Crossroads

By Andy Marks, GRC Chairman

Washington recreational anglers are at a crossroads. We have achieved a number of important policy victories (Puget Sound Crab and Shrimp, Columbia River gillnet reforms) that better recognize the many superior benefits of sportfishing. We’ve also benefitted from some recent large salmon runs, particularly to the Columbia River. Unfortunately, recent actions by WDFW have resulted in lost fishing opportunity, lost Puget Sound Steelhead hatchery production, and raised serious questions about the agency’s commitment to recreational anglers – WDFW’s primary customer and largest source of revenue. It is time for a paradigm shift at WDFW – one that truly recognizes and prioritizes the economic, social, conservation, and agency revenue benefits of recreational fishing in Washington. We can succeed, but we must be courageous and proclaim, “We’ve had enough” and band together at this critical time.

WDFW’s Commission has adopted policies to reform the management of harvest and hatcheries. This vision recognizes that tools like selective harvest and hatchery reform are critical to maintaining and enhancing fisheries in an era of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings (and the growing number of lawsuits from anti-hatchery organizations). It recognizes that times have changed and that not all user groups are created equal. It accepts the reality that WDFW would be flat broke without the revenue provided by recreational anglers. Sadly, WDFW’s implementation of this vision leaves much to be desired.

CCA outlined a number of concerns in a recent letter to the Commission (view at www.ccawashington.org/advocacy). They range from the mismanagement that led to the loss of a half million hatchery steelhead in Puget Sound, to this year’s state-tribal Puget Sound fishery agreement that cut recreational salmon quotas for Marine Areas 9/10 by nearly 60% despite tribal fisheries already accounting for over 70% of impacts to the limiting Chinook stock. It is no wonder that the number of annual salmon angling trips in Puget Sound continues to hover around 400,000 today, down from over 1 million in the late 1980’s.

Outside of Puget Sound, frustration is mounting around the implementation of Commission policies to prioritize conservation and recreational fisheries on the Columbia River and in Grays Harbor when it all too often feels like business as usual in managing damaging state gillnet fisheries. These same gillnet fisheries cost more to manage than the revenue generated for the state and often cost more than their entire economic value! The Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement fee generates roughly the same revenue as the total ex-vessel value of the Oregon/Washington lower Columbia River gillnet fleet.

The Commission’s 2009 Hatchery and Fishery Reform policy was intended to break down the silos between the management of hatcheries and harvest. It is only by taking an integrated approach, employing selective harvest principles, and investing in our hatchery system that we can maintain robust fisheries and meet the legal and conservation obligations of the ESA. The Wild Fish Conservancy’s Puget Sound steelhead lawsuit, and subsequent WDFW settlement, reminds us that inaction and excuses are not options.

I drove by Point Defiance yesterday. Puget Sound was devoid of recreational fishing boats. I can recall a time not that many years ago when Puget Sound would be covered with anglers fishing for Chinook, Coho, or even rockfish. Unfortunately today the perception of success is so low that even when seasons are open, few go fishing.

Facing additional rounds of state budget cuts, WDFW will likely propose more sportfishing license fee increases to the Legislature. Recent cuts have slashed WDFW’s state funding from over 30% of its budget to half that today. Leaders from CCA and other allied organizations are meeting with WDFW to understand its plan for changing the status quo and truly prioritizing and increasing recreational fishing opportunity in advance of the next legislative session and any potential license fee increases.

We’re at a crossroads. CCA members and staff have made significant progress with legislators in building support for the economic, social, and conservation values of sportfishing. But we’ve also seen agency failures resulting in lost fishing opportunity, along with the status quo litany of excuses and reasons why policies aren’t being implemented, why deadlines weren’t met, and why recreational fishermen are continually asked to bear the burden of the costs to manage state fisheries (including commercial fishing) without reaping the benefits.

As WDFW comes again with hat in hand seeking another license fee increase, we must use our collective voice to secure real policy changes that truly make recreational fishing the priority.
CCA Washington Welcomes Wayne Jordan & Kari Wallingford

CCA Washington was fortunate to add Wayne Jordan to the team as an Assistant Director this spring. Wayne has spent much of the past decade chasing salmon, steelhead, and trout throughout the Pacific Northwest. A Maine native, Wayne has experience as a CCA volunteer in his home state. His passion for fishing and 20 years of working in the outdoor retail industry has been incredibly valuable as he supports our local chapters’ fundraising banquets and efforts to grow CCA membership.

