



Washington Council of Trout Unlimited

P.O. Box 2652 Issaquah, WA 98027



2009 WCTU State Officers

TO: WCTU OFFICERS, STAFF, COMMITTEE CHAIRS, COORDINATORS, AND CHAPTER PRESIDENTS

Comment [GWR1]:

Mark Taylor
President / CEO

Paul Sparks
Conservation V.P.

Shirley Vanderveen
Operations V.P.

George Lang
Membership V.P.

Dennis Thireault
Secretary

Bill Abrahamse
Treasurer

Terry Turner
Past President

Robert Stroup
NLC Representative

Minutes of the Washington Council of Trout Unlimited Meeting Executive Board meeting, held November 15, 2008 at the Hawks Prairie Fire Station in Lacey. Meeting was hosted by the Olympia Chapter.

Chapter and Membership Attendance:

Table with 3 columns: Name, Chapter. Lists attendees and their respective chapters.

Mark Taylor (WCTU President) called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

**Welcome and Announcements:**

Mark Taylor, President distributed the day's agenda.

Minutes were seconded and approved unanimously.

There were several quick chapter announcements and Mark noted that **Andy Batcho is a finalist for the Sportsman of the year award by Field and Stream Magazine.**

**Saturday November 22<sup>th</sup> 9:00-4:30**

**Executive Board Meeting**

**Host: Olympia**

**Hawks Prairie Fire Station**

**WCTU Meeting Schedule FY 2008-2009**

**Thursday November 13<sup>th</sup> 7-8 PM**

**WCTU Conservation Committee Conference Call**

**1-866-740-1260 Access Code 2002840#**

**-All Members Welcome**

**Saturday Nov. 15<sup>th</sup> 10-4**

**Steelhead Alliance Summit**

**Foster Golf Links Tukwila**

**Tuesday November 18<sup>th</sup> 7-8 PM**

**WCTU Officers Monthly Conference Call**

**1-866-740-1260 Access Code 2002840#**

**-All Members Welcome**

**Wed. Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>**

**Olympia Chapter Meeting**

**Olympia American Legion Hall**

**Liars Drift 6:30 Meeting 7 PM**

**Thursday November 20<sup>th</sup> 6-9 PM**

**Washington Wilderness Coalition Annual Banquet**

**Intiman Theatre, Seattle**

**Friday November 21<sup>st</sup> 6-9 PM**

**Bristol Bay: Alaska's Red Gold**

**Special Reception and Screening of the**

**Award winning film Red Gold**

**Tashiro Kaplan Center, Seattle**

**Saturday November 22<sup>th</sup> 9:00-4:30**

**Executive Board Meeting-All Members Welcome**

**Host: Olympia**

**Hawks Prairie Fire Station**

1. Take I-5 to Exit #111, Marvin Road. Go North on Marvin Road.
2. One tenth of a mile from the off ramp turn right on Hogum Bay Road. The Mayan Mexican Restaurant is located at the point where you need to turn. (if you miss the turn off, continue north on Marvin to the second traffic circle and exit on to Willamette Drive.)
3. Go three tenths of a mile to the stop sign on Willamette Drive. Turn right onto Willamette.
4. Go one and eight tenths miles on Willamette to Fire Station Number 35. The fire station will be on the left at the intersection where Campus Highland Drive enters from the right. The class room is on the right at the rear of the building next to the parking lot.

**Thursday Dec.11<sup>th</sup> 7-8 PM**

**WCTU Conservation Committee Monthly Conference Call**

**1-866-740-1260 Access Code 2002840#**

**-All Members Welcome**

**Thursday Dec. 18<sup>th</sup> 7-8 PM**

**WCTU Officers Monthly Conference Call**

**1-866-740-1260 Access Code 2002840#**

**-All Members Welcome**

**Friday & Saturday January 9 & 10, 2009**

**State Council Meeting-All Members Welcome**

**Host: WCTU**

**Tumwater Comfort Inn**

**1620 74th Ave SW**

**Tumwater, WA 98501**

**Main: 360.352.0691**

**January 21-25**

**Washington Sportsmen's Show**

**Puyallup Fairgrounds**

**February 6-8**

**The Fly Fishing Show- Bellevue**

**Meydenbauer Center, Bellevue**

**Executive Board Meeting**

**Saturday, March 21, 2009 9:00-4:30**

**Host: Sky Valley-All Members Welcome**

**Monroe PUD building**

**Friday May 15, 2009 7:00PM-9:30 Bar B Q and presidents meeting**  
**State Council Meeting-All Members Welcome**  
**Saturday May 16, 2009 9:00-4:30**  
**Host: Icicle Valley**  
**Quality Inn Leavenworth**  
**1-800-693-1225 OR 509-548-7992**

