



**FLY FISHERS  
INTERNATIONAL**

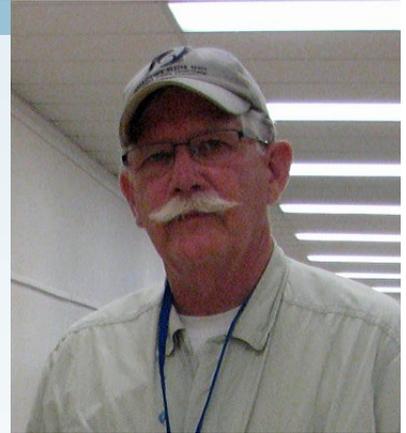
Washington State Council

# Covering the Drift

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## Fishing in the Age of Covid

Prime Lies - Page 2  
Conservation - Page 3  
FFI Weekly Zoom - Page 4  
Directors election - Page 5



# Prime Lies

## Fishing in the Time of Covid

By Bill Wheeler

In politically charged times its often difficult to know what facts are real and what “facts” are generated, manipulated or misinterpreted to support a particular point of view. The Covid-19 Pandemic is one of those times. As a retired physician, it is perhaps a little easier for me to sort some of those things out. My goal is just to present the facts, most of which are from scientific literature, without any political overlay. This is a changing landscape, so our knowledge is incomplete at this time. As I write this approximately 1.6 million Americans have documented disease and about 96,000 Americans have died from it. It killed more Americans in 3 months than died over 10 years in the Vietnam War. Epidemiologists feel the true number of deaths may exceed that number by tens of thousands because of our limited ability to test for the virus. University of Washington mortality projections are for 100,000 to 240,000 deaths by August 4 with a most likely scenario of about 135,000.

The virus did originate in bats in China. Genetic data confirms it was not generated or altered in a lab. Did it escape from a lab in China? No one knows, and we may

never know. The national security community has been concerned about the potential for weaponizing a respiratory spread virus for some time. In fact, an extensive plan to control just such an event had been developed, including adding a member to the NSC to coordinate the multiple agencies that would be involved in stemming such an epidemic. It also included stockpiling of strategic materials such as personal protective equipment and an ongoing research facility in China to learn more about these types of viruses and develop treatments and potential vaccines. This program was disbanded in the last 3 years.

Until adequate therapy and a vaccine are available, the best way to control an epidemic is to identify individuals who have the disease, track their contacts, and isolate those contacts so they don't infect others. But, we don't know as much about the spread of the virus as we need to control it because there has been a severe shortage of testing for both the virus itself and the antibodies. Antibodies are proteins the body makes to fight the virus and indicate someone has had the disease. The presence of antibodies doesn't guarantee the individual is immune from reinfection. Both of these are complicated tests that are not necessarily within the skillset of many smaller medical

Continued on page 4

### Inside this issue

Prime Lies.....	2
New FFI Weekly Zooms .....	3
Conservation .....	5
Officers Election .....	5
Notable Calendar Changes .....	5
Pebble Mine Status Update .....	6

### Special points of interest

- FFI has developed a new weekly Zoom presentation with the goal of keeping members entertained and engaged in the sport and FFI programs. Presentations on everything from fly tying to fishing destinations and conservation are on the agenda every week. Past programs are archived as well. Go to [www.flyfishersinternational.org](http://www.flyfishersinternational.org) to explore and learn more.
- The annual election of Washington Council directors is at hand. Eight FFI members have been nominated for eight open board seats. The election will be conducted online on Survey Monkey. Ballots will arrive by email in early June. Ballots must be returned by Friday June 12.
- Two traditional FFI events have been cancelled for this year, the Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy and the annual FFI Expo in Bozeman, Montana. See page 5 for further details on these programs and plans for future years.

# FFI Expands Online Offerings to include Weekly Zooms



The coronavirus is invisible and indifferent to individuals. It only becomes apparent when it hits us. Now we recognize the consequences on health, families and our daily routine and social distancing to control the virus often means we can't fish with friends, or in some states, fish at all.

Fly Fishers International aims to fill that fishless void with a new program of live, online meetings for members worldwide. The programs on Zoom cover the world of fly fishing from fly tying to conservation to destinations around the world.

Next week on Tuesday May 26 join Molly Semenik for another episode of her Fly Casting Series. Wednesday May 27, FFI ambassador Jeff Currier will present the

4<sup>th</sup> episode of "Currier's Global Fish Quest", this episode in Canada. Thursday May 28, Richard Williams will interview fisheries ecologist

Dave Peterson in another installment of the FFI Conservation Conversation.

