Recreational Priority: The Future For Washington’s Fisheries

CCA is successfully promoting the concept of a recreational priority to fisheries managers and elected officials with compelling facts that support change. This upcoming legislative session provides us a prime opportunity to secure the future of our fisheries.

New Budget Policy Released
In September of 2014, the WDFW Commission released a budget policy stressing the important conservation, economic and social benefits of selective recreational fishing. According to the Commission Policy, “the Department must develop specific proposals that result in increased sport fishing opportunity” and consider the “comparable economic and agency revenue benefits of respective fisheries” in budget discussions.

New Budget Policy Utilized
As part of the process to create a new salmon management policy in Willapa Bay, fisheries managers, following guidelines from the newly adopted budget policy, showcased the economic value of recreational and commercial fisheries. Despite catching less than 10% of the overall salmon harvest, the recreational fishery had a 63% greater economic impact on the state’s economy than the commercial fishery ($3,220,593 vs $2,047,396).

Revenue to WDFW
Recreational fishing is enjoyed by over 750,000 residents each year and is a $1 billion dollar industry responsible for nearly 13,000 jobs here in Washington. Due to recent license and endorsement fee increases, recreational anglers have become the largest single revenue source to WDFW, providing over $71 million each biennium in user fees which accounts for 19% of WDFW’s budget.

In contrast, the entire non-tribal commercial fishing industry provides less than $1.6 million to WDFW (1% of its budget) and $7 million to the general fund in excise taxes and other fees. When you look at non-tribal commercial salmon fisheries, the revenue disparity becomes even more evident. All non-tribal commercial salmon fisheries provide only $552,000 to WDFW and $2 million to the general fund. This is less than the $3 million generated by the Columbia River salmon and steelhead endorsement alone!

Commercial Subsidies
The fact is that commercial salmon fisheries cost more for WDFW to manage and administer than they generate in revenue for the state. Nearly every commercial salmon fishery actually costs more to manage than the entire Net Economic Value. A mere $100,000 in license revenue is generated from the Willapa Bay/Columbia River gillnet permit – far less than the cost of managing just the Willapa Bay commercial fishery.

Harming the Resource
Unlike recreational fisheries, nearly all commercial salmon fisheries are non-selective, meaning they are incapable of releasing wild salmon/steelhead and other non-target species unharmed. In many cases these are ESA listed species and the very fish we are trying to get back to their native spawning grounds.

Non-selective commercial salmon fisheries consistently constrain recreational fisheries, as well as the corresponding license revenue to WDFW and the economic value to the state. Common-sense conservation and economics point to a recreational priority as a key ingredient in protecting and restoring our fisheries.
CCA members from across the state have once again raised the bar during the 2014 derby season. Derbies are excellent events for not only getting out on the water, but also for growing membership and engaging with local businesses and communities in promoting the value of selective recreational fisheries.

**Wenatchee Salmon Derby**
The first of our three derbies kicked off in mid-July with the CCA Wenatchee Salmon Derby. Despite wildfires in the region, nearly 100 anglers took part in the derby with Mike Ervin capturing first place with his 24.5 pound Chinook.

**Steelhead Challenge**
In late July, the CCA Lower Columbia chapter hosted the 2nd Annual Steelhead Challenge derby with over 50 anglers participating. Sunny skies and acrobatic fish greeted the anglers with a 9.4 pound steelhead landed by Jan Thompson taking first prize.

**King of the Reach**
Finally, in conjunction with Grant County PUD and WDFW, the CCA King of the Reach derby was held in late October along the famed Hanford Reach on the mid-Columbia River. This derby is unique with the goal of landing as many wild Chinook as possible. Participants captured nearly 300 wild salmon to use as broodstock at the Priest Rapids Hatchery. By increasing the number of wild fish used in the hatchery’s spawning efforts, the fitness of hatchery salmon can be improved and their impacts on wild fish spawning in the river can be minimized. Congratulations to Thor Ostrom, his team captured the first place prize with 52 fish over three days of fishing.

Thanks again to the great derby teams and sponsors that made these events happen.
President’s Message

By Dale Scott, CCA Washington
State President

Conservation: The art of preserving, guarding or protecting; wise use.

Conservationist: Someone who works to protect animals, plants and natural resources, or to prevent the loss or waste of natural resources.

Conservation means something different to each one of us. CCA is, first and foremost, a conservation organization. A very large percentage of CCA members are sports fishermen and women. People using the resources, by and large, make some of the best conservationists.

Of note, recreational anglers pay a license fee surcharge that has provided nearly $3.5 million to the state’s habitat enhancement groups since 2008. By comparison, the commercial fishing industry has paid less than $470,000 into these funds during the same time period.

We make every effort to restore wild fish to their habitat. We also understand that hatchery fish are an integral part of the equation. With good science and good management we can have both, wild and hatchery fish. We can recover ESA-listed stocks; we can have robust fisheries. They are not mutually exclusive.

