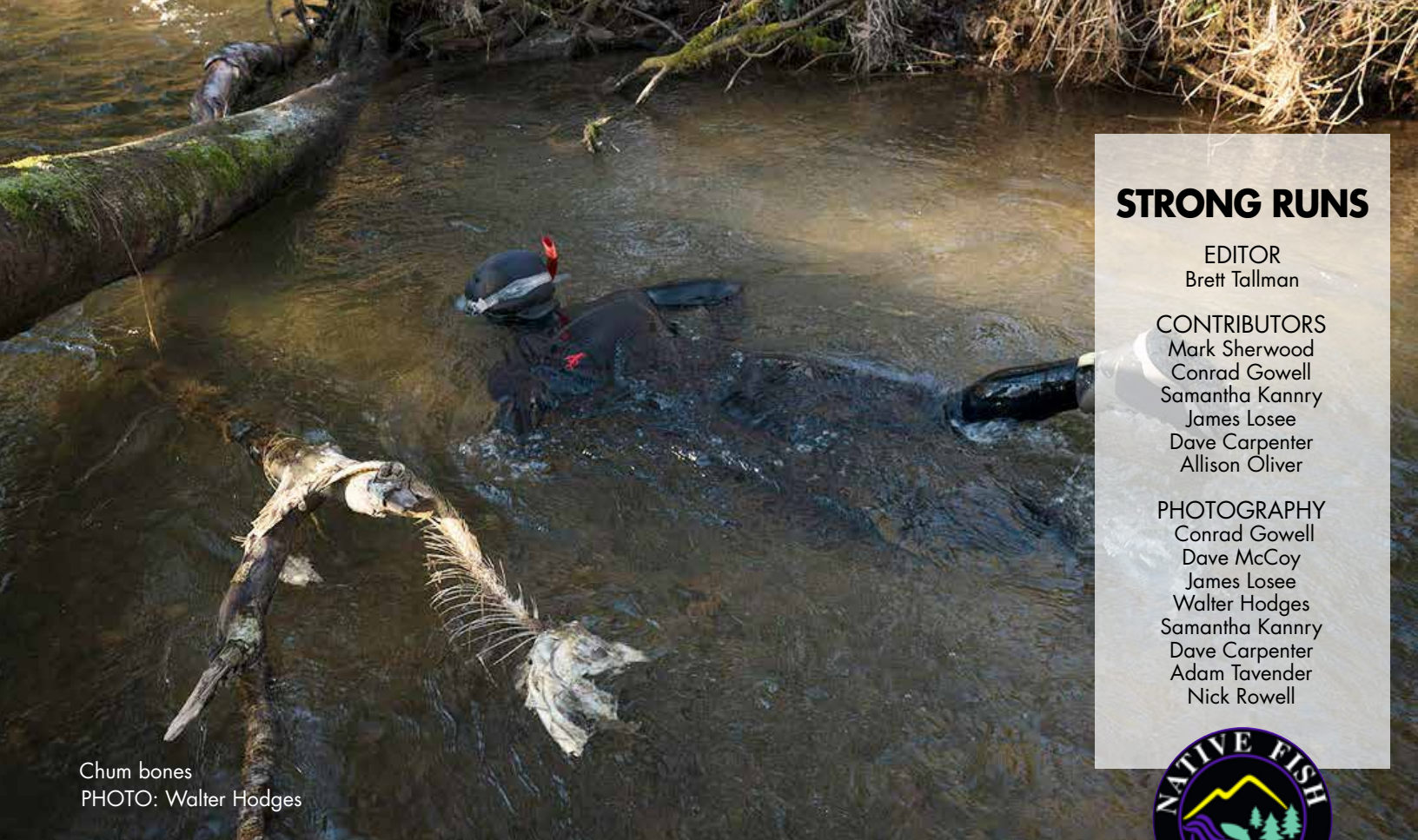


ISSUE 11.2

STRONG RUNS

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Chum bones
PHOTO: Walter Hodges

STRONG RUNS

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Native Fish Society is a tax-exempt, non-profit charitable organization.

"Few people know what fish think about injustice, or anything else." ~ Ursula K. Le Guin

(COVER) Coastal Cutthroat
PHOTO: James Losee



THE RIGHT STUFF TO ENDURE

*“Americans learn only from catastrophe,
not from experience.”*

Theodore Roosevelt

WORDS BY
Mark Sherwood,
Executive Director

(ABOVE)
The next
generation

PHOTO:
Conrad Gowell

A salmon run is like a vintage of wine. The year's return tells a story about the past. Through the winter and into the spring, there has been plenty of rain and snow this year. This bodes well for future runs. With any luck, the young fish that emerged this spring will tell the story of a good year. Their parents, however - the adult salmon and steelhead that returned in 2017 - are telling a different story entirely.

