Columbia River Gillnetter

Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union — *Spring 1999 / Vol. 30, No. 1*

ASTORIA REGATTA SCENE, 1903
August is the month of Astoria's Annual Regatta. *See Stories on page 8.*

Sally the Salmon Says…

Mr. President - Listen to the 200 scientists who have urged you to breach four lower Snake River dams. This is your chance to go down in history as my savior. Disregard the many special interest groups and politicians before it is too late.

Happy Birthday!

The *Columbia River Gillnetter* publication is 30 years old this issue! With over 60 editions of the local gillnet fishing specialty newspaper under his belt, Don, now 81, is ready to keep tackling the challenges thrown at the commercial fishing industry. You can help too!
Just call Don at (503) 325-2507.

Columbia River Update

By late 1999, the Clinton Administration (National Marine Fisheries Service) has said that it will choose a long-term plan to restore Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead. The 1999 decision will include how many salmon and steelhead are to be left in-river versus transported by truck or barge. Variables to be considered could include dam removal, reservoir drawdown, dam modifications (including adult passage improvements), and juvenile bypass improvements (including spilling the fish over the dams).

Conservation groups contend that fish barging is a proven failure over the last 20 years, and the scientific consensus for restoring salmon is more natural river conditions. The Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association (NSIA) endorsed dam removal on October 15, 1998. According to Buzz Ramsey of the Luhr Jensen and Sons fishing tackle company and NSIA President: We can't solve this problem with harvest restrictions alone. We need to reform the largest harvester of salmon and steelhead in the river, the federal dams, which kill up to 90% of young salmon and up to 40% of the adults.

On the other side of the issue, industries that depend on the Columbia River's electricity and transportation system say that the spill program is doing more harm than good, that harvest rates on Idaho chinook are too high, and that the benefits of barging fish are underestimated.

Two events recently took place that may have significant effects on the future

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Columbia River Gillnetter

One of the Oldest Conservation Unions on the West Coast—Since 1886

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The following individuals have made a cash contribution to the Columbia River Gillnetter Publication, which will be used to continue the publication and mailing of this free informational newsletter. We thank them for their support!

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Editorial

The Corps of Engineers: Dredging and dam removal

In 1938, Bonneville Dam went online. In 1941, Coulee Dam went online. Neither dam had plans for fish ladders. Conel Welch, head of the US Corps of Engineers, when asked about fish ladders said ***"I haven't time to play nurse-maid to a bunch of fish"*** — he lived to regret that statement.

The CRFPU, headed by Charles Knapp of Astoria, gathered a group of fishermen who petitioned the Corps of Engineers to knock out one end of Bonneville dam and make temporary adjustments for the giant August salmon run. Until permanent fish ladders were in place, many fish did not survive the make-shift passage upriver. Now, what if there had been no fish ladders at Bonneville dam? Can you imagine the slaughter? The Gillnetters saved the day!

Coulee Dam had no ladders and wiped out 40% of the entire Columbia River fish spawning grounds. In that massacre, we forever lost the big June "Hogs" (50 lb salmon) and Sockeye runs.

Now that the dams are in, the public has begun to realize after all these years that it was not the Gillnetters who were depleting the fish runs. May sport fishing clubs, especially the Northwest Steelheaders, for years, have tried to eliminate our fishing nets and our livelihoods because they wanted all the fish for themselves. They too are just beginning to realize that Gillnetters are not the problem. We have been the most regulated of any industry, and we have been the people who have been trying to tell everyone what is the real cause of the problem. **Breach the dams and do it quickly!**

Now something new is coming down the pipeline. **The Corps of Engineers wants to further ruin the Columbia river with a new multi-billion project to deepen the river from Portland all the way down to the ocean.** While this is partly based on the Corps' theory that deep-water habitat is not important, this will ruin the Columbia forever just so that the Port of Portland can be a deep-water port.

As for the politicians, here is what Rep. Peter De Fazio said:
"The Columbia River channel deepening will aid the Northwest commerce, and particularly the Port of Portland, by increasing the river's ability to accomodate newer, larger cargo ships. All in all, this is an excellent piece of legislation — good for the economy, good for the environment, and good for water resources across the United States" Several House members, including Reps. Greg Walden, R-Ore., and Brian Baird, D-Wash., cheered the Columbia channel-deepening authorization, saying it would boost river commerce through much of the Northwest. The project would deepen the river from 40 to 43 feet from the river's mouth to Portland and Vancouver, WA. Because wheat growers and much of the interior Northwest's commerce also depend on the river, the project was cheered inland as well. "It's real positive news for the eastern part of the river," said Jerry Simpson, commission chairman for the port of Umatilla.

Do politicians care about what happens to the fish and the river ecosystem? Do politicians care that 18 million cubic yards of spoils (some toxic, as discoverd in the Willamette) dredged from the river bottom will have to be disposed of somewhere? Do they care about how blasting rock at the bottom of the river will affect deep river fish populations such as the sturgeon? Do they care that the sloughs along the river will probably be drained? Do they care about the impact of dumping dredged sediment on crab beds at the mouth of the river? I think not! And thinking ahead, what about the fact that the river will have to be dredged again and again to maintain the channel? And if newer, deeper cargo ships are build, do we deepen the channel even more?

The corps of engineers own studies indicate that dredge operations kill both salmon and sturgeon, but apparently, this is not a concern of theirs.

There is a simple solution to prevent further destruction of the Columbia River: build a deep-water port at Tongue Point, just east of Astoria, where the water is as deep as 100 feet already. The communication links between Astoria and Portland could easily be enhanced (there is already a rail line), and a lot of taxpayer money could be saved in the process. **If anyone still cares about the fate of the Columbia River, now is the time to do something, because once the dredging begins, there will be nothing left to save!**

Support the Columbia River Gillnetter publication!

The *Columbia River Gillnetter* is the only remaining publication on the west coast devoted exclusively to gillnetting. We have been making a difference for 30 years, but our continued existence is threatened by increasing production and mailing costs. Now more than ever, we need a voice to represent our side of the issue, and the *Gillnetter* is our only contact with fishermen, lawmakers and the general public.

If you would like to help, send donations to
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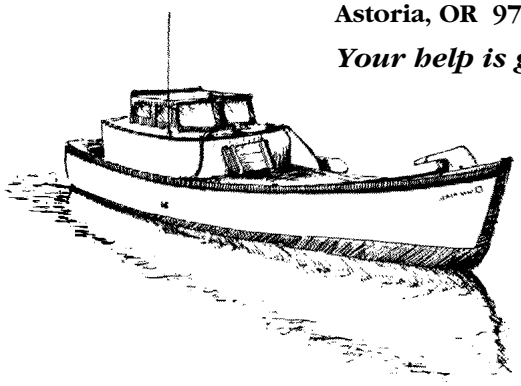
Your help is greatly appreciated



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The Columbia River Gillnetter is published seasonally for the Columbia River Fishermen's Union. Articles, letters and photographs are welcome for submission.

management of the river. They are the scientific justification for the removal of

Columbia River Update

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the Snake River dams, and the agreement by the Governors of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, and Montana to continue to pursue Columbia River management issues through a forum. Also, comments are now being accepted on the "Multi-Species Framework Process."

Scientists Back Snake River Dam Removal: A recently issued report by the PATH scientific review panel* entitled "Conclusions and Recommendations from the PATH Weight of Evidence Workshop" could play an important part in the 1999 decision on long term Columbia Basin salmon recovery strategies. The PATH Weight of Evidence process was developed to "provide scientific input to decisions regarding actions to restore endangered stocks to Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon**." The actions considered by the review panel were:

1) Current management (some salmon and steelhead smolts transported, some left in river);

2) Maximize transportation of smolts; and

3) Natural river drawdown (including dam breaching) of the four Snake River dams (The PATH report analyzed one drawdown which is implemented in three years, and one in which is implemented in eight years.)

*PATH (The Plan for Analyzing and Testing Hypotheses): PATH tests hypotheses underlying key salmon management decisions in the Columbia River Basin with scientists/managers from BPA, NPPC, NMFS, IDFG, ODFW, WDFW, and the CRITFC and their member tribes, as well as independent peer reviewers. The PATH scientific review panel is composed of Carl Walters, University of British Columbia; Jeremy Collie and Saul Saila, University of Rhode Island; and Steve Carpenter, University of Wisconsin.

**Snake River Chinook were listed as "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act in 1992. Conclusion: The review panel found that natural river drawdown has a much greater likelihood, under a 48-year time period, of recovering spawning stock, than either current

Dear Don Riswick,

Fox Guarding The Henhouse

Federal appropriations are granting $140 million for fish recovery efforts in this fiscal year. It is ironic that the U.S. Army Corps Engineers will receive $95 million of the funds to protect the fish. This is the same U.S. Army Corps of Engineers that builds dams, dredges rivers, dumps dredge spoils on crab beds or makes an ideal habitat for terns that eat most of the smolts that the Corps is supposed to protect. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is more the cause of the fisheries problem than the solution.

The Corps spends millions of dollars on inefficient programs like barging fish and for electricity or agriculture, instead of keeping the fish out of turbines or regulating water flow for the fish. The three are not compatible; you either fund fish recovery, electricity, or agriculture. Give the Federal funds directly to the fishery organizations to balance the financial clout with the Electric Power Corporations.

The Army Corps of Engineers commitment to further stir up toxic setement by dredging the river is another step in the elimination of the salmon. The river isn't big enough to coordinate water flow to satisfy all organizations. It is beginning to appear that fish are the odd man out.

Fred Korhonen
Astoria, Oregon

Dear Don Riswick,

I was given a copy of the Fall 1998 edition of the Columbia River Gillnetter to read and was disappointed in the general comments about "Sport Fisherman". Specifically, in the second paragraph of your editor "Political Management by Fisheries People Eliminate Fall Commercial Fishing on the Columbia Rive", where you say, "The sport fishermen and the Indians are getting all the Fish".

Maybe I do not understand your definition of"Sport Fishermen". Do you lump those of us that like to go fishing once in a while in with the Indians and Charter Boat group?

I am disappointed in the polarization of the "different groups". I would think that it would be far more affective to seek the support of the different groups rather than blaming them for the Gillnetter's problems.

I recognize that there is a problem and that we need to do something about the overall fishery situation or there will probably be no fishing for anyone. I believe though, that that can best be accomplished by working together to find a solution rather than blaming each other. I am sure that there are "Sports Fishermen" that do not speak very kindly about Gillnetter's, but that isn't right or going to solve the situation either. We need to work together to come up with something that will work for everyone.

I would hope that we could find a way to work together to solve the problem, increase the fish runs so that there would be plenty of fish for each group.

Editors Response.....

The Gillnetters have tried to work together with sport fishermen for years, but to no avail. You are one of the sports fisherman who sounds reasonable, there is a new bill in the legislature that wants to eliminate our livelyhood.

Historic Downtown CRFPU Office Moves To New Location

The Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union has moved from 322 10th Street (pictured above, John Westerholm) to a new location at the East End of the Red Lion at the Port of Astoria. The union was at the old location for over 60 years. The new owners of the building gave us until the end of December to move out or pay the new rent that they were asking, which was five times what we were paying. There was no way we could afford that, so when we had our annual meeting the last part of December, we had to make the decision. Close the doors for good or try to find a new office. The members thought it was still important that C.R.F.P.U. continue to have a voice so we started looking for a new office. The Port of Astoria was good enough to rent us a small space in between the Salmon for All office and Bob Eaton's Pacific Marine Conservation Council. We pay the same rent we had been paying for years previous at 322 10th, with the understanding that we would panel the office, which our President, Bill Finucane was kind enough to do. We had a lot of stuff to move, some was sold, most brought down to the new location. Items which had years of history behind them will be on display at the Clatsop County Historical Society for people to look at in future years.

During the 60 odd years at the old office we were fortunate to have the office work in good hands with ladies such as Harriet Engblom, Ruth Hastings, and for the last several years, Arlene Graham. These ladies, I know, had to stretch the dollars out a long way at times to keep the lights on, and we all thank them for that. At the new office we will run on a small budget with no salaries, paying for just the rent and telephone. We have good neighbors who leave their doors open so we get free heat. Come down to visit us. One of our fishermen is there for a while in the early morning, if not, Salmon for All Office Manager, Robin, is in the office next door Monday through Thursday, and she has been a lot of help for me.

Our new mailing address is: Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union
P.O. Box 56, Astoria, OR 97103
Phone number: 503-325-2702
Respectfully Submitted, Jack Marincovich, Executive Director Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union.

Historic Highlights of CRFPU Office...

The closing of the doors to the Columbia River Fishermens Protective Union office, at 322 10th Street last December 31st, ends another chapter in the long history of the organization representing Gillnetters and Cannery Workers in Astoria and the Columbia River.

At the turn of the century, in the year 2000, it will be either 125 or 116 years old, depending upon which organization you wish to use. It is said to be the oldest Commercial Fishing Union of its kind on the Pacific Coast.

It was organized in 1875 as the Columbia River Fishermens Beneficial Aid Society. Its name was changed to CRFPU in 1884. For all those years it has represented the Columbia River Commercial Fishing Industry at Federal Congressional and State Legislative hearings, price negotiations with Pack-

ers and Processors, and Oregon-Washington Bi-State compact meetings, as well as Conservation and Agency group conferences around the North West.

Having survived for some 60 years at the 1Oth Street location, after moving there from the Labor Temple shortly before WWII, it will now move West to a new office location at the West End Mooring Basin, Red Lion, next door to the Salmon For All office. At the same time all of the historic books, papers, and materials, some dating back to the l9th Century, will move East to the Clatsop County Historical Society Museum Archives for safekeeping as well as to create a new public gillnetter display.

Two of the many accomplishments of the CRFPU to help Salmon survival over the years, were to help convince the Corps of Engineers that a fish ladder was necessary in the construction of the Bonneville Dam, and to carry the early Pulp and Paper Pollution Abatement battle in the courts. As we now look back on it, getting Salmon runs safely over the dams and cleaning up the pollution in the Columbia and Willamette Rivers were both critical to anadromous fish survival.

