

Public Forum

12/2/2019

Hello ODFW Commissioners

I am writing this letter because I don't feel it is necessary to change the current regulations regarding the retention of Wild Steelhead. One per day 3 per year will not hurt the wild steelhead population in my professional opinion.

I have been guiding on the Southern Oregon Rivers for 32 years, there have been many changes most of them were good for the fisheries. Not this one

If you go to no retention of wild fish on a fisher that is fished as heavily as this one you will create problems such as high mortality rates, due to fish being released that are bleeding and will die anyways. It is very difficult for fisherman to release fish that we know are dying or dead.

I think it is a better option to allow a small number of fish to be harvested. The clients for example can keep that fish the tis bleeding badly or already dead as opposed to throwing it back in.

The hatchery programs have been cut back severely in Southern Oregon, while there appear to be more numbers of fish in the upper coastal streams, north of the Coquille.

I fish hard all winter and there are times were I don't catch a hatchery fish for 2-3 weeks. The only 2 rivers that have any hatchery fish is the Rogue and Chetco, with a few hatchery steelhead caught on the other rivers in the area. The Wild fish are more plentiful for sure.

Our community relies heavily on our fishing industry in the winter months. Personally and professionally I don't feel we should be changing the retention rate as we seem to have more Wild Steelhead then in my option then you give credit for.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully
Greg Eide



EAGLE BAY
RENTALS

94247 Wedderburn Loop Road
Gold Beach, OR 97444
(541) 556-5128
EagleBayRentals.com

12/3/2019

RE: Fishing Regulation Changes for Wild Steelhead in Oregon

To Whom It May Concern:

I am the owner of Eagle Bay Rentals in Gold Beach, Oregon. Fishing and lodging for the fishermen coming to the Southern Oregon Coast is my sole business and income for my family. These proposed changes to the fishing regulations concerning wild steelhead will greatly hurt my local small business and will deter fishermen/tourists from coming to go fishing and from stay at my lodging. This would be an economic disaster for my local business and family. I ask that you please leave the regulations as they currently exist. Thank you for your understanding!

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Hollinger', is written over the 'Best Regards,' text.

Patrick Hollinger
Owner, Eagle Bay Rentals
541-556-5128
eaglebayrentals@yahoo.com

I AM WRITING this letter in regard to winter steelhead. I AM told that a group of people are wanting to stop the catching and keeping of said fish on all of our south western streams including Rogue River. I am totally against this. We are already shut down to only 3 wild steelhead now on the Rogue - it went from 5 fish to 3 the last time this was brought up. there is no good reason on God's green earth for this to happen. I have been fishing these fish since 1956 there IS no ~~reason~~ shortage of said fish, and if there were we could go back to our HATCH BOXES again. As when we had them there were lots of fish. I AM A Retired fishing guide, my Dad was a guide, my Grandfather was a guide, 3 of my great ~~uncles~~ uncles were guides and owned and operated Owens Rogue View Lodge here on Rogue River - if I thought there was a good reason to stop keeping them I would not hesitate to say yes, but there isn't.

We already can't keep any steelhead on the Sixes River - Put in Hatch Boxes - that is the answer - Most of us would just stop fishing if we can't feed our families with what we catch. Another thing is if we were having a shortage of winter steel

Head then we should stop using fish
eggs for bait and go to Plugs, spinners,
spin n glows ect - get my ~~the~~ drift??
My vote is no on not
keeping any winter steel head or
SALOMON -

Don Pedro
P.O. Box 155
Gold Beach, Ore

P.S.

IN SHORT = I Fish
for food, not SPORT - As
A concerned FISHERMAN

Don

There is no emergency. Nothing in the petition indicated that the wild steelhead runs are either threatened or endangered. There is no need for a temporary rule change.

The following are specific repudiations of their arguments:

Poor ocean conditions affected our salmon run and will also affect steelhead runs

In NFS's "Reasoning" section, they argue that poor ocean conditions affecting salmon will also affect steelhead. If this is the heart of their case, this petition is DOA once they run it by the biologists. NFS assertion that ocean conditions near shore that affect salmon also affect steelhead is wrong.

