BRITISH COLUMBIA'S NEW QUALITY ANGLING POLICY

David W. Narver

Dr. Dave Narver is Director, Fisheries Branch, British Columbia Ministry of Environment. In this article he responds to The Osprey's invitation to discuss the specifics of B.C.'s new Angling Guides policy and what it hopes to accomplish.

In the January 1990 issue of The Osprey, Stan Young published an article entitled "B.C. Rule Changes Miss the Mark." Unfortunately some of the impressions created do not reflect British Columbia's intentions with the introduction of its new policy on Angling Guides.

Mr. Young and many others suggest that the Ministry should, in order of priority:

1) stop the incidental kill of steelhead by commercial salmon gillnet fishermen,

2) control logging to minimize damage to rivers,

3) reduce the number of guides along the province's best steelhead rivers.

First, it should be understood that the commercial fishery is managed by the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and forest harvesting by the Provincial Ministry of Forests. Our agency has no direct control over either, but a major part of our operational budget is allocated to working with these agencies to reduce impact on the recreational fisheries.

The mixed stock fishery at the mouth of the Skeena is a complex problem, and changes will only be achieved at substantial social costs. However, I hope you can appreciate that your editorial suggestion to eliminate the livelihood of Canadian commercial fishermen so that American anglers can continue to enjoy unrestricted access to Skeena steelhead at minimal cost might be a "hard sell" in Prince Rupert.

Nonetheless, we are making some progress. With the cooperation of the commercial industry (because steelhead swim near the surface), we are introducing "weedless" (a 30-inch gap between the corkline and the webbing) on gillnetter fishing the approaches to the Dean River. We also are anticipating a reduction in the number of commercial fishing days at the mouth of the Skeena and the Fraser. Now, if we could get a similar reduction in the Alaskan interceptions, we might start to see some improved escapements.

The point is that maintaining quality fishing is a problem with many difficult dimensions. But even if the logging and commercial interception problems were solved tomorrow, we would still need a policy to manage the continued growth in the world angling demand for these rivers.

As a native Portlander and later a Seattle resident in the 1950s and 1960s, I fished most of the best Oregon and Washington (Continued on page 2.)

QUICKLY....

The National Park Service's study of the Columbia River's Hanford Reach is on schedule. The study, authorized by Congress in 1988 and due to be completed in 1991, will examine the 51-mile-long Reach's potential for addition to the national wild and scenic rivers system. This last free-flowing section of the Columbia has major wildlife values, including spawning areas for salmon and steelhead. The study was prompted by proposals to dam or dredge the Reach for navigation, either of which would destroy the spawning areas. . . .

Pete Soverel's article elsewhere in this issue notes the arrest of a Taiwanese fish broker, one Patrick Lee, who was attempting to sell salmon caught illegally by drift net fishermen in the North Pacific ocean. For his troubles, Mr. Lee has been sentenced to nearly six years in federal prison and to pay $66,000 in restitution. Lee was caught in a "sling" operation, part of ongoing efforts by the U.S., Canada, and the USSR to put an end to the terribly destructive drift net fishery. Soverel's account is worth careful study and positive response. . . .

On the same general subject, The New York Times recently reported the presence of more than 100 Japanese fishermen aboard North Korean vessels in the North Pacific. These drift net fishing boats were seized on May 20 by Soviet authorities who are expected to prosecute the offenders on charges of harvesting thousands of tons of salmon that had originated in Soviet rivers, in violation of (Continued on page 16.)
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(Continued from page 1)
rivers. The deterioration of the angling experience on many once-fine streams because of high demand and overcrowding is a fact.

It may be too late or too difficult to introduce regulation of demand on U.S. waters, but it is not too late for us, and I intend to proceed with the implementation of the policy in 1990.

Mr. Young goes on to suggest that angling guides should be reduced in number on rivers like the Dean, Kispiox, Bute Inlet, etc., since “overcrowding... is largely because there are too many guides and their operations are run too aggressively.”

Some facts. On the Dean River the Canadian guides have limited their operations to a fixed number of clients for over a decade. Dramatic increases in angling resulted from the efforts of U.S. based companies marketing the Dean River, not from the efforts of residents or Canadian guides. The new policy deals with that.

On the Kispiox, less than 5 percent of the effort is coming from legally guided anglers. More than 50 percent of the effort is coming from non-guided non-residents. If the perception is that guided anglers are the problem, then you can draw your own conclusions.

On the Bute Inlet, between 5 and 10 percent of the effort, at most, is coming from guiding guides.

These numbers have remained low because of our actions and the development of the policy. However, the interest and demand for guiding has taken off in the last few years. Without the controls provided for in the policy, anglers would have experienced an unprecedented (threelfold) increase in guided activity on many of our northern rivers.

The policy requires a plan to be developed for each classified water and that guides not exceed the levels of use specified in the plan. This can benefit the guides as well as non-guided anglers if there is a willingness to compromise. So far, this seems to be a reasonable and potentially successful approach.

When we do as Mr. Young suggests and limit the angling guides according to a plan, it follows that the limits must be enforceable. A licensing system which records the level of use by guided anglers is therefore necessary and has been implemented.

Any administrative and enforcement system will cost money, and the fees are set so that the cost of these systems will not be carried by the resident angler or the general taxpayer. Surely it seems unfair for the resident angler to forego fishing opportunities because of guided angling of non-residents, and then have to pay for administration and enforcement.

Additional funds have been provided to the Ministry for these functions, as well as for inventory and management activities. Therefore, a significant part of the revenue from the licenses will go back into managing the resource.

It has been argued that the non-guided non-resident angler is not a threat to the resource and should therefore not be charged the same fees as guided anglers. However, for classified systems we see the day when additional controls will be necessary on quality waters. More control may not be essential for this year on every river, but I am sure that if we do not start now, it will be impossible to turn back the clock at some future time.

The Class II licenses will help in accurately monitoring non-resident use and potential illegal guiding activities. It will also assist in providing timely catch information to the regional staff.

Finally, I would like to think that the steps that we are taking are perceived as being in the interest of steelheaders and not a negative step directed at any group of anglers (except illegal guides).

Sharing any limited resource will become increasingly difficult as demand increases. Changes are inevitable. However, I believe that the bond that exists among steelheaders, independent of nationality, and between the anglers and the rivers they fish, will continue undiminished and that we can continue to work toward solving the many problems facing us using a cooperative manner.

There remains a fair amount of confusion regarding the status of the policy and its implementation. We have drafted a list of questions and answers which we hope will address most of those areas. When finalized, these will be widely distributed.

QUESTIONS FOR ANGLERS

Q. Why do we need restrictions on angling guides?
A. Commercial guiding for sport fish is an area of rapid growth. Without some controls, the wilderness character of many of B.C.’s waters and the high quality of the sport fishery would be lost as a result of overcrowding. Conflicts between guides and non-guided anglers would increase.

Q. What is the purpose of the classification system for some of B.C.’s freshwater fisheries?
A. The classification system gives managers flexibility in their approach to regulating angling use.

Q. What are the classes of waters?
A. Class I waters are those where total use (guided, non-guided, residents, and non-residents) will eventually be regulated to maintain a wilderness fishery. There are only 5 rivers in this category and the number will likely remain small.

Class II waters are those where guided angler use (angler days) will be limited. Non-guided non-resident use will not be restricted on Class II waters at this time. Unguided B.C. residents will not be regulated on Class II waters. There are approximately 40 rivers in this category.

Q. What is an angler day?
A. An angler day is a unit representing one person fishing any part of a day.

Q. What will happen to guides in 1990?
A. For classified systems, the number of guides and the number of angler (Continued on page 3.)
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(Continued from page 2.)
days allocated to angling guides will be limited according to a management plan. The plans are developed by the Ministry of Environment in consultation with the public.

Q. Can the plans change?
A. Yes. While it is our intention to minimize any changes, it is expected that plans will be reviewed periodically and changed if necessary.

Q. Will the restrictions make it harder to obtain the services of a guide?
A. It may. Guides on classified waters will be operating under an angler day quota. However, the quota is based on historical use. No reductions in the level of service are anticipated, but if there is any doubt, you should contact your angling guide.

