



WASHINGTON STATE COUNCIL
INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FLY FISHERS

COVERING THE DRIFT

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The Fly Fishing Show

The 50th Annual International Fly Fishing Fair held in Bend, Oregon this past August was a great success and a fun time. I hope many of you had the opportunity to take part in this event. There were a couple of folks from the Council who were recognized during the President's banquet on Wednesday night. Pat Peterman and Maura Johnson were awarded the 2014 Council Award of Excellence. Congratulations to everyone.

It was announced that the 2016 International Fly Fishing Fair will be returning to Livingston, MT on August 4th through 6th. The Fair will again be at the high school in Livingston. I hope a number of you can show up and enjoy the Fair and the fishing in the area.

The 2016 Washington Fly Fishing Fair dates are April 29th and 30th in Ellensburg. Hard to believe that we will be celebrating our 10th year! The event will feature the incredible tyers from throughout the Northwest, free seminars on

a wide range of topics and fly casting workshops with some of the best instructors in the world. Dave Hughes will teach a fly tying workshop and will again appear in the Author Signing Booth. Please keep checking our website for updates. If you are interested in being part of the Fair committee, please contact me or another Board member. We are looking for volunteers to help with many aspects of the Fair including raffle, check station, tyer hospitality and others. If you would like to volunteer, please contact me at 425-308-6161 or flyfishalso@frontier.com.

The Council will again have a booth at the Washington Sportsman Show in Puyallup and The Fly Fishing Show in Lynnwood. If you are attending these shows please stop by and say hello. Fall is now here and time for some great fishing. I am looking forward to spending time on a number of rivers fishing for trout and salmon; hopefully you will, too.—**Carl Johnson, Council President**

Important WDFW Proposed Rule Changes

By Jack Whitney VP-Conservation West

The WDFW is considering fifty fishing rule changes this fall. These changes can be viewed by going to <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/regulations/rule-proposals/2016-2017/recommend.php>. This website page lists all of the proposed rule changes and has links to each change. Each proposed change has detailed infor-



Jack Whitney

mation about it and a place for your comments. Comments are limited to 1,000 characters, so make it sweet and short.

The first rule change to consider is Proposed Rule 12 which proposes to change six lakes in Snohomish County from year-round state wide minimum size/daily limits to selective gear rules - Trout year-round minimum size 14 inches, daily limit 2. The proposed change was worked on by members of the Evergreen Fly Fishing Club, Fidalgo Fly Fishers, Olympic Fly Fishers of Edmonds, Washington Fly Fishing Club, and the Whidbey Island Fly Fishing Club. A complete presentation of their proposal is located at <http://1drv.ms/1yIV68t>. They had origi-

nally asked for three lakes, got two and then the WDFW change it to 6 lakes. I think it is in our best interest to support this change.

The second rule change that jumped out at me was Proposal Rule 8 listing 58 lowland lakes in northwest Washington, where WDFW wants to change the current limit of five trout with no more than two over 14 inches to a daily limit of five trout with no size limit. The reason for this change is that they plan on planting fish that average 2.5 to the pound. Most of us fish with a catch and release philosophy which keeps fish in the water over a long period of time. When catchable fish are planted, there is usually a big rush to the water right after planting. The crowd lasts until most of fish are caught and then it dissipates. Keeping the regulation at two fish over 14 inches would extend the catchable time period allowing more people opportunity to fish longer. With the pressure on the WDFW budget, I think they need to be moving to catch and release philosophy and this proposal moves in the opposite direction. Now you might have a different take on this proposal, so let them know what you think. There may be other issues in the list that rings your bell, so go through them and make your wishes known.

Meanwhile to the south and east of us Oregon and Montana have been bitten by the "simplify the regulations" bug. The major problem with their approach is that "simplifying" means killing fish. The lower Deschutes River has survived and prospered by its

slot regulation. The slot regulation permits the keeping of two native red band rainbows from 13 to 16 inches. This regulation protects native steelhead smolts as well as spawning and very mature red band trout. ODFW proposal is to change the limit to two trout over 8 inches. I have to wonder how many large mature trout will be killed by this change. To me this doesn't appear the way to maintain a world class fishery. World class fisheries attract out of state fishermen who buy expensive out of state licenses. They could have just as easily "simplified" the river by making it all catch and release.

Not to be outdone by Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Montana has proposed "simplifying" their regulations on the Madison. Simplifying to Montana is changing catch-and-release on the Madison to keeping one fish a day any size. In addition to that, they proposed opening the section from Quake Lake to McAtee Bridge to a year round fishery. That section had been closed from the end of February to the third Saturday in May to protect spawning trout. Keeping boots out of the river and off the reads helps to maintain a healthy wild fish population.

By the time you read this both Washington, Oregon and Montana will have closed their comment period. If you make recommendations to the WDFW, please email me (recreationman@iinet.com) and let me know what comments you submitted. It will help the Council know what impact we are having.