**President's Report:**

Hard work and commitment are what it takes to be successful at the work we do. In order to keep going as an organization it's what we need from the members of this council and your chapters. In an effort to form stronger bonds, foster more communication, and share the workload amongst us, I have initiated a schedule of monthly conference calls for committee members and also for council officers. The Conservation Committee will meet on the second Thursday from 7-8 PM. I have taken the liberty of assigning at least 1 member from each chapter to this committee, since it is at the core of what our organization is about. These calls will be chaired by committee chair Paul Sparks, who will be responsible for sending out an agenda a couple of days before the call and give committee members the chance to add their items to the agenda. I hope that each chapter will let the committee know what they are doing and how the council can help them with their projects or advocacy issues. These calls need to stay on task and be efficient. Side conversations and history lessons can take place separately after the call is completed. We will also be having a monthly Officer/Board call to assign tasks and check on the progress of our officers and committee chairs. These calls will be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month and begin at 7PM. The number to call for these calls is 1-866-740-1260 **Access Code 2002840#**. All members are welcome to listen in on these calls and I hope to have them recorded and posted on our website.

Not only do we need better communication amongst ourselves, but we also need to do a better job of communicating our message and mission to the public and other like minded organizations. The publicity generated by the Duwamish-Green Chapter's Miller/Walker Creek project has been unbelievable. Andy Batcho's being a finalist in Field & Stream's Heroes of Conservation has generated numerous calls for projects to be done in Mukilteo, Bellevue, the South Sound and inspired an Issaquah High Student to take her Roots and Shoots Club to removing invasive and restoring native plants in the Lake Sammamish Basin. In the last 2 months I or Paul have met with members of the Washington Wildlife Coalition, Puget Sound Partnership, Earth Corps., the Wild Fish Conservancy, the Wild Steelhead Coalition, the Steelhead Summit Alliance, and TU Staff from Portland, Seattle and Alaska. We are beginning to become relevant again in the eyes of our sister organizations. We need to work to cement those bonds and work together to achieve our goals. We always wonder where all the young people are. They are in these organizations doing the work that we should be doing. United we have a chance for a positive result. If we stand apart the enormous forces against us will surely carry the day.

Third, we are currently working on a plan to combine, revive and decharter the remaining dead or dying chapters in our state. I am writing a letter to our members asking them once again to step up to save their chapters and be a part of our efforts to save our resources for the next generation. This letter will go out in December with a deadline of Feb. 1<sup>st</sup> for speaking out for their chapter. All efforts made by members will be fully supported by this council. We have too much at stake to not go to any corner of the state to get a potential chapter going. The letter will also list some of the activities that our outstanding are doing, and how they can get involved. I will also mention that if folks can't give us their time that we'll be happy to take their money to support all the good work that our active chapters do. This can be done either by mail or online at the state website. We will be trying to post a calendar of upcoming events online as well as a quarterly newsletter.

Finally, I wish to thank those that have served on this council and those that have stepped up to serve this year. You are all appreciated more than you will ever know. You will be tasked to move us forward, help invigorate us with new ideas and energy and, most important, finding someone to step up when your tour of duty is complete. Thanks, Mark

#### **Officer's Report:**

- **Paul Sparks, VP Conservation (Via email, was unable to attend due to surgery)**

#### **WCTU CONSERVATION AGENDA**

- 1. Pacific Salmon Recovery: Engage actively in protection and restoration efforts of the State's wild salmon resources by addressing factors affecting their ability to sustain, grow and recover; Harvest, Hatcheries, Hydro and Habitat issues (including natural river and marine productivity cycles) identified as the most significant areas where recovery efforts can have the greatest impact.**

##### **1.1 Planning:**

- 1.1.1** Review and, as appropriate, support the goals and objectives of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office as well as continued funding for all recovery efforts through participation in the development of statewide recovery plans and strategies.

##### **1.2 Implementation:**

- 1.2.1** Participate in regional and watershed development and evaluation of salmon recovery projects and advocate for continued funding for these efforts at all levels of government.

##### **1.3 Harvest:**

- 1.3.1** Advocate for conservation oriented harvest management by participating in decision making processes.
- 1.3.2** Urge incorporation of sound scientific practices designed to minimize impact upon wild fish survival.
- 1.3.3** Advocate for sound implementation of the U.S Canada Agreement and Magnusson-Stevens Act.

- 1.3.4 Advocate for and continue to support selective harvest.
- 1.3.5 Advocate for protection of parr, smolts and resident forms of all salmonids from mortality caused by harvest fisheries and by non-selective gear.
- 1.3.6 Advocate for higher escapement goals before harvest and stress the importance of long term population growth, not status quo.
- 1.3.7 Advocate against co-manager allocation planning that allows the harvest of the wild fish savings from recreational Catch and Release fisheries. (note-presently the state annually agrees to tribal harvest in most rivers of all wild steelhead the sport fishery is estimated not too catch. Thus undermining conservation objectives of no-harvest sports fisheries.)