Steelhead feed in the deep ocean far offshore, not nearshore like salmon. They are feeding from a far different food chain than nearshore salmon. "Ocean conditions" are local. Ocean conditions near the west coast are far different than ocean conditions hundreds of kilometers offshore. Steelhead feed hundreds to a thousand kilometers offshore. While some salmon species do migrate offshore, they are mostly found feeding 1-100 kilometers offshore. Check out steelhead ocean migration graph on page 47 and 48 of <https://digital.lib.washington.edu/researchworks/bitstream/handle/1773/4115/8913.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

Quite frankly, I was surprised how far into the open ocean steelhead migrate. I knew they were incidental bycatch with tuna, but this range is amazing.

TAKEAWAY – Salmon and steelhead feed in far different areas of the ocean. While near shore salmon may be hurting for food, hundreds of kilometers off shore steelhead can be feasting. While in-river conditions may affect both steelhead and salmon, ocean conditions most certainly do not.

Regulation Consistency

In Section 1.b, NFS argues that for simplicity's sake we should have consistent regulations on every river in the Southwest Region. This flies in the face of reason. Using NFS's reasoning, for simplicity's sake, we should make the speed limit on 101 either 55mph or 25mph through all of Curry and Coos counties. We don't do that because, every section of 101 has its own safe speed. Similarly, every section of every river needs its own regulations regarding steelhead spawning on gravel.

Every river in the Southwest Region is unique. For example, the main stem of the Rogue is just a transit corridor for steelhead migrating to the tributaries and upper Rogue. With limited road access and, on a per mile basis, low angling effort, in river harvest on the lower Rogue really can't hurt the wild steelhead populations. If we move to areas of the Rogue or its tributaries where steelhead hold and spawn and have easier access and higher fishing pressure, regulations for harvest of wild steelhead need to be more restrictive.

TAKEAWAY – Each section of each river needs different regulations, because the situation is different. If harvesting so called "wild" steelhead doesn't materially affect their population, then there is no reason not to allow a limited harvest. If it does, then harvest needs to be restricted.

That's why we need to let trained BIOLOGISTS decide the proper regulations for each river, not petitioners.

Steelhead fishing has been really tough the last couple of years.

On Page 4 of the petition NFS makes the false argument that steelhead fishing has been tough. We have to ask when, where and for whom. When water conditions are good, steelhead fishing on the lower Rogue has been outstanding over the past few years. The steelhead have been big and fat in contrast to the smaller fall salmon affected by near shore ocean conditions. When the Rogue is flooded or cold, low and clear, fishing is tough, but, that doesn't mean the fish are there, they are just tough to catch.

NFS's statement is meant to read as applying to all of the Southwest Region rivers and it is just wrong. **TAKEAWAY** – "Tough fishing" is a subjective statement of personal experience which is not replicated by other anglers or on other rivers. Yet another reason we should let decisions about wild take made by trained biologists stand and not be overridden by an emotion driven petition.

FINAL ARGUMENTS

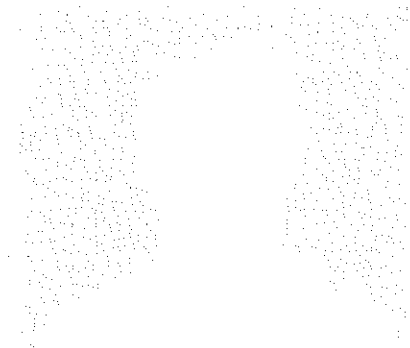
A temporary rule change should only be in response to a real emergency. NFS has not established any type of emergency.

1. The argument that poor near shore ocean conditions that affected the food chain for salmon that caused lower returns of smaller salmon will also affect steelhead is demonstrably false. It flies in the face of established science. It is also contradicted by 2019 angler success for lower Rogue steelhead. If the ocean wasn't feeding Southern Oregon coast steelhead, we have noticed it on the Rogue.
2. Consistency of regulations across a specific region is nonsensical. Every section of every river needs to be managed individually by BIOLOGISTS. Some rivers can sustain a limited wild harvest with negligible effect and others cannot.
3. Trained biologists need to make determinations of fish harvest. We set a dangerous precedent if we allow a passionate but misguided group to set harvest regulation by petition.