There have been seven Executive Secretaries to serve the leadership role during the organization's stay at the 10th Street location. The two with the most longevity were the first, Henry Niemela in the 40s and early 50s and the present secretary, Jack Marincovich from 1976 and continuing now in the new office. In between them Bob Hicks, Charley Henne, William Westerholm, Russ Bristow, and Ross Lindstrom served.

One hundred years of Regatta races

A steamship and sailboats cruise the Columbia River during the Regatta of 1899. In the festival's early years, water events - especially boat races - were the focus of attention. Fishing boats, cannery tenders and sloops raced against each other for prizes of $50 or $25.Though the first formal Regatta was organized in 1894, the annual Astoria event has its origins in local races between skippers of plungers (sailboats that carried the mails) going as far back as the 1870s.

The first Regatta was started on a lark. A casual conversation about boat races at the Astoria Athletic Club was overheard by a reporter for The Daily Astorian who decided that this sounded like a capital idea. He took the brainstorm to John Rathom, young editor of The Astorian, who declared that a regatta (a fancy name for a boat race) was just what the city needed.

The first Astoria Regatta was timed to coincide with the end of the commercial salmon fishing season. (In those days, only the premium spring and summer chinook runs were packed, and the season ran from May through August.)

The Astoria Regatta was the first community festival of its kind in the Pacific Northwest, predating Portland's Rose Festival and other such events by several years. However, due to the realities of small-town life, interruptions by two world wars, and heavy dependency on volunteer efforts, the centennial Regatta of 1994 does not actually mark the 100th annual festival by that name.

During the early years, the Regatta depended on individual efforts of community boosters, who seem to have made an annual ritual of calling off the event due to lack of interest. Most years, others stepped in with renewed enthusiasm to take over, but the years 1902 and 1909 passed without annual celebration. The festival resumed again in 1952 and has continued to the present.

As the name implies, early Regattas were organized around water-related events. In 1894, four boats qualified for the fast Regatta race. The starting line was off Flavel Dock at the foot of 1 lth Street, and the course rounded a buoy a mile upriver. The winning entry completed the course in 25.5 minutes.

The next race was for double-scull fishboats - the now-familiar "butterfly fleet" of sailing gillnetters and Shoalwater oyster sloops, sails spread wing on wing before the wind. In fact, most photos of the fishing fleet with sails spread like the wings of butterflies appear to have been taken during these early Regatta fishboat races.

The early sailing gillnet boats used but a single sprit sail, but during the Regatta, a second sail was spread on a whisker pole opposite the main. Many carried a jib as well.

A careful look at the crews will indicate three and four people on each boat, while the fishing was usually done by a crew of no more than two.

By 1897, the Astoria Regatta had expanded to a four-day festival, replete with royalty.

World War I brought a halt to the annual event, which was not revived during the 1920s, probably because of the efforts required to rebuild the town after the catastrophic fire of 1922, which laid waste to the entire downtown business district of Astoria.

Members of the Astoria Yacht Club elected to revive the Regatta in 1932, partly as a high social event and partly as a general tonic for the ills common to most communities during the Great Depression. The year following, the Anchor Club was founded to help organize the festival and has continued to be the Regatta's principal support group.

World War II was the cause of another hiatus, begun in 1942.

The Regatta in Retrospect

For 20 years, the annual Salmon Derby was a hugely popular end-of-summer event in Astoria.

It started in 1937 as a way to cap off Regatta festivities, but soon eclipsed the festival itself in popularity - and provided some much needed income to local merchants. The derby continued even in the years during and after World War II when there was no Regatta.

With gillnetting banned for the week, sport fishermen aboard as many as 3,500 boats reeled in 15,000-20,000 fish, averaging 25 puonds, between Altoona, Wash., and Buoy 10.

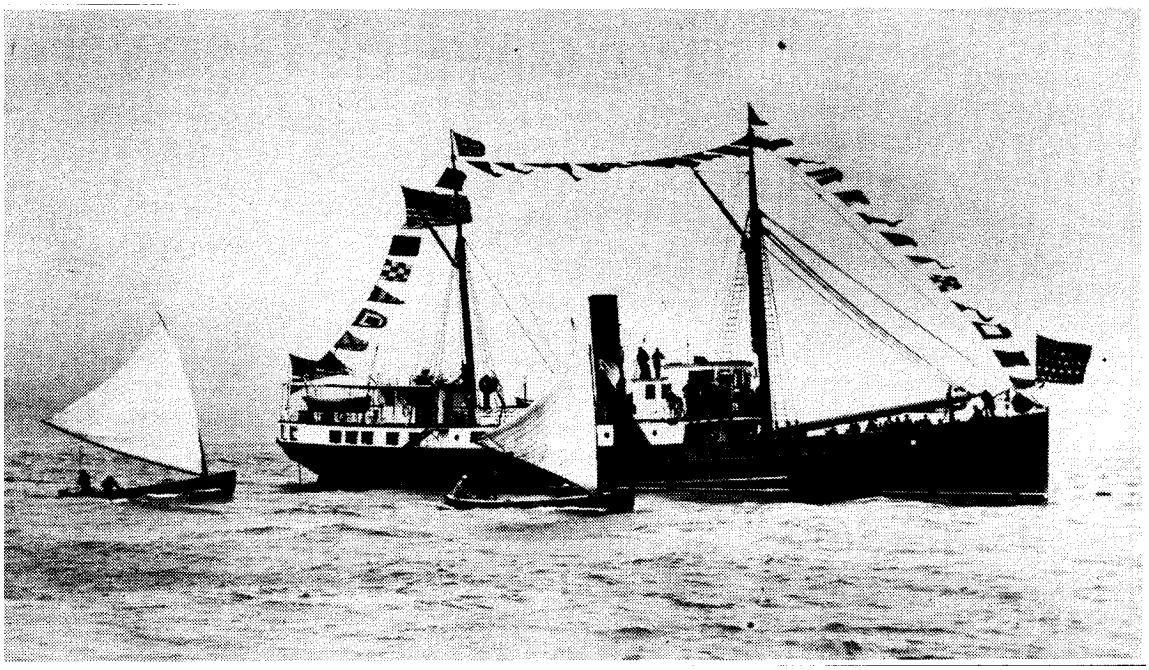
In 1952, top derby prizes were $1,000 and $500, with $100 going to the skipper of the boat with the biggest fish caught each day.

All of this seemed too good to last for Astoria's tourist industry - and it lasted only until 1957, when the Legislature banned such events in the interest of maintaining salmon stocks.

It may have been just as well. According to Bill McGregor, a founder of the derby, cheating had become a serious problem.Astoria Regatta Scene, 1903August is the month of Astoria's Annual Regatta. Miss Frances Thomas was Queen of the Regatta, and the U.S. lighthouse tender Heather was its flagship back in 1903, when the front cover picture was taken. Regatta was then a

major event, attracting attention even in San Francisco, and was already several years old. The first formally organized Regatta was held in 1894, but had antecedents going further back. From the 1870's, various types of boat races had been held in Astoria, but they then lacked many of the extra events that were added when Regatta became a regular annual affair.

The 1903 Regatta program lists a varied calendar of events on August 19-21. The Queen's Coronation and the Regatta Ball, held that year at Foard & Stokes' Hall, were major social events. Special races were scheduled for just about anything that floated: sailing yachts, gasoline launches, rowing barges, shells, lifeboats, tubs, canoes, sailing gillnet boats, cannery tenders, Shoalwater (now Willapa) Bay sloops, punts, and Whitehall boats. Other competitions included log rolling and greased pole contests, horse races, foot races, and a shooting tournament. There were also demonstrations by the Point Adams and Fort Canby lifeboat crews, swimming and high diving exhibitions, a Chinese dragon parade, a professional deepsea diver, and a demonstration of placing and retrieving buoys by a lighthouse tender. And one must not forget T.J. Arnold's Oregon, Pacific, & Oriental Carnival, which featured, among other things, a sixty-foot Ferris wheel, the Palace of Mirth, the Hindu Theater, the Edison Electric Show, and (of course) a merry-go-round.



A Steamship and Sailboats Cruise the Columbia River during the Regatta of 1899. In the festival's early years, water events — especially boat races — were the focus of attention. Fishing boats, cannery tenders and sloops raced against each other for prizes of $50 or $25.

Seals: A Historic Perspective

Seals and sea lions were a problem before the turn of the century. Visitors to Astoria often witness the playful antics of certain clowns of the sea which frequent the Columbia River in ever increasing numbers, but with mixed popularity: harbor seals (Phoca vitulina) and sea lions (Eumetopias stelleri and Zalophus californianus). These marine mammals have returned to the coastlines of California, Oregon and Washington in force after being hunted to near extinction. For nearly two hundred years commercial sealing fleets pursued the once immense herds of North Pacific sea elephants, sea lions, northern fur seals, and lesser groups of banded, leopard, and harbor seals for their skins and oil. This article examines three different eras of interaction between humans and pinnipeds on the Northwest Coast: native subsistence hunting, commercial exploitation, and international efforts to protect dwindling seal herds.

Seal hunting was practiced by most of the native peoples of the Northwest Coast. From the Columbia River north, leopard seals and sea lions were hunted along the coastline, at low water on the rivers, and in the sea caves off the Straits of Juan de Fuca. From Cape Flattery north through Southeast Alaska, seal hunters from various groups, most notably the Nootkans and Kwakiutl, ventured out beyond the immediate coastline for the northern migration of fur seal herds. In the far north, Aleut and Inuit peoples depended upon seal meat as a staple of their diet.

James G. Swan, in his The Northwest Coast, or Three Years Residence in the Washington Territory (1853), described how Chief Toke of the Shoalwater Bay Chinooks hunted seals using a twenty-foot spear with a detachable head. Entering the water naked, spear in right hand, he carried thirty fathoms of line coiled from his left arm and attached to the spear on one end. Swimming just below the surface of the water, with only his face and top of head showing, he appeared to be another seal in the water. He would approach to the leeward of a beached herd, slowly and noiselessly coming as close as he could underwater. Placing himself between the seals and deep water, he would wade ashore, then rising swiftly, throw his spear into a seal. Digging his heels into the sand, he braced himself, and played the panicked animal like a hooked steelhead. Eventually, he tired the animal enough to dispatch it with a club.

On the Columbia River, seals posed a threat to ancient fishermen. Anthropologist Franz Boas, who did groundbreaking fieldwork among Native Americans on the Northwest Coast in the late 19th century, noted in Kathlamet Texts (1901) that the

Cathlamets of the lower Columbia engaged in "drives to capture and harpoon sea lions down to the sea." A seal drive witnessed by Alexander Henry of John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Trading Company began near Oak Point, approximately 50 miles from the mouth of the river. The purpose of such seal drives was to prevent these aquatic carnivores from interfering with fishing efforts during the yearly salmon runs, which were the Cathlamet's primary source of food.

Canadians kill seals legally

"We've been carrying on the seal hunt in Newfoundland for 200 years," said John Efford, the provincial fisheries minister. "There's no group in the world that's ever again going to stop it."

The hunt almost was stopped in the l980s. Protests resulted in a European ban on the import of seal pelts, driving large sealing ships out of the business.

Newfoundlanders continued small-boat hunting, but the market was so poor by the early 1990s that only about 50,000 seals were taken annually.

Starting in 1996, the annual kill rose to more than 200,000. Government officials decided to back the industry with temporary subsidies in hopes of partly offsetting the loss of 27,000 jobs when Newfoundland's codfish industry collapsed in 1992.

This year's quota is 285,000, and Efford said it could increase if markets for seal products are strong.

Efford said animal-rights activists are more concerned about seals than Canadians struggling to survive in a province with 18 percent unemployment. "Why are these so-called humanitarians not concerned about 400 communities in Newfoundland left without work?" he asked.

The last government count, in 1994, estimated there were 4.8 million harp seals in the region. Efford said today there are about 6 million, posing a threat to dwindling fish stocks.

The International Fund for Animal Welfare says there is no proof that seals are responsible for the codfish shortage. The group also disputes claims that the seal industry is worth nearly $20 million a year, saying its net value is minimal if costs of enforcement and government subsidies are deducted.

But in Newfoundland, base of the sealing industry, there is equally strong determination to keep the hunt going — even to expand it by finding markets for virtually every part of a seal carcass.

Public-relations kits the sealing industry prepares contain no images of seals but plenty of glossy photos of appetizing dishes prepared with seal meat.

Samples of seal sausage and seal pepperoni are being offered at food fairs across Canada. Newfoundland's first seal-leather tannery recently opened. And Canadian and Asian health stores are stocking seal-oil pills, which supposedly ease arthritis pain, unclog arteries and relieve diabetes symptoms.

Seal penises are sold in Asia for use in aphrodisiacs — something more quietly noted by the sealing industry.

One argument the anti-sealing lobby cannot use is that the seals are endangered.

NMFS report on pinipeds calls for change in laws

California sea lions and Pacific harbor seals have increased so rapidly since the passage of the federal Marine Mammal Act, that there are now frequent and serious conflicts between them and humans all along the West Coast, says a report by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) which was sent to Congress Feb. 11.

The report, compiled with the assistance and concurrence of the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and the fish and wildlife agencies of California, Washington and Oregon, was requested by Congress in 1994 to address the effects of rising West Coast pinniped populations on declining salmon stocks and interactions with humans. According to the NMFS, Congress would have to change the law if the reports recommendation are to be implemented.

NMFS reported that by the mid-1990s there were 188,000 California sea lions and 76,000 harbor seals off California, Oregon and Washington. The populations have grown at an annual rate of about 5 to 7 percent, tripling their numbers since the 1970s.

"It's impossible to measure exactly how great an impact seal and sea lion predation is having on salmon," said William Stelle, NOAA Fisheries Northwest Region administration. "But we do know that sound principles of wildlife management tell us that we should minimize the pressure being put on already badly diminished runs of these fish." Stelle said the report recommends apply a conservation principle in natural resource management favoring the resource most in need of protection when information is uncertain.