Over that last few years, an epic drought in the Pacific Northwest left young salmon and steelhead high, dry, and hot. They struggled downstream from trickling headwaters to find spiking temperatures in mainstem rivers. In July 2015, the Willamette River reached a staggering 81 degrees Fahrenheit - a lethal temperature for most fish native to the Pacific Northwest. Those that survived the abysmal river conditions found no relief when they reached the sea. Since 2013, a mass of warm water in the Pacific called "The Blob" reduced the upwelling of cold, nutrient-rich water that sustains the ocean's food web.

The salmon and steelhead of 2017 have been hit twice, with a freshwater/saltwater, one-two punch. The result

is a vintage of catastrophically low salmon and steelhead returns. Extinction is once again part of the conversation.

How bad is it? Despite enough habitat in Idaho for 33,000 wild B-run steelhead only 1,100 are expected to return to the Clearwater and Snake rivers this year. 822 wild winter steelhead returned to Oregon's Willamette River, the lowest count since they were protected under the Endangered Species Act. On the Klamath River, fall Chinook are expected to return in the lowest numbers ever recorded. Even British Columbia's Skeena River, the anchor of what author Dylan Tomine calls "the great northern time machine," is not immune. Predicted returns of sockeye salmon were so low that recreational fisheries in the entire Skeena watershed closed for a month in the middle of the fishing season. You get the idea.

This has happened before. Salmon and steelhead returns declined through the late 1980s, finally hitting historic lows in the early 90s. Backed into a corner, tribal communities, conservation organizations, and individuals worked together to protect wild salmon and steelhead under the Endangered Species Act. Through progressive thinking

THE RIGHT STUFF TO ENDURE



(ABOVE)
A juvenile steelhead spends one to three years in freshwater before swimming to the Pacific.

PHOTO:
Conrad Gowell

(BELOW)
Keep 'em wet!

PHOTO:
Nick Rowell


and political courage, the communities of the Northwest coaxed dozens of salmon and steelhead populations back from the brink of extinction.

Faced again with catastrophe, we can build on the lessons we learned in the 80s and 90s. We know what needs to be done. We can set aside watersheds for wild fish, protect and restore habitat, increase spill at dams or remove them entirely. Long debated, deadbeat dams like the four on the lower Snake River must go. Outdated hatchery practices in the Pacific Northwest have to change. Sport and commercial fisheries must reduce their impact on sensitive species. Streams on forestlands, both public and private, need protection. The recovery of wild fish must become our overriding priority. We're in this together.

It's time to act boldly. This year, with the help of our River Stewards, the state of Oregon curbed suction dredge mining on 23,000 miles of salmon, steelhead and lamprey habitat, permanently protecting these special places from instream

mining. Hundreds of Native Fish Society members and supporters responded to our action alert and demanded increased protections for wild B-run steelhead in the Columbia River.

These are just the first in a series of steps that we will need to take if we want to save wild, native fish. In this issue you'll find stories about long-term solutions, like an ancient fishing method that could save wild fish and commercial fishermen on the Columbia River, the expansion of the River Steward Program into British Columbia, and grassroots efforts to save wild fish in California, Oregon, and Washington.

We can give wild salmon and steelhead a fighting chance. The ocean is cooling and rivers are rising; a chance is all they need. Each wild fish that returns in vintage 2017 embodies two million years of adaptation and survival. Can that be replicated? Unequivocally: no. Wild, native fish have the right stuff to endure. 





PROTECTING A NATIVE FISH PARADISE

NFS crosses the border, adds Regional Coordinator in British Columbia

WORDS BY
Allison Oliver,
NFS Regional
Coordinator, British
Columbia

(ABOVE)
The stuff of
legends: The
Babine River in
northern British
Columbia.

PHOTO:
Adam Tavender

HOW CAN YOU
HELP?
To learn how
you can help
us protect the
rivers of British
Columbia,
check out
nativefishsociety.
org/get-involved.

I am excited to join the Native Fish Society as the Regional Coordinator for British Columbia. I live on the Kispiox River, a large tributary to the Skeena River in northern British Columbia.