Best Regards,

Bill Divens
Owner and Guide
Salmon King Lodge Guide Service
Voice & Text 530-941-2398
Rogue and Nearby Rivers
Gold Beach, OR

Stop changes to the restrictions for harvesting Wild Steelhead



Donnette Brown 34 Comments

We're taking this petition to the Meeting with ODFW to stop the restrictions for harvesting Wild Steelhead and to keep our current restrictions as they are and to protect our right to harvest one a day and three for the year

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COMMENTS

- **Leonard krug**
Dec 05, 2019
We should be going to 5 and 1 if anything
- **Pat MacDonnell**
Dec 05, 2019
We like the steel head harvesting to stay as it is.
- **Carl Peterson**
Dec 05, 2019
Lets keep this going
- **Anthony Hugo**
Dec 05, 2019
Save our livelihood
- **Gerald Hill**
Dec 05, 2019

Keep current regs please.

- Mark Watkins
Dec 05, 2019

Please don't restrict

- Lisa Heyer
Dec 05, 2019

3 wild fish a year is not a lot. Leave the restrictions in place the way they are. Don't let the fly fishermen purists make the decisions on how to regulate the rivers. This is not science based, it's emotion based.

- Christopher Acosta
Dec 05, 2019

I agree

- Anthony Roszkowski
Dec 05, 2019

Leave regulations as they exist!

- Dean Iwahashi
Dec 05, 2019

This year was the most native steelhead, I've ever caught...i caught and released more than salmon this year... And most released didn't make it...will this large population of steelhead... Keeping some should not impact the population that much... And if it does we can modify the harvest.

- Chuck Barber
Dec 05, 2019

We need good returns of the steelhead to help the environment return to about normal

- Stacey Perkins
Dec 05, 2019

Don't let this happen

- Alan Borges
Dec 05, 2019

We are getting regulated out of existence. It's time to put our foot down and speak up. Fight back. We all love wild steelhead and most of us release them but every once in awhile, it is nice to take one home for the table. If more hatchery fish were released into the system, it would make it even easier to let the wild ones go. So in my opinion,

it is not the take of wild fish that is the problem, it's the fact that we need to release more hatchery fish so that the pressure to take a wild fish is lessened.

- Dave Schamp

Dec 05, 2019

Not real familiar with the situation on the South Coast and not a fan of the NFS. But, be careful what you ask for. Allowing retention of wild fish adds credence to the argument that wild stocks are in good condition and there is no need for hatchery supplementation. NFS can use that argument to close hatcheries and once they're closed, they're closed. Then, if wild stocks decline, NFS will petition to close all retention and you're fckd.

- Ken Munyon

Dec 05, 2019

Keep the current regulations in place.

- Mike Curran

Dec 05, 2019

Stopping the harvest will do more harm than good. I have spent many hours on the water and have witnessed first hand people pretty much kill fish before "releasing " them.

- Steve Huber

Dec 04, 2019

Facts not feelings.

- Anonymous

Dec 04, 2019

At 66 years old and living and fishing on the Rogue since age 5 I think I can be considered an expert witness here. This ban that is being pushed should not be considered!!!! It will destroy the fishing in Southern Oregon. Retention of wild fish is not the problem. 3 is a fair number to stay with. We need more hatchery fish. The coho production on the Rogue is a joke. Retention of a few wild fish and producing hatchery fish is not a bad thing. There are far bigger things that are causing problems on these rivers.

- Doug Oxford

Dec 04, 2019

Stopping the harvest of the few wild Steelhead that are harvested will not make a big impact on returns of fish. Illuminating predators like seals and sea lions will. Also the hatcheries need to increase the number of fish spawned and released back into the systems. I was a fishing guide here back in the 80's and 90's. The decline of fish is not from fisherman. It's from mismanagement of the forests and allowing mass growth in numbers of seals and sea lion with no management to control the out of control population.

- Dave Strahan

Dec 04, 2019

I've always been a strong supporter of science based decisions, and have backed past closures of other fisheries, when the data has shown the need.

The backers of this petition can not show us the need, nor do the scientists with ODFW believe there is a need.

We should leave the restrictions as they are, rather than deny license buying anglers the ability to harvest 3 wild fish a year, only to make some special interest folks feel good.

- Andy Martin

Dec 04, 2019

Those who want to ban harvest of wild steelhead are not basing their argument on facts or science, but emotion. They have the right to release any wild steelhead they catch. They don't have the right to dictate what other anglers do.