The report says in certain situations where seals or sea lions are preying on salmonids listed or about to be listed under the Endangered Species Act, state and federal wildlife managers, under strict federal guidelines and as a last resort, should be permitted to lethally remove these marine mammals. Further, the report recommends, that in cases where seals or sea lions are causing repeated, serious conflict with human activity at locations such as fishing grounds or marinas, state or federal managers should be authorized to lethally remove identified problem marine mammals, if the individual animals fail to respond to repeated attempts to deter them.

Other recommendations include developing safe and effective deterrents, so that lethal removal of problem animals is a seldom-used option.

The NMFS report also recommends that Congress consider reinstating the authority, removed from the federal marine mammal protection law in 1994, that allows a fisher to lethally remove a sea or sea lion to protect his catch or gear if the animal cannot be otherwise deterred. Such authority, the report says, would be only for certain fishers at specific sites and seasons, and only until effective non-lethal means to deter seals and sea lions can be developed.

Copies of the report, the 84-page scientific document that supports it, and other supporting materials are available on the Northwest Region office's home page at www.nwr.noaa.gov.

Preliminary Snake River Dam Breaching Costs Broached

The cost for breaching four dams on the lower Snake River could add up to almost a billion dollars, according to preliminary figures developed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Breaching would involve removing only the earthen part of the dams. The estimate includes costs of up to $170 million to stabilize embankments, and possibly another $100 million to modify pumping plants. Taking out the concrete could cost over $300 million, but leaving the powerhouses and spillways in place puts the rough estimate between $500 million and $816 million to achieve year-round natural river drawdown on the lower Snake.

The figures were announced Jan. 21 at a Corps meeting in Portland on the feasibility of different drawdown strategies. An estimate for drawdown to spillway crest is still in progress, but it's a strategy that previous consultants like Harza Northwest found to be of dubious biological benefit.

The dam breaching theme was also the topic of a panel discussion at a Jan. 24 salmon recovery workshop in Seattle, sponsored by the Sierra Club.

Bob Heinith of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission told the group that taking out the dams was the only thing to do because "the dams overwhelm the other impacts."

Heinith said there was a regional dispute over future capital expenditures at dams. With $1.4 billion slated for spending over the next ten years, he said projects like the $149 million projected smolt bypass pipe (nearly 2 miles long) at Bonneville Dam should be stopped, projected smolt bypass pipe (nearly 2 miles long) at Bonneville Dam should be stopped, other capital improvements at dams on the Snake canceled and the dams breached.

"Nothing is working in the Snake River now," Heinith said, pointing to continual declines in salmon runs since the dams were built in the 1970s.

Shawn Cantrell of Friends of the Earth said dam removal isn't something new. He said 580 dams have been taken out in the US for all sorts of reasons, with safety being the main issue.

The Sierra Club's Jim Baker told the group he was the "original Rodney Dangerfield of salmon recovery," and pointed to studies by the National Research Council and the Independent Scientific Group's Return to the River, which said the only way healthy ecosystems can be restored is by restoring watersheds.

Baker said transporting fish in barges past the dams for the last 20 years hasn't produced enough adults to restore any of the Snake stocks. Escalating costs for powerhouse rebuilding at dams that produce only a few percent of the region's power doesn't make sense, he said, when the dams are such an impediment to fish.

With only the remnants of original runs left, Baker told the group that even tearing out the dams may not bring the fish back. "They may have got too low," he added. But if the dams are removed and the runs don't come back, "fill them up again."

The panel's thrust was countered by fisheries scientist Jim Anderson of the University of Washington, who spoke from the audience. "I think you have misstated a lot of the science," Anderson told the panel, adding that none of the studies they had cited recommended taking any of the dams out. Anderson described the uncertainty in future benefits for fish from such actions. "The science is not that powerful," he said.

Anderson said closure of all in-river fisheries would be a better way to help bring fish back. He also noted that changes in climate may have masked whether dams have had much effect on the runs.

Baker told the gathering they should know Dr. Anderson received a lot of his research funding from BPA, and that proponents of keeping dams have an economic reason for supporting such a position. "The Sierra Club doesn't believe anybody who has an institutional tie," Baker said.

But Anderson said the science was too uncertain to call for dam breaching. "Whether or not the dams are removed, is not my business," he added.

—Bill Rudolph

Waves From The Past

Working my way through College

This picture was taken across the Columbia River from Astoria near the old ferry landing on September 10, 1935. The person with the gaff hook sitting is yours truly, Don Riswick, your editor at age 18 years old. The boat is one of CRPA's boats which was powered by a two cylinder 12 HP Palmer and leased for $40 per season.

My father took this picture and he steered the boat. I had no other help, and he know nothing about cleaning fish, etc. We had a ton and a half of Salmon and I was pretty tired at that time. In the background is a bamboo pole which acted as an aerial for my 3 tube battery set which I made myself. I used to listen to Salt Lake City and San Francisco using earphones -- probably one of the 1st radios out of Scandinavian (Bumble Bee) Station in the East end of Astoria, Oregon. In the fall I enrolled at Oregon State College and took a course in Fisheries.

Many Astoria young people worked in the seining grounds and gillnet fisheries, and for the canneries, to make money for college. I was one of them.

US ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS NW DIVISION

AVIAN PREDATION CONCERNS ON LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER

Colonies of Caspian terns, gulls, and cormorants nesting on Rice Island in the Columbia River estuary are consuming large numbers of salmon and steelhead smolts as the young fish migrate through the final stretch of river to the ocean.

As scientists and researchers noted this development in recent years, formal efforts were begun to determine the extent of avian predation in the estuary. NMFS Biological Opinion on salmon and the hydropower system included a request for the Corps to evaluate avian predation in the Columbia River system. The Corps began funding such research in 1996.

From field research results it has been estimated that Rice Island supports the largest known Caspian tern colony in North America, with around 8,000 nesting pairs in 1997 and over 10,000 pairs in 1998. Researchers estimate the birds consumed between six and 25 million salmon and steelhead smolts in 1997, and between eight and 30 million in 1998.

Rice Island, located 21 miles upstream of the mouth of the Columbia River, was created in 1962 by placement of dredged material from the river. Over the years, it has become a nesting site for thousands of gulls, cormorants, and since 1987, Caspian terns, who find the bare sand a perfect nesting medium. Rapid increases in Caspian tern nesting colonies were noted in the early 1990s. Caspian terns are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

A Caspian Tern Working Group has been established that includes the Corps, US Fish and Wildlife Service, NMFS, Oregon State University researchers, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, Oregon and Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife, and Bonneville Power Administration.

This group has developed a short-term plan to relocate the Caspian tern colony from Rice Island to East Sand Island, an island approximately 16 miles closer to the ocean. East Sand Island is where the birds first settled when they came to the Columbia River Estuary in

Knappa takes 2A championship by largest margin in history!

Knappa's 91-54 win over the Oakridge Warriors was the largest margin of victory in Class 2A championship game history, and was the exclamation point to a dominating run not likely to be soon repeated. It gave Knappa its sixth state championship in boys basketball.

Knappa finished the season 29-0, the first unbeaten boys basketball team in Knappa's storied history, running its win streak to 48 games.

Brian Jackson averaged 29 points and 13.25 rebounds in his four tournament games, leading both statistics. He finished his 109-game Knappa career with 2,515 points. He ranks second all-time in career scoring in Oregon high school basketball, training only 2,582 points scored by Knappa's Bob "Pudgy" Hunt between 1953 and 1957.

continues from page 13

1984. Nesting gulls and cormorants presently use East Sand Island. Research on cormorants that feed downstream from East Sand indicates a diet containing fewer salmonids and more of other fish species compared to Rice Island cormorants.

To move the terns, several actions are planned before the start of the 1999 nesting season. Habitat attractive to the terns will be developed on East Sand Island. Because the birds nest on bare sand, the island will be scarified to remove vegetation and debris. Decoys and tern colony recordings will be used to attract the birds to East Sand.

To dissuade the birds from settling on Rice Island, wheat and grasses will be planted. If needed, other methods to discourage nesting there may be used, such as noises or fences.

The planned habitat changes must be completed by March, because terns begin returning to the Columbia in late March to early April, and begin nesting in early May. If relocation is not successful before nesting begins, the agencies have agreed that all harassment actions will stop for 1999.

The Caspian Tern Working Group believes this short-term plan will work well for the terns and for the salmon and steelhead smolts. A monitoring program will help the team assess effects on the terns and salmonid predation, and formulate a long-term plan. Longer-term solutions will be explored as results are studied.

If an environmental assessment released October 28 by the Corps is approved, steps will be taken to relocate the Caspian tern colony on the Columbia River before the beginning of next spring's juvenile fish migration.

New anti-commercial fishing initiative filed

A new anti-commercial fishing initiative was filed in early January at Olympia, Washington.

The new initiative is from the same group that filed initiative I-640, which was soundly defeated at the polls.

This new initiative would ban all net fisheries within Washington State fresh or marine waters, other than those tribal fisheries conducted pursuant to valid treaty rights.

Gear listed to be banned include the following: Purse Seine, Gillnet, Baitfish Purse Seine, Dogfish Set Net, Foodfish Drag Seine, Foodfish Trawl (Puget Sound and Non-Puget Sound), Herring Drag Seine, Herring Gillnet, Herring Lampara, Herring Purse Seine, Columbia River Smelt, Smelt Dip Bag Net, Whiting (Puget Sound), Shrimp Trawl (Puget Sound and Non-Puget Sound), Emerging Commercial Fishery, and Spawn on Kelp.

Non included in the proposed ban are Reef Net, Crab Pots, Shrimp Pots, Baitfish Lampara and Herring Dip Bag Net.

Several responses are said to be in the process, including a potential Public Disclosure Commission fund raising violation, and court challenges. Other organizational responses are being considered.

Poll indicates voters unwilling to sacrifice to save salmon

A poll conducted by Elway Research Inc. indicates that Washington residents can talk-the-talk but are unwilling to walk-the-walk when it comes to saving the endangered salmon.

The poll would indicate that Washington's political leaders will be in the position of having to make hard decisions without the advantage of having a mandate from the voters.

That situation would put in jeopardy the likelihood of any action being taken to avoid federal intervention.

Fish Pirate Story

Here is another fish pirate story. It seems the U.S. coastal trollers were concerned in the seventies about the incidental salmon bycatch take of West Coast Chinook by the JVOAS operating off the coast for hake. Some UW researchers who would go over the observers notes reported very low figures. Some fishermen were able to get copies of the unloading of one of the JVOA's when it unloaded in France, and there were huge quantities of salmon. They were able to get actual notes from an observer and in the end they learned that:

(1) the value of the actual salmon caught was four times greater than the target species (hake);

(2) 35 times more King Salmon were being intercepted than were being caught by U.S. commercial fishermen in all the lower 48 states;

(3) according to my source, the bycatch reports left off THREE ZEROS on the interception quantities. As the truth came out, the observer efforts were stepped up by three or four times and then U.S. fishing picked up.

My source says he believes the Alaskan fishermen successfully modified their fishing to substantially reduce interception in the lower 48 states. However, he believes the lower far North migrating stocks that travel farther offshore could well be hammered by the Russians targeting salmon with their trawl vessels fishing up to 200 miles off their coast. He confirmed, as have numerous fishermen, that they saw more net-marked salmon last year (1998) than in the previous few years. He agreed the dramatically increased Russian trawl effort will target North American Salmon and leave telltale evidence, meaning dropout net-scarred fish returning to their streams in Oregon and Washington.

Story from Dan Barr, Chairman - SOS Save Our Salmon, President - Bristol Bay Driftnetters Assn., and Friends of U.S. Salmon
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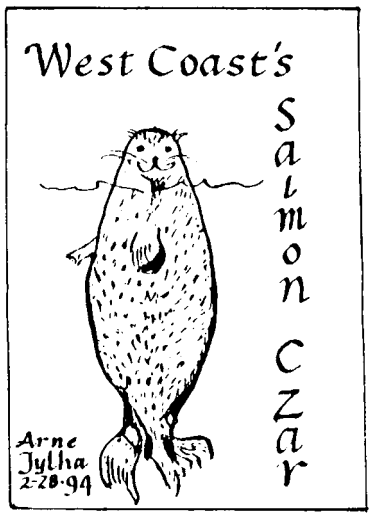

Collections Update

By Mark Tolonen

When the Columbia River Fisherman's Protective Union moved to a much smaller office at the West End Mooring Basin, they donated their historical records and memorabilia to Clatsop County Historical Society. The records represent nearly 120 years of meeting minutes, membership dues, strikes, fishery management and public relations. The former office at 322 10th Street in Astoria was a cool, damp, atmosphere overflowing with boxes of documents: a perfect breeding ground for silverfish. Silverfish (Lepisma saccharina) which love to eat book bindings, paper, and textiles, are a common pest in our humid environment. Although the records appeared to be in good condition, we wanted to be sure not to introduce harmful pests into Clatsop County Historical Society collection areas. Bornstein Seafoods generously handled the issue for us by flash freezing the documents. (AREA Properties loaned the truck to transport the archival materials.) The process occurs at such a rapid speed that insects die before they can acclimate. The result is an impressive historical collection of insect free Columbia River industry documentation.

If you would like to help research and catalogue this collection, please give Mark a call at 325-2203.

Exxon Profits from Settlement Delay

After $5 billion in punitive damages was awarded plaintiffs in the Exxon Valdez oil spill trial, Exxon set aside the money and appealed the decision. While the appeal has yet to be heard by the 9th Circuit Court, the money has been earning enormous interest -- for both the plaintiffs and the company.

According to an article by Natallie Phillips of the Scripps-McClatchy Western Service, the interest is adding $812,160 a day to the $5 billion. At the same time, the interest is also generating about $2 million a day for Exxon. "As it stands now," writes Phillips, "if the appeals linger on a couple more years, Exxon will have earned enough in interest alone to pay the $5 billion plus the accrued interest." Interest for the plaintiffs is capped at 5.9 percent a year. But Exxon has reportedly been making 14 to 17 percent from the $5 billion.

Exxon Valdez skipper to serve sentence

ANCHORAGE, Alaska -- Former Exxon Valdez skipper Joseph Hazelwood can look forward to a month in Alaska each summer for the next five years. But it won't be a vacation.