The Skeena watershed supports some of the most diverse and abundant fish populations in the Pacific Northwest. Free-flowing waters, as well as relatively intact and inaccessible spawning and rearing habitat contribute to the health of our salmon and steelhead runs. In addition, there are no recorded viable populations of invasive fish species, leaving native fish to fully utilize the habitat of the Skeena and Nass watersheds as they have for millennia. As a result, the fish in these watersheds still exhibit diverse and unique life histories. Steelhead, for example, which in some regions exhibit an adult life span of three to five years, may live up to 14 years in the Skeena River. Similarly impressive are the life histories of Skeena Chinook salmon, which can live up to seven years and can weigh as much as 100 pounds.


Anglers know it as a steelhead paradise, but these watersheds and fish are constantly threatened by overfishing, resource extraction, development, and, looming over it all, climate change. New threats are regularly knocking at the door. Like most places

throughout the region, the collective effects have been eroding our native fish populations.

As an advocate for my watershed, I wear multiple hats. I am an aquatic ecologist and typically view the world through a scientific lens. After earning a Master's and a Ph.D. in Ecology at the University of California, Davis, I spent the last decade studying aquatic ecology and biogeochemistry. In particular, I was interested in the effects of watershed processes and disturbances on water quality and aquatic organisms.



I am also an outdoor and river enthusiast. As an angler and a boater, I spend my free time in the watershed exploring all of its magic. In the process, I have seen that, from the substrate of the river bed to snowy meadows high above in the alpine, these systems are wild, dynamic, and fragile.

I see great potential for collaboration between individuals, communities, First Nations, and conservation groups to build a cohesive force for tackling issues that threaten British Columbia's native fish. People here are passionate about their lakes, streams and the fish that inhabit them. The opportunity for local people to advocate for their homewaters is an important step toward resisting threats to this region and its fish. I look forward to stepping into my new role and encouraging others to join in advocating for the native fish of the Skeena and Nass River watersheds. 



CAMPAIGN KICKOFF

MAKING CERTAIN IT GOES ON

REVERSING THE TREND TOWARD EXTINCTION
ON THE NORTH SANTIAM

BY DAVE CARPENTER

When the Willamette Valley's deciduous trees begin to show color each fall, my mind turns to wild winter steelhead. I live at the convergence of the North Santiam and Little North Santiam rivers and, after guiding through spring and summer, I change gears. This is my season to fish. Winter steelhead show up in my home river by mid-November and the run continues through April, when they are pairing up to spawn just out my backdoor.

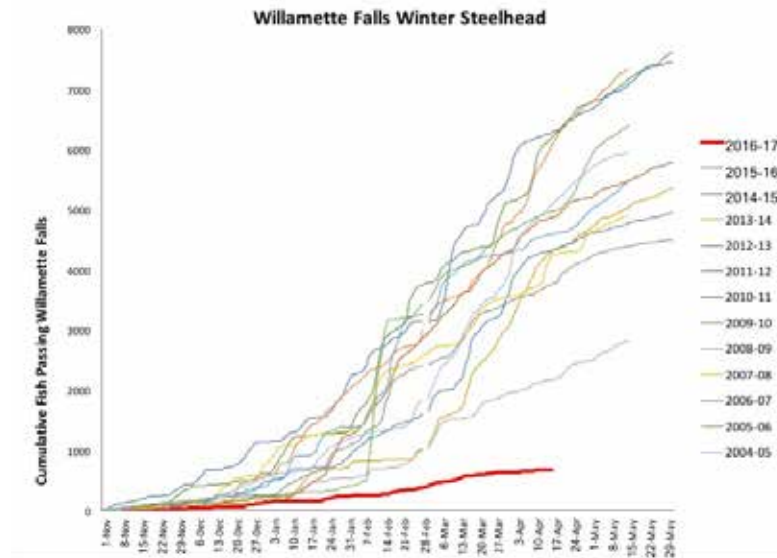
By New Year's Day 2017, a month and a half into my season, just 132 winter steelhead had crossed Willamette Falls near Oregon City. Of the 132, two had made it upstream of Upper and Lower Bennett dams on the North Santiam. By the end of January, the count at Willamette Falls stood at 241 fish. Four had made it over the dams. Some hoped it was a matter of timing. The fish, some said, might be late arriving. But February came and went and the run hadn't shown up.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife chose to leave the fishery open, but I canceled my guided trips anyway and refunded my clients' money. I locked out my booking calendar and turned down potential clients who called as the season went on.