Q. How will the quotas be enforced?
A. An additional licensing system will be necessary for classified waters. The license will be a daily license costing $20 per day for Class I and $10 per day for Class II water for non-residents of B.C. Residents of B.C., will have to buy a license to fish Class I waters, and if they are guided, to fish Class II waters. The cost of the resident license will be $1 per day.

Q. Why is a daily license necessary?
A. The management plans and quotas are defined in terms of angler days. Therefore, the number of days fished by an angling guide’s clients must be recorded for the quota to be enforceable. Similarly on Class I waters, a record of total use is necessary because of our limit on total effort. Therefore, all anglers must purchase a license.

Q. Why do non-guided non-residents have to be licensed on Class II waters?
A. There have been a number of complaints regarding illegal non-resident guiding, and the number of conflicts between residents and non-residents has increased.

The licensing system will aid in enforcement and document the severity of any overcrowding problems. If some form of draw/reservation system is needed in the future, these data will assist in determining where and when it might be appropriate.

Q. Why are the Class I and Class II angling licenses so expensive?
A. They are not expensive. River fishing of the type available in British Columbia is marketed between $500 and $1000 per day elsewhere in the world. The license fee was chosen so that the cost of administration and increased management are not transferred to the resident angler.

Q. Couldn’t there be a different fee for non-guided non-resident anglers?
A. There could be, but it would make an already complex system of licensing more cumbersome.

Q. Are Class I licenses river specific?
A. Yes, since we are keeping track of the total number of days on each of the Class I waters. This means that if you want to fish any of the Class I waters listed, you will require a separate license for that water.

Q. Are Class II licenses river specific?
A. No. We have tried to accommodate the requests for increased flexibility so the license applies to any water designated as Class II. At the time of license purchase, you must specify the number of consecutive days to be fished but not the specific waters.

Q. How will managers know which waters are being fished?
A. We are requiring a compulsory return of the license indicating which rivers were fished and the number of fish caught. This gives the angler a choice of any of the Class II waters while providing important catch information to the manager.

Q. Will compulsory return work?
A. We hope that anglers will cooperate with this more flexible approach. However, non-return of the license is cause of the Ministry to refuse to issue a license in the next year.

Q. Where can I get a license?
A. Most angling guides will have a supply of licenses for their clients. For non-guided anglers, all government agents, (8:30 to 4:30, weekdays only) will have a supply of licenses. Also many license vendors such as sport shops will carry the extra licenses in the areas affected by the regulations. Please note that in the first year not all vendors will carry them, so please plan accordingly.

Q. What happened to limited entry?
A. We implemented as draw/reservation system for non-guided non-Canadians on the Dean River this year. It is the only river system where there is a restriction on non-Canadians. Non-Canadians must apply prior to January 15 and their duration of stay must not exceed 8 consecutive calendar days.

Q. Where do I apply for a Dean River Class I license if I am a non-guided non-Canadian?
A. Write for an application to Dean River Draw Fisheries Branch 780 Blanshard St. Victoria B.C. Canada V8V 1X5

and submit the application to the above address before January 15.

Q. Why not focus on the problems of commercial interceptions and habitat loss?
A. We have not forgotten about the other problems. However, commercial fisheries for salmon are managed by the federal government and positive change has been slow. We are optimistic that the new system will heighten the awareness of the value of many of our wilderness rivers, leading to better integrated resource management.

(Ed’s note: All this means for damn sure you should read the regs before you plan a trip. JdY.)

A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We publish this issue of The Osprey at a time of transition for both the newsletter’s editorial staff and the Washington Steelhead Committee of the Federation of Fly Fishers. Both The Osprey and the committee have evolved from labors of love and commitment from dedicated steelheaders. The Steelhead Committee’s purposes are to protect, maintain, and enhance the steelhead resources in the Northwest region, especially native and wild fish, and to maintain the integrity of steelhead river ecosystems. In pursuit of these activities, the committee supports The Osprey.

Pete Severson

At the spring 1990 meeting of the Northwest Regional (NWR) Council, some of the administrative arrangements between The Osprey, the Washington Steelhead Committee and the council were formalized. First, the Washington Steelhead Committee was (Continued on page 4.)
FROM THE CHAIRMAN
(Continued from page 3.)

reconstituted as the Northwest Regional Steelhead Committee. The NWR Council then codified a number of administrative arrangements that had developed over time without formal direction from the council. In a nutshell, the president of the NWR Council appoints the chairman of the NWR Steelhead Committee. The Steelhead Committee chairman reports to the NWR president on all matters under the chairman's purview. The Steelhead Committee chairman appoints the editor of The Osprey. The Steelhead Committee chairman is responsible for oversight and management of the finances for both the Steelhead Committee and The Osprey. Thus, at the annual NWR Council meetings, the Steelhead Committee chairman will report on the activities and finances of both the NWR Steelhead Committee and its newsletter.

With the foregoing in mind, I have been appointed chairman of the NWR Steelhead Committee by the president of the NWR Council. For those of you who do not know me, I am a retired naval officer. I am a professor at the University of Washington and live in the Seattle area. I am an enthusiastic (but not very effective) steelhead fly fisherman. I have fished steelhead in many areas of the Northwest region. I look forward to working with you, my fellow anglers, on matters relating to our favored fish. The challenges are certainly worthy of our very best efforts and will take all we can give. I fear that time may be short (see my piece on drift netting and the editorial in this issue), but we are many and I am confident that we can have a significant and effective impact.

In this vein, I believe steelhead need desperately a broad, umbrella organization to protect and enhance steelhead similar to the International Atlantic Salmon Foundation. In my view, steelhead are threatened throughout their range by a series of daunting challenges—high seas driftnets, mixed stock estuarine commercial fishing, logging, mining, industrial pollution, excessive sports kills, and so on. Unlike Atlantic Salmon anglers, who are all fly fishers, steelheaders would have to overcome, as a prerequisite first step, angling method obstacles. However, we have precedent in this area with the model of cooperation between various types of anglers in the Steelhead Society of British Columbia, which is made up of steelheaders without reference to how they fish for steelhead.

Readers of The Osprey are knowledgeable, experienced, and dedicated. I would appreciate your thoughts on this general subject. If you agree with me that steelhead need an umbrella organization, then we in the Northwest Steelhead Committee and The Osprey should commit ourselves to establishing such a structure.

As I am sure that most of you know, The Osprey was invented by two long time members of the old Washington Steelhead Committee—Bob Arnold and Stan Young, who have served as co-editors since the newsletter's inception. The Osprey in that time has become a huge success with a large, influential, international following—although the connection with the FFF and the Steelhead Committee may not have been fully appreciated by its readers.

My first duty as NWR Steelhead Committee chairman was to find a new editor for The Osprey. I undertook this chore with the greatest reluctance. I have known and respected both Bob Arnold and Stan Young for several years. I knew that finding a willing volunteer (all Osprey editors, typists, and authors work without any compensation) would be difficult. You can hardly imagine my great good fortune (not to mention my relief) when my first phone call struck pay dirt. John de Yonge agreed to serve as the next editor of The Osprey. Many of you will remember John as the former editorial page editor of The Seattle Post-Intelligencer. He is a knowledgeable steelheader, a keen environmentalist, and a professional media man. He will be a great editor.

Finally, I would like to extend on behalf of steelheaders everywhere, but especially on behalf of readers of The Osprey, our most sincere appreciation to Stan Young and Bob Arnold, whose efforts and vision took The Osprey from an idea through incubation to full fledged bird: Well done and thanks from all of us.

EDITORIAL:
WE NEED A WORLDWIDE ORGANIZATION

Steelhead returns and angler success this past winter and spring up and down the West Coast are down significantly. While dams, pollution, and watershed destruction continue to take their toll, in recent years the high seas drift net operators of Japan, Korea, and Taiwan have learned where and how to take salmon and steelhead. Their illegal capture of millions of fish may be the biggest killer yet. It is premature to judge the impact of this fishery from the results of a single fishing season, but the drop has been so precipitous as to sound alarm bells.

