



The **STEELHEADER**

Official Newsletter of Tri-State Steelheaders Salmon Enhancement Group

YOUR SUPPORT MEANS NEW FISHING GEAR FOR KIDS

The chance to win a new fishing pole and other prizes, not to mention the chance to hook a big fish, brought 80 youngsters to the two Kid's Fishing Days this year. In the end, 10 lucky kids took home new fishing poles.

The weather was great for the Bennington Lake Kid's Fishing Day. The lake had been stocked with more than 5,000 rainbow trout by WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife. That included 200 jumbo trout, which were made possible by your donations supporting the Tri-State Steelheaders' Jumbo Trout Program. While the fishing was only so-so, the kids were having a good time. Four new fishing poles were raffled to participating youth, and lots of hot dogs and soda pop were consumed by these hungry fishers.

Jubilee Lake had heavy rain the night before the Kid's Fishing Day, but the rain held off for the July 9th event. The casting contest was very popular, with lots of

prizes handed out to all who tried their hand. A winner in each of three age groups was given a new fishing pole. The Biggest Fish also won a new pole. There were several entries in the Biggest Fish contest that were in the 11 and 12-inch range, but the winner was just over 13 inches. Oredgon Dept of Fish & Wildlife had stocked the lake prior to the event with 5,800 legal size and 500 trophy sized fish.

The Bennington Lake event was made possible with the co-sponsorship of the Corps of Engineers. Raffled fishing poles were sponsored by donations from Cascade Farm and Outdoor and Mike Bennett of Walla Walla. The Jubilee Lake event was sponsored by the US Forest Service. Steelheaders board members Scott Landwehr, Larry Zalaznik, and Dave Crabtree (who helped at both events) volunteered to conduct the events. Our thanks to all who supported Kid's Fishing Days!



One of four raffle winners at Bennington Lake (above center). A successful day at Jubilee Lake (above). The winner of the Biggest Fish contest (right).

OUTSTANDING SUPPORT FOR SALMON IN SCHOOL AT THE CRAB FEED

Nearly 500 people turned out on May 12th for the Crab Feed Fundraiser at the Walla Walla County Fairgrounds Community Building. Those in attendance were able to bid on paintings, carvings, accommodations at local and regional hotels, local wine, patio furniture, and a guided fishing trip among other live and silent auction lots. They were also delighted to a fantastic dinner by Graze Catering. Over 200 pounds of fresh picked crab was consumed.

Special raffles were held for a shotgun, a bbq-smoker and a fishing kayak.

During the live auction, a special ask for support of Salmon in School resulted in \$4,800 donated to the education program. These funds will be dedicated to purchasing new water chillers and other tank equipment for the coming school year.

Proceeds from the evening totaled \$22,334, which will go to support Kid's Fishing events, the Jumbo Trout program, and other Steelheaders' work.

During the evening, the Wib Wagoner award was given to Jon Cole. Wib was a dedicated, long-time member of the Tri-State Steelheaders. He contributed to



Steelheaders' Board President Scott Landwehr presents the Wib Wagoner Award to Bryce Cole, accepting on behalf of Jon Cole.

many Crab Feeds, and notably operated a fish counting weir on Yellowhawk Creek for about 12 years to count returning steelhead. He was recognized by WDFW as a Volunteer of the Year. The award bearing Wib's name is given to recognize a person who has demonstrated Wib's dedication to the Steelheaders organization and our mission.

Jon is a retired professor of engineering from Walla Walla University. He joined our board in 2003, serving 8 years, and acted as Vice President for his last 3 years on the board. Jon was instrumental in shaping our mission statement, and in keeping fishing as part of our mission in recognition of our organization's history. Jon also provided hundreds of volunteer hours by bringing his students to volunteer at Steelheaders projects. As Jon was not able to attend, the award was accepted by his son Bryce.

Congratulations to this year's door prize winner, Dan Aguilar. He wins two tickets to next year's Crab Feed.



The Live Auction table, featuring local art and wine (above). The bidding begins! (right).



Crab Feed by the Numbers:

Total Proceeds

\$22,334

Pounds of Crab Consumed

210

**Individual and
Business Donors**

96

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CRAB FEED DONORS!!!

Artificer Forge
 Baker Boyer Bank
 Banner Bank
 Best Pest Control
 Big Cheese Pizza
 Blind Dog Knives
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 Blue Mtn. Tire Pros
 Brian Burns and Cindy Boen
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 Superior Lube, L.L.C.

CRAB FEED FUNDRAISER AUCTION & RAFFLE RESULTS

This year's fundraiser was a great success! Thanks for coming out to support us!