With no fishing to do, I began contacting folks in positions of authority and influence. I wanted more information. More importantly, I wanted to advocate for the protection of the few fish that made it into the headwaters to spawn. It was explained to me that high ocean temperatures were

to blame for catastrophic returns. But I was disappointed to learn that managers wanted to wait and see before changing the regulations or closing the fishery. With abnormally high flows, they claimed, there weren't many people fishing anyway.

At the end of May, 822 winter steelhead had crossed Willamette Falls and 156 had crossed Upper and Lower Bennett dams. Counting stopped with numbers 10 percent of normal.



From my deck, I can see two redds. The winter steelhead that have made it this far are doing their dance. We have more water this year than any I can remember. This bodes well for the newest cycle of winter steelhead, but 156 adult fish can't do the work of 1,500.

The North Santiam has an abundance of quality spawning and rearing habitat, but, for decades, fishery managers have prioritized hatchery broodstock goals. These practices, coupled with increasing environmental stress, are driving Willamette spring Chinook and winter steelhead toward extinction.

Making wild fish the top priority in their natal watersheds is fundamental to science-based fisheries management anywhere. On the Willamette River and its tributaries, it's time to adopt an escapement-based management plan. By putting the needs of wild fish above hatchery production it's still possible to invert the graphs that point to extinction. 🐟



Juvenile Chinook at ODFW's Marion Forks fish hatchery on the North Santiam

FOOTSTEPS & PADDLE STROKES

IMAGINING A FUTURE FOR VAN DUZEN RIVER SUMMER STEELHEAD

WORDS BY

Samantha Kannry,
Redwood Coast District
Coordinator

(CENTER)

The view from the top:
Looking down on a pod
of wild Van Duzen River
steelhead.

PHOTO:

Samantha Kannry

(OPPOSITE)

Kannry spies on
summer steelhead from
a riverside boulder.

PHOTO:

Samantha Kannry

MORE:

In June, NFS became a charter member of the Eel River Forum, which brings together stakeholders to protect the watershed, conserve its ecological resilience, and restore its native fish. To find out how you can help, please visit our Eel River campaign page at nativefishsociety.org.

When I moved to the Van Duzen River seven years ago, I knew very little of its fishes. I had spent many hours the previous winter studying a relief map of the Eel in my supervisor's office at the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in Fort Bragg. I was mystified by its many forks and confluences and the northernmost fork especially, which was not a fork at all but the Van Duzen River. By mid-winter I had a mental picture of the watershed. I knew which tributaries entered where, where those tributaries originated and how the river grew as it marched north toward the sea. But soon I realized I could go no further standing in an office staring at a colorful wall hanging.

That summer I took a field job in the upper Eel. Monitoring steelhead and surveying streams for CDFW, I was finally putting footsteps and paddle strokes in the river I had been imagining. Not long after my first plunge into the chert-lined, emerald pools of the Middle Fork of the Eel to count summer steelhead, I learned that the Van Duzen River was home to these rare fish as well. CDFW's records, which date back to the 1970s, show numbers ranging from 0 to 58, with an average of 29. But a young local man told us he had seen hundreds of steelhead the previous summer. He guided us on the Van Duzen over two long days, but we were unable to penetrate to the core of their holding habitat and we decided to abandon the project until we could return better prepared. We came back the following summer and have returned every summer since. Some years we see hundreds of sleek, silver fish, many of them upwards of 40 inches. They keep pulling us back.


Over seven years, our counts on the Van Duzen average 150 adult summer steelhead. These numbers pale in comparison to the thousands of fish that once returned here, but they give us something to point to. They compel us to question how the land surrounding the river is managed.

The Eel River has two extant runs of summer steelhead – in the Middle Fork and the Van Duzen. Coupled with the runs in the Mad and Mattole Rivers, these fish represent the southernmost extent of this rare life history. No one who swims with these fish in a clear river on a hot day

can deny their majesty. But they risk being extirpated from this place. They face the same threats as native fish around the world – water diversions, a century and a half of bad land use, overfishing, competition with non-native species, a warming climate and pollution from agriculture, industrial forestry and development. The most recent threat to summer steelhead on the Van Duzen is the marijuana boom in Northern California. Land prices in the area have spiked and landowners are

under pressure to subdivide the large ranches that surround the middle and upper watershed. Cold springs and creeks flow through these ranches with few diversions, feeding deep pools with the cold water these fish need to survive the summer. Subdivision would mean a dramatic rise in summertime diversions.