Dave Hughes will be Featured at the 2016 WSCIFFF Fair

Washington Council 10th Anniversary Fly Fishing Fair is coming to Ellensburg April 29-30, 2016. Those in the know are aware that traditional 10th anniversary gifts are tin or aluminum. These metals represent strength and durability—words that appropriately characterize the Fair and those who volunteer to make it a success every year.

Who knew that the event first held in the Ellensburg Public Library would grow into an event that would attract thread winders and line flingers from across the western states and elsewhere. The Fair has become the 'go to' event of the fly fishing show season, sparked in no small measure by the free night-before-the-show-opens dinner for all the folks who volunteer.

Dave Hughes, author of more than 20 books, including *Essential Trout Flies* and *American Fly Tying Manual* is coming to Ellensburg for the 2016 Fly Fishing Fair. Known for his extensive knowledge of all aspects of fly fishing for trout, Dave dispenses that knowledge with a dash of wit and spark of personality. He will be teaching a hands-on

tying and fishing the wet fly workshop. Space is limited and will fill quickly when registration opens.

We are still working on the casting celebrity as most of the best already have a full dance card. Stay tuned for developments on the casting side of things.

A reason why the Fair is held in Ellensburg and not moved to Seattle or some other place where everyone would have to pay to park, is it offers plenty of fishing opportunities. Sure, we could all crowd together on the Yakima River and beat those poor trout into submission. Or we can take a look at the *Gazetteer* to suss out the black squiggly lines and blue dots sprinkled throughout the area. Try one of the local ponds. Go downriver into smallmouth country. Go east for some largemouth bass. Or head into the desert for selective gear trout. And if you are mystified by maps, check in with one of the local fly shops to pick up a few hot flies or even better, book a guided trip. They all have special places that offer a new and different experience.—*David Paul Williams, Council Secretary/Newsletter Editor*

THE DOGS OF WAR by David Paul Williams

Cry 'Havoc,' and let slip the dogs of war. Little did Shakespeare, that master storyteller, know he perfectly described chum salmon. These dogs bare their diamond-sharp canine teeth and show no mercy to salt and fresh water fly anglers. Gather a few salmon anglers together, toss the words “chum salmon” into the conversation, then step back to watch the eyes light up, the heads nod and the stories begin with “thought my arms were being pulled off,” “the big dog kicked my butt” and “those are the toughest SOB’s—that first run was so danged fast, it stripped the guides right off my rod.” I know the war stories are true. I’ve seen the broken rods. I’ve got one myself.

Fly fishers know chum are like NFL linebackers—they’re big, they’re fast, they’re strong—and they’re willing to hit. Like all Pacific salmon, they sacrifice longevity for growth rate and adult size. The first returning fish from a spawning class average eight pounds, a truly exponential rate of growth for a tiny fry that went to sea just three years before. Each extra year in the ocean adds another two pounds with the age five fish averaging twelve pounds. The biggest Washington and British Columbia fish run in the mid-twenties. Oregon fish run a bit smaller. Alaska, true to form, takes the cake with fish topping thirty pounds.

Chum, the fastest swimmer of all Pacific salmon, can rip off a hundred yards of line so fast that all thoughts of control evaporate in the mind of the fish and the angler. We’re talking survival. The fish trying to escape the restraint imposed by feathers and steel. The angler trying to avoid getting his knuckles cracked by a whirring reel handle while maintaining a grip on the rod. Sometimes the latter is the challenge of the day. Many a reel has been melted into useless junk by that first sizzling fast run.

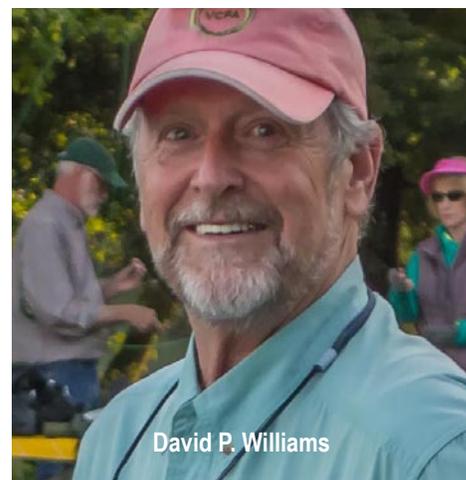
Not as showy or acrobatic as coho’s dramatic arabesque-like leaps, but still willing to get some air, chum are strong, more in the way of chinook. Veteran salmon anglers like Les Johnson acknowledge that chum pull harder than an equivalent-sized chinook, well-known for their own dogged determination. The brute strength of these fish awes and surprises those anglers having honed their fish-fighting skills on freshwater trout—often at the cost of a favorite rod. The plain fact is that marine fish are stronger than freshwater fish because the environment in which they live demands strength, and chum salmon are the strongest of the Pacific salmon.

Once a hooked chum is tired, the next stage of the battle begins. Teeth. Long, sharp, canine teeth that cut like a knife, protrude from the upper and lower jaw. When I was first learning about these fish, every landed dog took a bite out of me before I unleashed it to rejoin the pack. Some days it was like the Chinese torture of death by a thousand cuts, all of which stung in salt water. Don’t try to liplock these critters if you value your fingers in their present configuration. Barbless flies and a release tool will mitigate the need for a blood transfusion.