- Myrie bowlby

Dec 04, 2019

Steelhead fishermen are the biggest financial help do the steelhead resource and they're the most dedicated and qualified people to preserving and protecting Steelhead and making sure that their populations are high.

- Steve Hathaway

Dec 04, 2019

fishing is all I have left!! I don't abuse my rights as a fisher man so stop punishing us !!

- Bill Divens

Dec 04, 2019

We have an awesome steelhead fishery on the lower Rogue even with limited retention of wild steelhead. There is simply no reason to change the regulations in response to a petition from the Native Fish Society - a radical self righteous environmental group which cherry picks science to support their agenda of no hatcheries and only limited opportunities to catch and release wild fish.

- Les darling

Dec 04, 2019

I am not a Oregon resident but do support your local economy because of my fishing trips

I think you attempting to change wild steelhead limits is a mistake. Current restrictions of one per day and three per year does not harm the wild population at all. Sometimes a wild fish is injured while being caught and will die. Current law allows a fisherman to keep this fish and not let it go to waste

- Lyle Dykes

Dec 04, 2019

Keep the limits the way they are. There should be a bigger number of Hatchery (clipped fin) fish that are released into the river that would prompt more people to release the wild fish.

- Gary L Perkins

Dec 04, 2019

We can't let this happen

- KEVIN ANDERSON

Dec 04, 2019

Less restrictions please.

- Greg Eide

Dec 04, 2019

I believe we have good numbers of Wild Steelhead on these rivers and feel changing the retention rate will do more harm then good. Please do not make any changes.

- Steve Nelson

Dec 04, 2019

A large river like the Rogue May be able to sustain a limited keep of wild steelhead. I am in favor of stopping the take of wild steelhead on small rivers especially the Elk and Sixes rivers.

- Steven Colarich
Dec 04, 2019

Please keep current regulations for Steelhead one wild per day, three per year.

- Ruth A Dixon
Dec 04, 2019

ODFW needs to be proud of the work being done to keep our #'s high and not make further restrictions.

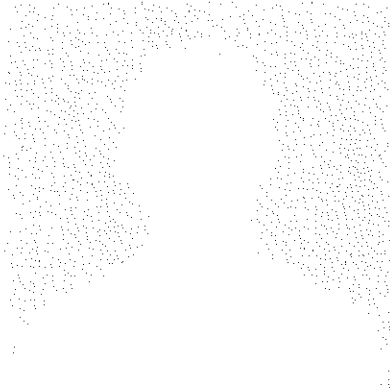
- John Anderson
Dec 04, 2019

35 trips not one skunked day we average 3 1/2 fish per day

- Don Gruener
Dec 04, 2019

Please leave well enough alone. Current regulations are getting the job done, numbers are up! Fished steelhead on the Rogue 3 days this year, 8 fish hooked, ALL were WILDS!

Stop changes to the restrictions for harvesting Wild Steelhead



Donnette Brown 34 Comments

We're taking this petition to the Meeting with ODFW to stop the restrictions for harvesting Wild Steelhead and to keep our current restrictions as they are and to protect our right to harvest one a day and three for the year

SIGNATURES

- Dave Kuehn
- Joe Martin
- Leonard krug
- Pat MacDonnell
- Jay lander
- Earlyn Casura
- Carl Peterson
- Anthony Hugo
- Gerald Hill
- Jacob Carpenter
- Ryan Galovic
- Mark Watkiris
- Melonie Moore
- Lisa Heyer
- Christopher Acosta
- Cortney Urie
- Ron speece
- Mark Cambra
- Mary Moore
- Anthony Roszkowski
- Stephen Stover
- River wolf
- Chris Sanders
- Dean Iwahashi
- Melonie Moore
- Erik Barnes
- Brandon moore
- Dave Hodge
- Terry kennedy
- Amy Busch
- Michael Thomas
- Alicia Presswood
- Al Francis
- Debi Urue
- Mark Grube
- Laurie Mather
- Jim Sanders
- Garrett Glidden
- Chuck Barber
- Tom Good
- Sam Stover
- Tim Hubbard
- Vince Colwell
- Richard nehmer
- Stacey Perkins
- Scott Bendtzen
- Robert Mccoy
- Patrick Burns
- Dan Westernen
- Alan Borges
- Marley
- Jacob McIntire
- Shane Brooks
- Robby Stover
- William Currie