#### **1.4 Hatcheries:**

- 1.4.1 Support state efforts to minimize the negative effects of production hatcheries on wild fish survival.
- 1.4.2 **Combine Hatchery Reform with Genetic Management.**
  - 1.4.2.1 Participate in the Hatchery Reform Coalition and support hatchery reform measures based upon the Hatchery Scientific Review Group recommendations.
  - 1.4.2.2 Advocate for comprehensive studies of existing and new hatcheries using wild brood stocks and the monitoring of all integrated/supplementation and brood stocking programs. Oppose new integrated and conservation hatcheries using wild stocks until the existing hatcheries in Washington have been studied to understand the impacts on productivity, life history, and genetic diversity when the progeny of hatchery reared wild fish spawn in the wild.
  - 1.4.2.3 Advocate for a robust system of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for all hatcheries performance and for adaptive management.
  - 1.4.2.4 Advocate for wild fish only management zones (significant river basins having no hatchery releases of any salmonids) (1) to study the natural productivity, abundance, life history, genetic diversity, and aerial distribution of all wild salmonids in natural systems, (2), to preserve the gene pools of wild fish, and (3) to understand how to restore natural levels (and what natural levels are) of marine derived and river basin cycling nutrient levels.
  - 1.4.2.5 Support adoption of genetic management and reform practices designed to minimize impact of hatchery fish on wild fish survival.
- 1.4.3 **Stocking Policy:**
  - 1.4.3.1 Support funding at state and federal levels for scientific research and monitoring of hatchery produced salmonids and their potential impacts on wild fish.
  - 1.4.3.2 Advocate for the reduction or elimination of hatchery production in river systems that are depleted or listed (depressed or critical) and/or in which hatchery production is making adverse impacts on wild stock escapement goals.
  - 1.4.3.3 Support the continued marking of all hatchery-produced salmonids.

- 1.4.3.4 Advocate for the removal or management of non-native species wherever they impact native salmonid species from PNW waters.

**1.5 Hydro:**

- 1.5.1 Support efforts to correct the adverse impacts of hydro and storage projects on native fish and encourage measures to enhance native fisheries.
- 1.5.2 Hydro Reform:**
  - 1.5.2.1 Participate in re-licensing negotiations to achieve organizational conservation goals and objectives.
  - 1.5.2.2 Accept no additional impacts and seek opportunities to fully mitigate for identified adverse impact and incorporate operational regimes that serve to enhance wild fish survival and passage.
- 1.5.3 Obsolete Dams:**
  - 1.5.3.1 Advocate for removal of all obsolete dams that impede fish passage or otherwise adversely affect wild fish survival, including, but not limited to, the four lower Snake River dams, Condit Dam, and the Elwha dams.
  - 1.5.3.2 Advocate for fish passage and fish friendly designs in any new dam construction or re-licensing process.

**1.6 Habitat:**

- 1.6.1 Encourage chapters to participate in programs and engage in activities that preserve existing essential fish habitat, enhance habitat that is degraded, expand the habitat available for healthy fish populations, and protect water quality for all beneficial uses based on best-available science.
- 1.6.2 Support enforcement of the provisions of the Shoreline Management Act and Critical Areas Ordinances wherever they have an impact on habitat and oppose attempts to reduce current standards for habitat protection.
  - 1.6.2.1 Protect and support flow regimes that will contribute to healthy populations of trout and wild salmon.
- 1.6.3 Advocate for revision of the standards of the Growth Management Act to protect critical watersheds and aquifers.
- 1.6.4 Pollution Abatement:**
  - 1.6.4.1 Advocate for and support federal, state and local water quality, non-point pollution, and TMDL programs (Total Maximum Daily Loads).
  - 1.6.4.2 Encourage efforts to implement and fund plan recommendations.
- 1.6.5 Habitat Protection and Enhancement:**
  - 1.6.5.1 Engage in activities that serve to protect, preserve, and restore suitable habitat for wild fish.
  - 1.6.5.2 Encourage chapters to participate in TU programs such as the Embrace-a Stream and Home Rivers initiatives, and the state TU project funding program initiative.
  - 1.6.5.3 Encourage chapters to seek grants and donations to support habitat protection, preservation, and enhancement projects within their watersheds.

- 1.6.5.4 Continue support and involvement with Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups and other watershed restoration programs.
- 1.6.5.5 Support efforts to preserve, expand, and enhance the functionality of near shore habitat that supports critical salmonid life history stages.
- 1.6.5.6 Advocate for and support the ESA, Clean Water Act, Clean Air Act, and other federal, state, and local laws that help to protect, preserve, and restore fisheries.
- 1.6.5.7 Advocate for removal or remediation of barriers to fish passage presented by inadequate or perched culverts, obsolete water management structures and diversions that hinder access to spawning and rearing habitat.
- 1.6.5.8 Advocate for better protection and or recovery of watersheds through improved logging and agricultural practices, improved mining standards and rigorous enforcement of critical areas ordinances and development standards.
- 1.6.5.9 Support state and national legislation and activities to reverse global warming to reduce impacts of flooding, reduced stream flows, and increased riverine water temperatures.
- 1.6.5.10 Advocate for Wilderness Areas where critical habitats and forest or riverine ecosystems can be preserved.