The situation is analogous to what happened to Atlantic salmon. The pressures of dam construction, pollution, and over-fishing, especially the latter by high seas drift netting off the coast of Greenland from 1960 to 1972, threatened to eradicate the species over most of its range.

A massive worldwide effort by the International Atlantic Salmon Foundation (IASF), arranged a ban on drift netting off Greenland in 1972. Ten years later the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) formed to ensure the conservation of salmon through international cooperation. Also in 1982 the Atlantic Salmon Federation (ASF) was formed from its predecessor, the IASF. The ASF is a working partnership of two organizations, the ASF (U.S.) and the ASF (Canada). In 1983 the ASF adopted a five-year Atlantic Salmon Management Plan that imposed stringent restrictions on commercial and sports fishing. Atlantic salmon numbers are still badly depressed, but they are making a slow comeback. In addition, runs are being restored in some rivers. The Atlantic Salmon Federation now has an annual budget of $2.5 million; its communications reach more than 500,000 people.

The ASF is dedicated to the preservation and wise management of the Atlantic Salmon and its habitat through research, management, education, and international cooperation. Its goals:

1. Conserve and enhance Atlantic (Continued on page 5.)
EDITORIAL
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salmon by promoting recreational salmon fishing as the best use of the resource.

2. Address and influence issues affecting the conservation and enhancement of the Atlantic salmon, including commercial harvesting on the high seas and elsewhere, the native food fisheries, habitat alteration, and illegal fishing.

3. Promote and support enhancement programs that increase natural production of Atlantic salmon.

4. Conduct educational programs to inform the public about Atlantic salmon and the Federation's concern for its future.

5. Increase knowledge of Atlantic salmon through scientific research programs.


7. Support, assist and cooperate with governmental agencies and national and international conservation bodies that share ASF objectives.

The problems facing steelhead have grown beyond the capability of the numerous local and regional groups to address them. Well-intentioned though they are, the groups are fragmented and disorganized. Needed is one large, cohesive international organization, similar to the Atlantic Salmon Federation, that by sheer numbers and budget would play a decisive role in resolving problems affecting the steelhead resource.

Local and regional clubs just aren't doing it. They will never have the kind of political leverage needed to address issues that now are international in scope. If the resource is to survive, we had better figure out how to unite and act.

Reader's comments would be welcome.

THE DAY THAT SIDNEY GLASSO TOTALLED HIS PORSCHE

Walt Johnson, who resides along Washington's North Stilaguamish River, is renowned as a pioneer steelhead flyfisherman, as an artful practitioner still active in the sport, and as a font of an endless number of stories about the early days.

Besides fishing for steelhead, one of the many pleasures of owning a cabin on the North Fork of the Stilaguamish River was the comradeship of other anglers who were always willing to share experiences and theories.

Back in the '40s fly fishermen, both the tyro and the experienced, gravitated to the camp of Al Knudson, whose legendary reputation was already established. It was my good fortune to have my camp only a few hundred feet from Al's and he was always a gracious host no matter when a fisherman might wander over for a visit. He would keep you enthralled with tales of his many angling experiences on the coastal steelhead rivers. At times it became difficult to break away to go fishing.

Al was a gentleman of the first water and no one was more willing to share his knowledge over a cup of coffee and a batch of cookies. In a word, Al loved company and it was on one of my casual visits that I had the pleasure of meeting the late Sidney Glasso. Sid had taken a sabbatical from his home rivers of the Olympic Peninsula to try his hand at angling for the summer run of the Siltly and was staying at Al's camp. After a visit, I was invited to Al's camp to receive some of his rivers the following winter.

After the first trip I became fascinated by this tall, rugged gentleman and the gorgeous flies he tied. More or less isolated from the majority of steelhead fly fishermen in the little logging town of Forks, he braved the torrential rains and blustery winter winds to pioneer a tradition of perfection in both fly tying and fishing that few men have equalled. I found this man and his lovely wife Evelyn to be gracious hosts and cherish the good times I shared while in their company.

Syd and I corresponded over a long period of time and I would get first hand reports on the status of his rivers. The Salduc, Calawah, Bogachiel, and Hoh all could be adversely affected by the heavy rains moving in from the Pacific. Syd would always advise me to call before leaving Seattle because the streams could easily go out even on my way over.

Syd and I corresponded over a long period of time and I would get first hand reports on the status of his rivers. The Salduc, Calawah, Bogachiel, and Hoh all could be adversely affected by the heavy rains moving in from the Pacific. Syd would always advise me to call before leaving Seattle because the streams could easily go out even on my way over.

There was a time when sunk fly anglers were searching for lines with a higher specific gravity in order to get the fly down deeper in the frigid water of winter. George McLeod was one of the most innovative and talented anglers of the area and through his concerted efforts, working with Scientific Anglers of Midland, Michigan and Don Redfern, a chemist with the Martin Marietta Corpora-

tion, the first hi-density Wet Cel line was conceived. It was appropriately dubbed the "McLeod Special" and became the prototype for all of the present-day sinking lines. With smaller diameters and greater density these lines opened up a whole new advantage over the old silk and nylon types. After Don Redfern's untimely passing, my friend Craig Shreve and I were given samples of these lines by Don's widow. The one drawback we found was that the level braided nylon core had a tendency to stretch, thus breaking down the finish. After a period of use the finish would crack and cause casting difficulties. Craig and I desperately tried to convince Scientific Anglers to use a dacron core, which had less stretch, but were told that the finish would not cling to this material.

Unknown to most anglers, Syd already had been working on his own version of a sinking line. After many attempts to interest manufacturers in making lines specifically aimed at a small group of northwest steelhead fly fishermen—particularly for the short and swift rivers of the peninsula—he gave up and decided to design his own. Syd would take level dacron, remove the finish and through a process of applying red lead and jap drier, he would build heads of different lengths and densities to conform to the water he was fishing. Most of these shooting heads were attached to monofilament and would attain both the desired distance and depths in the heavy water of his winter streams. He would

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Sid Glasso's Porsche
(Continued from page 5.)
painstakingly weigh each one on a grain scale until his specifications were met. I can attest to the effectiveness of Syd's lines: they worked even when in many situations the Wet Celts were inefficient in reaching the desired depths of those moving peninsular streams. A more detailed description of them can be found in Trey Combs excellent book "Steelhead Fly Fishing and Flies."

Syd was a master angler and daring wader who went places in rivers that the average angler would avoid. I recall one incident on the Soldtue when my friend Russ Willis and I went over to fish with Syd. Russ was of slight build. Syd put him into the lower river after assuring him, "It's a real nice bottom and you can wade all the way through." Well, Russ was a little apprehensive and after taking a few steps found himself on his toes as the heavy current lifted him off the bottom. In a quavering voice he yelled, "Oh, yes, it's a real nice bottom and you can wade all the way through!" No one was happier to reach shore than Russ. We still chuckle over the incident.

Another master wader was Dick Wentworth. Dick was a student of Syd's when Syd was a teacher at the Forks high school. They became good friends through their mutual love of angling. Through this association, and with Syd as his mentor, Dick became a fly fisherman and tyer of exceptional talent. Although I never had the opportunity to fish with Dick, I once watched him wade all the way across the Quiluayute directly below the confluence of the Soldtue and Bogachiel, a feat that I would never attempt and doubt that few others could do it successfully even if they had the courage.

We dubbed Syd the "gray eagle" as he was not only an outstanding angler but his dominate appearance and greying hair outlined against the leaden winter sky seemed to meld into the landscape as though he were a part of it. Both Syd and Dick were among the early steelhead fly anglers who learned watermanship the hard way, by actual trial and error, the kind of knowledge that can only be gained by experience and dedication not found in books. Syd took the beautiful classic Atlantic salmon patterns of the past, brought them to his rivers, and devised those of his own to entice the big winter steelhead he sought. Both his full dressed patterns and Spey styles are now recognized as high art and justly so, for they are perfection.