We are all complicit in the loss of our native fishes. I live on twenty

acres halfway up the Van Duzen River – land that was once part of a large ranch. Prior to that it was part of an unbroken landscape maintained by native people for millennia. I water my garden with a spring flowing off the north slope of a forested ridge and share bounty with my neighbors. Peaches, melons, tomatoes and the return of Van Duzen steelhead represent summer to me. It is possible for Humboldt County and the rest of Northern California to make land-management decisions that favor the long-term health of our ecosystems and communities rather than short-term profits. But it requires us to slow down. We must ask ourselves what we value and what we want to leave behind after we are gone. 







THE FIXED-GEAR FIX

Can pound nets save wild fish and commercial fisheries on the Columbia?

WORDS BY
Conrad Gowell,
River Steward
Program Director

(ABOVE)
WFC Biologist Aaron
Jorgenson pilots a
small craft near the
pound nets on the
lower Columbia River.

PHOTO:
Conrad Gowell

WANT TO LEARN
MORE?
Visit WFC's pound
net with us in
September. To
find out how, visit
nativefishsociety.org.

A bleak future for the wild salmon and steelhead of the Columbia River is also a bleak future for the tribal and commercial fishermen that work there. Wild salmon runs that historically numbered between 10 and 16 million fish are now on the brink of extinction. There is no silver bullet that guarantees their future. But part of the solution may be an ancient, fixed-gear fishing method called a pound net.

On a bright fall day last September, I joined a crew of biologists, conservationists, and ex-gillnet fishermen to fish a pound net prototype built by the Wild Fish Conservancy. In one afternoon on the lower Columbia River near Cathlamet, WA, we caught and released more than 40 fish. Our catch included coho, fall Chinook, wild B-run steelhead and endangered lower-Columbia chum. Over the course of one month, the pound net captured 2,144 fish.

The first of its kind in over 80 years, WFC's pound net is little more than soft netting strung between vertical Douglas fir pilings embedded in the river bottom. The structure funnels fish into a small area where they are netted, captured, and sorted by the crew.

Fixed-gear fishing methods like pound nets aren't a new idea. Simple, effective, and efficient, they were once favored by many Columbia River tribes. At the turn of the 20th century, Columbia River canneries incorporated their principles into the development of the fish wheel. Left unregulated, fish wheels were appallingly effective and played a leading role in the demise of salmon runs throughout the basin.

In spite of their history, pound nets may be the way forward. Properly regulated, pound nets have a brilliant advantage over other gear: they capture fish

alive. Hatchery fish can be harvested, while imperiled wild species can be separated from the catch and returned to the river unharmed. In 2016, the survival rate of fish released from WFC's pound net was 99.6 percent.

The gillnets now being used on the river indiscriminately kill hatchery and wild salmon alike. It's nearly impossible to monitor the number of wild fish lost this way. This is bad for fish and fisherman alike. Because many Columbia River salmon and steelhead are protected under the Endangered Species Act, commercial fisheries constantly risk closure during low return years and have little to no legal or practical control over it.

Counterintuitively, a closed commercial fishery is not a boon to wild fish in the Columbia River. According to biologist Jim Lichatowitch, hatchery fish comprise 95 percent of coho, up to 80 percent of spring Chinook, 50 percent of fall Chinook, and 70 percent of steelhead returning to the Columbia. When a fishery is closed, both wild and hatchery fish escape indiscriminately. The high percentages of hatchery fish, which should have been harvested downriver, are reflected on Columbia River spawning grounds, further eroding the viability of wild stocks.



(PHOTO) An ESA-listed, lower-Columbia-River chum is ready to be released.

Commercial and subsistence fisheries continue to hamper the recovery of wild, native fish. But the problem is the gear, not the people who use it. We think our friends at Wild Fish Conservancy have found part of the solution. The Native Fish Society is proud to partner with them in turning the pound net prototype into a commercially viable alternative. By adopting selective gear, working fishermen would be more effective, on the river longer and, ultimately, working with conservationists to recover the wild, native fish of the Columbia River. 🐟

A volunteer looks on as the net is raised. In 2016, WFC released all fish caught in the pound net with a survival rate of 99.6 percent.



COASTAL CUTTHROAT CURIOUS PT. 2

WORDS BY
James Losee,
Fisheries Biologist
WDFW

(CENTER)
Losee displays a
picture perfect
Puget Sound
cutthroat.

(PHOTO)
James Losee

(ABOVE)
Coastal cutthroat
trout snorkel
survey.

(PHOTO)
James Losee

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

To learn more,
volunteer, or
donate, head to
nativefishsociety.org
and visit our
coastal cutthroat
campaign page.