**2. Wild Salmonid Restoration:**

- 2.1 Protect, restore, and enhance the state's wild salmonid resources throughout their range.
- 2.2 Support TU initiatives to protect and restore salmonids and their coldwater habitat on federal state, county and public trust lands.
- 2.3 Support and participate in management measures aimed at control of invasive and nuisance species.
- 2.4 Support federal, state, local and public trust lands and Trout Unlimited efforts in preserving wild western trout. Devote particular efforts to bull trout/dolly varden, redband, rainbow, sea run and west slope cutthroat trout, and wild steelhead.
- 2.5 Support efforts to increase salmonid conservation funding.

**3. Wild Steelhead Conservation:**

- 3.1 Support efforts to recover and protect wild steelhead populations throughout the state.
- 3.2 Continue to advocate for wild steelhead release in all areas to increase the spawning population, help all populations to grow to former levels, buffer management error and to improve resilience to environmental impacts, cycles and changes.
- 3.3 Participate in efforts to develop recovery and protection plans.
- 3.4 Support innovative co-manager efforts to develop specific watershed restoration and preservation programs.
- 3.5 Review and comment on the WDFW Steelhead Science paper (Oncorhynchus mykiss, Assessment of Washington Populations and

Programs) and Statewide Steelhead Management Plan and the upcoming Regional Watershed Plans...

- 3.6 Continue to participate in the Steelhead Summit Alliance and the implementation of a conservation based Wild Steelhead Management Program.
- 3.7 Continue to advocate for rebuilding of all populations to levels nearer historical abundance (such as the abundance levels of the 90's). Special additional emphasis should be given to protection and recovery of the remnant populations of wild summer steelhead.
- 3.8 Assure that the state continue to work on improving on the Viable Salmon Population (VSP) Characteristics including abundance, diversity, distribution and productivity. Recovery of these characteristics of a health population should be essential elements of all management plans.
- 3.9 Seek rules and regulations that establish Wild Salmonid Management Zones (WSMAs) in each ESU to protect wild steelhead and salmon genetics for the future.
- 3.10 The concept of WSMAs should also be applied to the upper reaches of all steelhead habitat to provide for all ecosystem values of wild salmon/ steelhead and protect growing fry and rainbow trout from harvest. The Skagit WSMA is a good example of the protection needed in all rivers.

**4. Conservation Education:**

- 4.1 Maintain an education and outreach program for members and the public to highlight significant initiatives and conditions that affect the health and survival of cold water fisheries and their habitat.
- 4.2 Maintain a conservation education section on the webpage with a library of links to appropriate conservation, recovery, and fisheries reference materials.
- 4.3 Assist chapters in selecting venues for conservation presentations to the public where support could be elicited for TU conservation efforts.
- 4.4 Encourage member and chapter participation in TU workshops related to water usage, conservation, stream flow remediation and restoration.
- 4.5 Continue to keep abreast of research regarding global warming and ocean conditions.
- 4.6 Support educational projects such as student research/activities.

**5. Aquaculture:**

- 5.1 Advocate for a science based inter-agency management system that establishes and enforces the best management practices to avoid impact on native resources.

**6. Enforcement:**

- 6.1 Advocate for adequate funding and improved enforcement on all wild salmonid waters.
- 6.2 Become engaged in "Eyes In the Woods/Stream Watch" programs to assist WDFW and Federal enforcement efforts.

## **Request to the Fish and Wildlife Commission to Reaffirm the Commissions Conservation Decision for Wild Steelhead of 2004 and to Require Annual Management Plans**

Wild steelhead are in peril or in decline in most areas of Washington. At this date, 5 of the states 7 wild steelhead Distinct Population Segments (DPSs) have been listed as either threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Many of the states steelhead runs are already described as functionally extinct due to their low numbers and apparent inability to recover.

In 2004, following several well attended steelhead hearings, the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission passed a regulation limiting sport harvest to one wild steelhead each year. Hundreds of Washington steelhead fishers attended these special steelhead hearings and most spoke favorably for conservation, not harvest. The intent of the Commissioners and sport fishers was to save more wild steelhead for spawning and the regulatory decision was stated as a conservation decision in the WDFW's *Concise Explanatory Statement* following the final decision of September 2, 2004.

We would like to describe an example of how this conservation intent has been neglected in the management of wild steelhead fisheries on the Hoh River, a river system on the Pacific coast of the Olympic Peninsula that is slowly declining in abundance but still managed for maximum harvest (MSH). Following the September 2004 Commissions decision, WDFW signed a 3 year agreement with the Hoh Tribe giving them up to 68% of the wild fish available for harvest. Large tribal harvests, relative to low run predictions the past 4 years, have caused the run to be under escaped 2 of those years. Due to a contentious early closure last year, the river just made escapement. In fact, the Hoh River run has been under escaped 9 out of the last 17 years due to overestimates of the impending run and aggressive commercial harvests.