One memorable day, among many with Syd, involved our mutual love of fine sports cars. At that time of our life they were reasonably affordable and I was fortunate enough to own a couple. My favorite model happened to be the inimitable Alfa Romeo Guilin Sprint Coupe. Syd in turn was a Porsche fan and we both enjoyed discussing the merits of each model. We agreed that there could be no more personal pleasure than tooling down a winding road to our favorite fishing stream in a finely tuned sports car, except the fishing itself. On this particular weekend I left Seattle on an optimistic weather forecast and arrived Friday evening. The streams were in great shape. Syd suggested that in the morning we try the Bogachiel, only a 15-minute drive or so from his home.

Syd had a farmer friend who allowed him to come onto his place to fish. After walking across the field we approached the river. The pool he chose to fish had a very fast chute at its head where the water concentrated and rushed through clefts in the rocks and then opened out into a long beautiful fly drift. Syd told me to start at the head and work down as he watched. It soon became obvious that this was one of those places in which the Wet Celts were in spite of its high density, was no match for this piece of water. Sensing my plight Syd finally came over and said, "Here, try one of these. The steelhead are lying right at the base of that chute in the fastest water and you have to get the fly down right now or you're wasting your time."

After he handed me one of his special lines I rigged up for another try. What happened next left me spellbound. I don't think I've fully recovered to this day. The fly had hardly started its drift when I had a vicious strike that all but jerked the rod from my grasp. Then I felt the power of a great steelhead as it began its sluggish run downstream! I could do nothing but run after it. Backing disappeared at an alarming rate. I am sure that fish was headed back to the Pacific. We never did see it. I know I have had few steelhead in my lifetime as powerful as that brute!

Syd was laughing at my antics as I raced down the bar in my frantic effort to catch up, to no avail. I did manage later to take a 9 pounder but I didn't stand a candle to the first. To top all this excitement off, the sky opened. Torrential rain poured down. Calling it a day, we hurried back to the car, removed our gear, and headed home.

On arrival, Syd discovered that he had left his rain jacket in the farmer's yard. He said he would run back to retrieve it. Evelyn and I visited while we waited and became concerned when a half hour had passed and he hadn't returned. Finally the door opened and he limped.

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SID GLASSO'S PORSCHE
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"Well," he said, "I just totaled my Porsche." He was extremely irritated. He told us that while rounding a curve he met another car travelling at excessive speed that failed to negotiate the corner. It forced him off the shoulder and into a ditch where he crashed into a stump, bending the front frame of his beloved Porsche out of shape. Later he told me that his insurance company tried to convince him to have it straightened but he refused. No way was he going to drive that car again. I don't recall whether he traded it in on another Porsche. I'm grateful that he wasn't critically injured. He lived long after to share his remarkable talents with fly anglers all over the country.

CALIFORNIA SEA LIONS IN WASHINGTON

Robert L. DeLong

Is "Herschel" our future? Dr. DeLong is a research biologist and sea lion expert with the National Marine Fisheries Service's Marine Mammal Laboratory in Seattle.

California sea lions have become winter residents of Washington State waters. Each September and October several thousand adult and subadult male California sea lions move through coastal Washington waters enroute to their wintering grounds in British Columbia. A few hundred animals move into inland Washington waters from Neah Bay to southern Puget Sound, where they spend the late fall, winter, and early spring feeding on such concentrated prey as hake in Port Susan, squid and dogfish in central Puget Sound and pollock in southern Puget Sound. A small portion of this wintering population (collectively nicknamed "Herschel") has become notorious for feeding on returning adult steelhead in the Lake Washington Ship Canal at the Ballard Locks.

There are two species of sea lions in Washington waters, the California sea lion and the Stellar sea lion. Neither species breeds here. Small numbers of juvenile and subadult Stellar sea lions have always been year-round residents of Washington waters, between the breeding populations in coastal southern Oregon and in the Queen Charlotte Islands of British Columbia.

California sea lions did not occur until recently in Washington. The first documented sighting was in 1950. Not until 1979 were as many as 100 California sea lions counted in Puget Sound. The numbers increased through the mid-1980s. They have now declined to maximum counts of about 400 animals (graph, below).

California sea lions breed on the Channel Islands off southern California and on islands off Baja California, on islands in the Gulf of California, and along the west coast of Mexico. The population numbers about 177,000 animals, with about half the breeding population in U.S. waters. The population has been increasing at about 5 percent annually over the last 15 years. Pups are born in May and June each year, and the breeding season extends from late June through July. Females and young remain near the breeding islands all year while the subadult and adult males migrate northward beginning in early August. Males winter along the coast of California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia. They begin leaving the northern areas in April to return south for the breeding season. Adult males that begin to arrive in September to winter in Puget Sound waters may originate from any island rookery in southern California or Mexico.

The counts shown in the graph represent peak numbers of animals counted and around Everett, Wa., generally during early April of each year. This peak coincides with the southern movement of animals out of the Straits of Georgia in British Columbia. If we add perhaps 100 animals to these counts we obtain a maximum count for all of inland Washington waters. So the peak (Continued on page 8.)

Maximum California Sea Lion Counts at Everett/Port Gardner, 1979-1990

![Graph showing maximum California Sea Lion counts at Everett/Port Gardner, 1979-1990.](image-url)
CALIFORNIA SEA LIONS
(Continued from page 7.)

abundance over the past few years has been around 500 animals, but the average number present throughout the winter months is closer to 200 to 300 animals.

What is the impact of several hundred California sea lions on marine resources in general and, specifically, on steelhead?

We have learned that wintering sea lions prey primarily on hake, herring, squid, dogfish, pollock, and salmonids. Sea lions and commercial fisheries compete for hake in Port Susan. The hake stock there has declined over the past few years. Biological data indicate that the decline could have been caused by over-fishing, poor survival of juvenile fish and subsequent low recruitment, and predation by sea lions and harbor seals.

Sea lions take salmonids by removing fish from gill nets and by catching free-swimming fish. Commercial coho and chum salmon gill net fisheries occur while sea lions are arriving in Puget Sound and fishermen have some problems with sea lions taking fish from nets. Indian fishermen fishing steelhead with sets near the river mouths within Puget Sound and Hood Canal have substantial problems with California sea lions patrolling their nets and grabbing fish.

After the nets are pulled, sea lions frequently remain at the mouths of the rivers during much of the winter. Some succeed in taking steelhead as they enter the river system. The impact of this type of predation on winter steelhead in the inland Washington rivers has not been measured.

Sea lion numbers continue to increase on the California breeding islands. Probably increasing numbers of sea lions will pass through Washington waters over the next decade and perhaps increasing numbers will winter in Puget Sound.

That would increase opportunities for people to observe and enjoy the presence of these large marine predators and would increase the probability of significant interactions with returning winter steelhead in the inland marine waters of Washington State.

IDAHO WILD STEELHEAD UPDATE

For Steve Petit, steelhead are his work and his recreation. When not helping manage the Columbia River’s anadromous fish runs as fish passage specialist with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, he likes nothing better than to wade the Clearwater River near his home, flyrod in hand.

Idaho’s tributaries of the Snake River produce approximately 55% of the Columbia Basin’s wild/natural summer steelhead. Although the present wild stock identification/classification methods are oversimplifications, we commonly classify steelhead trout utilizing the Clearwater, Middle Fork Salmon, and South Fork Salmon Rivers as “Group B” fish. These steelhead are larger and enter the Columbia River later than the smaller “Group A” fish that populate the remainder of the Salmon River drainage, a few lower Clearwater tributaries, and the Snake River section of Hell’s Canyon. As a point of reference, wild summer steelhead runs of the early 1960s numbered over 100,000 fish into the Snake River. Approximately 35% and 30% of the escapement headed for the Clearwater and Snake Rivers, respectively. Wild steelhead smolt production from the Snake River drainage was estimated to range from 1.4 to 4.2 million. About one-half of this total originated in the Salmon River system. Clearwater wild smolt production was estimated at 700,000 to 1,000,000 smolts before damming of the North Fork (Dworshak Dam), with 500,000 wild smolts coming from the remainder of the drainage.