For a schedule of programs, go to the Fly Fishers International Website. All programs begin at 8 p.m. Eastern, 5 Pacific.

Past programs are archived there as well. Be sure to watch the first presentation in the series where FFI President Patrick Berry lays out a vision for the online events and a larger vision for the organization itself.

Be careful and be well on the water and stay in touch with FFI online.

## Past events in the archive

**Soft Hackles for Pan Fish:**

**A Covid Confidential**

**A Jerry Coviello workshop**

**Currier's Global Fish Quest**

**Atlantic Salmon and Monster**

**Brown Trout of Iceland**

**A Jeff Currier travelogue**

**The Mystery of Key Bonefish**

**Spawning Grounds**

**Conservation with FFI's David**

**Peterson and Aaron Adams**

**of the Bonefish Tarpon Trust**

## Fishing in a Time of Covid

laboratories. That shortage is complicated by unreliable test kits sourced from around the world, some of which are outright frauds. In the absence of adequate testing, our best tool is social distancing and self-isolation.

In addition, some infected individuals display no symptoms. Others display mild flu-like symptoms, to severe flu-like symptoms. About 15% of symptomatic people need to be hospitalized and many of those succumb to respiratory failure and death. Although older individuals and people with several risk factors are more likely to develop the more severe and often fatal conditions; children and younger, previously healthy individuals are not immune from the more severe effects, including death. Also stroke, blood clots and renal failure are associated with infection, and sometimes without severe flu-like symptoms. There is evidence that it is more contagious in the days preceding the development of symptoms. Covid-19 is about 3 times as contagious as the flu. So even with the same mortality, it would have about 3 times as many deaths.

It appears that there were cases in Europe back in December, but they were not recognized because of the spread by asymptomatic individuals and symptoms similar to the flu.

In the absence of adequate testing, it appears that many deaths attributed to other things like the flu are actually Covid-19 related. Anyone who still thinks that this is “just the flu” only needs to look at the steep increase in all-cause mortality to see that it is not like the flu. The fact that our healthcare system has been swamped by covid-19 cases also proves this is not a flu. “Flattening the curve” means slowing the time to peak disease incidence, using social distancing and contact tracing, so that the healthcare system is not overwhelmed as it was in NYC.

On the treatment side, Oxford is developing a vaccine that was effective in monkeys, but human safety and efficacy testing will take months to years. Remdesivir, a drug previously developed to treat Ebola but found ineffective in that disease, has shown some benefit in severely ill patients, shortening the duration of symptoms but without mortality benefit. The FDA has approved it for

emergency use only and it has not undergone rigorous safety and efficacy studies yet required to prove its safety and effectiveness. Convalescent serum has been used with some success. However, it is not clear yet that having had the disease and having antibodies to it (especially if the person had the original virus) may not provide immunity. There are reported cases of recurrent infections. Chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine have not been found to be effective and may adversely impact mortality via a well-known and deadly arrhythmia effect (an area I did research in for about 10 years).

Having worked in the drug development field for over 20 years, I can tell you that it can be arduous to prove efficacy and safety. Even if it were possible to develop a vaccine or medicine in a year or so, it would take months to manufacture it and immunize the population. All the while the virus is spreading to less populated areas and overwhelming our ailing healthcare system in rural America.

So why did I go through all of this information? To point out that our only significant intervention at this time is social distancing. There has been a lot of chatter that recreational fishing should not be limited, but the reason it was is because fisher people gathered in unsafe groups. We hear, we fly fishers are different and it is a solitude sport. Prove it. The Governor has given recreational fishing the go ahead, but if we don't act responsibly it could be banned again.

Remember that experience with previous pandemics shows that they tend to come waves over a few years until there are enough people vaccinated or have immunity from a previous infection. The second and third waves of the 1918 Flu Pandemic were worse than the initial wave, probably due to cessation of social distancing. A warning we should heed.

If you remember one thing from this synopsis, it's this: Social distancing and self-isolation are not only for benefit of you and your family, but for everyone else especially my family. We are doing this for everyone.

Practice Social Distancing.  
Stay Safe.

## Nominees for Board Election

Ballots for electing new Washington Council directors will come through Survey Monkey and arrive in your email in early June. Please vote by June 12.