With the addition of Wayne, CCA Washington now has two active Assistant Directors working with our chapters to help grow membership and fundraising. When he’s not working with CCA chapters, you’ll find him exploring his new locale with his wife and son, fishing rod in hand. Wayne’s passion for angling and conservation has already been making a great difference for CCA Washington and we couldn’t be happier to have him aboard.

We are also pleased to add Kari Wallingford as our new Office Manager. Kari, a Pacific Northwest native and CCA Life Member, joined the CCA Washington staff in March. Kari has extensive experience in the banking industry and her financial background has proven valuable to our accounting operations.

When Kari isn’t working out of the office, she can be found on the water with her husband Terry and their two children. Kari is also an active high school dance team judge, and she enjoys working with her children’s 4-H market steers. Kari is excited to be a part of the CCA team and she is looking forward to working with our volunteers from across the state.

President’s Message

By Dale Scott, CCA Washington State President

I hope everyone had a good, safe 4th of July holiday and that you are enjoying a summer of excellent fishing. My wife Kathy and I just finished a fantastic June season in Westport and the Buoy 10 fishery is just around the corner. As we wind down from our busy spring banquet season, I would like to take a moment and thank the sponsors, donors, volunteers, members, and staff for all our successes. Without everyone’s support and hard work CCA Washington would not be able to work on the advocacy issues that concern us. Banquets serve several crucial roles in our organization. Besides raising important funds to fuel our conservation efforts, banquets are a fun social event and they help grow membership. If you haven’t attended a banquet in the past, please consider doing so this fall.

When people ask me about CCA, I start by explaining how we are a grass roots organization. We are dependent on our volunteers from across the state. There is always strength in numbers. The more individuals and organizations that you can rally to our cause, the better.

Thank you for your hard work and continued support. Good Fishing!

CCA Washington’s Newest Chapter

CCA Washington continues to grow. Last month we added our seventeenth chapter located in the greater Tacoma/Puyallup area. Officially called the Pierce County chapter, we have filled a geographical void on the I-5 corridor between Olympia and Federal Way. The chapter has a strong leadership group that is passionate about the health of Puget Sound fisheries. Keith Artz, a resident of University Place, will serve as the Pierce County chapter’s first president.

The inaugural Pierce County chapter banquet will be held on Thursday, September 25th, at the Tacoma Sportsmen’s Club, Puyallup. If you would like more information about how to get involved with the chapter, or purchase banquet tickets, please contact the state office on our toll free line at 877-255-8772.

The 2014 spring banquet season has come and gone, and it was a season to remember. Nearly 20% more people attended these banquets over the previous year, and several chapters hosted sold out events. The fall banquets are nearly here, and we’re looking forward to another great season of events. CCA banquets are the best way to grow membership, raise funds to conserve marine resources in the state and to raise awareness of the issues that our fisheries face. With five banquets on tap for the fall, including the inaugural Pierce County Chapter banquet, we hope you are able to attend your local event this coming year. Here are our 2014 Fall banquets:

- Pierce County - Thursday, September 25th @ Tacoma Sportsmen's Club, Puyallup
- Yakima Valley - Friday, October 3rd @ Yakima Valley Hotel & Conference Center, Yakima
- Lower Columbia - Friday, October 10th @ Kelso Elks Lodge, Kelso
- Capitol City - Thursday, October 16th @ Lacey Community Center, Lacey
- Sno-King - Thursday, October 23rd @ Nile Gold & Country Club, Mountlake Terrace

For more information about these and other CCA events, please call us at 877-255-8772 or visit us at www.CCAWashington.org.
Conservation Benefits of the Columbia River Policy Revisited

By Ed Wickersham, Former GRC Chairman

A couple years ago, I wrote a piece on the conservation benefits of the bi-state lower Columbia River reforms. I would like to re-visit three key tenets of the new policy: the elimination of large mesh gillnets; a shift toward selective fishing methods and the implementation of a recreational priority. As the policy moves forward, it seems prudent to provide an update on where we stand today.