Wild steelhead stocks were extremely depressed in the mid 1970s. We are all familiar with the causes: construction of eight mainstem hydroelectric dams and the associated mortalities inflicted on downstream migrating juveniles.

Fewer than 3,000 wild steelhead returned to Idaho tributaries during the 1974-75 return! At the same time, hatchery production began to play an extremely important role. Wild stocks were depleted to approximately 10% of the early 1960s population.

A combination of protective measures and regulations, downstream passage improvements, juvenile transport operations, and excellent habitat conditions have allowed some increases in wild/natural steelhead populations. (The term “wild/natural” is now (Continued on page 9.)

### Steelhead (1000's)

- **Clearwater River**
- **Hatchery**
- **Wild**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>72</th>
<th>73</th>
<th>74</th>
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<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RELEASE EM' ALIVE!!**

**RELEASE EM' ALIVE!!**

**RELEASE EM' ALIVE!!**

**RELEASE EM' ALIVE!!**
substituted for wild steelhead, since most Idaho streams have received hatchery augmentations in the form of smolt, fry, or unspawned adults.

Three large drainages, the Selway (Clearwater) River and South Fork and Middle Fork Salmon Rivers have been reserved for wild steelhead management only. These drainages have shown substantial increases in smolt production since 1974, but we estimate only 10% of their potential is utilized. Wild and natural steelhead runs into other drainages, such as the Lochsa and Salmon River tributaries, are at similar low levels.

Idaho’s Fish and Game Commission has adopted policies directing that wild steelhead populations will receive priority consideration in all fisheries management decisions. Therefore, in the event of a conflict between management for wild fish and management of hatchery fish, wild steelhead will receive first consideration. In most cases, the preservation of the genetic characteristics of these wild stocks is very important and is the main reason that streams such as the Selway and Middle Fork will not be stocked with hatchery steelhead. In addition, the Commission has delineated anadromous fish habitat for non-development status. Every effort will be made to deter development that could further degrade these critical habitats.

Paramount to the IDFG wild steelhead program was the adoption of “known-stock” harvest management for Idaho’s steelhead runs. To facilitate “known-stock” harvest and to afford our wild stocks maximum protection, Idaho adopted an adipose fin regulation in the late 1970s, the first of the Northwest states to do so. Idaho is presently ad-clip- ping over 9 million hatchery fish annually, a figure expected to reach 12 million by 1993.

In all, the Clearwater wild/natural component has slowly increased from the dismal returns of the mid-1970s.

The most important factors influencing wild/natural B-run escapement appear to be Columbia River commercial harvest rates and, to some extent, the passage conditions of the lower Columbia and Snake River reservoirs during the late summer. Harvest quotas (Zone 6 Treaty Fishery) are based on the strength of the B-run wild/natural steelhead component. A new method of estimating the B-run steelhead escapement at Bonneville Dam may help to rebuild Clearwater wild/natural stocks.

ESCAPEMENT OF WILD/NATURAL STEELHEAD AT LOWER GRANITE DAM AND ESTIMATED A-RUN AND B-RUN COMPONENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fish Run</th>
<th>No. Fish</th>
<th>No. A-Run</th>
<th>No. B-Run</th>
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<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>10,300</td>
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<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>19,700</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984-85</td>
<td>24,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>1985-86</td>
<td>26,700</td>
<td>17,826</td>
<td>8,874</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986-87</td>
<td>26,500</td>
<td>19,984</td>
<td>6,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988-89</td>
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<td>1989-90*</td>
<td>23,500</td>
<td>13,900</td>
<td>9,600</td>
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</table>

* Preliminary estimate of fall component only.

The method of accounting for the strength of the B-run group of summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam has been based historically on passage data derived in the 1960s that indicated the larger B-run fish arrived at Bonneville after August 25. Idaho has continued for the past decade that using this date to separate A and B groups of the Bonneville escapement is subjective and no longer valid, because recent shifts in B-run timing have produced increased A and B stock overlap. The CRFMP is evaluating an intermanagement technique to separate A and B steelhead stocks.

The interim method, based on fork length measurement, attempts to distinguish A and B wild/natural components at Bonneville, Lower Granite, and in the Treaty commercial fishery. It now appears that fork length method may provide (Continued on page 10.)
THE STEAMBOATERS

Yvonne Knouse is a founding member and Memorabilia Chairperson of the Steamboaters. Her home, located between Roseburg and Gilda, fronts on the North Umpqua. If each major steelhead river had a protector as effective as The Steamboaters, our sport would be vastly improved.

For almost a quarter of a century, The Steamboaters, an organization of fly fishermen and women, has been the watchdog of the 33-mile fly-fishing-only segment of the North Umpqua River. The NU, host to both winter and summer runs of steelhead, lies mainly within the Umpqua National Forest, and some Bureau of Land Management, Douglas County, and State jurisdictions.

The brainchild of Col. James L. Hayden, Ret., and Donald F. Haines, The Steamboaters was formed as a non-profit Oregon corporation in 1966 by a small group gathered at Steamboat Inn on the banks of the North Umpqua. It derived its name from the Inn, a family-style fishing resort owned by Frank and Jeannine Moore, and from nearby Steamboat Creek, an important spawning tributary to the NU. The quarterly newsletter is Steamboat Whistle. The organization's purpose is to preserve, perpetuate, and promote the tradition and art of fly fishing; conservation of clean and pure angling waters; research on trout and especially anadromous fish; good sportsmanship and the ethics, education, and fraternity of fly fishermen; and to support those organizations that have purposes in common. It is a charter member of FFF and a member of National Wildlife Federation, the Oregon Environmental Council, and Oregon Trout.

The seven-member board of directors is elected for a term of one year at the annual fall meeting by members in attendance or by proxy. Members may initiate motions at that time. Directors elect their own officers and have authority to conduct the corporation's business. Memberships are Regular (voicing), Associate (non-fishing adult family member), Junior, Honorary, and Life. An applicant must be a fly fisher who has fished the NU and must be sponsored by a Regular member. Membership holds steady at about 325, with 23% residing near of the river, 34% elsewhere in Oregon, and 43% in 20 other states and two foreign countries.

The group maintains a memorabilia collection estimated at 3,000 album pages, plus the Col. James L. Hayden Memorial Film Library, which records a history of events of every kind effecting the NU River. Calling cards of "Stream Fishing Etiquette," composed by an old timer who inherited the code from earlier old timers, are traditionally published and distributed. Sturdy plastic litterbags with The Steamboaters Logo and Etiquette are also made available to the public and members for river cleanup. As strong advocates of fly fishing education, Steamboaters provide fishing related books to the county and school libraries, fly tying equipment and supplies for use by school instructors, and for more than 10 years have conducted a spring fly casting clinic, with attendance reaching 70.

Protection and management of wild steelhead and their spawning and rearing habitats is a major priority. The group donates money and time toward research, provides volunteer labor to build gimbals in such spawning streams as Cedar Creek, where members also helped plant 950 Douglas fir seedlings on stream slopes. Gabion-building on Little Rock Creek involved five separate crews, 35 volunteers and 344 person hours. Both creeks are important spawning tributaries to Steamboat Creek. The group cooperates with USFS and ODFW wherever possible.