CCA Washington members need to educate the public on the importance of hatchery fish – the social, cultural, economic, and political importance. And, that hatchery fish can coexist with wild fish if managed properly. Selective gear used by sports fishermen has shown time and again that we can fish AND protect our wild fish.

All anglers – bait or fly, bank or boat, fresh water or saltwater – need to join CCA and unite. There are critical issues we all face and though we have made progress, there is still much work to be done. We need to continue our demands for good management, we must stay vigilant and CCA must continue to grow. The more members we have, the stronger our voice. Sign up a new member today! Keep up the good fight! 🎣

Spring Banquet Dates Announced

CCA banquets are the best way to grow membership, raise funds to conserve marine resources in Washington State, raise awareness of the issues facing our fisheries and most importantly to have fun. We’re looking forward to another great season of sold out events and we hope you are able to attend and support your local event in 2015.

- **Twin Harbors** - Saturday, March 7 @ Grays Harbor College in Aberdeen
- **Tri Cities** - Saturday, March 14 @ the TRAC in Pasco
- **Sea Tac** - Saturday, March 14 @ the IBEW Hall in Kent
- **Lewis County** - Saturday, March 21 @ SW WA Fairgrounds in Chehalis
- **Kitsap** - Saturday, March 28 @ Kitsap Fairgrounds in Bremerton
- **North Central Washington** - Saturday, April 11 @ the Eagles in Wenatchee
- **Southwest Washington** - Thursday, April 16, 2015 @ Clark County Fairgrounds in Ridgefield
- **North Snohomish** - Saturday, May 02, 2015 @ the Everett Yacht Club
- **North Olympic Peninsula** - Thursday, June 11, 2015 @ the John Wayne Marina in Sequim
- **North Sound** - Spring TBD (Bellingham/Mt Vernon)
- **Hells Canyon** - Spring TBD (Clarkston/Lewiston)

For more information about these and other CCA events, please call us at 877-255-8772 or visit us at [www.CCAWashington.org](http://www.CCAWashington.org).
CCA is successfully promoting the concept of a recreational priority to fisheries managers. The WDFW Commission recently released a budget policy stressing the importance of “selective, recreational fisheries.” It has taken many years, but the conservation, economic and social benefits of recreational fishing are being recognized by fisheries policy managers in the Northwest. According to the WDFW Commission, “the Department must develop specific proposals that result in increased sport fishing opportunity” and consider the “comparable economic and agency revenue benefits of respective fisheries.”

CCA Washington and Oregon are both working diligently to ensure that the new Columbia River Gillnet Reform Policy becomes reality. CCA volunteers are at the forefront of this battle, working with agency and elected officials to implement the reforms, including a recreational fishing priority. CCA is the only organization that has intervened in lawsuits brought by gillnet interests in both states that aim to dismantle the conservation and economic benefits of the policy.

Thanks to the terrific efforts of volunteers across the state, CCA Washington set a new statewide banquet attendance record with 25% more attendees than last year’s previous high mark. The CCA Tri Cities chapter set a single event mark with 420 banquet attendees.

A new policy was adopted in Gray’s Harbor that places an increased priority on conservation and provides more certainty to recreational fisheries. CCA is currently working to establish a new policy for Willapa Bay fisheries. For too long, subsidized commercial fisheries and current management practices have created negative impacts on the health of salmon populations through non-selective commercial gillnet fisheries. As we have experienced with the implementation of the Columbia River policy that was adopted last year, more work will be required to ensure these policies are a success.
In 2014, CCA Washington added to the already long list of accomplishments. Efforts by CCA volunteers and staff proved fruitful around the state in accomplishments concerning advocacy work, fundraising efforts and membership development.

Hosted the 2nd Annual CCA Legislative Outreach Event

Over 30 people attended the crab boil at the Port of Everett. Events like these help showcase CCA to our elected officials and they aid in conveying our message of common-sense conservation.

Re-initiation of Summer Steelhead Recycling on the Cowlitz River

Using sound science, CCA Washington members advocated for and worked on reinstatement of Summer Steelhead recycling on the Cowlitz River.

Implementation of Cowlitz River Net Pen Program

Construction of the net pens at Mayfield was finalized and for a short period of time Fall Chinook were reared there. The primary short-term benefit of these net pens is to allow for comparison studies in smolt acclimation and survival compared to standard hatchery production practices.

Lake Washington Predation Study

In an effort to begin restoring the Lake Washington sockeye salmon run, CCA helped secure funding for a study to evaluate the impact of predation on juvenile sockeye salmon. When open, the Lake Washington Sockeye recreational fishery generates millions of dollars to the state economy.

Hosted our 4th Annual Concerts For a Cause Fundraising Event

For the fourth year in a row, CCA was selected as a benefitting non-profit organization for this 8-week concert series. Joined by over 1,500 local residents, we raised several thousand dollars and also spread awareness about CCA and the need for community involvement in protecting the future of our marine resources.
Did you Know?