- Diedre Geissel
- Tamara Dildine
- Marcus Tilley
- Ken Munyon
- Mike Curran
- Audie Butcher
- Dell Kelly
- Michael d brouillette
- CD Smith
- Randall Hecker
- Justin Kelly
- Steven Vincent
- Steve Huber
- Mark Berry
- Jesse Vassar
- Joe watkins
- Larry brocker
- Robert hollenbeck
- Doug Oxford
- Dennis Corthell
- Dave Strahan
- Mark Fisher
- Andy Martin
- Myrle bowlby
- Steve Hathaway
- M Wolf
- John Zinn
- Debbie Pedro Maguire
- Bill Divens
- Genny Bell-Turner
- Danielle Dulon
- Kristal Carpenter
- Shaun Carpenter
- Les darling
- Lyle Dykes
- John Rouse
- Monte C Wilke
- Gary L Perkins
- lyn hulslander
- Mary Jean Dykes
- Michael Merica
- Glorie Carlson
- Antonio Rodriguez
- Joseph Speece
- Jamee Shropshire
- Michael Clark

- Patrick Hollinger
- Gordana zinn
- Travis Parker
- KEVIN ANDERSON
- Greg Eide
- Steve Nelson
- Jeff Denney
- Steven Colarich
- Louis Zandonella
- Daniel Swaney
- Ruth A Dixon
- Robert Waller
- Alyssa Greaux
- Karen Kennedy
- John Anderson
- Don Gruener
- Tammy Walter
- Janette Brown-Lampert
- Thomas Massengale
- Anita Laiwa
- Lana Ketchem Turner
- Donnette Brown
- Brenda Davis
- Anita Laiwa
- Bryan Dinneen
- Ronnie davis
- Yvonne Rowe
- Rodney L Warren

Hello, my name is Rich Zellman. I'm a full-time fishing guide in Southern Oregon and Northern California. And I'm here today to voice my support for wild steelhead release in Southern Oregon.

There are many reasons to release wild steelhead, most importantly the future.

- I think I can safely say most everyone here would like to enjoy fishing for steelhead into the far distant future.
- Some may have kids, they'd like to share steelheading with.
- At 39, I'd like to be fishing for them until my body won't let me anymore.

There is very little data on the run sizes of the south coast steelhead populations.

- But, as a guide who is always on the water when the rivers are in shape, I can tell you that last year I saw the worst fish numbers I've seen in the 18 years of fishing them.
- Steelhead stocks don't rebound from one year to the next. Steelhead runs up and down the northwest coast are plummeting.
- This is not a time to allow harvest. These stocks need to be confidently understood.

My clients come from all over the states and as far away as Singapore to catch and release wild steelhead on the South Coast.

- Very few, if any locally. This means, lodging, dining out multiple time a day, fishing licenses, grocery store stops, gas and so on.
- All to catch and release wild steelhead - a truly renewable resource if they make to the spawning grounds.

Steelhead have become one of the most popular game fish throughout the northwest and beyond.

- Most people don't live on or near steelhead rivers and again, this means money coming in from out of the area to the south coast.

I also guide just south of the border on Northern California's Smith River. This river has been a "no kill" fishery since 2011 and I have yet to see a drop in angling pressure, only an increase.

- Anglers are there to catch and release wild steelhead as there are very few hatchery fish in the Smith. There is far more to steelheading than taking one home.

Those who know me, have probably heard me say: **we have the best of what's left. Let's keep it that way.**



Sherwood
Public Forum

December 6, 2019

To: Oregon Fish & Wildlife Commission
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE
Salem, OR 97302

Fr: Mark Sherwood, Executive Director
Native Fish Society
813 7th St. Suite 200A
Oregon City, OR 97045

Re: Petition for Temporary Rule Change for Catch and Release for Wild Winter Steelhead in the Southwest Zone for 2020

Acting Chair Wolley, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissioners, and Director Melcher,

My name is Mark Sherwood, I'm the Executive Director of the Native Fish Society. Our organization exists to cultivate a groundswell of public support needed to revive abundant wild fish across the Pacific Northwest. I'm also a resident of Pistol River and personally invested in the revival of abundant wild winter steelhead in my homewaters.