Steamboaters showed the film at the 1968 FFF conclave at Jackson Hole. Copies were made available to FFF clubs. Frank Moore personally showed the film 40 to 50 times. Pass Creek had national impact. Its story altered road building and logging methods around streambeds. It alerted fisheries agencies, watershed management committees, local, state, and federal agencies, and effectively emphasized that maintaining stream quality required responsibility in logging. Moore received several high conservation awards. The FFF awarded The Steamboaters the McKenzie Cup as the outstanding club in 1969 for its conservation accomplishments. The film rights were turned over to the Oregon State University Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

Five years of concerted opposition by Steamboaters to the BLM North Umpqua Management Plan ended in 1977 as a victory for the river but not without a bridge being built across it. Swiftwater Bridge, a structure that goes nowhere, was built at Rock Creek before release of the environmental statements on a project calling for a visitor information center at the bridge, eight miles of two-lane paved road, picnic grounds, two new campgrounds, and access to logging on the south side of the river along fly-only water. Interior Secretary Andrus killed the "Bob Butte" project with congratulations for "years of hard work in opposition to the project" and cited "poor planning, faulty experimental and will have to withstand the test of time and comparison with known-stock-length frequency samples.
The hydro project was touted as a model for the nation, a bonanza for additional Portland Power & Light electricity, favored by the governor and countless other supporters. The $2.5 million project called for reconstruction of the fish ladder and viewing window, and installing two 2.5 kilowatt turbines at the 100-year-old wooden dam. Steamboaters promptly initiated legal action through attorney Bill Kloos of Eugene to try to stop construction. Umpqua Fishermen's Association, a non-fly fishing group, joined the protest. Development proceeded rapidly. Governor Aiyeh dedicated the project. It was killing fish. Fingerlings migrating downstream battered against the generators' screens and adults moving upstream battered in confusion at the reconstructed ladder.

Because the two fishing groups diligently monitored the passage of fish, held innumerable meetings with ODF and the operators, pounded out legal actions and protested every fish kill, generators halted or operated at low power. A court decision finally silenced the generators. Litigation continued four more years with no assurance the project would not resume operation.

On Sept. 19, 1989, PP&L announced that Winchester Hydropower operation had been terminated; agreement had been reached to compensate the Water District and that the turbines would be removed. The perseverance and expertise of attorney Kloos is hailed by both fishing groups.

Steamboaters have had an average share of wins and losses on regulating proposals to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission. The N.U. fly water is constantly under attack to eliminate the designation, move the deadline further up the river, and allow any kind of gear during winter months.

In the fall of 1989 Steamboaters proposed a no-kill (catch and release) regulation for wild summer steelhead in the 33-mile fly fishing section of the N.U. A steady decline in fish counts prompted the action to protect the genetic integrity of the wild fish run. The Commission approved the regulation despite strong opposition by petition, vocal presence, and request for a special rehearing (denied). The regulation will be reviewed in two years. The action may boost statewide support for catch and release for all wild steelhead.

President Joe Ferguson of Springfield presents an awesome program ahead: Continuing issue with the Forest Service for protection of spawning and rearing habitats; critical watersheds of two major spawning tributaries are scheduled for extremely heavy timber harvest and road building; final draft of the UNP plan which is rumored to call for increased timber harvest and aggressive harvesting in the remaining roadless areas; the BLM Management Plan; proposed widening of the N.U. highway; removal of turbines from Winchester Dam and reconstructing the fish ladder; terms of relicensing of PP&L for operation of the generating facilities at Soda Springs Dam, eastern dead-line of fly only waters.

As earlier Steamboaters recede, their sons, daughters, and new devotees continue the traditions and meet the challenges. Great are the bonds: fly fishing, steelhead, and the North Umpqua, royalty of rivers.

SEACOPS

Pete Soverel sits on the board of directors of SEACOPS and is active in its efforts to stop the deadly North Pacific drift net fishery, which he discusses in this article prepared originally for (and reprinted here with permission of) the spring 1990 issue of The Flyfisher. Pete also is the new (May 1990) chairman of the FFF's Northwest Council Steelhead Committee, sponsor of The Osprey.

To paraphrase an old anti-war ballad, "Where have all the steelhead gone -- gone to France every one; when will they ever learn. . ."
SEACOPS
(Continued from page 11.)

"squid" fleets. These countries send 1,000-
1,400 ships into the North Pacific supposedly
to fish squid using extremely long--30 to 40
mile--untended drifting gill nets. In 1987,
these fleets illegally intercepted about 35,000
metric tons of steelhead and salmon and
head catch of 376,000 based upon a 35,000
metric ton catch (1987 figures). We also
know from previous research that the ocean
population of steelhead--the number of
steelhead at sea at any one time--is about 2.2
million fish. Thus the current drift net
fishery harvests or kills 17 - 25 % of all
steelhead at sea each year. No fishery can
withstand this kind of harvest of immature
fish. As alarming as these numbers are,
examination of illegal catches by National
Marine Fisheries experts have found a higher
than expected interception rate on steelhead
ranging from 8.5% steelhead to an astounding
25% steelhead. Albeit the same sizes in
question are small, but even a modestly high
interception rate on steelhead would have

THE DRIFT NET FISHERY
HARVESTS 17 - 25% OF ALL
STEELHEAD AT SEA EACH
YEAR

while we do not have figures for 1989, we do
know that the fleets have continued to ex-
and; so it is reasonable to conclude that
the 1989 catch figures exceed those from
1987--perhaps 40 - 50,000 metric tons. Most
of the salmonoids are small, immature fish (2
-4 pounds). Thus, a 50,000 metric ton catch
represents a staggering total of about 27
million steelhead and salmon with an average
weight of four pounds. Of course, in addi-
tion to illegal interception of our anadrom-
ous fish, these invisible nets catch everything
in their path--non-target species of fish,
marine mammals, sea birds, all of which are
simply discarded over the side as unwanted.

As devastating as the impact on salmon is,
the affect on steelhead populations is even
more alarming. Steelhead are the most far
ranging of the salmonoids. North American

A 50,000 METRIC TON INCI-
DENTAL CATCH FROM THE
SQUID FISHERY MEANS A
CATCH OF AT LEAST
270,000 STEELHEAD ANNU-
ALLY

steelhead are routinely captured in Japanese
shore based fisheries. Based upon long
standing research, steelhead occur at about
one percent of ocean salmon populations. A
50,000 metric ton incidental salmonoid catch
from the squid fishery means a catch of at
least 270,000 steelhead annually. Addition-
ally, we know that for every fish landed in drift
nets one is killed but falls out of the net with
a resulting annual kill of our steelhead of as
many as 540,000 based upon a 50,000 metric
ton salmonoid catch and a minimum steel-

Seacops supports a worldwide ban on high
sea drift netting. In this context, the House
of Representatives sub-committee on Fish-
eries and Wildlife recently passed amendments
to the Magnuson Act which would require the
Secretary of State to seek a worldwide
ban on high seas drift net fishing and to

THE HIGH SEAS DRIFT NET
FISHERY POSES A CLEAR,
PRESENT AND IMMEDIATE
THREAT TO STEELHEAD

report back to the Congress within 18
months on progress of those negotiations,
including a list of those nations which have
refused to enter into discussions with the
U.S. for that purpose. Unfortunately, our
own Department of State has been reluctant
to press for such a worldwide ban without
additional scientific evidence supporting the
destructive nature of the fishery. Thus, at
the UN, the U.S. would not support even a
worldwide moratorium, deciding instead that
the U.S. could only support a moratorium in
the South Pacific, where the target species is
tuna--a commercially important fish to Am-
erican fishermen to be sure, but not a species
which originates in our own country.

We believe this type of amendment is
crucial to our goal of eliminating high seas
drift net fishing. I urge you to contact the
House Merchant Marine Committee (Repre-
sentative Walter B. Jones Chairman, 241
Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515) and
your own representative on this vital matter.
Of course, once the amendment has passed
the House, it will have to be passed in the
Senate so you might also contact your sena-
tors. I believe the high seas drift net fishery
poses a clear, present and immediate threat
to steelhead as well as other North American
salmonoids. We need to end this wasteful
and environmentally unsound fishery imme-
diately before more nations join in the hunt
for the last of our steelhead in the North
Pacific.

Seacops has led the public education effort
on the drift net issue. We U.S. fishermen
have a long way to go to secure a worldwide
ban on this type of fishing. We can use your
help and financial support through member-
ship and direct donations. To join, simply
contact Seacops, 700 Water St. Upper,
Ketchikan, AK 99901.
Terry Lyons is president of the FFF's Great Lakes Council, an avid steelhead flyfisher, and a student of the species in the Great Lakes Region. A recent poll of FFF Great Lakes Council members reveals that steelhead fishing is second only to trout fishing as the region's favorite fly fishing activity. In this article, Terry, with help from fisheries biologist Dr. Paul Seelbach of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, provides an account of the fishery.