Did you know that the Sea Cucumber industry in Washington brings in just as much money as the state's entire non-tribal Coho fishery? In fact, according to WDFW, in fiscal year 2013, the Sea Cucumber fishery actually generated more revenue than the Coho fishery ($1,845,177 vs $1,831,063). Coupled with the fact that many commercial Coho fisheries result in the unnecessary slaughter of ESA and non-target species, leaves many people wondering how the conservation, economic and social benefits of our state's resources are being optimized?

Senator Pearson Named CCA Washington Legislator of the Year

Senator Pearson (R), District 39, has been selected as CCA Washington's 2014 Legislator of the Year for his support of recreational fishing, including working closely with the Senate Budget writers to secure a $150,000 appropriation in the 2014 Supplemental Biennial budget to fund the Lake Washington Sockeye Predation Study.

As Chair of the Senate Natural Resources & Parks Committee, Senator Pearson also convened a special public hearing to shed some light on the litigation and subsequent settlement between WDFW and the Wild Fish Conservancy regarding Puget Sound winter steelhead hatcheries. At that hearing, Senator Pearson put both WDFW and the Wild Fish Conservancy on the spot regarding the litigation, the settlement, and the legal threat facing our salmon and steelhead hatcheries. Senator Pearson has pledged to continue tracking this issue to secure needed reforms.

“Protecting our waters so that future generations can enjoy them is vital for our state's economy and quality of life. Our state's fisheries create jobs, generate revenue for our communities and state coffers and, perhaps most importantly, help make Washington the great family recreational treasure it is,” said Senator Pearson.

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Winter Steelheading on the Olympic Peninsula

By Sean Orr, Washington West Fishing Adventures

The Olympic Peninsula (OP) offers some of the best winter steelhead fishing on the West Coast. People from all over the nation travel to the OP pursuing the wild steelhead that still thrive there.

There are numerous methods to catch these majestic creatures including drifting eggs, bobber and jig, side drifting, pulling plugs and casting spoons. Fly fishing is also popular. These fish are typically very aggressive. If you have a relatively good presentation, any of these methods will entice a strike.

Whether you are fishing from the bank or floating from a boat, the biggest secret to catching these fish is to cover lots of water. I usually float about 15 miles of river a day, moving quickly. We fish lots of different water, typically making 5-10 casts before moving on. This strategy will increase your odds of finding a willing biter. I learned this method when I was growing up fishing small streams from the bank in the late 70’s and early 80’s. I was always impatient wanting to move around a lot and it worked to my benefit. Many of the old timers would stay in one spot while I hiked for miles and enjoyed the vast pockets and deep runs of the river.

Although some rivers on the OP allow you to keep one wild steelhead a year, I encourage all of my clients to practice catch and release on all wild steelhead to ensure they survive well into the future. These runs are still relatively healthy and I do my part to help ensure they remain this way for future generations to also enjoy.

Several rivers including the Sol Duc, Bogachiel, Calawah, Hoh, Clearwater, Queets, Quinault and Humptulips all produce good numbers of wild winter steelhead. They typically begin entering these rivers in early January and run all the way through April. Some of my best fishing is in late April when fishing pressure is minimal. Check your regulations carefully as some rivers close earlier than others. You can reach most of these rivers by staying in the City of Forks or Amanda Park on Lake Quinault. A quick Internet search will reveal several quality lodging sites in these areas.

Sean fishes the Olympic Peninsula from January through April and can be reached at 360.789.8391 or by visiting www.washingtonwestfishing.com.
Coastal Conservation Association Membership Application

**MEMBER INFORMATION**

- Renewal Dues
- New Membership

Name ____________________________________________________________

Associate Member Name(s) (if applicable) ____________________________________________

Member ID# (if renewing) ____________________________________________

Address __________________________________________________________

City/State _________________________________ Zip _______________

Phone ____________________ Email ________________________________________________

Gift Membership From: _____________________________________________

- $25 MEMBER: Membership card, window decal, 2 bumper stickers, TIDE magazine.
- $100 MEMBER: All of the above plus CCA print of your choice
- $15 ASSOCIATE: Per each family member. All member privileges except TIDE. Send names.
- $200 SPONSOR: Bronze lapel pin, print, plus member gifts.
- $500 PATRON: Silver lapel pin, print, plus member gifts.
- $1,000 LIFE MEMBER: Life Member display piece, print, plus member gifts. Quarterly payment option available.
- $10 NEW TIDE: Rising Tide newsletter, three NEW TIDE logo decals, iron-on T-shirt transfer, redfish & speckled trout sticker. For members 17 and younger.

**METHOD OF PAYMENT**

- Cash Enclosed
- Check or Money Order Enclosed
- Mastercard
- Amex
- Visa
- Discover

Credit Card # _________________________

Exp. Date _________________________

Signature ____________________________________

Associate Member Name ____________________________________________

Complete this form and send to:

**Coastal Conservation Association**

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