I'm here to support the temporary rule change for catch and release for wild winter steelhead in the southwest zone for the 2020 season.

Because Oregon Revised Statutes designates that the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission establish seasons, methods and bag limits for recreational fishing we're bringing this issue before you today. One of the Commission's central duties is to manage Oregon's fisheries to prevent the overharvest of wild fish.

Fisheries for wild fish need to be conducted in such a way that a sufficient abundance of adult wild fish escape the fishery to spawn, preserving the abundance, productivity, spatial distribution and genetic diversity necessary to maintain healthy populations and resilient fisheries.

For this reason when ODFW is managing fisheries for wild fish the NFCP requires the Commission to put the resource first and have high confidence, informed by data, informed by evidence, not by

assumptions, that a sufficient abundance of wild fish are escaping the fishery to spawn the next generation.

Both studying and participating in this fishery we have not found evidence to give us the confidence that current fisheries management is preventing the overharvest of wild winter steelhead in the southwest zone.

Specifically our concerns include:

- Lack of adult spawner surveys (these are conducted in all other coastal zones for winter steelhead but have not been conducted in the Rogue since 2009, and the south coast since 2015. So we don't know how many spawners we have or a good sense of total region wide abundance or trends wild winter steelhead.
- Lack of good data on harvest. Creel surveys have not been conducted since 2013. Harvest tags are returned voluntarily so the data is not very accurate. Nevertheless in many rivers like the Sixes, Rogue, Elk, and Chetco harvest has increased significantly over the past decade.
- Lack of a Conservation and Management Plan. This is the central factor missing. Without a plan we don't have a current population status assessment, thresholds to prevent overharvest, and a plan to monitor and enforce regulations.
- No cap on total harvest. Unlimited entry 1 fish per day and 3 per year. There is no cap on total harvest for 8 of the 10 wild steelhead harvest fisheries in the southwestern zone, so bag limits do not prevent overharvest from a growing number of anglers.
- A failure to enforce harvest goals to prevent overharvest where they do exist. Even where conservation plan and harvest limits do exist, like for the Sixes River, harvest has increased dramatically and the department has failed to enforce its own harvest restrictions.

For all these reasons, we're deeply concerned.

If you have the evidence that gives you high confidence the current fishery is not overharvesting wild fish, allow the fishery to open as planned. But if you don't have that data, if the department has not provided you have the evidence proving otherwise, let me encourage you to err on the side of caution.

You have the duty to protect our public trust resources and the authority to direct the department to enact a temporary regulation for catch and release for the 2020 season. Catch and release is the proven management method to ensure wild steelhead are not overharvested across the Pacific Northwest - it is the management standard in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California, British Columbia. It's also free, easy to understand, and equitable - all anglers can do this together for the health of wild steelhead.

We're committed to working with the department on the long term management plan, but until this plan is developed, vetted by stakeholders and adopted by the Commission let's take a pause on wild steelhead harvest in 2020.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Sherwood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Mark Sherwood, Executive Director

PETER MURRAY
Public Forum

Good morning Chair Wolley, Commissioners, and Director Melcher.

My name is Peter Murray and I support an emergency regulation change for catch and release for wild steelhead in the southwest zone.

I'm a native Oregonian. I grew up in Waldport, and I've been fishing for steelhead on the Oregon Coast for over sixty years. I'm here to advocate for large, healthy, sustainable runs of wild steelhead. I live in Redmond, Oregon and I've come here today because I believe strongly that the wild steelhead is a magnificent game fish. I hope that fishermen will be able to experience the thrill of hooking and playing a wild steelhead fifty years, and even five hundred years from now. But in order for that to happen we have to ensure we have healthy, sustainable runs of wild steelhead now.

I would like to see more anglers catch more steelhead. If we implement catch and release in the southwest region, there will be more fish in the river, and a higher probability that the fish that was released will be caught again. This will increase overall catch rates for anglers and increase the satisfaction with the fishery. Increased satisfaction will encourage more steelhead anglers to participate in the fishery. This, in turn, will increase license sales, and business for guides and the local communities as more people will have the opportunity to catch wild steelhead and continue to be drawn to fish in Southwest Oregon.