Counting coastal cutthroat trout is difficult business. Averaging 14 inches in length and occupying diverse habitats, they have a way of slipping through the cracks in traditional stock-assessment techniques. Furthermore, coastal cutthroat compete with numerous commercially important and threatened species on the to-do lists of biologists and fisheries managers.

As the Northwest’s anadromous fish stocks decline, the need to monitor this native trout has never been greater. The good news is, Native Fish Society, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and The Coastal Cutthroat Coalition have teamed up to conduct a two-year study that will provide fisheries managers with a tool for estimating abundance of anadromous cutthroat trout across their range.

For other species of anadromous fish, biologists, managers and volunteers produce abundance estimates by counting the number of redds present in a stream. Because coastal cutthroat spawn over six months in remote tributaries, few studies have been devoted to answering even the most basic questions.


To fill this data gap, we spent the last 12 months beach seining Puget Sound marine waters in order to capture and tag cutthroat. More than 400 cutthroat received a Passive Integrated Transponder, or PIT tag, with a unique number that corresponds to the length, weight, date

of capture, gender and condition of the fish. As tagged cutthroat move into freshwater to spawn, antennas monitored by South Puget Sound District Coordinator Jason Small detect their movements on the spawning grounds. Coupled with weekly spawning surveys, the work allows for a census of both the total number of cutthroat trout on the spawning grounds and the total number of redds built.



Despite record rainfall and high flows, the first fish-per-redd estimate for coastal cutthroat is closer than ever. The spawning window has closed and WDFW fish biologists Gabe Madel and Riley Freeman are tallying the numbers and summarizing the movements of coastal cutthroat. We still need to interpret what we’ve learned, but the raw data is fascinating. For instance, spawning peaked in late March this year, but volunteers observed redds every week from February 1 through June 1. Overall, we counted 103 redds with a sex

ratio of two males for every female.

With the first year of the study behind us and another ahead, we will continue to seek insight into the biology of coastal cutthroat trout in order to get the science caught up with other anadromous fish. With a strong partnership between NFS, WDFW and CCC, as well as momentum from early success, we expect 2018 to be the year we tell the story of the West Coast’s native cutthroat trout. 

TASTE OF A WATERSHED

A place-based recipe for sustainable smoked salmon

WORDS BY

Conrad Gowell

River Steward Program Director

Traditional skills like fishing, foraging, and preparing wild food have always connected people to the places they live. Here in the Pacific Northwest, salmon are woven into the landscape. They have nourished the region for two million years and, for the native people of the northwest, salmon are a sacrament. Though modern people probably can't break our dependence on grocery stores, we can help wild fish and reconnect people to place by finding a way to sustainably harvest wild salmon.

Because all the ingredients come from a single watershed, this recipe requires healthy riparian forests and strong salmon runs that can be sustainably harvested.

- 1 fillet bright Chinook salmon
- 1 cup big-leaf maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons fine-ground sea salt
- 3 pans of fresh red-alder chips

My recipe calls for fresh Chinook, which can be taken by late summer in the estuaries of coastal rivers. By fishing near the mouth of a river I know Chinook return to, I can limit the number of endangered species, like Oregon coastal coho, that I intercept in the process. I also use flies tied on barbless hooks, so if I do happen to catch a species I'm not targeting, I can release it quickly and unharmed.

Bleed the Chinook immediately by removing the gills and put the fish on ice for two days before filleting. Coat the fillets with finely-

ground salt that has been boiled down from seawater. Rest the fillet for 20 minutes in the open air. Then brush on syrup tapped from a big-leaf maple and give the glaze 20 minutes to form the pellicle. Cold smoke the fillets at 160 degrees Fahrenheit - I use about three pans of red alder chips. Old porcelain refrigerators can be repurposed to make a great cold smoker. Fill an external fire box with alder chips and pipe the sweet smoke to the salmon fillets inside.

The ingredients for this recipe can be found within a few miles of one another. Preparing a salmon meal can connect us to the watersheds we know and love. And enjoying it reminds us of our responsibility to ensure that future generations have the same opportunity.



(TOP)

Ready for the smoker: A Chinook salmon steak cut from a fresh fillet.

(MIDDLE)

Gathering maple syrup from a big leaf maple in the headwaters.

(BOTTOM)

Alder chips for the smoker.





A Look Inside America's Favorite Flies

WORDS
An excerpt from
America's Favorite Flies

RELEASE DATE
Nov. 15, 2017

PRICE
\$145

PROCEEDS
John Bryan and Rob Carter will generously donate all proceeds - that's right, 100 percent - from sales of *America's Favorite Flies* to a pair of conservation organizations - James River Association and Native Fish Society.