Live Auction

\$5,800

Dollar Raffle

\$5,347

Silent Auction

\$2,730

Proceeds from this year's Crab Feed Fundraiser will support the Jumbo Trout Program, Kids Fishing Days and the Steelheaders' Salmon in the Classroom educational program.

Colleen Reser
 Colville Street Patisserie
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Mill Creek Brew Pub
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 Walla Walla Valley Honda
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 Widner Electric
 Wildhorse Resort and Casino
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 Wine Valley Golf Club
 Wingman Birdz & Brews

ANNOUNCING ANDREW BASSLER AS EDUCATION & OUTREACH COORDINATOR

Outgoing Education & Outreach Coordinator Amber Larsen joined our staff about a year ago, when the position was created. Over the last year, one of Amber's primary tasks was to expand the Salmon in School program. Six schools participated in the program last year, exposing hundreds of students to the salmon life cycle and raising awareness of the importance of water quality. We thank Amber for her good work and wish her well in her new pursuits.



Amber Larsen releases chinook into Mill Creek with one of her Salmon in School classes.

Filling the Education and Outreach Coordinator vacancy, Andrew Bassler joined our staff early in August. A native of the Moscow-Pullman area, he is enjoying his new home of Walla Walla and all of the opportunities it has to offer. An avid fly-fisherman,



Andrew Bassler with a cutthroat on the North Fork of the Clearwater.

he is excited to continue and expand Tri-State Steelheaders' educational outreach and partnerships with local fisherman and residents who enjoy our beautiful watershed. Andrew received his Master's Degree in Education from the University of Idaho and is just as comfortable in the classroom teaching a lesson as he is in his waders searching for cutthroat trout. In his free time, Andrew enjoys camping, fishing, sports, and engaging in good conversation.

BRIDGE TO BRIDGE PLANS NOW COMPLETE

Final plans have been completed for habitat improvements on the reach of the Walla Walla River between McDonald Road and Lowden-Gardena Road. Work on this section of the river was initiated in 2008, with all four landowners participating in an alternatives assessment for restoration plans.

The first phase of the preferred alternative was constructed in 2013, at the upper end of the project reach. One-half mile of levee was removed from WDFW property, and large wood structures were added for instream complexity.

Phases 2-4 are now spelled out in the completed plans. We're working on securing construction funding now and hope to build phase 2 in 2017 or 2018. The design report and plans are available at our website: www.tristatesteelheaders.com/habitat/



PASSAGE IMPROVING FOR MILL CREEK

Work is now wrapping up on the latest Steelheaders' project to improve fish passage in the Mill Creek flood channel. The project is located between 9th Avenue and 6th Avenue and will address about 1,000 feet of channel.

A passage assessment sponsored by the Steelheaders, completed in 2009, showed that migrating adults may encounter water moving at speeds over 10 feet per second. An adult steelhead can handle this velocity for short durations, but not for the two miles of the channel. Because of the velocity and lack of resting areas, migrating fish fatigue and are unable to pass.

The passage improvement uses "roughness panels" to reduce the velocity to a



The completed channel, showing roughness panels, new baffles, and a resting pool.

speed that an adult steelhead can swim in a sustained manner. The roughness panels have blocky projections that provide friction with the water, slowing it down. Resting pools are also part of the design, for additional benefit at all flows, but especially during high flows.

The passage assessment also showed passage problems during low flow, typical of this time of year. The existing channel has a trench down the middle.

Baffles in the trench span most of the trench width. As the water flows around each baffle, it speeds up and becomes very shallow. This presents passage problems for juvenile fish. The ideal situation is volitional passage, meaning that a fish can move upstream or downstream at will. This is important for escaping predators, and for finding cool pockets of water when high summer water temperatures become marginal for fish.

The low flow passage improvement removes all existing baffles, replacing them with new ones, spaced closer together than the existing ones. The result is that they all backwater each other, eliminating the high speed water that was the problem.

This is the fourth passage project in Mill Creek completed by the Steelheaders. These projects have been conducted in cooperation with the Walla Walla County Public Works Department. Designs for each project have been reviewed by the Corps of Engineers. Funding for this project was provided by the WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board, with matching funds provided by Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Bonneville Power Administration.



The existing concrete is cut and removed to make room for the roughness panels (above and right). Then concrete is poured in place to re-seal the channel (below).





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Thank you for your support!!!

Tri-State Steelheaders' mission is to restore sustainable populations of native salmonids by enhancing habitat, providing public education, and promoting recreational angling.