Steelhead were introduced into the Great Lakes in the early 1890s from the McCloud River in northern California. The state of Michigan stopped egg importation within the following two decades and today eggs are collected from fish captured at a blocking weir on the Little Manistee River. These eggs continue to be used in many of the Great Lakes states to provide fish for streams that are unable to sustain natural production. Fisheries biologists now feel that there is a separate strain of Great Lakes steelhead that has evolved out of these early plants. In Lake Michigan the fish average about eight pounds and seldom exceed 30 inches in length; a really large fish might weigh 16 pounds.

In the past few years West Coast eggs again have been imported to establish summer run fish, in order to give steelhead fishers a longer season. In Michigan, this program has been relatively slow taking off but we are now seeing some of these fish coming back to spawn in the spring. In the St. Joseph River there are good runs of these summer fish, coming from plants made by both Michigan and Indiana. The greatest success, though, is on the big lakes where the boat fishermen account for most of the captured fish. Elsewhere in Michigan, relatively few are caught by stream fishermen and most of those are caught during the fall run, which starts in late September or early October. Michigan fishers still look forward to this summer fishery but it has yet to happen.

Steelhead populations in the Great Lakes presently are in very good shape. Several significant factors apply, the most important of which are the five rivers in northern Michigan that are perfect natural hatcheries for young steelhead. The Platte, Besse, Manistee, Little Manistee, and Pere Marquette all have similar characteristics and they all support large yearly runs. The Little Manistee, for example, has counted up to 20,000 fish. These rivers all lie in sandy terrain that allows rain and runoff to percolate into the soil, entering the streams at a moderate rate. This also keeps temperatures cooler and stream flows more steady throughout the year. Ideal temperatures and relatively steady stream flows are an advantage to spawning fish and aid in the survival of young fish and smolts on their journey to Lake Michigan.

The fact that Lake Michigan has relatively few large predators is another advantage for Great Lakes steelhead. Although predation by the sea lamprey caused the steelhead population to plummet in the 1950s, this parasite has been brought under control and steelhead populations have rebounded. Nowadays, 20 to 40 percent of a year class of fish return annually to the Little Manistee weir.

Even though Great Lakes steelhead have a promising outlook, the fishery is not without problems. One of these is targeting the fish by charterboat captains. Salmon fishing on Lake Michigan has been in a serious decline for the past few years and the charterboat industry has found a solution by targeting steelhead in Lake Michigan's "scum line." By cruising out ten to fifteen miles from shore these boats easily can fill their limits in short order by catching steelhead which feed close to the surface. 1989 was the first year of mandatory catch reporting and showed just under 10,000 fish taken in this manner. The reporting does not include private boats and it does rely on the honesty of the charterboat captains. Other problems for steelhead include the continuing need to control the sea lamprey, and the introduction of exotic species into the Great Lakes.

Steelhead fishing in Michigan usually starts in late September, when a few fish are taken from among the first arrivals who come early, in preparation for spring spawning. These fish feed actively on nymphs and the eggs of spawning salmon. But significant numbers usually don't appear until the middle of October. Depending on weather and other variables the peak of this fall run usually hits about the middle of November. Then there are fishable numbers throughout the winter for those who are able to withstand the weather.

A second spring run starts sometime between the first of March and the first week in April, again depending on weather and water conditions. A warm, wet spring will bring the run in early and a cold dry one will postpone it. The first week of April will always provide some good fishing regardless of when the run has begun. There are always a few fish around well into May, even into the Memorial Day weekend.

Great Lakes fishers are fortunate to have many streams that are managed for steelhead. The best in Michigan are the five previously noted. But there are many more that are planted with smolts to produce runs where natural reproduction is inadequate to sustain the runs. The Rouge River (a tributary of the Grand) and the St. Joseph River are examples. There are also a few streams which support good runs of steelhead on the Lake Huron Side of the state, such as the AuSable, Augers, and Ocequoc. And several rivers in the upper peninsula, running into both Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, have steelhead.

When fly anglers first attempted to fish for steelhead in Michigan, most tried to adapt western techniques to our relatively small midwestern streams. While they had some success they were confronted with the problem of presenting the fly in a manner that would take fish lying directly on the bottom and unwilling to move to take a fly. The technique that has been accepted by most midwestern fly fishers involves the use of long leaders with shot applied to a dropper two or three feet above the fly. This method allows the fisher to work his flies through the small pockets and deep cuts in which the fish like to hold. Most water can be worked in this way with only one or two shot.

(Continued on page 14.)
GREAT LAKES STEELHEAD  
(Continued from page 13.)

While not traditional flycasting, once mastered the technique is a viable alternative.

One of the questions always posed by Pacific Coast steelheaders is whether midwestern steelheaders really fish to spawning fish. The answer is yes but the situation is not as important in the midwest as it is on the Pacific Coast. For one thing, most of our quality steelhead streams are at or near their carrying capacity. It is therefore not critical that every fish has the opportunity to spawn as it is for some threatened Pacific streams. Midwest biologists tell us that steelhead have evolved so that if five to ten percent of a year class can spawn successfully, the run will be sustained. In Michigan the steelhead escapements are many times more than that. Secondly, the streams in Michigan are relatively short. When the steelhead enter them to spawn, if the water is warm enough, the fish come in, are on the redds, and are gone in a very short time. While some fishing to spawners does occur, most fishers prefer to fish behind spawning fish, for those fish feeding on drifting eggs and nymphs.

THE FLYFISHER'S SHOULDER  
Nate Smith

Nathan J. Smith, M.D., herewith contributes a second article from his wealth of knowledge and experience as Emeritus Professor of Pediatrics and Sport Medicine at the University of Washington. This widely fished steelhead angler's first article, in Issue 8 of The Osprey, dealt with elbow problems.

Sooner or later, in conversations among old steelheaders, comes up the subject of someone's painful shoulder. Putting away the rod because of shoulder pain is a flyfishing tragedy. Some familiarity with the shoulder joint and its function will help to avoid, or at least to manage, common shoulder problems without those troublesome visits to a physician.

The Shoulder Joint

The shoulder joint functions as it does because of some rather complicated interrelationships of muscles, tendons, and bones that are the functional units of this joint. No other joint can do so much, with so much power, and no other joint exists quite so close to some painful disaster. The shoulder joint is the most flexible joint in the body. It can be rotated in a full circle. With its flexibility and power it can pitch a fast ball, deliver a cannonball serve, or even cast out an entire No. 9 flyline. This power and mobility is not only manifest in sporting performances, it is required in almost everything we do: listen to a friend with a painful shoulder lament about driving his car, combing his hair, tying his shoes, or opening a door.

But the shoulder is not only the most flexible and powerful joint, it is also the body's least stable. Therein lies a tradeoff. This limited stability is maintained by the body's constant monitoring of the complicated interrelationships of the muscles and tendons that maintain the joint in its optimal functioning position. In this regard the shoulder is unique. In the knee, for example, an elaborate network of seven ligaments provides stability. The hip joint is housed in the deep cup of a socket, requiring neither ligaments or muscles to keep it in place. The hip may be compared to cupping one's hand and fingers around a medium size orange. Although the shoulder is also a ball-and-socket joint, it is better compared to the orange sitting on the palm of an outstretched hand. No other joint compares in flexibility to the shoulder with its shallow, flat socket.

Fortunately for flyfishers, the common injuries (falls and blows) that result in shoulder dislocations and bony fractures are not usually attributed to the sport. Instead, shoulder problems among the steelheading crowd involve the debilitating and chronically-recurring pain made worse by casting. The activity-induced pain results from doing too much too soon and too hard and too fast. The shoulder interprets the level of activity as being excessive and rebels with a painful message. So this, like the elbow, is another of the so-called "overuse" syndromes that bedevil the moving body parts of many weekend warriors and outdoorsmen. Once aware, however, one can do some practical things to relieve or head off a painful shoulder before it threatens to limit time on the river.

