



The **STEELHEADER**

Official Newsletter of Tri-State Steelheaders Salmon Enhancement Group

TWO-HUNDRED KIDS AT KIDS FISHING DAYS!!!

What a great turnout this year!

It would not be an exaggeration to say we were stunned by the number of kids that came out for the Bennington Lake Kids' Fishing Day on June 11th. The line started forming at the registration table just before the 8 AM start, and there was still a line at 8:30. At that time we had handed out nearly all of the goodie bags, and had to make more on the fly. By the end of the day, 117 kids had registered.

The Jubilee Lake event started similarly, with a line forming for the 9 AM start. Forest Service staff handed out goodie bags as fast as they could stuff them. A total of 83 kids registered.

We encourage families to come to these events so kids can try fishing. At the Bennington Lake event we loaned poles to 17 kids. An anonymous donor provided us with 10 new loaner poles recently. Most of the kids at Jubilee had their own gear, but did borrow some of

our poles to try different gear.

With all the participation, our volunteers were busy. Ashley Landwehr, Scott Landwehr, and Dave Crabtree handed out 160 hot dogs during both events, and enough Pepsi products to wash them down.

Between the two events, 11 kids won new fishing poles through raffles, casting contests, and biggest fish contests. Lots of other prizes were given out.

"Didn't catch a fish, but I won a fishing pole!"

Dielan Legrand, 10, fishing pole raffle winner

The Bennington Lake event was made possible with the co-sponsorship of

the Corps of Engineers. Ruffled fishing poles were provided by donations at the 2016 Alternative Gift Fair from Elizabeth Guerra, Evan Heisman, Linda Herbert, and Heidi McFarley. Sponsorship and prizes for the Jubilee Lake event was provided by the US Forest Service. Thanks also to donations from Jon Patterson of Hermiston and Perry Roeder of Walla Walla. Steelheaders board member Mike Mahan volunteered to set hooks and bobbers and give advice to novice anglers. Our thanks to all who supported Kid's Fishing Days!



Nathan Soper with his biggest catch (above). Selyna Walton, 4, won a new fishing pole in the raffle (middle). Alonna Fine displays her catch (right).

CRAB FEED PROCEEDS SUPPORT ANOTHER YEAR OF YOUTH PROGRAMS

This year, 465 people turned out on May 18th to have a great time while supporting our education and youth fishing programs. They visited with friends and neighbors, enjoyed a great meal from A Chef's Creation, and some went home with auction and raffle prizes. This year's auction items included paintings, a quilt, fishing gear, accommodations at local and regional hotels, local wine, patio furniture, and a guided fishing trip. Over 4,200 raffle tickets were purchased for chances to win merchandise and gift certificates in the Dollar Raffle.



Art and wine were just a few of the items the Live Auction



Fabulous side dishes from A Chef's Creation accompanied 200 pounds of crab served.

During the evening, the Wib Wagoner Conservationist of the Year award was given to Debbie Zalaznik. Wib was a dedicated, long-time member of the Tri-State Steelheaders. He contributed to 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 and our mission.

Debbie was recognized this year for her dedication and support to the organization as a professional accountant and as a donor. For many years, Debbie provided accounting services for the Steelheaders.

"Debbie has been our go-to expert for accounting questions for as long as I can remember. Her help has been tremendous, and we can't thank her enough," said Brian Burns, our Executive Director. "Not only does she support the Steelheaders with her professional abilities, Debbie has volunteered to help serve crab at the Crab Feed for more than 15 years."

The Crab Feed couldn't have happened without our volunteers. This year's volunteers contributed over 60 hours to the event, setting up tables and chairs, serving crab, selling raffle tickets, and helping with clean up.



Alex Coak, AmeriCorps volunteer for the Steelheaders, measures entries for the Biggest Fish Contest at Jubilee Lake.

TREMENDOUS THANKS TO ALL OF OUR CRAB FEED DONORS AND VOLUNTEERS!!!

Donors:

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Wingman Birdz and Brewz

Volunteers:

Cindy Boen
Larry Brown
Monty Buell
Brett Cox
Debbie Delaney
Megan Deffert
John Geidl
Judy Gwinn
Rich Gwinn
Ralph Hogate
Rick Johnston
Kandice Kelly
Scott Landwehr
Mike Loney
Mike Mahan
Teresa Miller
Jeff Porter
Tom Porter
Phil Reser
Dan Vernon
Tony Wenham
Debbie Zalaznik
Larry Zalaznik

CRAB FEED PROCEEDS SUPPORT:

**New
Salmon
in School
Tanks** **2**

**Kids
Programs** **3**

**Jumbo
Trout
in Area
Lakes** **4,000**

SALMON IN SCHOOL ADDS TWO NEW SCHOOLS

With the kids heading back to school, Education Coordinator Andrew Bassler and AmeriCorps volunteer Alex Coak are busy making preparations for this year's Salmon in School. The first salmon eggs were delivered to classrooms in early September.

Last year, over 400 salmon were released into Mill Creek, the Touchet River, and Yellowhawk Creek. Teachers and their students monitored and cared for these salmon for six months, preparing them for their long trip to the ocean and eventual return. While raising the salmon, students learned about the importance of salmon to our region, their life cycle, and how riparian improvement and conservation is critical to their livelihood. Each school had their own release event, and every student was able to release a salmon or two. Salmon were also released by children at the WWCC Water Center's Return to the River community event. Additionally, the Steelheaders hosted a table at Whitman College's Family Science Nights, with six elementary schools participating and hundreds of students learning about salmon and science.