John Shewey writes about an Oregon angler determined to catch a Kilchis River chum on a four-weight rod. Shewey suggested the angler was under-gunned, given the size and disposition of the quarry. The angler suggested Shewey mind his own business. The four-weight lasted less than five minutes as the first fish converted it a pile of junk. The angler returned to his car, got another bigger but still light rod, and head back into the water. Sometimes lessons learned the hard way are lessons best learned. The next fish trashed the second rod as well. All this is good fodder for campfire stories, but hard on the pocket book. The point

here is go big or go home.

A better suggestion is to match the gear, the fish, and the location. A shore-bound angler, wading moving water in search of the big winter fish, should



David P. Williams

use stronger gear than the boating angler fishing early run fish in the salt. The first angler must overcome both fish and current while the latter can up anchor and use the boat to run down the fish. 9- or 10-weight single-handed rods fit the bill. Beach fishing calls for a floating line with leader ending in 8-pound Maxima. River chum may need to add a sinktip.

A thought about spey rods and catch-and-release fishing. All too often, the angler using the long rod lands a fish by dragging it up on the barnacle-covered rocks or coarse beach sand. Fish, even those that will die after spawning, are too precious a resource to be maltreated that way. (How’d you like to be dragged naked across those rocks?) For those who insist on using a spey rod for fish they intend to release, work with a fishing buddy who can release the fish without removing it from the water.

A reminder to read the regulations as WDFW has promulgated a plethora of emergency rules this year due to water shortages and diminished coho runs.

David Paul Williams's brother Michael with a "dog of war".



A Fly for All Seasons: Chum Caboose

If it ain't chartreuse, it ain't no use or so some chum fishers posit. No question chartreuse and chum go together like peanut butter and jelly. Perhaps because that color most reminded them of the jellyfish and ctenophores consumed at sea or maybe they just like chartreuse. Whatever. If the fish turn off chartreuse, then cerise, pink and orange work. Some fly fishers new to chum ditch the traditional colors in favor of purple.

When I first started fishing chum, I followed the rule of big fish, big flies. Size 2 and 4 streamer hooks were the rule of the day. The rule has been eroded over the years. Every recent chum fly has been tied on Daiichi 2546 in size 4 and 6. When chum school together awaiting the right tide like commuters standing on the subway platform, or once upstream as they hold, serried in their favorite holes, casting a traditionally tied fly directly into the milling horde can result in a snagged fish. One of the most effective chum fly style goes a

long way towards avoiding that problem. The Comet, originally designed in 1949 for California's Russian River steelhead, sports a beadchain or dumbbell head sufficiently heavy to flip the fly so that it rides point up, allowing the fly to slide over the top of fish. These guys are tough enough to land when mouth-hooked. Trying to drag one in sideways is an exercise in tedium.

Flies tied with soft, breathable materials like marabou and rabbit get high marks for imitating the undulating motion of the jellyfish. The fibers also catch in those big teeth, helping to gain a solid hookset. Estaz, a sparkly body material, that is loved by smallmouth has become my recent favorite. It radiates a brilliance even under the low light conditions that spark chum to bite. If I only have one hour to fish, it will be the hour around dusk. Even better if that hour coincides with the last hour of high tide.—**David Paul Williams, Council Secretary/Newsletter Editor**

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Olympic Peninsula Fishing Innovations

Here's a test for our readership. What do the Boeing Aircraft Company, Trout Unlimited and Washington Council IFFF have in common? The answer—all are financial contributors to Olympic Peninsula Fishing Innovations (OPFI).

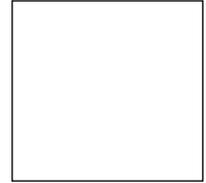
Next question. Who or what is OPFI? Based out of Dean Childs' garage in Sequim, OPFI's mission "is to design and produce unique adaptive devices that allow individuals with limitations to participate and/or remain active in the sports of fly tying and fishing." To date they produce two such devices: Evergreen Hand and Casting Partner.

The Evergreen Hand, developed in 2007 by Jesse Scott and Marvin Johnson makes fly tying available to those with only one hand. The Casting Partner, developed by OPFI, allows the fly fisher to cast and fish, even if she has



but one hand or arm.

Here's the final question. What's the selling price for each of these devices? The answer—FREE. OPFI, a 501(c)3 organization, in partnership with Project Healing Waters and IFFF provides a device without cost to anyone who needs one. Not only that, OPFI did not patent either device and will provide the blueprints to anyone who wants to make or distribute them. To allow this good work to continue, keep OPFI in mind when considering year-end charitable donations or estate planning. Your generous participation in the Fly Fishing Fair raffle, silent and live auction allowed your Washington Council to give \$1,500.00 to help build these cool tools.—*David Paul Williams, Council Secretary/Newsletter Editor*



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