Recognizing a Problem Shoulder

A fisherman obviously has a problem if he finds himself limiting his casting because of shoulder pain. Prudence should cause concern before the pain forces one off the river and usually it is possible to detect a debilitating, painful injury before the pain reaches that level. These two maneuvers will tell a fisherman if a shoulder problem is developing.

Standing in front of a mirror with his shirt off:

A. He raises his arm away from his body and observes the thick triangular muscle that lies on top of the shoulder (deltoid). He can see and feel a forward component of that muscle that rises up as a little bump in front of the shoulder. Compare the right and left sides. If there is a detectable difference between the two, trouble probably is on the way.

B. He raises both arms to the side. If, while raising the arms he hunches either shoulder up toward his ear or rolls the shoulder forward toward his chest, or possibly does a bit of both, he is using the shoulder abnormally to try to compensate for an existing problem.

So if flycasting and playing 15-pound steelhead are to continue as part of his future, the fisherman must recognize these three indicators of the need to take action: pain with repeated use, differences in appearance of shoulder muscles when comparing one side with the other, and abnormal shoulder function.

How to Get Out and Stay Out of Trouble

When pain exists, getting rid of it is the first essential, before trying to re-tune all those muscles and tendons. This probably means laying off active use for a few days, plus taking aspirin or some other anti-inflammatory drug. As the pain decreases, and with rest it almost certainly will, one must resist the temptation to cheat "just a little" with a couple of hours on the river. Rehabilitation, through dedication to some simple rehab exercises, eventually will result in painfree shoulder function through a full range of motion. This is the goal.

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STEELEHEADER'S SHOULDER
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Rehabilitation exercises are equally important to the fisher who has not yet developed debilitating pain. One should use the aforementioned self-examinations; then the rehabilitation exercises can pay big dividends, even in improving casting performance.

These four exercises were developed by Robert Kerlan, M.D., orthopedic surgeon, known as 'the baseball players' doctor."

1. Arm Rotation. Bend forward at the waist and let the arm on the bad shoulder hang in front. Start to swing the arm in a clockwise direction, not too fast. Put just enough oomph into it to have the arm continue to swing lazily. Don't let anything hurt!

2. Sawing. Stand up straight and pretend you are on the end of a double-handled saw. Start sawing back and forth, in and out, way out and way back. This stretches and strengthens some of those muscles. Stop and reduce the effort if anything hurts.

3. Flapping an injured wing. Let the arms fall straight down to your sides while standing erect. Raise and lower the arms to right angles with the body (abduction swings) like flapping wings. Take it easy. You may have to start by raising your arms only a foot or so from your side. Don't let it hurt!

4. Shoulder shrugs. Simply shrug your shoulders. You may want to roll the shoulders up and forward or back and down with a circular motion.

If the shoulder is pretty sore, a good starting schedule is to do the four exercises just 10 times each, every morning and evening, twice a day. Do less if there is pain. The goal is to do 50 of each of the exercises three times a day for a week to 10 days. This is a darned good workout and will eliminate almost all the complaints I hear about that will respond to exercise.

These exercises might also be a good conditioner for a couple of weeks prior to taking that steelhead trip of a lifetime, particularly for the fisher who has had pain in the past. If they don't work, then see two doctors: the sports medicine specialist and the flycasting doctor. One will make a specific diagnosis for your shoulder problem, the other will upgrade your casting.

LETTERS

The Osprey welcomes and solicits letters but we ask that they be limited to 300 words or less.

A GUIDE RESPOND

Carp, carp, carp! From front page editorial to mid-stream controversy the January issue of The Osprey brays with complaint.

As a river guide, I'll tolerate any angler's venting steam. I refuse, however, to be sacrificed by self-appointed priests who would have my profession be the scapegoat for all that is wrong on the river. The Osprey miscasts blame for reason and allows prejudice to masquerade as criticism. The fault is doubly so: in demeaning my profession the journal humbles anyone who might hire a guide or commission an outfitter.

The British Columbia Ministry of Environment has wisely foreseen that to preserve a fishery it must restrict who fishes, where, when, and how. The Ministry's proposed Angling Guide Policy reserves preference: first, for the angling residents of the province; second, for the professionals who derive a living from sport; and last for non-resident, non-guided anglers like Osprey editor Stan Young.

Sucking hind teat, Young and others might be expected to whine. He cannot, however, be excused for editorially charging that a cabal of guides are engineering policy for the province. "In our view," writes Young, "a relatively small number of guides are seeking to control sport along the best of British Columbia's steelhead rivers." Sour grapes!

Too few fish to divide between too many anglers sums up the problem. River gridlock is the result. Osprey commentator Peter Soverel skirts the issue to instead, like his editor, fume in accusatory exasperation. "Boat races, arguments concerning who is where in the pecking order on particular runs, angry words, and baleful glares..." are among the streamside grievances that Soverel titles, "The Trouble With Guides."

Enough of such balderdash! We need to fret less and fish more.

Be it on the distant reach of a brawling steelhead river where his caution insures safe wading, be it on a perplexing bonefish flat where his vision spies sport, be it on a placid spring creek where his recollection unlocks the hatch's riddle -- your guide has much to offer. He is no more than pronounced version of yourself, his vocation being your avocation. Profit from his service in the sport you both share.

John Farrar, Senior Flyfishing Guide, Seattle, WA.

ANOTHER VIEWPOINT

The remarks (regarding) guides concern all of us. . . .

To have some peace (on the Smith River, in northern California) I arrived at daybreak to have a couple of hours of fishing before the boats came through. On my last day I was waist deep when three boats in parallel moved down the drift to the tailout where I was casting. All three stopped in front of me and eventually set anchor. There was nothing to do but leave the drift. Neither guide nor client said a word. It is hard to understand how thoughtless fishermen can be.

None of us has objection to boats fishing through a nice piece of water, but to deliberately stop and run bank fishermen out is rude and discourteous. Two of the guides in particular have had runs-in with other bank fishermen. . . .

Gordon Stangland, Placerville, CA.

AN ENCOURAGING WORD

... The quality of many articles is such that they deserve to be shared with audiences beyond those of your current readers. I suggest that after they have been published in The Osprey they should be offered to other fly fishing, general fishing, and conservation and wildlife publications. There are many people who are not steelhead fly fishermen who also would be interested in the efforts to protect the wild fish habitat. The wider publication of such articles would help to increase public awareness... Keep up the good work.

Elmer Jantz, Sterling Heights, MI.
QUICKLY...

(Continued from page 1.)

several international agreements." The North Koreans are not signatories to any of these agreements and apparently the Japanese fishing companies sought to avoid them by fishing from these foreign-flag vessels. According to the Times, the case already has disclosed secret agreements between Japanese and North Korean fishermen, even though the two countries do not have diplomatic relations. The deal is reported to have earned tens of millions of dollars on the sale of the salmon in Japanese markets, the co-conspirators splitting the profits. The case is causing acute embarrassment in some Japanese government circles.

In May the Steelhead Committee presented to the Washington Wildlife Commission a strong plea for emergency regulations on the Tolt River, a major tributary to the Snoqualmie. Over the past two years, the Committee's Kurt Beardslee has led a team of wet-suitied snorkelers to conduct accurate counts of the steelhead population in the upper portions of the river. There has been growing concern that the summer fish are severely depleted and the snorkel counts, conducted through the summer and fall of 1989, strongly supported that fear. Combined with other data collected through the 1980s, the snorkel counts indicated a total population of perhaps only 30 summer steelhead in the entire river. After consideration of the data and recommendations by the Department of Wildlife, the Commission decided against an emergency closure of the Tolt's forks but did ask the Department for a more aggressive enforcement program during the upcoming summer season and a careful study of appropriate regulation changes to be made prior to the beginning of the winter season in November.

As is our custom, we remind readers of The Osprey of the advantages of membership in the Federation of Flyfishers. The organization can have a strong voice in matters affecting game fish management at the local level and like any such effort it needs new blood and willing volunteers. A subscription to The Flyfisher, the FFF's nationally-distributed magazine, is included with membership. Write: Federation of Flyfishers, P.O. Box 1088, West Yellowstone, MT 59758.

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