



NEWS

Member meeting this Thursday, January 17, 7 p.m. Oak Tree Restaurant in Woodland January 2008

2007 Highlights

John DiVittorio, Executive Director, Fish First

Another year has passed in our effort to recover salmonids in the Lewis River. Much has been accomplished with your help.

The Egg Box (RSI) program led by Mike Moss continued on. Approximately 800,000 wild Coho were hatched in Cedar Creek and tributaries of the North Fork Lewis. When last counted about 17% of the out-migrating Cedar Creek smolt are from FF egg boxes. The rest are from the naturally spawning adult population that has been built up over the years by our restoration efforts.

The Nutrient Enhancement program led by Al Fulcer and Dennis Frantz continues although the number of available carcasses is decreasing. This year 14,000 carcasses were distributed in the East Fork, North Fork and tributaries by Fish First and the Clark-Skamania Fly Fishers. In the prior year

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Gary's Column



The WDFW commissioners

Held a good meeting Jan 11 and 12 and we heard a lot of testimony about allocation but heard no one talking about not overharvesting. I didn't hear sufficient testimony about the aftermath of spending 9 billion dollars for fish recovery. That money was for saving the wild and native fish. It's a shame these fish cannot speak for themselves so I'm glad that CCA and FF and others understand that our Pacific NW marine resources are in danger and need to have special attention. I guess we and the salmon

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Net Pens and Nutrients

Dan Balch, Director

On January 19th I will be looking for help from the members in releasing the first batch of Spring chinook and on the 22nd at 7:30 a.m. we will be putting 75,000 more fish in the Echo Net Pens on the N. Fork of the Lewis. I will be asking for volunteers at the Thursday, January 17th members meeting. You can call me at 360-225-7388. *(continued on page 2)*

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the number was 16,000 and the year before that 19,000. Our goal is to get back to the 19,000 number. A new platform for processing fish was fabricated by Brad Loomis to make the job a bit easier and keep volunteers safe.

The Mill Creek Rescue project led by Dave Brown is proving successful as well. WDFW estimated that 150-200 wild Coho were spawning in Mill Creek last year. Fish are currently rescued from Mill, Mason, and Rock Creeks on the East Fork. This year approximately 16,000 juvenile Coho and Steelhead were rescued. With the help of Carl Burger (Smith-Root) and Northwest Marine Technology about 10,000 of these fish were tagged with coded-wire tags. This is the first year of a three year monitoring program to measure the results of the program. An ATV was purchased by Fish First, the Clark-Skamania Flyfishers and the Native Fish Society for hauling fish and materials to and from the rescue ponds. The large pond on the site received a concrete bottom for hygiene reasons. The concrete was funded by HSBC bank.

Dan Balch continues to lead the net pen program in this transitional year. Dam mitigation funding will allow Pacificorp to take over the feeding process. They will also be expanding the number of pens. Fish First volunteers will continue to maintain the pens and manage the pen loading and fish release processes. This year approximately 53,000 Kokanee, 115,000 Summer Steelhead and 150,000 Spring Chinook were reared in these pens.

There was much activity on restoration projects this year which are led by Dick Dyrland. The Gren Fels (Barta) project was completed. This project created spawning and rearing habitat for Steelhead and Coho in a small tributary of the East Fork below Lewisville Park. This project was funded by Trout Unlimited, the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and the SURF

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On December 10th Dave Bowden, Greg Glass, Gary Hurn, Steve Harrison, Jack Kaeding, Roy Pickner, "Glen Johnston, Dennis Frantz, Allan Fulcer, Harry Bresnahan and myself put 85,000 Spring Chinook in seven pens at Echo. On December 14th Jim Burns, Toni Harms, Kevin and Dwayne and myself went back to the Echo pens to feed. We also moved 600 lb. of fish out of pen 7 to the other 6 pens due to inadvertent overloading on the 10th. 154 lb. of food was distributed on the 14th.

December 26th Bob Schneider took his boat with Roy Pickner and Dan Balch to feed Echo 220 lb. of fish feed. Toni Harms was snowed in at Speelyai. On January 2nd Richard Potenski, Toni Harms and myself took 264 lb of fish food using my boat and fed the Echo Net Pens. All of Toni's usual helpers were working fish traps at Merwin Dam.

Nutrient Enhancement

We started receiving fish October 16th at the Lewis River Hatchery. Co-Chairmen Allen Fulcer and Dennis Frantz led a crew of the following: Greg Glass, Tom Golik, Steve Harrison, John DiVittorio, Glen Johnston, Richard Potenski, Ed Wickersham, Roy Pickner, Clayton Pickner, Bob Schnieder, Marshall Allen, Wayne Horne, Glen Fredrickson, Gary Loomis, Steven Balch, Danny Balch and myself. The last trip on January 3rd we got 80 fish carcasses and the season is mostly over for this year. We have 1637 fish in the freezer to put out Feb. through May at egg box sites. Ed Wickersham and his crew put out 3,497 in the upper East Fork of the Lewis by Yacolt and the Dole Valley areas. I put 320 in the Dean Swanson project Mason creek areas and we put approximately 9,471 in Cedar Ck. Drainage and egg box areas on the North Fork of the Lewis River. This is a total of 14,471 fish carcasses from the hatchery this season. In 2006 we put out approximately 16,000 fish carcasses and in 2005 we put out about 19,000 fish carcasses. This work took just under 470 hours and 4,000 miles of travel. Nutrient co-chairs are Allan Fulcer (360-225-5690) and Dennis Frantz (360-225-5116).