It is my understanding that there may be a lack of hard data concerning the harvest numbers and total size of the recent wild steelhead runs in the southwest region. As a result I ask that we err on the side of caution and reduce the risk to wild steelhead by implementing catch and release for wild steelhead in 2020.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Murray
December 6, 2019



NORTHWEST SPORTFISHING
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Box 4, Oregon City, OR 97045
503.631.8859 www.nsiafishing.org

Strahan
Public Forum

December 6, 2019,

Honorable Chair Wahl, Director Melcher and fellow Commissioners,

My name is Dave Strahan and I am a lifelong native of Grants Pass, Oregon.

I have been in the Sportfishing business for over 40 years. For the last 38 years I have been a distributor salesman throughout the SW Zone and beyond. I currently sit on the Board of Directors of the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association (NSIA), an organization I have been a member of and an active participant in since 1995.

I wish to express our opposition to the proposed temporary rule change to make the entire SW Zone catch and release only for wild steelhead.

Historically NSIA has supported mandated catch and release fisheries when the data supported the need for such. We supported the move to protect sturgeon on the Columbia, back when they went to catch and release. Even though we lost roughly 95% participation and experienced a very significant loss of Sportfishing business, it was a pill we willingly swallowed for the sake of sturgeon conservation.

Just in the last two years, we supported the rolling closures for Steelhead in the Columbia, because the returns warranted more stringent protections.

NSIA has been supportive of numerous closures over the years, when process was followed, and the need was proven true. However, in the case of the SW Zone Winter Steelhead, there has been no data presented to support a blanket end to harvest, and the process set forth less than two years ago has not be completed.

It was established by a decision of the commission at that time, that there was insufficient data to warrant stopping a limited harvest. But as an interim measure harvest **was** reduced from 5 wild fish annually to 3.

Again, no data has been presented that suggests that now, suddenly there is an emergency. What has changed, is that anglers can harvest only 1 wild steelhead a day and 3 a year, the compromise that was made for the interim.

I ask too, that you be mindful of the likely consequences of such a draconian rule change, not only to our regional economy, but to the budget of ODFW.

My decades of living the economic ups and downs of the industry, tells me loss of harvest opportunity brings about the loss of anglers. The Commission need only look at staff data from the participation drops in sturgeon and those times in the fall when the Tongue Point to Warrior Rock fall chinook fishery goes to catch and release, to realize the precipitous drops in participation such restrictions create.

NSIA is dedicated to the preservation, restoration and enhancement of sport fisheries and the businesses dependent upon them.

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Big Rock Sports, Inc.

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Public Forum

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andrasoutfitters@me.com
530.722.7992

Good morning and thank you for providing the opportunity to testify on behalf of S. Oregon wild steelhead here today.

I am a guide on the Rogue River and support adopting catch and release regulations for wild steelhead across the upper Rogue and South Coast Zones.

I feel fortunate to live in S. Oregon and to make a living connecting anglers to the beautiful Rogue. As a guide on the upper river for nearly 15 years, my guests have released countless wild steelhead and return again and again for that experience. In doing so, they not only support my livelihood, but also contribute to the local economy by staying in hotels, dining in restaurants, purchasing licenses, gear, etc.

Even so, I can't help but think about the future and what it holds for these fish. Bear Creek, a major spawning tributary of the Rogue, "is the most urbanized stream within coastal watersheds in Oregon" (Vandyke - "The Confluence" Spring '16). Certainly, the valley's continued growth, combined with increasing interest in steelhead angling and evolving techniques and technology will place further stress on them moving forward.

Wild steelhead, by nature, are aggressive. Whether one uses a fly, spin or a baitcasting rod, techniques and tackle continually improve allowing anglers to make effective presentations in all but the most difficult conditions. Combined with the increase in social media reports and real time river flows, it's never been easier to fish the right water at the right time. The fish just need to be there.

I believe that each of us share a bond in fishing and the positive impacts it makes in our lives. I would like to emphasize that my opinions do not seek to limit anyone's opportunity to pursue wild steelhead. Let's take a step in a new direction today and adopt catch and release regulations. I believe doing so will result in greater angler opportunity, enhanced fisheries, and set S. Oregon apart from the rest of the Pacific Northwest! The economic, recreational and social benefits will outlive us all and preserve an iconic symbol of our rivers and our home for generations.