Instead, Hazelwood will pick up trash along Anchorage highways and clean up litter in parks as part of a 10-person work crew. He is scheduled to begin serving 1,000 hours of community service this year for his 1990 conviction on a charge of negligent discharge of oil stemming from the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound.

The sentence had remained on hold during eight years of appeals. Under an agreement reached with prosecutors in November, Hazelwood will serve 200 hours a year through 2004.

It was Hazelwood who ordered the 984-foot tanker to shift position to avoid icebergs in Valdez Arm. Hazelwood then went below to his cabin, leaving 3rd Mate Gregory Cousins in control of the vessel. Cousins ran the vessel onto Bligh Reef just after midnight on March 24, 1989.

The spill of 11 million gallons, which remains the nation's worst, polluted more than 1,000 miles of Alaska shoreline, killed tens of thousands of birds and marine mammals and disrupted fishing.

Young Atlantic salmon found in B.C. river

Fisheries biologists in Canada have confirmed that a dozen young Atlantic salmon found in the Tsitika River on Vancouver Islands in British Columbia were offspring of farm-raised fish that spawned in the river.

Until the discovery of these fish, marine biologists have generally maintained that farmed fish could not spawn in the wild.

Biologists estimate that somewhere around 60,000 Atlantic salmon escape from the many fish farms in British Columbia each year. Critics of fish farming have charged that Atlantic salmon escaping from these farms could spread disease, form hybrids with Pacific species, or compete with wild stocks for food. These fish have not been considered a threat because biologists, up to now, have been of the opinion that the fish would just die off.

Alaskan officials report that some farmed fish are beginning to show up in Alaskan waters, but so far no signs have been found to confirm that the fish are reproducing in state waters.

The Magnuson Fishery and Conservation Management Act

The Magnuson Fishery and Conservation Management Act (MFCMA) is the cornerstone legislation of fisheries management in US jurisdictional waters. A federal law originally passed in 1976, its purpose was to stop overfishing by foreign fleets and aid in the development of the domestic fishing industry. Additionally, the Magnuson Act gave the United States sole management authority over all living resources within the 200-mile exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of our shores.

One of the primary mandates of the original draft of the Act created 8 regional councils whose job it is to act as a regional management body in controlling the harvest of fish within their region. The councils are also mandated to prepare, monitor and revise fishery management plans for fisheries requiring conservation and management. These councils answer directly to the Secretary of Commerce whose job it is to review, approve and sometimes prepare fishery management plans. Ultimately it is the Secretary's responsibility to provide for the conservation and management of our fisheries resources. The Act has been amended at least 15 times since its initial passing in 1976.

The most recent and extensive Congressional amendments to the act were passed on October 11, 1996 and is refereed to as H.R. 39 or the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA). The result was issues being addressed such as habitat degradation, overfishing, funding, bycatch and sustainability of fishing communities. Many of these issues will be addressed by requiring the councils to amend their Fishery Management Plans. The next Congressional amendment is scheduled for 1999.

Bristol Bay salmon stocks at risk AIFMA reports

A new report, Bristol Bay Salmon Stocks at Risk, was published by the Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association (AIFMA). The report is the result of one and a half years of investigation into causes for the unexpected low returns of sockeye salmon to the Bristol Bay region.

The report addresses AIFMA's deduction that Japanese and Russian high seas salmon fishing within the Russian EEZ appears to be the direct cause of back-to-back disaster seasons in the Bristol Bay sockeye salmon fishery.

To ensure protection of U.S. salmon stocks, as well as other nations, AIFMA believes that the United States -- Russia Bilateral Pacific Salmon Agreement must be renegotiated. Directed salmon fisheries must be limited reciprocally as in the U.S., to within 25 miles of the Russian coastline.

Copies of the report are being sent to selected U.S. scientists, government officials, media, industry members and others interested and/or affected by this issue. For information on obtaining a report contact AIFMA at: Alaska Independent Fishermen's Marketing Association, Post Office Box 60131, Seattle, WA 98160; Telephone/Fax: 206-542-3930; or by e-mail at aifmal@seanet.com.

AIFMA is the largest salmon fishers' association in the Bristol Bay region of Alaska.

ADF&G foretells '99 Bristol Bay run

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is predicting a total 1999 run of sockeye for Bristol in the area of 26.2 million with a forecast range from 9 to 43.4 million. The escapement goal is set at 11.1 leaving a South Peninsula quota of 1.3 million and an inshore harvest of 13.8 million.

Both the 1997 and 1998 Bristol Bay sockeye runs came in considerably under what was forecast, and in response the ADF&G is pointing out that there is great uncertainty in the prediction for the 1999 Bristol Bay salmon sockeye run (the forecast range is 9.0 - 43.4 million).

According to Beverly Cross, Research Project Biologist at Anchorage, "We do not know why production for the past two years has been so low and whether this decreased production will continue. We will continue to discuss Bristol Bay salmon production with other scientist and search for new information that might decrease the uncertainty in the prediction, however, it is unlikely we will be able to do so prior to the 1999 season."San Francisco herring fishermen get pleasant surprise when fish show up

By Matt Marinkovich

News Briefs

More Funding For Salmon Net Pens

The Power Planning Council has approved funding to expand fishing opportunities in the lower Columbia. At their work session in Pendleton on Oct. 14, Council members approved money for more net pens to raise coho salmon at several sites near Astoria on both the Washington and Oregon shores. The fish are now raised at several places near the mouth of the river, and fed until they are old enough to be released.

Returns have been mixed over the past few years. But this fall, cohos released from the Youngs Bay net pen site have produced more than 15,000 adults for commercial gillnetters while another 3,330 fish have been produced at the Tongue Point site, according to Astoria fisherman Don Riswick. Riswick said that's almost five times the number predicted for the Youngs Bay harvest this year. Buyers were paying 40 cent a pound for the fish.

Just west of Astoria, Youngs Bay is one of the four sites where fish are raised to provide a harvest area for lower river fishermen, allowing them to fish in places where it is difficult to intercept ESA-listed salmon heading up the mainstem Columbia.

"In addition to valuable research, the program provides an economic benefit to the lower Columbia area through enhanced sport and commercial fishing opportunities," said Council chair John Etchart of Montana. The program is a joint effort of the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Departments and the C!atsop County Economic Development Council.

About $158,000 would be allocated for 12 new net pens, which would allow another 200,000 coho to be raised at each of the two sites. The total budget for the five-site project is expected to be about $1.4 million for 1999.

By the end of October, commercial fishermen had netted about 24,000 coho and 2,000 chinook created by the project, worth about $30,000 altogether.

Currently, the project releases about 600,000 coho and 1.75 million spring and fall chinook. For 1996, adult harvest totaled over 22,000 coho and 1,600 chinook. According to Council staffer John Marsh, that means, statistically, that only one endangered Snake River fall chinook was harvested by the fishery.

The net pen project is being monitored for its effectiveness, as part of a 10-year research project that began in 1993 to evaluate strategies, sites and harvest strategies designed to allow harvest by commercial and sport fishermen while protecting weaker runs. -Bill Rudolph

Power Council Contributes To Bird Re-location

The Power Planning Council has approved a request for a contribution to help pay for relocating salmon-eating birds from Rice Island, where they've been eating up to 25 percent of all the migrating salmon that are heading out to sea from the Columbia River Estuary.

In the mid-1980s, Caspian terns from the Grays Harbor area apparently stumbled into the promised land of the Columbia estuary, where the region's salmon recovery effort was producing millions of hatchery smolts a year and creating one of the largest bird feeders in the world. The terns have thrived--their numbers have grown over 600 percent to about 10,000 nesting pairs that appear every spring.

Council members OK'd spending $235,000 on a strategy that will use a combination of tern decoys, loudspeakers and vegetation in an attempt to move 10,000 Caspian terns from their present nesting colony at Rice Island to another spot 15 miles downriver, where juvenile salmon would make up less of their daily diet. Research over the past two years has estimated that the terns consume 6 million to 25 million salmonids every year.

The $815,000 strategy was devised by USFWS, NMFS, Oregon State University researchers and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. It calls for removing vegetation from East Sand Island, near Astoria, and placing almost 400 decoys there while playing tern calls over loudspeakers to lure the birds towards the new nesting habitat.

Meanwhile, wheat will be planted on Sand Island to discourage nesting there next spring. The terns only lay eggs in bare, sandy areas.

"The Council is required to mitigate the impact of the Columbia River Basin hydropower system on fish and wildlife, and this problem is not really a responsibility of the hydro system," said Council chair John Etchart. But he said the investment in salmon recovery must be protected. "If the terns are eating salmon produced through the ratepayers' investment, then we are willing to help address the problem."

The funding will come through BPA's fish and wildlife program budget, but Council members expected some or all of the contribution will be reimbursed in future years by the Corps of Engineers or other federal sources. -*Bill Rudolph*

Little Success For Lower Snake Hatcheries

The Lower Snake River Compensation Plan was authorized by Congress in 1976 to offset losses in salmon and steelhead from construction and operation of the four federal dams. But a recent review has found that the program has not achieved its goal.

It's administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with BPA reimbursing costs from power revenues. The fiJnding covers a small empire of 12 hatcheries and 14 trapping and acclimation facilities, along with monitoring, evaluation, and fish health operated by the state and tribal fish managers.

The production goals for the LSRCP hatcheries include returns of 18,300 fall chinook, 58,700 spring/summer chinook and 55,100 steelhead back to the lower Snake; the plan did not set goals for wild fish. After 20 years, hatchery mitigation goals have not been achieved, and now all wild, native salmon and steelhead in the Snake River are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Ed Bowles of the Idaho Department of Fish and Game summarized the technical reports on spring and summer chinook. "Overall, I think it is fair to characterize what we have heard today as a bleak picture with respect to the goals of the LSRCP program.

"There are some extremely important legislative and court sanctions and mandated promises that were made. Those promises relate to the LSRCP, U. 3: v Oregon and Idaho Power settlement agreement; they are not going away. Those promises all resulted from construction and operation of dams, and they all chose hatcheries as the primary tool to mitigate for those effects. Based on the presentations we have heard today, it may be time to take a step back and ask ourselves whether we, as a society, have chosen the right tool for the job. If we depend on hatcheries as the only tool for the recovery of Snake River chinook stocks, we may be setting ourselves up for failure.

Trouble On The Tucannon

Wild spring chinook in Washington's Tucannon River are in a very bad way. This tributary of the Snake flows north out of the Blue Mountains near Walla Walla, and its spring run has declined from 6,000 at the turn of the century to about 2,000 in the 1950s--and about 150 wild fish today.

The declining trend for this population has been steep since 1986—about 700 fish. A major shift for all Snake River wild chinook populations began in 1990, with a dramatic decline in adults and recruits per spawner. In the Tucannon, the adult run declined, for the first time, to below 200 wild fish in 1994.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service assessed the ESA-listed Tucannon stock in the 1998 Lower Snake River Compensation Plan Status Review.

In 1994 and 1995, runs to the Tucannon River were predicted to be less than 100 fish. Severe flooding in 1996 and 1997 nearly eliminated all natural production, which affected in-river rearing for the 1994, 1995 and 1996 brood years, said Joseph Bumgarner, of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Coastal gillnetters are least likely to sell permits; in buyback Puget Sound gillnetters most interested

By Matt Marinkovich
(Courtesy Alaska Fisherman Journal)

Last fall, the State of Washington offered a long-awaited permit buy back to anyone who owned a permit to fish for salmon in the state. The project was funded primarily through federal money, with the state required to match 25 percent of the total funding, which came to $4.67 million. $3.5 million of that came from the federal government, and $1.17 million from the state.

U.S. Senators Patty Murray and Slade Gorton worked for the federal appropriations, which was approved in June of 1997. The program was delayed until State funding was approved in January of 1998. After that, the state had to determine how the funds would be allocated among the different user groups. It wasn't until October that the program was finally ready to present to the license holders.

The "buyback" program could be called a "disaster relief" measure. It was enacted on language held in the Magnuson/Steven's Act regarding disaster relief for fishermen, pursuant to the 1995-96 and 1996-97 disaster declarations in the wake of severe winter flooding. The actual language came from an amended piece of legislation that already existed in the Washinston Administrative Code.

The program was intended to provide long-term relief by reducing the number of permits in the fishery, and short-term relief in the form of money paid to the fishers who sell their permits back. It also aims to make the fisheries easier to manage by reducing the number of fishermen participating in the fisheries.

The Puget Sound gillnet fishery had the greatest number of permits bought back and the greatest interest in selling by its permit holders. Going to the state were 170 permits at a price of $12,000 each. 563 of the 872 permit holders submitted their permits into the program, representing 56 percent of the permits. The number of permits was reduced by 20 percent to a total of 502 permits.

Lanny Pillatoes, President of the Puget Sound Gillnetter's Association, said that he is not happy with the price paid for the permits, and that he told the State negotiators that the price should be $15,000 at the very least. "Their original offer was only $2,000," he said, chuckling in disbelief. Although many fishermen had complained the price was too low, they "were still happy to get something for their permits." Pillatoes also said that he knows a number of fishermen who sold their permits but still plan on participating in the fishery.

Puget Sound purse seine license holders received the most money for their permits, at $30,000 each. Twenty-two permits were bought back out of the 291 valid permits held by the fleet, for a reduction of only 7.5 percent. The purse seiners were reduced the least through the program. There was quite a bit of interest by the fleet with 144 permit holders submitting their permits into the program, or 49 percent of the permits. 269 permits remain in the fishery.

Tacoma purse seiner Mitch Beritich said he felt the $30,000 offered for the permits was "beneath" him, and that there is no way he would give up a part of his livelihood--that he has been doing for nearly 50 years--for that amount of money. He said a more appropriate price would be something similar to what the Canadian government paid their fishermen, "around $100,000 American!"

Puget Sound reef net permit holders also showed interest in selling their permits, as 56 percent of the 48 license holders submitted their licenses into the program, for a total of 27 submittees. Only 7 of these received the $15,000 offered by the State, for a total fleet reduction of 15 percent. Forty-one licenses remain in the fishery.