We would like to thank the following teachers for their time and dedication to the Salmon in School Program: Angela Adams (Prescott 3rd Grade), Tonya Wessman (Rogers Adventist 1st/2nd), Darin Durand (Davis Elementary 4th/5th), Tom Porter (WaHi Opportunity Program), Cheryl Peters (WaHi Special Education), Chris Frank (John Sager Science), Melissa Holecek (WWCC Water Center), and Darilyn Hackett (Vista Hermosa 1st/2nd). All eight schools are participating again this year, and we have added two more schools - Touchet High School Science and Pomeroy 4th grade. Look for updates on the progress of their salmon in future newsletters!



MY TIME WITH THE STEELHEADERS

Our AmeriCorps volunteer, Alex Coak, was asked to reflect upon his 10.5 months of service as his first volunteer term comes to an end. Alex will continue to serve with the Steelheaders for a second term of service. Here's what he had to say.

My journey with the Steelheaders as their AmeriCorps volunteer began last October, after applying for the position and pulling off a last minute move from the East Coast. From the beginning of my term to the end, this has been a learning experience I would not trade for anything. Over the last ten months, I've learned more than I ever thought I would about our local salmonids and the habitat they require. In addition, I've seen firsthand the amount of effort and planning it takes to get even the smallest of our projects off the ground.

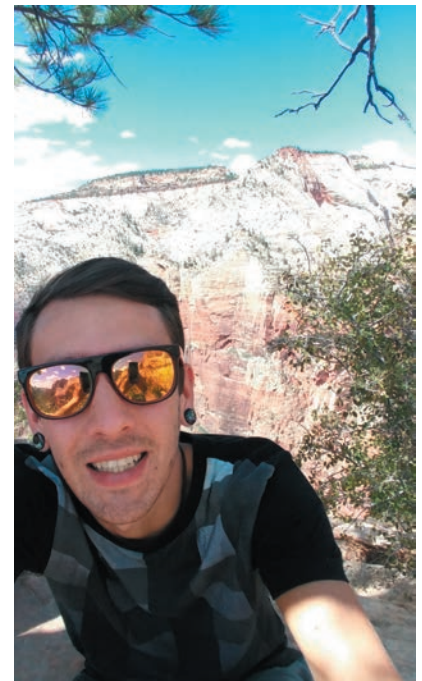
Over my first term, I've been involved in everything from Kids' Fishing Days to wetland restoration, as well as assisting with maintaining our Salmon in School tanks and helping teach our in-class lessons. I've even spent a snowy, windblown day in the Tucannons chucking dead salmon into the river for nutrient enhancement and boy, what a day that was!

One of the most important things I've learned is that

conservation is much more complicated than many would think. It takes time, piles of paperwork, and cooperation with everyone from local landowners to teachers to the state and federal governments.

Overall, though, my favorite part of my time served at the Steelheaders has been working with our local children, whether it's in a classroom teaching them

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Alex has taken the opportunity to see the northwest, including a road trip to Oregon to see last month's eclipse

about their local fish or on a lake teaching them how to fish (and most importantly, why it's called fishing and not catching!).

While I might not be too familiar with catching our local fish species, I've been fishing as long as I can remember and it's always been one of my favorite pastimes. To be able to pass my passion on to the next generation of conservationists and anglers has truly been wonderful, and there's nothing quite like the smile and excitement of a child who has just caught their first fish. After all, fisheries conservation isn't just about protecting our trout and salmon. It's about ensuring that generations of Washingtonians to come will be able to continue the millennia long tradition of catching chinook and steelhead from our waters, and maintaining and strengthening the connection between the people and nature. I, for one, consider myself very lucky to be able to play a part in this, no matter how small it may be. Thank you, and I look forward to continuing to serve with the Steelheaders for a second term!

LIONS POND CONCEPTUAL PLAN COMPLETED

The conceptual design phase of the Lions Pond Project came to a close this summer. We were able to fulfill our fundraising goal of \$10,000 for the project with a second contribution by the City of College Place. In cooperation with the Lions Club, Anderson-Perry completed the plans which illustrate the concept of separating Garrison Creek from the pond. Stormwater drains are re-routed as part of the plan, eliminating discharge into the pond, with the addition of a trash collector to improve the quality of water going back into Garrison Creek.

Completing the plans was a critical first step in improving youth fishing and water quality at the College Place park. "All we had was an idea in our heads. Getting it on paper is vital to continuing fundraising efforts. Before the plan was completed, all we could do was wave our hands around when describing the project. Now we have something that we can show to people and say 'this is what we want to do,'" said Executive Director Brian Burns.

You can view the plans at our website: www.tristatesteelheaders.com.

REFLECTING ON SUCCESS

Twelve years ago, we removed Kooskooskie Dam on Mill Creek to restore passage to over 30 miles of high quality habitat for spring chinook, summer steelhead, and bull trout. Here's a look at the site over the years.





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Inside: Kids Fishing | Crab Feed results | Reflecting on Success

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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.