



## *Action Alert*

### **Show Your Support for Recreational Angling and Hatchery Steelhead**

On July 29, 2014, the Washington Senate Natural Resources & Parks Committee will hold a hearing to discuss the recent settlement on Puget Sound steelhead hatchery programs agreed to by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and an anti-hatchery group.

This anti-hatchery group, the Wild Fish Conservancy, fails to recognize and/or blatantly dismiss the value in a well-managed hatchery system. The recent settlement reached between WDFW and the anti-hatchery crowd will severely limit steelhead fishing opportunities in the Puget Sound, as it will end nearly all releases of Chambers Creek hatchery steelhead, only allowing them to continue if the federal government (which has been very slow to process state hatchery plans) approves each program after conducting a scientific review. The federal court settlement also bans the planting of hatchery steelhead in the Skagit River system, one of Washington's most popular and productive steelhead streams.

The hearing will include presentations from numerous affected parties, including recreational anglers and businesses, Puget Sound tribes, WDFW, NOAA Fisheries, and the Wild Fish Conservancy. This is an excellent opportunity for Washington's recreational angling community to show its support for well-regulated hatchery programs and the immensely positive impact they have, and to voice its opposition to agency decisions that continue to impede recreational fishing in Washington.

#### ***How you can help: Attend the hearing and express your support for:***

- WDFW's use of evidence-based strategies that meet recreational angling needs while protecting native fish species.
- Reforming WDFW management to recognize and prioritize recreational fishing and its many benefits.
- Fishery management policies that are developed in an open process by those entrusted to manage natural resources for the public, not policies developed and agreed-to by attorneys in backroom deals under the threat of lawsuits.
- WDFW taking steps to solicit feedback from the recreational angling community prior to making decisions that limit access to fishery resources.
- The timely consideration of Hatchery Genetic Management Plans (HGMPs) submitted by WDFW to NOAA Fisheries.
- Washington's recreational angling industry, one that according to WDFW, generates approximately \$1.1 billion annually and supports nearly 15,000 jobs in the state.
- As state funding continues to decline, WDFW's ability to manage and conserve our fish populations is highly dependent on revenue from the sale of recreational fishing licenses.

Sincerely,

Senator Pam Roach  
Chair  
Washington Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus

Senator Kirk Pearson  
Chair  
Senate Natural Resources & Parks Committee

#### **Hearing Details:**

Date: July 29, 2014 at 10:00 am

Location: Senate Hearing Rm 1, J.A. Cherberg Building  
304 15th Ave SW  
Olympia, WA 98501