The run size for the Hoh River wild steelhead has fallen from abundances of over 5,700 fish in the 1980's to levels generally below 4,000 fish in recent years. Historically, the run has been estimated during the 1950's at 8,000 to 13,000 wild fish. Some managers argue that the estimates from the 1950's may be high. Throughout the writing of the WDFW steelhead science paper and the Statewide Steelhead Management Plan our reviews requested that the Department develop its own estimates of the historical runs to document how far they have declined and to establish long-term abundance recovery targets. The Department has not produced those estimates. Given that the Hoh Rivers habitat has not changed significantly, the rivers habitat should still be capable of supporting runs of similar size. About 59% of the rivers watershed is in the Olympic National Park. There are no dams or mines, no changes in agriculture or logging practices and no other significant anthropogenic alterations that may have reduced productivity since the 1950's. Additionally, the Hoh River Trust has been purchasing critical habitat properties that will help improve the productivity of the river.

Sport fishers remain dedicated to the recovery of ESA listed and declining wild steelhead runs. We believe that rebuilding runs and DPS's not yet listed should be a very high priority of the Department, assuring they do not decline further and need protection under the ESA. However,

as recent management actions on the Hoh demonstrate, we continue to see conservation of wild steelhead – which the Department has established as its top priority in its Statewide Steelhead Management Plan – subordinated to harvest opportunity. If the Department had managed the Hoh River fishery so that some of the 50% of wild steelhead allocated to the sport fishery were allowed to escape to the spawning grounds instead of reallocating them to the tribal fishery, the Hoh River’s wild steelhead runs would be in much better shape today.

During last season’s negotiations for the Hoh River wild steelhead, the Hoh Tribe demanded more than 77% of the harvest. The WDFW earlier verbalized a willingness to settle out of court for about 23% of the wild fish. The state has not furnished us with the exact levels they will settle at in out of court negotiations, but we believe the above figures are indications of those levels.

The below signed sport fishers and organizations request the Commission to reaffirm its commitment to conservation of wild steelhead as established in the Statewide Steelhead Management Plan by assuring that wild, unharvested fish that are part of the sport fishers’ 50% allocation are allowed to return to the spawning grounds and not be reallocated to tribal commercial fisheries. Further, we ask the Commission to direct the WDFW to always err on the side of conserving, protecting and rebuilding wild steelhead populations rather than planning for harvests from the reduced and declining runs. Finally, we ask that annual steelhead management plans always be completed and signed by the parties before fisheries open for the upcoming fishing season (s) so there is sound conservation and transparency in the co-management process.

## **Hoh River Wild Steelhead Issue Paper: Stock And Fishery Information**

### **Background on the Public Interest to Save Wild Steelhead**

2002. Sport Fishers recognized that wild steelhead, statewide, were in serious decline and initiated a movement to save wild fish. During a hearing in Vancouver on wild steelhead, about 90% of a large audience of fishers asked for a moratorium on harvest. The Commission responded with a 5 fish limit.

2003. Members of the Wild Steelhead Coalition met individually with WA Fish and Wildlife Commissioners throughout the state to discuss the declining wild steelhead stocks. We suggested ending the state harvest of wild steelhead and allow our share to spawn, helping to prevent further declines and to rebuild depleted populations. The Commission, in February of 2003, voted to establish a moratorium for two years on state wild steelhead harvest. However, later that year the Commission responded to political and legal concerns by holding a second hearing in Bremerton. Approximately 65% of the sport fishers attending testified against further harvest. The Commission followed by establishing a limit of one wild fish annually.

Later that year the WDFW policy branch ignored the Commission decision and its conservation intent and signed a three year agreement with the Hoh Tribe giving them up to 68% of the wild fish and allowing harvest far below the 2,400 escapement goal. Escapements as low as 1600 fish could be negotiated in annual plans during low run years.

2004. A WDFW sport fisher survey found about 64% of the states fishers supported no harvest.

### **History of the Hoh River Wild Steelhead Run Abundance**

The historical estimate by McMillan and Gayeski (2006) indicates a run size in 1920 of 35,000 to 59,000 wild fish based on a watershed size and abundance comparison to the Queets River.

The 1950's run size was estimated by McMillan and Gayeski (2006) from landing records to be between 8,000 and 13,000 wild fish. The authors used the same estimation procedure employed by NOAA Fisheries for their estimate of the historical Puget Sound population.

The run abundance peaked at approximately 5,800 wild fish during the early 1980's and has since fallen to abundances of 2,500 to 4,000 in recent years.

### **MSH Management**

MSH estimates a maximum perpetual harvest level based on long term stability in habitat capacity and stock productivity. However, MSH models were not designed to address other conservation or recovery needs. MSH models do not provide the necessary tools to manage for (1) the long term highs and lows in productivity due to weather and ocean cycles, (2) maintaining life history and genetic diversity and distribution, (3) mixed stock fisheries, (4) hatchery impacts on genetics and productivity, and (5) habitat changes. The models only provide harvest parameters based on current abundance information fed into the model. The model error (such as the intervals around predicted run sizes) and management error (the inability to accurately estimate annual parameters such as the impending run and the total harvest) for wild steelhead are very high. The recent history of depletion of many Western Washington River is a sad testimony to the status of wild steelhead stocks, and is in part due to MSH management.