TO PURCHASE
Pre-order your copy online at americasfavoriteflies.com

John Bryan and Rob Carter's forthcoming book showcases the favorite flies of 224 notable anglers, including Joan Wulff, Lefty Kreh, and Yvon Chouinard. Naturally, they've called it America's Favorite Flies. Is there an angler out there who hasn't played this game? How else do you pass the time? Can you really know a fishing partner if you haven't? Better still, each fly is accompanied by a story. Some are technical, others are funny, more than a few are sad, but each reveals something about the angler who contributed. Put together, they make up a book that transcends fly fishing.


CONTRIBUTOR Pat English	FAVORITE FLY Girdle Bug
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Forty-five years ago on my honeymoon I fished with my wife in Idaho and Montana. We were introduced to a local while fishing the Beaver Head River near Dillon, MT. He gave us a fly that was black with grey hackle and white legs made from the elastic in a ladies girdle. It works.

I've got lots of good memories of fishing. I never was really good at fly fishing. I liked any kind of fishing. Over the years I've caught with my hands, a net, hit 'em with rocks, worms on the bottom, worms floating on a marshmallow, worms injected with air from a syringe, spinners, spoons, fly and bubble, dry flies, wet flies, Velveeta, floating cheese bait and in my dreams.

One cold November day when the deer hunt overlapped with fishing season I went with my two friends Robert (Bird) and Howard to Strawberry Reservoir ready to hunt or fish. We were just teenagers. When we got there, hunters were already on every ridge so we launched an old aluminum

boat and went out fishing. We got out about fifty yards from shore and our little motor conked out. The wind blew us out away from shore a ways further as we tried to get the motor running. We noticed, soon enough, that we had no oars and threw out the anchors. We could have drifted all night. We worked on that motor hoping for the best when we heard gunshots way up the hill. A few minutes later more gun shots closer. We figured some poor deer was running for his life. Then we saw a nice buck run down the hill and out to the edge of the reservoir. It only paused for a second and then jumped in and began swimming across the bay to another point of land.

Luckily we were right in his line. We pulled up one anchor and tied a loop in the end. We laid down in the boat until he got close. On the second try we lassooed his antler. He pulled us safely to shore. Along the way we trolled our double Renegades and caught three fish. I swear by the spirit of "Mr. Kit Fish" and an old dead black cow it's the truth. 



RIVER STEWARD OF THE YEAR 2017

STANLEY PETROWSKI SOUTH UMPQUA RIVER

At the annual Homewaters Benefit Banquet and Auction in April, Executive Director Mark Sherwood presented South Umpqua River Steward Stan Petrowski with the 2017 River Steward of the Year award.


For the last six years, Stan has been at the forefront of a campaign to change suction dredge mining regulations in Oregon. Thanks in large part to his leadership, a coalition of regional advocates convinced Oregon Governor Kate Brown to permanently protect 23,000 miles of salmon, steelhead and lamprey habitat. We are grateful for Stan's experience and his dedication to the wild coho and spring Chinook of the South Umpqua.

Stan has also been recognized by NOAA Fisheries for his commitment to integrating beaver into river restoration as an exemplary model for holistic recovery under the Oregon Coast Coho Recovery Plan. In 2014, the United States Forest Service presented Stan with the National Rise to the Future Award for his commitment to the restoration of the South Umpqua watershed.

A resident of Oregon for 30 years, Stan and his wife, Alexandra, run a small goat farm on 80 acres near the town of Tiller. 

REMEMBERING A RIVER STEWARD

MARK SCHMIDT, 1952-2017

Mark Schmidt was one of Native Fish Society's original River Stewards and the first recipient of the River Steward of the Year Award. He loved the Molalla River and knew it well. With that knowledge, he worked to protect his homewaters, stopping gravel mining in the river's floodplain and keeping untreated wastewater out of the river. He was also welcoming and generous and many of our River Stewards now point to Mark as a source of inspiration. Ultimately, he achieved what all conservationists aspire to -- he left the place he loved better than he found it. To his wife Diana, his family, and his friends we offer both our condolences and our gratitude for sharing Mark with us. Our staff and River Stewards miss him dearly. 

BOOK REVIEW: A TEMPORARY REFUGE BY LEE SPENCER

By Brett Tallman

The landscape painter John Constable once said, "We see nothing truly till we understand it." After reading Lee Spencer's *A Temporary Refuge* you might say the same about fish and fishing.