Washington troll license holders had their numbers reduced by 31 percent, which is the greatest amount any gear group was reduced through the program, as 100 of the 326 licenses were bought back, with 226 remaining in the fishery. Forty-four percent of the fleet was interested in selling out, with 143 permit holders submitting their licenses for the $7,500 payment offered by the State.

Washington coastal gillnet permit holders, those who fish in Grays Harbor and Willipa Bay, by far showed the least interest in selling their permits for the $10,000 offered to them. In fact, they were the only user group in the program who did not have more submittees than

dollars available to buy their permits back. The State allocated funding for the purchase of 84 permits, but only 61 out of the existing 364 permit holders signed on to the deal, leaving $230,000 for "phase 2" o"f the program.

"Phase 2" uses a somewhat complicated formula based on a fisherman's past catch record. The price paid for the permits varies because the fisherman requests his own price based on the numbers he comes up with within the formula. All user groups were capable of going to phase 2 if all of the available funding was not used up during the initial "phase 1" (the price offered by the State) of the program.

Vic Mandich, Jr., President of the Grays Harbor Gillnet Association, said that "if the State is going to take away your livelihood, and leave you with a gillnetter that can't be used for much besides a sport boat, they should pay at least $35,000 to $40,000 for the licenses." He feels "the department of fisheries wants to take the permits for nothing."

Washington charter licenses were also bought out in the program. These licenses were bought back according to the number of anglers the charter operator was allowed to have aboard the vessel. The State paid $1,000 for each angler, with a maximum of $10,000 paid to any license holder, as the number of anglers an operator may have varies. A total of 152 anglers were taken out of the Washington charter industry, thereby reducing the number of operators by 19, leaving 191.

Initially, the charter licenses were not included in the buyback plan because they did not fall under the category of commercial fishing. Once the disaster was claimed, though, they were included as part of the fishing community which was in need of disaster relief, and thereby qualified under the guidelines of the Magnuson/Steven's Act.

Since there were, for the most part, more permits submitted into the program than there was funding, the State held a random drawing to determine which applicants would actually have their permits bought back. Many fishermen referred to this as the "lottery." The drawing was held before the public on October 3 in the auditorium in the Department of Social and Health Services building in Olympia, between 9:00 am and 1:30 pm. all of the applications were put on cards, then tossed into an oldfashioned hand-cranked wire tumbler cage. Applications were drawn from the cage in lots of 25. When an application was drawn the permit number was announced, and the order it was drawn in was stamped onto the card. This information was also displayed on an overhead projector so the spectators could see. Applications were drawn until the tumbler was empty, and all applicants were notified as to what number their application was drawn from the pot. The first licenses drawn from the pot, up to the number by which the permits were to be reduced, were the ones that were bought back through the program.

Some of the fishermen who participated in the buyback were confused by the way the plan was explained in the letter which was mailed out on October 2, 1998. They thought that it was a first-come, first-serve deal, and the public event on the 30th was being held to announce who's names were on the list early enough to qualify for funding. Needless to say, these individuals were a little upset when they were told their permit would not be bought back, because their applications were not drawn early enough to qualify.

The rules explained that permit holders had a five day window of opportunity to submit their applications,which was the week of Monday, October 26th to Friday, October 30th. All of the applications received prior to, or on the 26th would be considered to have been submitted on the first day of the period, and so on for each day during the week. Most of the applications were submitted on the first day, and therefore were the ones competing for the funding in the drawing. This is where the fishermen became confused, as they thought the first people to sign up on that Monday would be first on the list to have their permits bought back.

Although the fishermen's sentiments were that more money should be paid, the numbers of permit holders willing to sell their permits back in this buyback program shows that the fishermen are willing to take what the state is offering. With this knowledge, the State is working to provide funding for another buy back program.

Brian Edie, the special program manager for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, said there is "nothing definite" in the works right now, although the department has a budget request for $1.17 million in the legislature at this time. This would cover the State's matching funds if the Federal budget provides funding for a program similar to this last buyback. The idea is that if the Federal money is appropriated, the State would have their matching funds ready. This would be different from the last buyback, which was delayed six months while waiting for the legislature to approve the matching funds in the State budget. If there is funding available in the future, it would be for a totally new program, and that may have different dollar amount for the permits, as well as different rules.

1999 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Recommendations

Based on the Management Agreement and the predicted returns of spring and summer chinook and sockeye, all lower river non-Indian fisheries should be managed so that collective impacts do not exceed 246 upriver spring chinook, 165 summer chinook, and 115 sockeye. These numbers represent 1% each of the forecasted summer and spring chinook and sockeye returns for 1999. In addition, spring chinook forecasts for Washington's lower river tributaries are likely to result in shortages of hatchery spawners in one or more of those streams, even with sport fisher restrictions.

Expected hatchery and wild escapement shortages will mean the Compact will not be able to authorize all fisheries that have occurred in past years. The Compact will have to be selective in shaping and adopting 1999 seasons that minimize impacts on listed and depressed runs.

Potential main-stem Columbia River commercial fisheries for the 1999 winter, spring, and summer season time frame listed here will be considered at the 1999 Compact hearings.

Anchovy & Herring Fishery

The anchovy and herring fisheries primarily provide bait to the local recreational salmon and sturgeon fisheries.

The anchovy and herring season is open year round seaward of the Megler-Astoria Bridge, with seines of a mesh size not less than 1/2-inch and not over 1,400 feet in length. All other species must be released. The Joint Staff is recommending no changes for the 1999 bait fisheries.

1998-99 Run of Steelhead

The in-river summer steelhead run is the sum of main-stem harvest in May and June and lower river tributary returns (lower river stocks), plus main-stem harvest during July-October and Bonneville Dam counts during April-October (upriver stocks). Since the 1998-99 run is still in progress at upriver dams, some harvest has yet to occur and escapement estimates are incomplete. Final run size data will be included in the fall Joint Staff Report. Run size estimates through 1997 for lower river, Group A and Group B summer steelhead are presented in Tables 12 and 13. Based on preliminary dam counts the total Group A passage was down from 1995-1997; however, the wild Group A count was similar to that observed during 1993-1997. Preliminary Group B total and wild fish counts, are the highest since 1992 (Table 14). Run size and wild escapement at Lower Granite Dam are included in Table 15; however, the 1998-99 count at Lower Granite Dam will not be complete until May 31, 1999.

1999-2000 Forecast

The 1999-2000 prediction for upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam of 211,300 fish (127,600 Group A and 83,700 Group B) is an increase over the 1998 returns of 184,400 fish. The 1-salt return was predicted using the recent 3-year average. The predicted 2-salt return is based on the 1998 1-salt return and a regression of 2-salt vs. 1-salt returns from the same cohort for 1983-1998 data. Independent estimates were made for Group A and Group B, and wild and hatchery fish. The Group A predicted returns at Bonneville Dam for 1999-2000 run year is 127,600 of which 26,500 (21%) are expected to be wild. The total returns would be improved from 1998 while the wild run would be similar to wild passage observed during 1993-1998 (Table 14). No prediction was made for lower river summer steelhead returning in 1999.

1999 Forecast

The ODFW staff is projecting a return of 46,500 Willamette spring chinook entering the Columbia River in 1999. Age specific returns are expected to total 1,600 3-year olds, 18,600 4-year olds, 24,400 5-year olds, and 500 6-year olds. The 1999 forecast in-

cludes a correction for reduced ocean harvest and is similar to last year's actual return. Statistical analyses indicate a 90% probability that the run will be 35,000 or greater. Based on the current run size prediction, a 14.6% freshwater fishery impact rate, and average conversion rates, it is estimated that 1,840 wild spring chinook will pass Leaburg Dam is 1999. An escapement of 1,840 past Leaburg Dam would be similar to a 1998 and above the recent 3-year (1996-1998) average of 1,498. Table 3 compares predicted and actual Willamette runs since 1980.

The forecast for the Kalama River in 1999 is for a return of 300 adult spring chinook. This would be identical to the record-low observed in 1985. The four-year-old age class is projected to make up 33% of the return. A run of approximately 600 adults is needed to achieve the minimum hatchery escapement goal because a portion of the run spawns naturally.

The forecast for the Cowlitz River in 1999 is for a return of 2,100 adult spring chinook. This would be an improvement over 1998 but would still represent the third lowest return since 1980. Adult returns have been in a general pattern of decline since 1984. The 4-year-old age class is projected to make up 86% of the return. A run size of approximately 1,800 adults is needed to achieve the minimum hatchery escapement goal because a portion of the run spawns naturally.

The preseason prediction for the 1998 upriver spring chinook run was 36,200. The actual run entering the Columbia was 38,300, the third lowest run on record. The 1998 age class components were 20,000 4-year olds, 18,300 5-year olds, and a low count of 800 jacks. The 1998 Snake River spring chinook run size was 19,700 fish, compared to the preseason prediction of 12,400 fish. The proportion of the upriver spring chinook return that entered the Snake River was almost 50% compared to the 10 year average of 33%. The return of Snake River wild spring chinook in 1998 was 9,500 fish, compared to the preseason forecast of 3,700 fish. Wild spring chinook made up over 50% of the total Snake River return.

The 1999 run prediction is 24,600 upriver spring chinook to the Columbia River, comprised of 19,900 4-year olds and 4,700 5-year olds. The forecast represents a decline from 1996-1998.

1999 Forecast Summer Chinook

The TAC projection for the 1999 summer chinook run is 16,500 fish to the Columbia River. This would be similar to the 1994-1996 returns, but below the recent two years. The Snake River wild portion of the 1999 return is expected to comprise 13% of the total summer chinook return and is projected to be 2,200 fish which would be below average.

Attention! Maritime Museum Needs Your Help NOW!

Maritime Museum

Preserving Your Past

The Columbia River Maritime Museum has embarked on a project to preserve and share 6,000 historic photographs from the Columbia River Packers Association, Bumble Bee Seafood, and Union Fish archives. With over 6,000 images of fishing and canning on the Lower Columbia, these collections will serve as an invaluable resource to researchers, Museum visitors, descendants of fishermen, cannery workers and boat builders, and the world at large.

New technology will allow the Museum to create a "digital photo album" which can easily be accessed from any computer in the world. To perform this project, the Museum is working to raise funds for a photonegative developer and a professional archivist to convert the negatives to computer images.

To find out more about the project and the photos involved, or if you would like to make a gift to support this effort, call Rob Rudd at the Museum at (503) 325-2323.

1998 Winter Gill-Net Season for Sturgeon

At the December 22, 1997 hearing, the Compact adopted the 1998 winter season, with five consecutive 2-day-per-week fishing periods of noon Mondays to 6 PM Tuesdays (30 hours) and noon Thursdays to 6 PM Fridays (30 hours) starting on January 12 and ending on February 13. This was the second winter target sturgeon season set under the adopted sturgeon management agreement, which allows sturgeon harvest outside salmon timeframe. In concurrence with the OFWC recommendation to limit the Willamette spring chinook catch to less than 100 fish in main-stem commercial fisheries, the Compact adopted a chinook catch guideline of 100 Willamette spring chinook. In addition, a minimum mesh size of 9 inches was adopted for this season to minimize the catch of chinook and the handle of steelhead and sublegal sturgeon. The maximum mesh size was permanently set at 9-3/4 inches to facilitate the catch of legal-size sturgeon. Preseason harvest expectations for the five weeks were <100 chinook and 2,000-4,000 white sturgeon.

1998 Youngs Bay Winter Full-Fleet Commercial Chinook Test Fishery

The first ever winter full-fleet commercial fishery in Youngs Bay was adopted in order to target the first arrivals of an expected good retum of 5-year old spring chinook. This fishery is expected to occur prior to the time when significant interceptions of non-local chinook stocks occur. The test fishery consisted of two daylight-only 12-hour periods on February 25 (7AM-7PM) and March 4 (7AM-7PM). An 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction was enacted to target the larger 5-year old chinook whole minimizing the handle of smaller steelhead. The test fishery was also monitored with on-board observations of catch and incidental handle of steelhead.

After the first two fishing periods, catches and on-board monitoring information were reviewed. This information, combined with the results of test fishing during 1990-1992 which showed few non-local stocks in Youngs Bay prior to mid-March, allowed the addition of another 12-hour period on March 11 (7AM-7PM).

With a catch of 74 chinook and 6 white sturgeon, the winter full-fleet test fishery successfully met preseason expectations; local Youngs Bay 5-year old chinook dominated the catch, handle of steelhead was minimal (one immediate mortality), and ex-vessel prices were high at $4.90 per pound for chinook and $1.70 per pound for white sturgeon. Only one upriver spring chinook was landed based on VSI analysis of 63 fish (85% of the catch), and verified with CWTs. A total of 67 chinook (91% of the catch) were sampled for CWTs with 23 snouts recovered. Of the 22 CWTs recovered, 21 recoveries were from Youngs Bay releases and one CWT recovery was from an upriver stock spring chinook.

1998 Youngs Bay Spring Commercial Chinook Fishery

The 1998 Youngs Bay spring chinook gill-net fishery was set to open with a 12-hour fishing period from 7AM-7PM on April 23. The 12-hour opener was followed by an increasing progression of fishing days as follows: noon April 27 to 6 PM April 28 (1 day); noon May 4 to 6PM May 6 (2 days); noon May 11 to 6 PM May 14 (3 days); noon May 18 to 6 PM May 22 (4 days); noon May 25 to 6 PM May 29 (4 days); noon June 1 to 6 PM June 5 (4 days); and noon June 8 to 6 PM June 12 (4 days). The slow progression of the season was designed to maximize the harvest of local stocks while minimizing impacts on non-local stocks. An 8-inch maximum mesh size restriction was also adopted to target on chinook instead of sturgeon.

The Youngs Bay spring fishery landed 2,031 spring chinook, 23 Select Area Bright (SAB) fall chinook, and 251 white sturgeon during the season. Based on VSI of 545 fish (27% of spring chinook catch), and verified by CWTs, upriver spring chinook comprised 1% of the catch (23 fish) in the spring season. Sampling of 1,545 chinook (75% of the catch) for the presence of CWT's recovered 432 snouts. Of the 406 CWTs recovered, 384 recoveries were from Youngs Bay, Tongue Point, and Blind Slough releases and 8 recoveries were from Willamette River releases. Other recoveries included three upriver stock spring chinook, 5 Big Creek SAB fall chinook, and one Rock Creek (Umpqua River) spring chinook.

