animals that need to be removed.

Before any specific sea lion can be euthanized, it first has to be observed and documented killing or consuming endangered salmon. Stellar sea lions are protected under the ESA, so only California sea lions can be removed. If authorities are unable to place a trapped animal in permanent captivity, it will be given a lethal injection. If the worst offenders will not enter the traps they can be shot under the permit issued last year by NOAA-Fisheries. If it gets that far, sharpshooters from Washington law enforcement agencies have already been recruited. Only animals within 50 feet of shore (or on land) can be shot, and any carcasses that result from those actions would be recovered and removed from the river.

Authorities can remove up to 85 specific problem California sea lions in 2009. Over the last few years we have seen that hazing operations using rubber buckshot and pyrotechnics have only had limited success with California sea lions, and the underwater acoustic deterrence devices installed by The Corps have been a failure at keeping them away. Although it is unfortunate that we once again at the point of lethal removal, there are simply no other options. The number of fish consumed by sea lions at the dam increases every year, and the wild ESA listed salmon and steelhead that pass Bonneville Dam each spring need this protection. These fish are far too valuable to lose. ☹

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Monthly CCA article in

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# Coastal Conservation Association Membership Application

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*The Ripple Effect*  
 Spring issues in a new season of the political fight to conserve Salmon and Steelhead. Learn more in this issue of...

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