Thank you.

John Anderson
Public Forum

ODFW

Commissioners:

I am John Anderson, formerly of Anderson Stream and Rehabilitation. I have done bank stabilization and stream rehab since 1988 to 2002. From Bend to the coast, down into northern California, and as far east as the Sprague river and Sican River. In my line of work I would attend American Fishery Society workshops. The last two were the meetings at Salishan and Rhododendron. I've worked with biologist from ODFW like Dave Lumis, Dave Hake, Roger Smith, Jerry McCloud, Tim Wagner, just to list a few of your employees. I've worked with organizations such as Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, US Forest service, BLM. My last big job was for Oregon Trout, which they won a presidential national award for the work I did.

In 2003 I started a guide business taking terminally ill patients fishing for free and guiding for hire to support my ministry. I have built a good business doing this. Last year I made a home made boat with an extra large cabin on it to cater to the needs of my older clients and the terminally ill, for winter Steelhead and spring Chinook.


I find myself now standing up fighting for my livlyhood and it isn't over lack of habitat, or lack of fish, or biological reasons. It's over choosing how one party wants to fish over another. I did 33 trips last year ont the Rogue river for winter Steelhead and not skunked one time. I average 3 1/2 fish per trip.

I looked over the proposal that Harvey has put together and then went to the ODFW office in Gold Beach and talked to several of the biologists, talked to several of the guides in the Agness area, they have had no shortage of fish up there either.

Most of our clients come for 2-3 days at a time. Each guides efforts bring thousands of dollars into the community, which our community needs to survive on. If you add the Steelhead guides, this helps generate over \$100,000 for our community.

This closure has nothing to do with the number of fish or poor habitat. It's a life style that some anglers choose to live. There has been many times that I have talked my clients into releasing a very nice fish. But it should be a personal choice. Not beig pushed on them by increasing the restrictions on the regulations. When you hook a fish deep and he's bleeding you should be able to tag him and put your rod away and be done for the day. We would kill far less fish doing this instead of catching and releasing. We would do far better if we would adopt the current wild Steelhead regulations for the spring Chinook and wild Coho. Also we need to address the real problem of predation from sea lions, seals, cormorants and squaw fish. 75% of our fish had teeth marks on them.

Thank You


John Anderson
Memory Makers Guide Service

John Anderson
Public Forum

December 5, 2019

To whom it may concern,

I am a fishing guide on the Rogue and surrounding South Coast rivers and am deeply concerned about current proposed changes made regarding wild fish. The changes made over the past years are restrictive enough to cause significant issues. I strongly feel that conducting business with a "no take" policy would be impossible. We do not have in place a viable hatchery alternative fishery as do some other areas. Our catch is almost entirely wild due to ineffective hatchery management. I have found that most people are doing a good job of policing themselves and releasing most wild fish. The numbers taken are overall insignificant compared to other issues observed daily in the form of predation.

In the 1980s and early 90s, state and federal government groups promised that with the downsizing of the timber industry and the subsequent environmental impact, fish would be abundant enough for sport and even commercial fisheries to replace the lost economy. Thirty plus years later that has not happened. It seems that a few river guides and special interest groups from places unknown would have us lose the few jobs left in Southwest Oregon .

As a fisherman of 40 plus years I have seen many restrictive regulations come and go, all of which failing to produce healthier runs. It may be time to look elsewhere for the real problems. We have dwindling numbers of fishers and hunters stemming from restrictive rules that fail. The economic fallout to the south coast areas can be seen any winter day.

My deep concern and troubled heart stems not from just an economic perspective. I value fish being in the rivers like they used to be from a perspective of someone who loves what is left of our rivers and way of life. In addition, I am a Rogue River and Karuk Indian that values our traditional lifestyle of eating fish. Along with these values, comes a deep respect of stewardship for these fish and their rivers. Your proposed solution, however, is NOT the answer. Two solutions that that would be EFFECTIVE solutions are effective hatchery programs and control of Cormorants and seals in the rivers. My native american ancestors were very active in controlling the predation in the rivers to keep a balance. It is about balance and predators are being allowed be unnaturally out of balance. For thirteen thousand years, my ancestors killed seals. They are meant to be hunted just like any other species.

Thank you,



Joe Martin

Rogue Coast Sportfishing