Martin Alvey

1999 Non-Indian Fishery Recommendations

Commercial Winter Spring Chinook/Sturgeon Fishery

(adopted December 17, 1998)
No spring chinook season recommended for 1999; however, a sturgeon target fishery was adopted.
The adopted season consisted of ten 30-hour periods in all of Zones 1-5 during the time period of January 11 through February 12, 1999. Season dates, gear restrictions, and expected catches are listed in a previous joint staff report titled "Joint Staff Report Concerning Commercial Seasons For Sturgeon and Smelt in 1999". This early target sturgeon fishery provides maximum protection to depressed and listed stocks, while allowing commercial fishers to access a portion of their white sturgeon allocation. This fishery is expected to harvest 2,000-4,000 white sturgeon and 50 spring chinook.

Youngs Bay Commercial Spring Chinook Select Area Fishery

(OFWC consideration, January 28, 1999)
Area: In Youngs Bay--same boundaries as 1998 fall fishery (upper deadline at confluence of Youngs and Klaskanine rivers)
Dates: Similar to 1998 except short fishing periods thru July Gear restrictions: 8" minimum mesh size during late February-early March and 8" maximum during April-June
Expected catch: 2,500 chinook and 400 white sturgeon
Expected upriver spring chinook catch: 15 fish (similar to 1998)
Expected steelhead handle: Less than 10 fish (two mortalities)Staff recommendations for Youngs Bay seasons and other miscellaneous rules are presented in a separate management report.

Spring Chinook Select Area Commercial Fisheries in Tongue Point Basin and Blind Slough

(Compact and OFWC consideration January 28, 1999)
Area: Same as 1998 spring fisheries, except Tongue Point will include South Channel area and Blind Slough will include Knappa Slough area.
Dates: Late April through mid June, 2 fishing days per week
Gear restrictions: Same as 1998 spring fisheries for both Tongue Point and Blind Slough. No mesh size restriction. Nets restricted to 100 fathoms in length with no weight limits in all areas except Tongue Point. Expected catch: 1,300 spring chinook in Tongue Point and 800 spring chinook in Blind Slough and a total of 200 white sturgeon.
Expected upriver spring chinook catch: Less than 10 fish for both Tongue Point and Blind Slough.
Expected steelhead handle: Less than 10 fish (two mortalities) for both Tongue Point and Blind Slough.

Staff recommendations for Tongue Point and Blind Slough select area seasons will be presented in a separate select area fisheries management report. These fisheries will target initial returns of age-4 and age-5 spring chinook from net-pen releases.

Lower Columbia River (off-channel) Select Area Test Fishery

(ongoing BPA funded project)
Areas: Zones 1 and 2 (two Oregon and one Washington site)
Dates: April through early June (1 day/week/site)
Gear: Same as 1998
Expected handle: 30 chinook and 10 steelhead
Expected upriver spring chinook handle: 5 fish (1 mortality)
Expected wild steelhead handle: Less than one fish (zero mortalities)

A reduced test fishing program in selected sites is planned for 1999 to determine background levels and incidental handle of non-target species prior to stocking and subsequent returns to these sites. This is part of a Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) research project to determine the feasibility of Select Area fisheries in these off-channel areas.

Based on 1994-1998 averages and a reduction in fishing effort for 1999, expected catch for steelhead in 1999 is 10 fish, with two mortalities. The stocks of steelhead include primarily summer-run hatchery stocks (88%), with the remaining 12% wild stocks of kelt and fresh-run fish.

Area 2S Shad Fishery

(Compact consideration January 28, 1999)
For 1999, it is recommended that the Area 2S shad fishery operate using modified gill net and restricted hours as oc-

curred in 1996-1998. Shad only may be kept and sold. All salmonids, walleye, and sturgeon must be returned immediately to the water, and those alive must be released unharmed (in effect since 1976). Due to small expected runs and the recently adopted
gear restrictions, the number of incidental species that will be handled in the proposed 1999 Area 2S shad fishery is expected to be less than that of the 1989-1994 average handle of 145 adult chinook, 200 steelhead, and 50 or less sockeye due to small expected runs of these species and the gear restrictions.

Season: Daily 3 PM-10 PM

May 24-28 (5 days)
June 1-4 (4 days)
June 7-11 (5 days)
June 14-18 (5 days)
June 21-25 (5 days)

Area: True north/south line through Light #50 near Sandy River mouth upstream to boundary near Beacon Rock (in effect since 1976).
Gear: Single-wall, unslackened, floater gill net, 5-3/8 to 6-1/4" mesh, 10-lb breaking strength (in effect since 1976), may not exceed 150 fathoms in length nor 40 meshes in depth (in effect since 1996).
Monitoring: The Joint Staff will routinely monitor the fishery. An estimate of salmonid handle and mortalities will be provided each week by the ODFW shad management biologist.
Expected catch: Up to 45,000 shad
Expected summer chinook handle: Up to 80 fish (24 mortalities)
Expected sockeye handle: Up to 30 fish (9 mortalities)
Expected steelhead handle: Up to 30 fish (22 mortalities)
Expected wild steelhead handle: up to 4 fish (3 mortalities)

The proposed 1999 Area 2S fishery will occur after the upriver spring chinook run and during the summer chinook run. The Joint Staff estimates a handle of 11 Snake River wild summer chinook with three being direct mortalities in the proposed 1999 Area 2S fishery and two indirect nonretention delayed mortalities. Based on the low proportion (0.00017) of Snake River sockeye expected in the 1999 return, it is unlikely that a Snake River sockeye would be impacted in the recommended 1999 Area 2S shad fishery. Based on run timing, the majority of steelhead handled are expected to be Skamania stock.

Washougal Reef Shad Fishery

(Compact consideration January 28, 1999)

Shad only may be kept and sold. All salmonids, walleye, and sturgeon must be immediately returned to the water and those alive must be released unharmed (in effect since 1969).

Season: Weekly 4 AM Monday-12 midnight Friday (In effect since 1990)
May 17-21 (5 days)
May 24-28 (5 days)
June 1-4 (4 days)
June 7-11 (5 days)
June 14-18 (5 days)
June 21-25 (5 days)
June 28-30 (3 days) 4 AM Monday-12 midnight Wednesday
Area: Approximately upper Lady Is. to below Reed Is. (in effect since at least 1971).
Gear: Single-wall, unslackened, floater gill net, 5-3/8 to 6-1/4" mesh, 30-1b breaking strength (in effect since 1977, except 1982).
Expected Catch: 5,000-10,000 shad
Expected Salmonid Handle: Near zero

The Camas-Washougal Reef is a known shad spawning area. The Joint Staff estimates there will be few salmonids handled in the recommended 1999 Camas-Washougal Reef shad fishery due to the area's physical characteristics that limit salmonid presence. This lack of salmonid presence was noted during monitoring of previous years fisheries. In 1994 monitoring, a single sockeye was observed during the last week in June; in 1995, a single steelhead was observed in late June; and in 1996, no salmonids were observed. No monitoring occurred in this area during 1997 or 1998.

1999 Treaty Indian Fisheries Recommendations

No commercial treaty Indian spring and summer seasons for salmon are anticipated in 1999. Spring and summer chinook harvest will primarily occur in the C&S

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fisheries. However, a few spring chinook are expected to be incidentally harvested in the winter season gill-net fishery and very limited incidental handling mortality is expected from the proposed tribal experimental target shad fishery.

Treaty Indian C&S fisheries, including dip-net fisheries, are managed individually by the four Columbia River treaty tribes through a permit and catch monitoring system. The tribes have defined regulations concerning lawful gear, fishing area, notice restrictions, and other miscellaneous regulations concerning the tribal C&S fisheries. Tribal staffs will continue to monitor the C&S fishery and provide in-season accounting of this fishery, as well as for the proposed experimental shad fishery.

1999 Treaty Winter Gill-Net Commercial Fishery

(Compact consideration January 28, 1999)
The CRFMP states in section II.B.1. "The treaty Indian winter gill-net fishery shall commence on February 1 and shall terminate on March 21 to minimize the incidental harvest of upriver destined spring chinook." The spring chinook catch in the 1999 fishery is expected to be six fish (one Snake River wild) based on the 1993-1998 average harvest. The tribes will recommend winter gill-net season options.

1999 Treaty Indian Spring Ceremonial and Subsistence Fisheries

(Provided for in CRFMP)

The treaty tribes have not yet determined the structure of their 1999 C&S fisheries, but the combined gill-net and platform spring chinook catch is expected to be within the harvest rate identified in the Management Agreement. Based on 1999 run size forecasts, the harvest level is expected to be 5%. If the full 5% impact were harvested, an estimated 1,230 upriver spring chinook would be caught in 1999, of which 180 would be Snake River wild fish, based on the expected 1999 Snake River wild proportion (0.1463) of the upriver run.

The average catch ofsteelhead during the years 1993-1998 in the spring platform and permit gill-net C&S fisheries was 547 (range 101 to 1,333). During these years, the percentage wild steelhead in the Bonneville ladder trap (April-May) has been consistently low (5-16%). The 1999 C&S harvest of steelhead is expected to be less than the 547 average, because less chinook fishing opportunity will be available than in several recent years. The majority of fresh fish are Skamania Hatchery returns and some of the catch is holdovers and kelts. Total steelhead impacts on listed populations in combined treaty Indian Fisheries from January 1 through July 31, 1998 were estimated to be 41-62 (1.5%-2.2%) lower Columbia fish, 1-2 (<0.1%) Upper Willamette fish, 515-768 (2.7%-4.0%) Middle Columbia fish, 38-58 (2.4%-3.6%) Upper Columbia wild fish, 190-322 (1.3%-2.2%) Upper Columbia hatchery fish, and 483-762 (2.2%-3.5%) Snake River fish based on TAC's steelhead run reconstruction database (TAC 1998). Work continues on the development of a starch gel electrophoresis method for estimating stock composition.

1999 Treaty Indian Summer Ceremonial and Subsistence Fisheries

(Provided for in CRFMP)

The CRFMP allows for the treaty Indian C&S platform fishery to remain open through the summer season. Summer chinook, sockeye, and steelhead are expected to be caught in the summer platform fishery. The CRFMP specifies that incidental impacts to summer chinook in treaty Indian fisheries directed at other species are to be minimized, and in no event exceed 5% of the summer chinook ran. The CRFMP indicates that for sockeye runs between 25,000 and 50,000 (as expected in 1999), the treaty Indian platform fishery shall remain open, and treaty Indian gill-net fisheries may occur. The combined main-stem platform and gill-net C&S sockeye harvest shall not exceed 5% of the run. The Management Agreement allows a maximum of 5% tribal harvest impact for both summer chinook and sockeye at run sizes anticipated in 1999, but recognizes and encourages voluntary tribal efforts to manage their fisheries for levels below these upper limits.

The 1993-1998 average harvest rate on summer chinook for the treaty Indian C&S fisheries is 1.9% (range 1.1% to 3.1%). The 1993-1998 average harvest rate is expected for 1999 C&S fisheries, which would result in a catch of 313 upriver summer chinook, of which 42 would be Snake River wild fish.

The average harvest rate of sockeye during the 1993-1998 period for treaty Indian C&S fisheries was 4.5% (range 3.5% to 6.0%), including both platform and permit gill-net fisheries. During the 1993-1998 period, permit gill-net fisheries occurred only in 1993. The treaty tribes have not yet determined the structure of their 1999 C&S fisheries (platform and gill net), but the catch is expected to be within the harvest rate identified in the

CRFMP and the Management Agreement (5% of the sockeye run for sockeye returns of less than 50,000 fish). If the full 5% impact is harvested in 1999, an estimated 575 sockeye would be caught, of which none are likely to be Snake River fish, based on the low Snake River proportion (0.00017) expected in the 1999 run.

The average catch of steelhead, during the years 1993-1998, in summer platform and permit gillnet fisheries was 2,639 Group A steelhead and the average harvest rate on the Group A run was 2.30% (range 1.05% to 4.68%). If the steelhead catch during 1999 summer C&S fisheries is equal to the 1993-1998 average, and 31% are wild as in 1998, then 818 wild Group A steelhead would be included in the catch.

1999 CRFMP 10,000 Fish Entitlement Expectation

The Columbia River treaty tribes are expected to harvest approximately 1,543 spring and summer chinook in main-stem Columbia River fisheries in 1999. Therefore, approximately 8,457 fish are expected to remain on the 1999 CRFMP entitlement. The CRFMP provides a priority order describing how the 10,000 fish entitlement is to be fulfilled (see Part II. Section A. of the CRFMP). Fish were provided to fulfill the entitlement during each year from 1994 through 1998, from WDFW and ODFW hatcheries within the Columbia River Basin and an ODFW hatchery outside the basin (Cole Rivers Hatchery). In 1995 and 1996, tribal dipnet fisheries were conducted at Willamette Falls. Tribal salmon and steelhead harvest at Willamette Falls was included in the entitlement.

Is He Our Friend?

Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber, sport fisherman, says:

"I don't like gill nets at all. They're indiscriminate to fish. But it sort of has a cultural place. It's been a way of life in Oregon."

Waves from the past: When Skinners and Hookers Waded the Tide

A seining crew works the web towards the bunt of the net, while behind them skinners rest their teams of horses on the beach. The photograph was taken in 1939 by S. W. Vernon on Ken Parker (Van Dusen) Sands, located on Desdemona Sands across the main channel from Astoria.

The shorelines of the lower Columbia River in many places are lined with piling, offering mute testimony to activities and structures of days gone by. They are the remains of once bustling cannery docks, fishermen's netracks, and sawmill booming yards -- the factories and engines of the fishing and logging industries which historically have dominated this region. Curious onlookers sometimes wonder what the pilings represent. Often there is little clue to what structures they supported in the old days before the resource extraction boom went bust.

