



# NEWSLETTER

Protecting the resource *and* anglers' access to it.



## CCA Connect May 2023

### Sea Lion Predation



We saw large numbers of sea lions in the Columbia River basin this year, including well upstream in lower Columbia River tributaries. It is likely that the large smelt run enticed them upriver, but our salmon and steelhead are also paying the price.

CCA helped pass the federal legislation that makes it easier to remove sea lions in the Columbia River basin, including in any tributary. So far, the states are only set up to remove sea lions below Bonneville and Willamette Falls. This has helped in those locations, but we need to be able to remove sea lions in the Cowlitz and other tributaries - particularly as this year's swarm of sea lions returns next year. We also need to secure streamlined authorities to address predation elsewhere in Washington, especially in Puget Sound.

### Columbia River Gillnets



WDFW [just released their calculation](#) of harvest impacts associated with gillnets licenses that were purchased in the buyback. It is critical that WDFW honor the intent of the buyback and its promises by reserving these impacts for conservation and reducing the allocation of the gillnet fleet. Stay tuned for more updates on this.

This year the gillnet fleet has once again harvested over 12,000 spring Chinook in the off-channel areas. This compares to about 3,500 spring Chinook caught by anglers in

## 2023 DATES

### July 14 & 15

Pete Flohr Memorial Wenatchee Salmon Derby

### July - August

Baker Lake Sockeye Derby

### September 15

Lower Columbia Banquet (Longview)

### September 21

Capital City Banquet (Lacey)

### October 5

North Sound Banquet (Mt Vernon)

### October TBD

King of the Reach Derby

## OUR SPONSORS



the Columbia and Snake Rivers through May 21. This once again shows there is no rationale for maintstem gillnets.

CHECK US OUT

## Wenatchee Salmon Derby



[www.CCAWashington.org](http://www.CCAWashington.org)



The CCA North Central Washington chapter is again hosting the highly anticipated 10th Annual Pete Flohr Memorial Wenatchee Salmon Derby. This two-day event is scheduled for July 14-15, 2023. Anglers from all walks of life, regardless of age or skill level, are encouraged to participate in this fun event. Participants can [register for the event here](#).

With its stunning location along the Columbia River, participants will have the opportunity to fish in one of the most breathtaking natural settings in North Central Washington. [Register now](#) and be a part of this amazing event.

## More Coastal Steelhead Shenanigans from WDFW



WDFW recently submitted their proposed [regulation changes](#) resulting from the annual North of Falcon process. While these changes typically only impact salmon fisheries, buried in the 170-page Washington Administrative Code fishing rules packet, are two proposed rules for the Hoh River and Quillayute River system, including the Sol Duc, Calawah, Bogachiel, and Dickey rivers that will significantly reduce steelhead fishing opportunity.

Nearly everyone in the recreational fishing community, including guides, businesses and conservations groups were completely blindsided by this proposed rule change. It seems WDFW fish program staff [forgot the outcry in December 2020](#) when they failed with their outreach efforts to both constituents and the [Fish and Wildlife Commission](#) around proposed emergency regulations for coastal steelhead fisheries.

While WDFW staff has acknowledged this “oversight,” it’s a stark reminder of WDFW’s status quo management that has resulted in less and less fishing opportunity for the public. You can read more about this WDFW debacle [here](#).

WDFW is taking [written public comments now](#) or pre-register and [plan to attend](#) a Thursday, June 8 public meeting.

### **The Real Reason Salmon Are Smaller These Days**



This letter recently ran in [The Chronicle](#):

This is in response to Darryl Wareham’s April 13 letter to the editor titled “Hatchery Practices Must Be Improved and Modernized.”

He blames current hatchery practices for the decline in size of salmon, but in reality the responsibility lies elsewhere.

Chinook salmon return from three to six years of age. The older, larger fish are exposed to years more ocean harvest by commercial trollers, so the likelihood of a fish returning to hatcheries at age six is far less than one returning at age three, resulting in smaller salmon returning to hatcheries for broodstock.

One researcher found the average size of Chinook salmon declined by about 50% between the 1920s and 1970s, while another found the average age of Chinook returning to Columbia River hatcheries declined by another six months between 1970 and 2018.

Both authors pointed to ocean commercial trollers as the cause.

There are only about 100 commercial trollers in Washington state but they harvest about 20,000 Chinook salmon, and they harvest wild fish along with hatchery fish. In 2019, the average size Chinook salmon landed by commercial trollers was only about 8 pounds. Society is spending billions of dollars to save wild Chinook salmon while commercial trollers sold them for less than \$100 each.

If we don’t restrict harvest of commercial ocean trollers, Mr. Wareham’s 10-pound salmon may soon be a trophy fish.

### **End Alaska Salmon Troll Fisheries**



*Photo credit ASMI.*

Another excellent letter that was recently published in [The Columbian](#).

Fisheries managers know that over 90 percent of the chinook caught in the Alaska troll fisheries come from the Pacific Northwest. Chinook will feed in the Gulf of Alaska for up to six years. We fish them there for 10 months of the year. Not many chinook survive for six years with that fishing pressure. Those fisheries have contributed to the destruction of the chinook populations in the Pacific Northwest, leading to younger hence smaller and fewer chinook.

NOAA Fisheries has known this for decades and continues to facilitate those unsustainable destructive fishing practices. They invest hundreds of millions of public dollars in habitat while they enable commercial fishing practices that ensure there are no fish for that improved habitat.

If we are to save chinook and orcas and fill that habitat we must terminate the Alaska troll fisheries. The fisheries managers have known this for years yet they stubbornly resist.

### **Commercial Harvest in the Ocean**



There is growing concern about the impact of commercial ocean fisheries on our northwest salmon stocks. A federal judge recently ruled against the commercial troll fishery in southeast Alaska due to its impacts on an important food source for Killer Whales. This is positive news as we look to get more of our northwest salmon back to their natal rivers and streams.

This is an issue that resonates along the entire Pacific coast as ocean salmon fisheries are closed in Oregon and California. We must do more to pressure the Pacific Salmon Commission and the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) to reduce harvest rates in non-selective commercial fisheries.

Unfortunately, these entities have been long dominated by commercial interests. This was evident in how PFMC allocated available lower Columbia River fall Chinook impacts for this year's fisheries. The so-called Tule impacts really drive fishing opportunity. Despite having extra Tule

impacts to work with, [PFMC cut the pre-season allocation for Columbia River freshwater fisheries by 4%](#) while increasing the allocation for the commercial troll fishery by nearly 32%. This just isn't right and needs to change - but it will only happen if we all get involved.

Your CCA Membership ID # is %%IMIS||NAME||ID%%

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