### VP Eastside Chet Allison

I worked for Cowles Publishing in Spokane, Washington for 43 years until retiring in 2010. I began fly fishing about 1973, a self-taught fly tyer from the Herters Professional fly tying book. I learned to build fly rods from Earl Grotto and John Propp. I, along with my wife, am a founding and original board of directors of the Spokane Fly Fishers and have been a member of the IEFFC since 1974 and was IEFFC President in 2012. I was a Boy Scout fly fishing merit badge counselor for about 5 years. I enjoy fishing Washington lakes and streams. I was asked to be a BOD member of the WSCFFF in 2012.

### Government Affairs Mike Clancy

I grew up in the Seattle area and bait-fished as a youth for many years. As time moved on and I completed my working years, I retired in 2000 and discovered

Continued on page 7

# Conservation

## THE PEBBLE MINE

### – A Current Report

By Mike Clancy

The Washington State Council of FFI is very interested in the Pebble Mine in Alaska. For many years our members and council directors have been concerned with the mine proposal and our concern is growing. It appears that a decision could happen either this year 2020 or in early 2021. Trout Unlimited is leading opposition to the mine and is providing a wealth of information on the risks it poses to the Bristol Bay fishery and the environment of Southwest Alaska. Highlights of the mine plan and key reasons for concern include:

- This will be the largest mine in the USA.
- Mine developers propose building a road over 100 miles long to haul minerals and mine waste. The road to a new deep-water port on Cook Inlet would cross Lake Illamna and cross more than 200 salmon streams including the famed Upper Talark Creek and Gibraltar River. This is a proposed heavy haul road for large industrial vehicles, not ordinary ½-ton pickup trucks. Building the road alone will have a wide-ranging environmental impact on hundreds of salmon streams.
- The proposed mine also would require construction of a 188-mile pipeline from new natural gas facility on the Kenai Peninsula.
- The mine would be located at the headwaters of the Kvichak and Nushagak Rivers which empty into Bristol Bay.
- The risk of building this mine is not worth the possible loss of an important fishery habitat and broad damage to the environment?

I suggest everyone go to [www.savebristolbay.org](http://www.savebristolbay.org) to learn more. Click the link to “Get the Facts” and you will be busy for hours learning more about the mine and the threat it poses to Bristol Bay.

## Calendar Changes

**National Women’s Fly Fishing Day** - The crew at Emerald Water Angers is launching National Women’s Fly Fishing Day on June 27, 2020. The goal is to create a single day dedicated to encouraging the presence of female fly fishers everywhere. Women are invited to link up with other female anglers in their communities and fish together, learn together and support each other. Emerald Water applied to the online National Day Archives and was granted the last Saturday in June this year to begin the recognition.

**NWYCFACademy** – June 21-27 - The 2020 Academy is cancelled due to the

virus. Applications submitted for this year will be held to 2021. Jim Brosio and Mike Clancy have led the academy for years. They have recently selected three, solid new co-directors to take over. Brosio and Clancy will support them during the transition.

**FFI –Fly Fishers International** – July 21-25. The FFI Expo in Bozeman, MT. has been cancelled for 2020. This was going to be the last National event to be conducted of this type. The National Board has decided to conduct regional expos around the country in conjunction with regional council events.

# BRISTOL BAY: NO PLACE FOR THE PEBBLE MINE

The wild and rugged Bristol Bay region in Southwest Alaska is famous for its world-class wild sockeye salmon runs and incredible sport fishing opportunities. The plentiful salmon of the region have sustained local Alaska Native people for thousands of years, support thousands of American jobs, and feed people all over the world.



## IF PERMITTED, PEBBLE MINE WOULD:

### BUILD HARMFUL INFRASTRUCTURE

In order to acquire copper and gold from the deposit, Pebble would permanently destroy 105.4 miles of streams and 2,226 acres of wetlands. The proposed 1 mile wide and a quarter mile deep open pit would transform the mine site, and associated infrastructure would irreparably destroy critical salmon habitat. The proposed transportation corridor includes 90+ miles of roads with 200 stream crossings and 8 large bridges, an ice-breaking ferry system on Iliamna Lake, and a 188 mile natural gas pipeline across Cook Inlet.

### DESTROY A WORLD- CLASS FISHERY

Bristol Bay's wild landscape holds six major rivers and hundreds of lakes that produce the largest run of sockeye salmon on the planet, and trophy-sized rainbow trout and other coldwater fish species. The region attracts anglers from all over the world who seek the "once in a lifetime" Alaska fishing experience. The sport fishery and fishing tourism is a \$90 million annual economy that supports over 1,000 jobs. Anglers have been a critical role in the efforts to protect this sporting paradise.