Similar pilings also may be found on shoals and sandbars throughout the lower river. One such set of pilings can be seen astride the Desdemona Sands by those traveling across the Columbia on the bridge stretching from Astoria to Point Ellice, Washington. If they could talk, these rotting posts would tell a tale of changing times, of the halcyon days of the salmon fishery before the Columbia became the most dammed river in North America. For here on these partially submerged lands not fifty years ago men fished for salmon with horses.

The use of horses in the Columbia River haul seine fishery has in the space of a lifetime become the stuff of legend. Historic photographs and catch statistics provide some clues, but the mechanics of the fishery have largely faded into mystery. Fortunately, a vivid and detailed portrait of horse seining was recorded in 1988 during an Oregon Sea Grant oral history project whose archives are now housed at the Columbia River Maritime Museum. *Fall-Winter 1993 - Columbia River Maritime Museum newsletter.*

Canadians To Chase Mackerel In May

With large schools of mackerel preying on millions of Northwest salmon smolts over the past few years, it's been more difficult than ever to recover endangered stocks. But the region may finally have a chance to get even. The Canadian government is developing an experimental fishery on these prolific predators, hoping that people will buy them and eat them.

Ed Lochbaum of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans said high temperatures in waters of the BC coast have kept mackerel in the region since 1992. It's unusual that the fish have stayed around this long, he said, but water temperatures have stayed high enough to keep them there.

Over the years, schools of mackerel have occasionally migrated north from their traditional feeding grounds off California, but nobody can remember them staying for this long. Lochbaum estimated that 300,000-400,000 metric tons of both Pacific and Jack mackerel are currently swimming off the Northwest coast.

Scientists say El Nino can't be blamed for the current state of mackerel, either, since they have been hanging around even after El Nino events dissipated. Oceanographers say the warm ocean temperatures off BC in 1995 and 1996 were probably due to a "mixed layer anomaly," a condition they stress that does come from an El Nino.

Some biologists have speculated that the mackerel stay trapped in warm water pockets in the fall or stay in the region to feed on herring, whose numbers are climbing. Besides juvenile salmon, they also eat various species of invertebrates, copepods, amphipods and the like.

Another theory, and the least supportable, is that a wholesale change in ecosystems of the Northeastern Pacific has occurred that is responsible for the mackerel's long stay. Odd things are happening that may signal such a change, like large schools of hake showing up in the Gulf of Georgia, between Vancouver Island and the BC mainland, where they have never been seen before.

As for the mackerel, no one knows how long they'll stick around. Canadian scientists say there is no way of knowing, but the predators could be here "for an extended period of time."

That's bad news to salmon managers. In the early 1990s, mackerel appeared in Barkley Sound, eating millions of hatchery chinook released from a Vancouver Island hatchery at Robertson Creek. Schools of them still roam off the coasts of Oregon and Washington, where more stocks of salmon and steelhead have been added to the list of endangered species.

What Canada proposes will barely put a dent in the mackerel population, however. Thirty-two licenses will be issued this year to vessels with different types of gear to determine the best way to catch them. Lochbaum said there will be some purse seining, mid-water trawling and hook-and-lining. So far, he said it looks like "line-caught" is the way to go. "Seines have failed due to behavior of the fish," he said.

The biggest problem in developing mackerel for human consumption, is keeping the fish cold. Once caught, they must be cooled down in refrigerated sea water or flash frozen.

Lochbaum said he's not sure what will happen in the ocean this year, but he expected a cooling trend to develop by mid-June. Such a change could improve upwelling conditions, boosting nutrient levels off the coast. That would be welcome news for people concerned with salmon, who are expecting meager returns this year. Washington state fish managers say it appears ocean survival for coastal and Columbia River stocks was poor.

The warm water has been a boon to albacore fishermen, however, who found the tuna plentiful last season and were picking up sailfish on their gear as far north as the southern BC coast. —*Bill Rudolph*

NEW SPECIES MUSCLING INTO NORTHWEST WATERS

A tiny, dime-sized mollusk called the zebra mussel, whose larvae probably hitched a ride across the Atlantic in the bilge water of a European freighter in the 1980s may become a major headache in the Northwest. The little invader has already caused millions in damages to power plants and civic water systems in the Midwest. The US Army Corps of Engineers has estimated that the little pests will have done $5 billion worth of damage by the year 2000, and they say it's only a matter of time before the zebra mussel shows up here. It's their prodigious capacity for reproduction that has plugged fresh water intakes throughout the Midwest, where they can form colonies of 750,000 mussels per square meter. They have also been found 25 feet up intake pipes on Mississippi River towboats. The alarm bells have been sounded and zebra mussel Web sites have taken off as well.

Colonies of zebra mussels coat intake pipes at industrial plants and will do the same thing to fish screens, dam turbines, and irrigation systems on the Columbia River. Jim Athearn, biologist for the US Army Corps of Engineers, said that everyone agrees they will eventually show up in this part of the world.

At a conference in Portland on March 10, West Coast scientists were told be their Eastern counterparts they had better take steps to prepare for the invasion. BPA biologist Scott Bettin said that more turbines will have to be built at dams so some can be shut down for cleaning without disrupting power production. The costs could add up to more than $1 billion to prepare for the invasion.

Zebra mussels haven't been found in waters west of Oklahoma, but two years ago live adults were found at the California border, attached to the hull of a boat on a trailer that had returned from a voyage to the Great Lakes. They have been detected at the California border seven times now. It would be difficult for the mussels to travel to the West Coast by ship because salt water in bilges will kill them. However, the mussels came originally from Europe, and it is possible they could make it to the West Coast from increased seagoing traffic from the East Coast of Russia.

BPA biologists say the mussels would love to colonize the smolt bypass systems at Columbia River dams, where low flows and small pipes make for their perfect habitat. Extended length screens in front of turbines would be another likely spot for colonization. With such screens slated for installation at John Day Dam in the near future at a cost of millions, the mussel question is being taken seriously.

The Corps of Engineers has produced a CD-ROM about zebra mussels that is available free by contacting: Michael J. Grodowitz, US Army Engineers Waterways Experiment Station, CEWES-ER-A, 3909 Halls Ferry Road, Vicksburg, MS 39181, phone (601) 634-2972, email growdowm@ex1.wes.army.mil.-B.R.

Many stocks are on the verge of collapse, and trimming fleets is seen as the key to avoiding economic and ecological calamity

By JOHN H. CUSHMAN JR.
New York Times News Service

WASHINGTON -- In a stark recognition that many commercial fishing stocks are being harvested to the verge of collapse, the world's seafaring nations have promised to make the first far-reaching cuts in their fishing fleets.

Despite limits on how many fish can be caught, trimming the fleets is now seen as the key to heading off economic and ecological calamity, industry experts say.

But they acknowledge that the new effort, a nonbinding agreement sponsored by the United Nations, could take many years before having much effect on overfishing.

Without a solution, the question for some of the world's waters will only be which would come first -the bankruptcy of the fishing companies or the extinction of their quarry.

As things stand, government and private experts said, the industry is wasting tens of billions of dollars each year trying to catch ever-scarcer fish.

At a meeting in Rome in mid-February, delegates from virtually every fishing nation agreed on a plan to reduce fishing capacity, starting within six years. To meet targets, many governments will probably have to pay owners to scuttle vessels, or the governments will have to reduce immense subsidies.

"The bottom line is that some folks are going to have to find a new job," said David Schorr, a fisheries expert at the World Wildlife Fund. He added that politicians will face some tough choices about who is forced out of fishing, and where.

Even without knowing whether the voluntary effort will work, fishery officials call the plan one of the most significant to address the need to preserve fish stocks.

"Globally, the problem of overcapacity in the world's fleet is probably the single greatest threat to the world's fish resources," said Terry Garcia, chief American delegate to the negotiations.

"Within the next decade or so, if we do not take steps to address the problem of overcapacity, then the demand for wild fish stocks is going to exceed the supply."

Some experts say this has already occurred. After decades of growth, the catch has leveled off, suggesting that many fish are being caught faster than they can reproduce.

The new agreement calls for nations to cap their fleets at existing levels and then to scale them back progressively, and to eliminate subsidies to companies that are deemed to overfish. Past efforts to control overfishing have focused on strictly regulating the quantity of fish that can be legally caught, the size of fish that may be kept, the length of the fishing season and the type of equipment and nets used.

But the nations agreed that approach is flawed, given the capacity of many fishing fleets to catch more fish than permitted. Increasingly, countries have recognized that they must find ways to cut the industry's capacity. In 1997, fishing vessels at sea were estimated to have caught 95 million tons, the international food agency says.

Despite strict controls on fishing in recent years, New England fishery managers concluded in December that the cod fishery in the Gulf of Maine is collapsing.

The Clinton administration has already proposed new spending to take some of the region's boats out of service, and last month the National Marine Fisheries Service proposed guidelines for buying back licenses and scrapping boats throughout American fisheries.

The new international measures recommended in February, at the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization, will have no immediate impact. The first step is to get an accurate measure of how much fish the world's fleets really can catch.

Each nation that signs the agreement pledges to reduce overcapacity, starting between 2003 and 2005.

"This is the first significant international document on the management of fishing capacity," said Dominique Greboval, a fisheries planning manager with the Food and Agricultural Organization. "It might not look like much, but in terms of approach it is a significant departure."

Shad No Fad On The Columbia

Several Northwest scientists have pooled their collective curiosity and formed a group to promote the study of shad. Columbia River researcher Rich Hinrichsen of the University of Washington is president of the Shad Foundation, he edits the Shad Journal and has put together a Web site to promote the overgrown relative to the herring.

Shad first came to the Columbia after being planted in the Sacramento River in 1871. By 1938, 5,000 were counted passing Bonneville Dam, the year it was completed. Fifty years later, the count is more than three million annually, with around two million more that spawn in the lower river below the concrete.

While the Northwest spends hundreds of millions every year to save salmon in the Columbia, East Coast folks are spending plenty to restore their shad populations by building expensive fish elevators to help them past dams. A $20-million fish lift is being constructed on the Susquehanna River at Holtwood Dam.

Meanwhile, on the West Coast, shad don't get much respect. Hinrichsen points out that some fishery managers on the Columbia have called for the shad's elimination, and he says only a few studies have even looked at the amazing creatures.

Shad enter the river in late summer to spawn, and migrate seaward as delicate fry that seem to have no problem navigating slack summer flows and dam turbines. But that's about what we know. Their ocean migration patterns are a total mystery.

Hinrichsen and oceanographer Curt Ebbesmeyer say the Shad Foundation was formed to encourage research about the thirty or so species around the world. "It's mission," says Hinrichsen, "is to promote a greater understanding of shad for their restoration where depleted and their wise use where sufficiently abundant."

Columbia River commercial shad landings have ranged from 66,000 lbs. to more than 1.2 million lbs. In the past few years, landings have averaged around 400,000 lbs. Shad roe is a delicacy and is found at many Asian markets during the summer season, but eating the rest of the fish can be a bit of a chore. There is a pamphlet available that describes the 32 steps to de-bone shad.

A growing sport fishery has developed for the gold-scaled mystery fish that weigh in around four lbs. apiece. Sport anglers are catching more than 100,000 of them every year.

Oceanographer Ebbesmeyer was amazed by the lack of knowledge of one of our region's most prolific fish. "When you add up the biomass from the shad population," he said, "the Columbia is producing as much fish as it did when it was full of salmon."

The Shad Foundation's address is PO Box 21748, Seattle, WA 98111-3748. An annual membership costs $15 and brings you four issues of the Shad Journal. —*Bill Rudolph*

GILLNETTERS ENDANGERED TO SAVE SALMON THIS TIME
By Herb Goblirsch

I grit my teeth every time "overfishing" is mentioned as a primary cause for our diminishing salmon runs in the Columbia River and elsewhere. If it hadn"t been for lower Columbia River gillnetters, there currently wouldn't be any salmon in the Columbia to fight over.

In the Dally Astorian of Oct. 19, 1933, a plan for the proposed Bonneville Dam was shown with no provision for a fish ladder. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was planning a fish trap and elevator hoist and thought the rest of the run would go up through the locks.

The headline of the Daily Astorian on Dec. 1, 1933 read, "Dam is fatal -- U.S. experts see doom for Columbia River salmon." A Mr. G.C. Leech was quoted as saying that "downstream migrants will be the problem." Another headline said, "U.S. Corps of Engineers says dam will have little or no effect on regularity or abundance of the salmon runs." (Does that sound familiar?) Charles Knapp, an Astoria gillnetter and president of the Kiwanis, gathered

a group of gillnetters and conservationists to petition the Corps of Engineers for a fish ladder. The rest is better-known history.

So that's why we have any salmon left in the Columbia today below Grande Coulee. That dam was too high for a fish ladder and became the end of the trail for salmon, including the once-famous June hogs.

Commercial fishermen have always had a vested interest in maintaining Oregon's renewable fishery resources. They make a career of harvesting fish as healthy food for millions of consumers who don't fish for themselves.

Being highly visible has made commercial fishing an easy scapegoat for the finger pointers. The picture of a fisherman removing a salmon from his net or hook is easy to see.

But who sees the multimillion fish killed by the invisible practices that have gone on nearly unchallenged for decades?

If all fishing for salmon had ceased 50 years ago, but dam building, water diversion and habitat degradation had progressed as they have, the salmon's future would be the same: eventual extinction!

The basic needs for every animal (including fish) are food and shelter. Without favorable habitat, both in river and ocean, the salmon are doomed, whether or not they are fished.

In a nutshell, the problems facing salmon are:
Loss of flow due to diversion and other water uses.
Loss of cover (including dam impoundments).
Water temperature.
Cumulative sedimentation (mud covering spawning gravel).
A persistent El Nino, making ocean waters warmer with less upwelling (which means less food and more predators).

The simplified solutions are:
Guaranteed water flow at critical points. Laws with teeth are needed to assure a constant flow of cold, clean water, clean gravel and shelter in the stream.
Shelter in the streams (maybe removing some impoundments).
Reduced water temperatures with stream buffer zones and shade.
Clean gravel in which to spawn. Prevent soil erosion into streams from logging, agriculture and development.
A boost from Mother Nature to remove El Nino for a return to friendly conditions.