Elimination of Large Mesh Gillnets

The most significant conservation benefit of the policy is the removal of large mesh gillnets from the lower mainstem Columbia River which is scheduled to occur by 2017. With this one action, we will end the unintentional mortality on thousands of wild salmon and steelhead caused by these indiscriminating “kill” nets, not to mention their unaccounted for drop out and predation related mortalities. With gillnets and tangle nets, bycatch and mortality rates are so high that fisheries managers many times cannot contemplate selective fisheries for the commercial fleet. This was again the case with the 2014 summer Chinook fishery. Fortunately for the resource, with this new policy, only selective commercial gear will be allowed on the mainstem in a few short years and the unacceptable high mortalities and by-catch problems associated with antiquated gillnets will fade into history.

However, since the policy leaves the door open to the continued use of so-called “tangle nets” we still have work to do. It should also be noted that in order to accommodate the commercial fleet, the plan allows gillnetting to take place in off channel areas where far fewer wild salmon and steelhead are entangled and unintentionally killed.

Selective Fishing

By unanimously approving the new policy, our Commissioners made it clear that selective fishing, for both recreational and commercial fisheries, is critically important to the long term health of our salmon, steelhead and sturgeon populations and the future for most mainstem Columbia River fisheries. After 2017, mainstem commercial fisheries, when needed, are to be conducted with selective “live capture” commercial gear. Most commercial fishing in the mainstem for spring and summer Chinook will end unless a large run size justifies commercial harvest, and then only with selective gear. For fall fisheries, it is anticipated that selective commercial fisheries may even help meet conservation-related goals and are to occur only after recreational goals have been met.

Seine nets, when handled properly, are capable of live capture and sorting of non-target species with a very low immediate mortality rate. On the Upper Columbia, the Colville Tribe has fished with seine nets for several years with a very low mortality rate on wild salmon and other non-target species. Preliminary testing on the lower Columbia, which cost tax payers millions of dollars, also showed very promising results with immediate mortality rates to non-target species under 2%. Even more promising was the negligible handle of sturgeon, a species that gets ensnared by the tens of thousands in gillnets. Recent test results on seine nets have not been as promising, with long term mortality rates closer to those found with gillnets. The results raise serious questions about the testing and the relatively low mortality rates adopted for tangle nets. We look to our fisheries managers to start resolving this predicament in future months. In any case, the fact still remains that gillnets have no part in the future of lower mainstem Columbia River fisheries.

A Recreational Priority

Fortunately, recreational fishing with rod and reel can be highly selective as it is capable of the live capture and release of non-target species, in most cases wild salmon and steelhead. Because of this, and in conjunction with the huge economic value of recreational fisheries, the policy provides for a recreational priority for all mainstem fisheries. We have seen a similar recreational priority implemented in the new Grays Harbor management plan.

More than ever, our fisheries managers are beginning to understand the conservation and economic value of recreational fisheries and the many problems associated with gillnets in mixed stock fisheries. It is critical that we continue closely monitoring the implementation of these important principles in the weeks and months to come.

Cowlitz River Summer Steelhead Recycling: A Step in the Right Direction

By Tyler Comeau, Assistant Director

After a near half-decade hiatus, and then two years of test programs, Tacoma Power and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will once again recycle summer steelhead on the Cowlitz River. The anticipated 1,600 hatchery-reared fish will provide an excellent second opportunity for anglers, and will help improve the summer fishery and local economy.

The program was reintiated after two years of testing that resulted in an 18% angler capture rate on the recycled summer steelhead. Aside from the excellent catch rate, the U.S. Geological Survey worked with WDFW to determine how often the recycled hatchery steelhead would stray into small tributary streams where they could compete with wild winter steelhead. The study showed hatchery steelhead rarely moved into the smaller tributaries which helped further validate the recycling program.

“The data gathered from the two year study helped secure this year’s recycling, and with more data we hope to see this program continue to grow,” said CCA member Randy LeDuc.

Recreational anglers, including many CCA Lewis County members, worked in partnership with WDFW and Tacoma Power to help reinstate the recycling program. Tacoma Power will mark and transport the fish from the Barrier Dam to the Cowlitz River near I-5 during the months of July and August until the 1,600 fish recycling quota is met. Tacoma Power and WDFW will share the cost of the recycling program, which many anglers hope to see expanded in the future.

“This is a good step forward for CCA and recreational anglers to get the 1,600 steelhead recycled on the Cowlitz,” said professional fishing guide Clancy Holt. “While this is a positive step for the Cowlitz, there is still much work needed to bring the Cowlitz River back to a premier recreational fishing destination.”