### YOU CAN HELP

In 2020, Pebble is the closest it has ever been to becoming a reality in Bristol Bay. With the permitting process on track to be completed by fall of 2020, it's imperative that sportsmen and women sign on to the petition calling on President Trump to deny Pebble's key federal permit.

**Add your name today at**  
[www.savebristolbay.org/tellpresidenttrump](http://www.savebristolbay.org/tellpresidenttrump)

## Nominees for Board Election



fly fishing. It wasn't long before I became active with PSFF in 2001, a Life Member of the FFI in 2002 and BOD member of the WSCIFFF in 2003, and a BOD member for SSFF in committing to various officer responsibilities. I am presently the Government Affairs director for the WSCIFFF. 13 years ago I became a Co-Director of The NW Youth Conservation & Fly Fishing Academy in Lacey, WA. Along with Jim Brosio, we assumed the responsibility of

continuing the Academy, after the founder, Dick Nye retired. The Academy is for boys and girls 12-16 years old, conducted for one week, usually the last week of June. I have been proud to conduct the Youth Programs at the annual FFI National events. The future of our FFI organization is in the future of our youth.

### VP-West Robert Gerlach



I am a retired general contractor living in Gig Harbor who has been angling the Pacific Northwest for over 30 years. The fly rod captured my attention 13 years ago, and I have picked up the gear rod only a few times since then. I studied for three years and became a Certified Casting Instructor in 2013. I find

just about as much pleasure throwing a perfect loop as I do hooking a great fish. Well, I said almost! I have been working with Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy, Tacoma School of the Arts and SAMI teaching larger groups of young men and women casting as well as many smaller groups and individuals. I am constantly working on improving my ability to communicate and demonstrate good casting form as well as working with each individual and their particular casting style. I am available for both group and private lessons. It is an honor to serve on the Board of Directors of the Washington State Council of FFI and have a hand in passing it on to future generations.

### VP Membership Larry Gibbs



I joined the Board of Directors in the early 2000's and have held the positions of Director at Large, Treasurer and Secretary and Auction Coordinator. I am a life member of the FFI. I belong to the FFI President's Club and I am a sustaining member of the new FFI program, 1000 Stewards. I am a life member of the

FFI Fly Tying Group. I am a past member of the FFI Board of Directors. I am the president and newsletter editor of the Alpine Fly Fishers Club, which is a FFI Charter Club located in Puyallup. I am a retired law enforcement officer. I am an all waters fly fisher but I prefer to fish for trout and smallmouth bass in the rivers of western Montana and eastern Washington. I fish with both graphite and bamboo fly rods.

### Director Peter Maunsell

Over the past 45 years I have become enamored with fly fishing and rafting. I will hike and float anywhere to catch any fish. I really enjoy multi day camping on the Northwest's white water rivers. The longer the trip the better. I have learned to tie flies through reading and watching others.



### Director Dave McCoy

At a young age, Dave's father introduced him to fishing and sparked a lifelong passion to experience and enjoy life in the great outdoors. Growing up in Eugene, Oregon, his stomping grounds were and remain legendary namesakes such as Crane Prairie and Hosmer Lakes as well as the Deschutes, McKenzie and Umpqua Rivers to name a few. While Dave quickly discovered the thrill of

Continued on page 8

## Nominees for Board Election

having a fish on, it was the awe of his surroundings that instilled his deep passion for fishing and conservation. Dave has dedicated his professional life to the fly fishing industry and has spent the last twenty-plus years relentlessly trying to surpass expectations as a guide, outfitter owner, conservationist, and fly fishing ambassador. Dave is quick to note that he is nothing in his pursuits without his wife Natalie and daughter Nessa, who constantly remind him why he is so inspired without saying a word. In addition to owning and operating Emerald Water Anglers, Dave represents several fly fishing brands including Patagonia and Costa Sunglasses and Echo/Airflo rods and lines.



### **Director Don Simonson**

I have been teaching fly tying and fly casting since 1970. I have been a member of the FFI since 1980. I have been the casting chair for many years and served

as the West VP for several years. I would like to continue to serve as a director at large for another term.

### **Veterans Affairs Jay Woodbury**



Jay has been Life member of FFF since 2009. He is a member of Tualatin Valley Trout Unlimited group. And has served as Deputy Area Coordinator for Project Healing Waters in Portland, OR and Vancouver, WA.

He has been involved with PHW for last 5 years. Jay is a VA

Hospital Volunteer, Life member of the Disabled American Veterans and Retired National Service Officer Supervisor for the DAV. He retired (medically) from the US Marine Corp after 13 years active service.

## Address