MSH models are based on the theory of compensation; that runs will be more productive at low abundance levels. That is not unreasonable as fewer parr present less competition with each other and should have higher survival rates. Depensation, the biological phenomenon that occurs when reduced stock size results in reduced recruitment (due to a low critical mass, predation and disease problems) runs contrary to the model theory of compensation. History has shown that many wild steelhead stocks have become extinct or unable to rebuild on their own when reduced to moderately low populations.

Neither Ricker or Beverton/Holdt, in their major work on MSH published in the 1950's publications indicated a familiarity with ocean productivity cycles, such as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) and Anthropogenic Global Warming (AGW). However, they did discuss the effects of observed random variation, including annual weather variation, on their models.

Many fisheries managers now recognize the limitations and problems of managing at MSH. There is recognition amongst many managers that the stocks need to be managed for spawner and total stock abundances significantly greater than the estimates of MSH.

### **MSH Escapement for the Hoh River**

A 2,900 wild fish escapement was calculated by Gibbons, et al., in their paper of 1985.

In 1988 the Hoh Tribe convinced the Fisheries Advisory Board (FAB) in what was probably a compromise, to lower the escapement goal to 2,400 wild fish.

The 2003 to 2007 three year management agreement allowed for annual plans to utilize an escapement as low as 1600 wild fish if the predicted run was low.

Conversations with WDFW biologists have indicated that staff continue to support the higher escapement levels (Bob Gibbons--recently retired lead Freshwater Fish Manager).

Gayeski (2006) conducted a current stock recruitment analysis and found that maximum recruitment would occur at an escapement level of 3,780 wild steelhead. Managing at this level would encourage the population to recover lost diversity, productivity and capacity.

### **Hoh River Watershed Condition**

About 56% of the Hoh River watershed is in the Olympic National Park and additional lands adjoining the South Fork of the Hoh River are under consideration for either Wild and Scenic River or Wilderness Area designation.

The Hoh River Trust has purchased important habitat along main stem and tributaries of the Hoh River and has 13 new acquisitions planned. There are several other organizations working to preserve additional Hoh River habitat.

Little habitat change has occurred since the 1950's: there are no dams, no significant changes in agriculture or logging, no mines, etc.

This scenario implies that there has probably been little or limited changes in the Hoh River productivity, that most of the rivers habitat will be well secured for the future, and that the rivers habitat should support higher abundances in the future similar to those of the 1950's (8,000 to 13,000 wild fish per year).

## **Recent Fishery Impacts**

Due to MSH harvest, management error and a very aggressive commercial harvest attitude, the Hoh Wild steelhead run has been under escaped in 9 of the last 17 years. As recent as the 2002/03 and 2005/06 seasons the escapement has been below 2,400 wild fish by 784 and 920 fish, respectively.

Last years (2007/08) run was predicted to be low and the Hoh Tribe demanded more than 78% of the harvest. The tribe refused to agree to or sign an annual management plan and went fishing. The wild steelhead run made its minimal required escapement (2,417 wild fish) last year only because WDFW demanded the tribe close their fishery by March 30 (their normal time for closing). The tribe refused to close unless the state closed; hence the sport fishery closed early on April 1 (30 days earlier than planned). By agreement, the tribe continued to fish Ceremonial and Subsistence during April. The final landings were: Hoh Tribe, 940 wild fish, or 77% of the harvest; Sport Fishery, 275, or 23% of the harvest of wild fish (includes Catch and Release estimated mortality); escapement, 2419 wild fish. Had either the sport fishery or the tribal commercial fishery continued through April 1, the run would clearly have been under escaped.

The Hoh Tribe is taking an average of 1113 wild fish or 73% of the harvest and the state 411 wild fish or 27% of the harvest each year (since 2000). Since the one fish limit was enacted in 2004, the sport fishery has harvested fewer than 200 fish per year (plus an additional estimated 120 to 160 mortality from catch and release fishing).

Incidental mortality rates have not been considered in management planning and are part of the reason for the often missed escapements. This includes catch and release, net drop out, and unrecorded (illegal) mortalities which are believed to be significant for both sides. WDFW is trying to include some of these rates into the upcoming plan/agreement but is meeting resistance.

Details of the 2003 three year Hoh River steelhead harvest agreement between the state and Hoh Tribe included a study of the Catch and Release mortality by the state and the Net Drop out mortality by the Hoh Tribe. The state invested considerable time and budget in conducting their study; the tribe did not conduct their agreed to study.

## **State Goals for Negotiations and/or Court**

1. A 50/50% allocation
2. The ability to use our fish as we desire
3. The existing 2,400 escapement goal maintained (may be decided by the FAB)

Washington's Leading Cold Water Fisheries Conservation Organization  
Telephone 206-200-2840 FAX 206-267-4457

4. Aggregation not applied to steelhead management.

The above are good initial goals for future fisheries management of steelhead fisheries on the Hoh River. A AGs opinion in 2003 indicated the state should prevail on the question of allocation. Aggregation is a non issue as the tribes have taken more than 50% of the hatchery run since 1995. The state does not believe that foregone opportunity is an issue as there is no foundation established in law for this principle that has been applied to some salmon runs. Wild steelhead are not considered wastage as they may not die after spawning.