**Meeting Dates and Contact
Information for Fish First
Members meeting Thursday
January 17th, Oak Tree Restaurant
Woodland , WA 7pm**

**General Membership Meetings
2007-2008**

Always on 3rd Thursday 7 p.m.,
Oak Tree Restaurant, Woodland, WA

Oak Tree is at Exit 21 off I-5

North bound I-5 take Exit 21 and it's straight ahead
when you hit the stoplight

Southbound I-5 follow frontage road to stoplight, left
and under the overpass

Meeting Dates:

January 17, 2008

February 21, 2008

March 20, 2008

April 17, 2008

May 15, 2008

On the Internet: www.fishfirst.org

Contacts: John DiVittorio, Executive Director 360-713-7460

Jerry Sauer, Membership Chairman, 360-607-1646

Harry Bresnahan, Membership meetings 360-225-9836

Jerry Brown, Newsletter Editor 360-600-8559 for
newsletter ideas

Future meeting speakers:

January 17th, speaker- Mark Lytle, Fishing guide
and government trapper for Clackamas County.
Topic: Fishing for Spring Chinook.

February 21st, speaker- Ann Stephenson,
Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
biologist. Topic: Fishing counting program for the
lower 3 dams on the Columbia River. (This
program has been in place since 1938.)

March 20th, speaker-Shane Hawkins, Washington
Department of Fish & Wildlife biologist. Topic: Fall
Chinook monitoring program on the North Fork
Lewis

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board.

Final designs and permit applications were prepared for the Manly Road Creek Project and the Edwards Project. The Manly project is on Clark County property below Daybreak Park. It will create spawning and rearing habit as well as remove a man-made fish passage barrier that is trapping and killing juveniles in the summer. The Edwards project is another reach on Cedar Creek which will get the same treatments which have been installed on the Doty, Shimano, Carter and Malinowski properties. These projects are also funded by the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation and the SURF board.

Salmon Allocation Hearing

Sport Fishermen Testify

Dozens of sport fishermen attended a Jan. 12th salmon allocation hearing in Vancouver, WA and let it be known that Sport Fishermen want a larger allocation of Spring Chinook and Commercial Gill Netters should get less. There are literally thousands of sport fishermen in Washington and Oregon who fish the Columbia and less than 100 commercial gill netters. If there are ten thousand sport fishermen, then gill netters would be one percent of that number yet they are allocated 43% of the post Indian take on the Columbia and Sport fishermen get 57%.

More than a dozen sportsmen including Glen Johnston, a FF Board member, testified during the four hour hearing. Testimony was also heard from commercial fishermen who predictably opposed any increase for sport fishing.

The WDFW Commission will make a decision on the allocation at a February 1st and 2nd meeting in Olympia. FF members are urged to attend and speak out for a higher sport fishing allocation and more emphasis on selective harvest.



Fish First Volunteers Assist Dave Brown with Salmon release.

Fish First is a sponsor of Dave Brown's wild salmon rescue program, licensed and monitored by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. On 12/24/07, Dave Brown and his group of volunteers released approximately 1,700 fish to Mason Creek. The population of fish rescued last summer and raised in pens had grown large enough to threaten depletion of the oxygen in the pens. This partial release of some of the larger fish enables Dave to keep a number of rescued fish longer so that they can grow larger and stronger before their release. A larger release will be held in February.

Angler West TV

Comcast Sports NW is making the Angler West show available on Saturday mornings at 8 a.m. The show is produced by Justin Wolfe who has been running the show on TV in Northern California and providing promotional pieces for Fish First on his program.

Volunteers Needed For Sportsman's Show

Fish First will have its booth at the big annual Sportsman's Show February 6-10 at the Portland Expo Center. We need volunteers to be in the booth and speak up for Fish First, sign up new members and promote Salmon recovery. If you want to volunteer please contact Daina McLean at 360-687-5306 or email her at webmaster@renewfitness.com. You will have fun and meet a lot of interested people who want to help save the salmon and steelhead.

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will see when the commissioners come to their minds and how much weight they give to non-select overharvest that is currently going on.

Ghost Nets: There is a big and continuing problem of abandoned/lost nets that continue to harvest indiscriminately. There are over 3000 ghost nets in Puget sound and could be that many in Columbia river that are harvesting fish 24 hours a day 365 days a year. Worst of worst is Puget Sound where nets are placed by people in smaller boats and don't have power to pull the nets free. I strongly urge you to get on your computer and 'google' Ghost Nets in Puget Sound you can see a video and other articles and see the damage they do. I also have a copy of a tape on ghost nets and it can be loaned out. It's very dramatic and these have to be cleaned up. There could be as many fish harvested by these as by the gill netters. There are numerous recovery efforts in both Puget Sound and on the Columbia but there should be more attention focused on this issue because of the non-selective nature of this problem.