Our hats off to Tacoma Power and WDFW for using sound science and common sense economics in order to reinstate this great recycling program.

Mayfield Lake Net Pen Update

Despite some setbacks, the net pens on Mayfield Lake have been constructed. One of the primary objectives of these net pens is to compare smolt survival between hatchery only reared fish and fish that have acclimated for several months in the net pens. If survival rates are higher for the net pens reared fish, there could be major benefits for future hatchery production. We are looking forward to future years where it is anticipated the fall Chinook smolts will be allowed to acclimate in the net pens for at least three months.

Once again, thanks to Tacoma Power and WDFW for getting these pens completed. A special thanks to our elected officials, especially Rep. Hans Dunsehue, for securing the initial funding from the Capital Budget.

Wayne Vigre with a couple chrome bright Cowlitz steelhead.
Looking for more CCA Washington Information and Updates?

Do you receive the CCA Connect newsletter sent out monthly? Have you received any other electronic correspondence from CCA since you last renewed your membership?

If the answer to either of those questions is yes, than you are in good shape! If not, here's how to fix the situation:

2. Select the "Update Your Membership Information" link near the bottom of the page.
3. Follow the simple instructions and your membership information should update quickly.
4. If you need assistance in updating your membership information, call the CCA Washington office at 877-255-8772 and we will gladly help you update your information and email address.

Contact Your Local Coastal Conservation Association Chapter and Get Involved!

**LEWIS COUNTY**
- **Chapter Location:** Centralia
- **President:** Jeff Ash
- **Meeting Info:** Contact Chapter for meeting info.
- **Banquet Date:** May 23, 2015
- **Banquet Location:** Chehalis

**LOWERING COLUMBIA**
- **Chapter Location:** Longview
- **President:** Rick Este
- **Meeting Info:** jloweringcolumbia@ccapnw.org
- **Banquet Date:** October 10, 2014
- **Banquet Location:** Longview

**NORTH CENTRAL WASHINGTON**
- **Chapter Location:** Wenatchee
- **President:** Bob Loomis
- **Meeting Info:** Contact Chapter for meeting info.
- **Banquet Date:** Spring 2015
- **Banquet Location:** Wenatchee

**NORTH OLYMPIC PENINSULA**
- **Chapter Location:** Sequim
- **President:** John Alviso
- **Meeting Info:** Contact Chapter for meeting info.
- **Banquet Date:** April 2015
- **Banquet Location:** Sequim

**NORTH SNOHOMISH COUNTY**
- **Chapter Location:** Marysville
- **President:** Adam Dierck
- **Meeting Info:** Contact Chapter for meeting info.
- **Banquet Date:** May 6, 2015
- **Banquet Location:** Everett

**SOUTH WASHINGTON**
- **Chapter Location:** Bellingham
- **President:** Meghan Hallam
- **Meeting Info:** Second Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm

**PSE POINT**
- **Chapter Location:** Tacoma
- **President:** Keith Arts
- **Meeting Info:** TBD
- **Banquet Date:** September 25, 2014
- **Banquet Location:** Parallel

**SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON**
- **Chapter Location:** Vancouver
- **President:** Jamie Birkeland
- **Meeting Info:** Monthly - 2nd Thursday, 7 pm

**SEATAC**
- **Chapter Location:** Des Moines
- **President:** Joe Slepke
- **Meeting Info:** Contact Chapter for meeting info.
- **Banquet Date:** March 14, 2015
- **Banquet Location:** Kent

**TWIN HARBORS**
- **Chapter Location:** Montesano
- **President:** Leon Bailkowski
- **Meeting Info:** Monthly - 1st Tues. 6:00 pm

**TRI-CITIES**
- **Chapter Location:** Richland
- **President:** Nate Grims
- **Meeting Info:** Even Monthly

**YAKIMA**
- **Chapter Location:** Yakima
- **President:** Red Mykel
- **Meeting Info:** Contact Chapter for meeting info.
- **Banquet Date:** October 3, 2014
- **Banquet Location:** Selah

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**Washington Office**
1006 W. 11th Street
Vancouver, WA 98660
877-255-8772

Comments or questions? Please contact: info@ccapnw.org
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.

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