### **Our Goals for Conservation and Fishery Management**

1. Equal (50/50%) state and tribal allocations for the wild run
2. Buffers for management error
3. Account for all fishery impacts
4. Escapement above the original 2,900 (possibly increased each generation) to challenge the rivers carrying capacity and productivity
5. Recovery of healthy and abundant populations (a good target is the population of the 1950s) to levels the river can support, through the rebuilding of the Viable Salmonid Population characteristics: diversity, distribution, productivity and abundance.
6. Assure the resilience necessary to quickly recover from environmental disruptions, cope with weather/ocean cycles and adapt to long term weather change.

### **The Issues that we are dealing with**

1. The state will settle out of court for lower levels than their goals. They did so in 04 after taking the same steps in negotiations and preparing for court and have provided ample signs that they will do so again. The 04 settlement resulted in a bad 3 year agreement that has been detrimental to wild steelhead as well as the sport fishery. This year the state is seeking a 3 to 5 year negotiated agreement. If completed out of court, it will put off resolution to the major issues on the Olympic Peninsula coastal stocks. The Director, Jeff Koenings, and Heather Bartlett have stated they will settle out of court if their management needs can be met. WDFW Policy people have been asked four times to describe the states bottom line in or out of court negotiations but have not done so.

2. Dropping out of the court case leaves all of the four state goals unresolved and subject to new interpretation and change each time the state/tribe negotiate a new annual plan or long term agreement.
3. There will be no buffering for management error or opportunity for stock rebuilding.
4. The Hoh River stocks will remain subject to further declines, over harvest and loss of resiliency; and possible future listing if stocks of the Olympic Peninsula Rivers continue to decline.
5. There will be no protection against changes in stream or ocean productivity related to natural or human-caused changes in climate.

**In Addition:**

There has been a major difference in management needs as expressed between WDFW biologists and administrators (policy). WDFW biologists/managers have supported taking the case to court both in 2004 and today. A coastal manager told us recently that, in his opinion, we are going to see depletion of the coastal stocks if we do not take these issues to court and win.

Presently, the Queets River stocks are managed at about a 3,000 wild fish escapement, low in comparison to the WDFW calculated escapement goal of 4,200 fish. The Quinault Tribe takes 80% of the harvest leaving only some years (when the run-sizes are especially high and/or harvests especially low) for rebuilding. The Quinault River is managed in a similar manner.

The coastal tribes have consistently argued for lower escapements of wild steelhead. As stocks decline due to excessive harvests and periods of low productivity and run sizes, the tribes argue for lower escapement goals so they can keep fishing. This is a recipe for severe and sustained depletion of wild steelhead on the Olympic Peninsula, setting the table to repeat the extremely undesirable situation that currently faces too many depleted and listed wild steelhead populations in Washington State.

**Washington Lower Columbia River  
Spring Chinook  
2008 Forecasts and Actual Returns  
and 2009 Forecasts**

	2008 Forecast	2008 Actual	2009 Forecast	Comments

Cowlitz	5,200	2,700	4,100	About 2/3 <sup>rd</sup> of recent 10-year average
Kalama	3,700	1,600	900	Lowest return since 1998
Lewis	3,500	2,400	2,200	Similar to 2008 and about half of the recent 10-year average
Total	12,400	6,700	7,200	About half of the 10-year average

**Committee Reports:**

- **Conservation:** Paul Sparks (Chair)
  - See VP Conservation Report
- **Project:** Bart Madison (Chair)
  - Bart spoke about some current proposals
- **Communications:** Mark Taylor (Chair)
  - Brief Update on Website
- **Membership:** Mark Taylor (Chair)
  - No Updates
- **Raffle:** Mark Taylor (Chair)
  - The council took a loss of \$370 this year, but our chapters gained over \$4800. In order to cut costs and stimulate sales we are going to offer a week in Puerto Vallarta as our first prize with a pontoon boat that we can display as 2<sup>nd</sup> prize. We will be offering a fishing trip (any volunteers?) another Fetha Styx rod and a nice sweater or shirt from Ex Officio as other prizes. Our MOR raised over \$4100 net for the Conservation Camp. We are going to use part of those funds to buy rods for all the students, with the balance going to cover camp expenses. We hope to offer a trip to Montana, a rod, Ex Officio gear for the 2009 MOR. Our first event for ticket sales will be the Puyallup Sportmen's Show in Jan. There will be no show in Monroe this year. I encourage chapters to seek out local events to sign new members and sell tickets. Be a part of your community.
- **Winners of WCTU 2008 raffle are as follows:**
- **1st Place - Bruce James of Shoreline** -2007 Gregor H22 12.2' Aluminum boat w/8 hp Tohatsu outboard and EZ Loader trailer from Inland Boats of Ellensburg