Some bureaucrats say we need to give up on the recovery programs because they'll cost too much. Salmon have played an important role in the culture, commerce and tradition of Oregon since before recorded history. Can anyone planning to live a lifetime here imagine Oregon without salmon?

We're at a critical point in history. It's finally time for the dam builders, water diversionists and habitat degraders to own up to the damage done to salmon in the name of progress for all these years -- and pay the piper.

The lower river gill-netters aren't strong enough anymore to come to the rescue alone. Now is the time for all Oregonians to stand up together and speak for the salmon.

Herb Goblirsch of Otter Rock, commercial fisherman.

Exxon hearing Appeal arguments scheduled in May

By Natalie Phillips
Anchorage Daily News

A date has been set for oral arguments in the $5.3 billion Exxon oil spill appeal, nearly five years after the verdict was rendered. A panel of three 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals judges will hear the case in Seattle on May 3.

The case has been pending since 1994 when a federal court jury in Anchorage awarded 35,000 fishermen, Natives, cannery workers and landowners $5.3 billion for the damages done by the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill.

Within moments after the verdict was read, Exxon vowed to fight the decision all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Exxon contends the award is excessive, considering it spent $2 billion on spill cleanup and another $300 million reimbursing fishermen for their lost harvest that summer.

The May 3 hearing will begin at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 815 in the U.S. Courthouse in downtown Seattle. It is expected to last most of the afternoon. The three judges who will hear the case have been selected, but in keeping with the appellate court's tradition, their names will not be made public until a week before the hearing.

Plaintiff's attorney David Oesting on Anchorage said he expects a packed courtroom because the judges will be deciding whether to uphold or throw out the largest punitive damage award in U.S. history.

More than 600 pages of briefs and a four-foot stack of court records and transcripts have been filed by the plaintiffs and Exxon, Oesting said. On May 3, each side will have a total of one hour to make their cases on three different appeal issues. A decision isn't expected until six months to a year after the hearing.

During appellate court hearings, attorneys present their arguments, but they are often interrupted by the panel of judges who pepper them with questions about the case and the applicable law.

The first appeal issue is whether a group of Seattle seafood processors known as the "Seattle Seven" is entitled to a share of the $5 billion punitive damage award. Prior to the start of the 1994 trial, the Seattle Seven settled part of its case out of court with Exxon for $70 million. The confidential settlement agreement required the seafood processors to pursue their share of any punitive damages in the massive class action suits and then to turn the proceeds over to Exxon.

The Seattle Seven's share comes to more than $700 million. The plaintiffs contend Exxon would hardly be punished -- the purpose of punitive damages -- if it could pay a share to itself. District Judge Russel Holland agreed in 1996 and called the maneuver by Exxon to lay claim to pat of the punitive damages an "astonishing ruse." He rejected Exxon's claim to the money. Exxon appealed.

The second is called the "main appeal." Among other issues, Exxon is appealing the way the $287 million in compensatory damages was calculated. The company is also challenging the $5 billion verdict as excessive and unwarranted.

The third issue deals with jury tampering and coercion. Exxon contends that one juror gave in the the $5 billion punitive damages after being intimidated and threatened by other jurors. Holland rejected that charge in July. He wrote that the juror's memory of the trial was "not credible" and that the story she told the court during a deposition was "shocking and bizarre."

EXXON VALDEZ: The suit slowly

creeps along with several court hearings in the next month or so *on Exxon's attempt for a new trial. The Ninth Circuit Court seems to be helping more than hindering in moving the process along. The window for claimants in the OILED fisheries closed on February 1, 1999. Within the next six months or less a window of six months will open for NON-OILED fisheries like Bristol Bay. If you want to insure that you are registered or have questions contact Exxon Qualified Settlement Fund, c/o Keller Rohrback LLP, 1202 3rd Avenue, Suite 3200, Seattle, WA 98101-3052 or call (be patient) 800-397-7453. Presumably the interest costs will cover attorney fees. The plan on distribution provides for Drift salmon dollars to be distributed both on participation in the fishery and a portion based on pounds caught.*

200 Scientists say breach dams to restore salmon runs —Trains, trucks can transport grain and leave river for fish

By Tim Palmer

It's time to quit wasting our money on the salmon and steelhead of the Columbia River. We should get on with the job of restoring these fish instead of window-dressing efforts intended to prolong government and ratepayer subsidies that run counter to everything in political rhetoric today.

We can do it. We can restore this emblem of the Northwest that once gave us 25,000 commercial fishing jobs. We can reinstate a fishery worth $250 million to $500 million a year. We can honor our treaties with the first Americans. We can allow a whole circle of life the grace of living, and we can do it by saving money.

Here's the problem: The four lower Snake River dams pushed a healthy population of fish into a death-curve toward extinction. Before those final dams went up, commercial fishermen in Oregon and Washington still have jobs. Idaho still had a sport season on salmon — a huge economic event.

The final four dams, finished long after the era of economic dam building had ended, put living salmon in their tomb. Now it's time to let them out.

Let's face it. After a generation of unequivocal failure, the Army Corps of Engineers' approach of loading the fish onto boats and motoring them around the dams has led to nowhere but oblivion for salmon and steelhead, and it costs taxpayers $98 million a year for "fish transport" alone. Meanwhile, the four dams provide only 4 percent of the region's electricity, an amount easily saved or replaced without driving the Northwest's symbol of life to extinction.

The political muscle for building these dams that even the corps ruled uneconomic came from one group -- the businessmen of Lewiston, Idaho, who wanted the taxpayers to make their town, 465 miles inland, a seaport for commodities carried by barge. The barges' current allies in the aluminum, hydropower and agribusiness industries would scarcely be affected by dam retirement, except to get endangered species requirements off their backs.

You'd think that whatever is barged must be very important. Well, surplus grain bound for Asia is the main commodity in this fish-killing complex. The totally subsidized bargeway delivers surplus crops to Japan, and that is why we are driving our own food source in salmon and steelhead to ruin.

The federally owned dams could be bypassed for $75 million a year according to engineers hired by the corps. Instead, the BPA alone now pays up to $400 million a year trying to counter the dam's unwanted effects that kill fish. Other costs are formidable.

Conservation economic projections say that taxpayers will save $183 million a year by laying these four white elephants to rest.

The other dams and the hydropower network can remain intact. Support that system by getting rid of the deadwood in the Snake River.

The economic pill of reform need not be bitter. It will be far cheaper for the government to aid in the economic transition than to continue the subsidies. We could still barge from Pasco; only 4 million of the 38 million tons of commodities on the Columbia system are shipped above Pasco anyway. Trucks and rail can fill the gap.

Lewiston can be the biggest winner by upgrading from a fourth-class barge depot to a world-class fishing destination.

Most biologists agree that the fish will rebound if we return the river to a more natural condition. Those who doubt might refer to the foremost panel on the subject, the Independent Scientific Group of the Northwest Power Planning Council.

Bypassing the four dams is not only the most certain means to bring back the fish, but also the easiest, cheapest way to tackle the job.

The generations and the politicians before us either lacked the knowledge or the will to choose the correct course of action for salmon and steelhead. Now we have the knowledge. A growing number of people have the will.

It's time for our leaders to look beyond the subsidies for their corporate constituents and, instead, save the taxpayers' money and fish, all at the same time.

--Tim Palmer of Kelly, Wyoming, is the author of "The Columbia: Sustaining a Modern Resource," "The Snake River: Window to the West," and other books.

By Ken Rait

The four lower Snake River dams produce just 5 percent of our region's power. Not only is power available from significantly cheaper sources, but conservation alone could more than make up for lost power production when these dams are removed.

Rail transportation could replace barging -- which currently moves less than one-fifth of the grains produced in the region -- and at significantly less cost to taxpayers.

Only one of the four lower Snake dams provides irrigation water and that for less than 1 percent of the region's farmland. The massive taxpayer subsidies to the 13 agribusinesses that benefit from the dams could be alleviated by a buy-out.

Only by incorporating all of the dams' costs to society are we painting an accurate picture of their economic importance. The power, transportation and irrigation provided by the four lower Snake River dams waste $114 million each year. The only ecologically and economically responsible mitigation for the four lower Snake River dams is their removal.

The industrial river users' opposition to dam removal is based on their interest in protecting the status quo of publicly subsidized industry profit margins. As Bruce Lovelin of the Columbia River Alliance, an industry front group, said, "(T)he salmon issue has not harmed any of the economic interests to this point. With the power of the industrial river users, we were able to control this thing [the river] from the board rooms."

It's time to run the river for more than just a few special interests. Restoring a free-flowing Snake River and its salmon runs will provide major economic benefits from increased sport fishing, white water rafting and other public uses of the river.

—Ken Rait is the conservation director of the Oregon Natural Resources Council.

A Wave Goodbye

Anthony John Radich

A Mass of Christian burial was held at 10 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 21, 1999, in St. Clare Church for Anthony John Radich, who died Jan. 18 at age 83. Recitation of the rosary was at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 20, 1999, in Hennessey, Goetsch & McGee.
Mr. Radich was born Aug. 13, 1915, in Clifton. As a young man, he was a gill-netter in Astoria. During World War II, he did photomapping in the U.S. Army Air Forces 8th Photography Squardron in Europe and North Africa. Later, he lived in Astoria and worked for the Bradley Woodard and Pillsbury mills, moving in 1970 to Portland, where he was a longshoreman through Local 8 of The International Longshore and Warehouse Union. He retired in 1980. He was a member of St. Mary's Star of the Sea in Astoria and St. Clare Church. He was a past grand knight of Columbus in Astoria. In 1945, he married Margaret Turina. Survivors include his wife; daughters, Rita Grant of Lanham, Md., Paula of Kelso, Wash., Michele Dahl of Portland, Sister Kathleen Mary of St. Mary's, Alaska, Trina of Portland and Joan Sullivan of Kirkland, Wash.; sons, Anthony J. of Denver and John of Eugene; and 12 grandchildren. A son, Mark, died in 1960. Interment will be in Ocean View Cemetery in Warrenton. The family suggests remembrances to Oregon Right to Life or a favorite charity.

Carl Axel Pierson
Gillnetter, 75

Carl Axel Pierson, 75 of Astoria, died Saturday, Feb. 13, 1999, in Portland.
Mr. Pierson was born July 18, 1923, to Carl August and Nanny Mathilda Pierson. He attended school in Knappa, and at an early age, began gillnet fishing in the Lower Columbia River with his father. Each spring, the family would move their floathouse from Blind Slough to Tongue Point to be nearer their fishing drift.
During World War II, Mr. Pierson served in the U.S. Navy. After the war, he returned to the area and resumed gillnetting. He did longshore and construction work and also raised beef.
He was a member of the Clatsop Post 12 American Legion, and one of the original members of the John Day Fire District. Mr. Pierson enjoyed Scandinavian music, playing his button accordion and especially visiting with family and friends. "Uncle Carl" as he was known to many, will be remembered for his jolly personality and his concern for others, family members say. He is survived by a brother-in-law, John Hendrickson of Astoria; four nieces, Joyce Brown of Albany, Pat Heiner, Nancy Junes and Elaine Mart, all of Astoria; cousins Gladys Ann Halson of Knappa, and Richard and George Nase of the Portland area; and eight great-nephews and great-nieces. His only sibling, Louise Hendrickson, died in 1993. A funeral was held at Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary. Burial followed at Knappa Prairie Cemetery.
Memorial contributious may be made to the Post 12 American Legion or to a favorite charity.

Waves From The Past

The Launch PAPCO is sunk!

Ben Rinel was the skipper. Ben and Ken Parker, horse seiner at H & B seining grounds are sitting on top of the cabin. The PAPCO was heading down river from the seining grounds with about 16 tons of fish aboard. They hit a sinker around Clifton, then headed for a log raft close to the beach. The Columbia River Packers tender CRPA came by and took the entire deck load of loaded fish boxes off the launch. The next morning at low tide they removed the fish from the hold with a barge crane. Clarence Dreyer, Skipper, and Arvo Peltola, deck hand, are the crew on the PAPCO. They had 25 tons of salmon aboard with one more stop to make at Pillar Rock, Washington, where they picked up about 5 more tons of fish, making a total of about 30 tons of fish aboard.

The 153-foot wooden steam tug Daniel Kern had a career spanning six decades.

Built in 1879 as the U.S. Lighthouse Service Tender Manzanita, she was first assigned to the California District. The Manzanita came north in 1885 to replace the tender Shubrick.

In 1905, the Manzanita sank after striking a submerged portion of Warrior Rock, just off the tip of Sauvie Island. Ironically, the Manzanita had brought the supplies for building a lighthouse at Warrior Rock in 1889, as a warning to mariners of this very same hazard. After she was abandoned as a total loss, the Columbia Contract Co. of Portland purchased her salvage rights the following year. Completed refurbished as a steam tug, she emerged from the yards renamed for the president of the firm.

The Daniel Kern labored from 1906 through 1917 transporting barge loads of rock to the mouth of the Columbia River and to Grays Harbor for jetty construction. In 1909, she went to the bottom again in a collision with the steamer George W. Elder. Just as before, she was raised and put back to work. Two years later, the sternwheeler M.F. Henderson, with a Standard Oil Co. barge in tow, was rammed and sunk by the Daniel Kern while she was towing rock barges to the jetty.

In 1917, Columbia Contract Co. sold the Daniel Kern. She spent the rest of her career in coastwise service and on Puget Sound. The old wooden steam tug was deactivated in 1936. In 1939, she was towed to Richmond Beach near Seattle and burned for scrap.

The Daniel Kern worked on some of the most notable engineering features of this region: the massive jetties which abut the mouth of the Columbia River. These jetties, easily taken for granted today, represent hard-won victories wrested from the sea with prodigious effort. In their own way, they are monuments to those who built them. One such person was Daniel Kern, president of Columbia Contract Co. Yet, his conspicuous absence from standard biographical references indicates a man not much concerned with leaving his name on things. Instead, he left behind a lifetime of deeds, remarkable in their own right. *Vol. 17 No. 2 Winter 1991 - Columbia River Maritime Museum newsletter*

Photo: Steam tug Daniel Kern near Ilwaco, Washington, with rock barges for Columbia River north jetty, circa 1915.

Columbia River Gillnetter

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