Published in May by Patagonia, *Refuge* is the distillation of Spencer's notes from more than 3400 days observing a single steelhead pool. Part natural history, part memoir, part elegy to a dog, the book is literate, lyrical, and beautifully illustrated.


With a dog (Sis and now Maggie) his only permanent company, Spencer is now in his 15th full year at the Big Bend Pool. But let's be clear: he is not some mountain hermit writing poems on leaves and sending them down the river. He is immersed in the core problems of the 21st century and he approaches them with clear thinking and magnanimity.

Refuge shines, I think, because of the junction of Spencer's talents with the needs of the place. On the first day of his first season protecting

the pool from poachers, he realized the job also "represented an unusual opportunity to take notes on whatever these wild summer steelhead did." With that in mind, consider this: Spencer is a fisherman who cares more about fish than fishing. He is also a scientist; an archeologist, trained to observe. And, finally, he is a man for whom "writing is like breathing." Could we put ourselves in better hands?



In print or on foot, it's the sort of thing I like best: shambling after someone who knows a wild place intimately. Very soon, *Refuge* will be shelved alongside Muir, Abbey, and Roderick Haig-Brown. Like the old sages, Spencer understands his subject, sees it truly, and, by writing, ushers us all a little closer to seeing for ourselves.

A Temporary Refuge: Fourteen Seasons with Wild Summer Steelhead (\$27.95, pp. 319) is available at Patagonia stores and online at www.patagonia.com. 



NATIVE FISH SOCIETY

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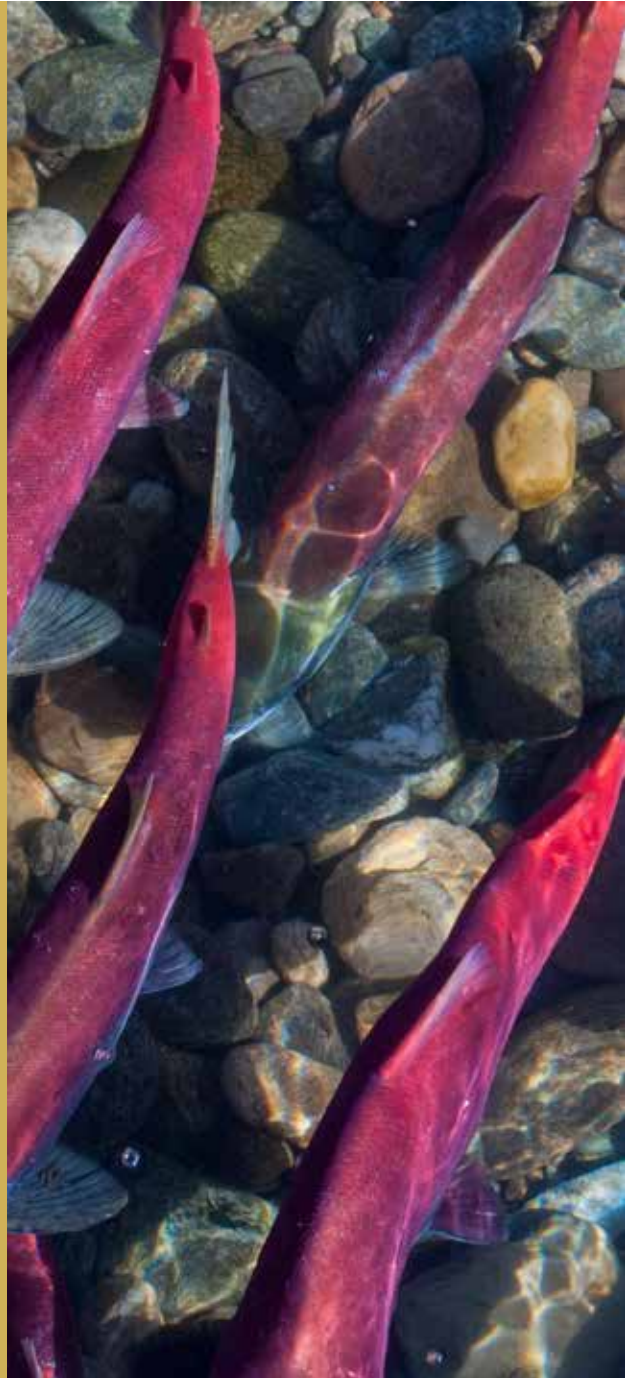
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(BELOW) Sockeye salmon. PHOTO: Conrad Gowell

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