- 
- 2008 Raffle Winner and new TU member Bruce James gets his
- new boat from WCTU President Mark Taylor!
- **2nd Place - David Adams of Kirkland** - trip for two to Las Vegas including round trip airfare on Alaska Airlines and two nights accommodations at the Luxor or MGM Hotel/Casino from Adventure Travel in Tacoma
- 3rd Place - Philip Rowley of Sherwood Park AB Canada - **guided fishing trip for two with Raven's Luck Guide Service and Charters**
- 4th Place - Kim Malcolm of Olympia - **7wt custom fly rod by Fethastyx w/matching reel from Creekside Angling in Issaquah**
- 5th Place - Laura Giovannil of Monroe - **1 year TU membership**
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- 
- 

	<b>Gold</b>	<b>White</b>		<b>Total</b>
Ballard	\$220	\$100		\$320
Bellevue/Issaquah	\$1,510	\$950		\$2,460
Duwamish-Green	\$1,090	\$500		\$1,590
Edmonds-Laebugten	\$310	\$54		\$364
Icicle	\$110	\$52		\$162
Olympia	\$1,400	\$622		\$2,022
Sky Valley	\$1,340	\$1,202		\$2,542

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Spokane	\$50	\$44		\$94
Tacoma	\$1,550	\$920		\$2,470
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,580</b>	<b>\$4,444</b>		<b>\$12,024</b>

Year	2008
Gross Receipts	12,024.00
Prize Expense	-5,778.00
	-
Printing and Distribution Costs	1,807.00
Chapter Payout	-4,809.06
Net Profit to the Council	-370.06
Chapter Sales	
Ballard	320.00
Bellevue/Issaquah	2,460.00
Clark County	
Duwamish-Green	1,590.00
Edmond-Laebugten	364.00
Icicle	162.00
Kittatas	
Northshore	
Olympia	2,022.00
Rainshadow	
Sky Valley	2,542.00
Spokane	94.00
Tacoma	2,470.00
WCTU	
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,024.00</b>

- **By Laws:** Terry Turner (Chair)
  - No Updates
- **Nominating:** Tammy Mackey (Chair)
  - Bart Madison presided over nominations for 2008-2009 Officers
- Mark Taylor-President / CE
- Paul Sparks-Conservation V.P.
- Shirley Vanderveen-Operations V.P.
- George Lang - Membership V.P.
- Dennis Thireault-Secretary
- Bill Abrahamse-Treasurer
- Robert Stroup-NLC Representative
- **Ways and Means:** Mark Taylor (Chair)

- No Updates
- **Awards:** Mark Taylor (Chair)
  - No Updates
- **Audit:** Dana Smith (Chair)
  - No Updates
- **Kokanee:** Mark Taylor (Chair)
  - Kokanee are beginning to show up in our local streams again and it looks like the WDFW is going to begin a supplementation program using Issaquah Hatchery. The plan is not the first choice, but with the severe budget cuts going on we will make do with what's available. Hopefully it will be enough. The USFWS tells us they will have a decision on our petition to list these fish under ESA by the end of the year. We'll see. THE BI chapter will be expanding it's fry trapping program to 2 other creeks in April-Laughing Jacobs and Ebright to get better data on the entire population. Our new traps will be built by the Woodinville High shop class. We will also be assisting King Co., WDFW and USFWS in placing acoustic tags on kokanee, cutthroats, and pike minnow in the lake to try to gain a better understanding of the behavior of these fish in Lake Sammamish. Both of these projects are being submitted for Embrace A Stream grants. Save Lake Sammamish is contributed \$2000 to this project and the BI chapter has started an Adopt A Kokanee program to help buy more tags. Details can be found on our web site [www.tu-bi.org](http://www.tu-bi.org) . We have another Eagle Scout candidate planning a project as well as the Issaquah High Roots and Shoots Club, led by student Kate Brunette, chomping at the bit to restore native vegetation to the watershed. Hopefully all of these efforts will help us recover the little red fish.

**Adjournment:** A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 3:15 pm. A motion was seconded and approved. By the way it was extremely hot that day.

REMINDER: For meeting reports to be included in the minutes of Council and Executive Board Meetings, all reports must be e-mailed to the Secretary, Dennis Thireault–[DThireault@gmail.com](mailto:DThireault@gmail.com) in WORD as an attachment within one week of the meeting. To ensure the accuracy of a meeting's minutes and reduce the time involved in preparing the minutes for distribution to the Council, the Secretary will no longer summarize "oral" reports that are presented at meetings.

REMEMBER:

The next two meetings and locations are:

**Friday & Saturday January 9 & 10, 2009**  
**State Council Meeting-All Members Welcome**  
**Host: WCTU**  
**Tumwater Comfort Inn**  
**1620 74th Ave SW**

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 Telephone 206-200-2840 FAX 206-267-4457

**Tumwater, WA 98501  
Main: 360.352.0691**

**Executive Board Meeting  
Saturday, March 21, 2009 9:00-4:30  
Host: Sky Valley-All Members Welcome  
Monroe PUD building**

Olympia Chapter will be providing directions. Please RSVP as soon as you can.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis Thireault  
Secretary  
Washington Council of Trout Unlimited