



# The *STEELHEADER*

Official Newsletter of Tri-State Steelheaders Salmon Enhancement Group

## Two Fish Passage Projects Completed in 2014

### CULVERTS REPLACED IN IRELAND GULCH

In the Touchet River headwaters, about 12 miles south of Dayton, two barriers to steelhead were identified in 2012 on this Lewis Creek tributary. Both barriers were undersized culverts, which leads to water

velocities within the culverts that fish cannot pass. Both culverts also had outfall drops that exceeded passage criteria. And because the culverts were undersized, they often plugged with debris, causing road washouts, which contributed sediment to the stream.

In September, one culvert was removed and replaced with a ford. A ford was chosen instead of a

new culvert due to the low use of the road, the difficult access to the site, and because the cost of a ford is much less than a new culvert. The other culvert was replaced with a bottomless arch culvert, properly sized to convey peak flow and debris. Construction was by Royse Hydroseeding & Excavating. The project was funded by the Family Forest Fish Passage Program.

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*In addition to the culvert being undersized, the plunge out of the culvert was a passage barrier (above). The new arch culvert was assembled in place, shown below during backfilling. The completed structure (right) provides plenty of room for expected peak flows, and a natural stream bottom to fish swimming through.*





*Fish Passage Projects, continued*

## ROCK WEIRS INSTALLED IN YELLOWHAWK CREEK

A few years ago, a barrier inventory completed on Yellowhawk Creek identified a small irrigation dam as a passage barrier for steelhead, chinook, bull trout, and other aquatic species. A project to remove



the unused dam and regrade the channel was funded by the Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board. However, during the development of the project plans, the owner of the dam decided against removal of the dam.

The project was re-designed to leave the dam untouched, by constructing two boulder weirs below the dam. The design breaks up one large drop over the dam into three small drops that each meet current fish passage criteria. Work was completed in August by A. Key Excavating. Additional funding was provided by Tri-State Steelheaders through the Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Program.



## TUCANNON STEELHEAD, BOARD ELECTIONS AT ANNUAL MEETING

As part of the business of the Annual Membership Meeting, elections for the Board of Directors are held. This year, Monty Buell, Ralph Hogate, Mike Mahan, and Dan Vernon were re-elected to two year positions.

Officers of the Board were also elected during the meeting. Scott Landwehr was voted President, succeeding Larry Zalaznik, who has served as President continuously since 1999.

We also recognized outgoing board member Melodie Selby for her active participation on the board during her two year term.

The evening's program, "Update of Summer Steelhead Management in the Tucannon River," was presented by Joe Bumgarner, Fisheries Program Manager for WDFW. The talk included background on WDFW management priorities, hatchery and stock management within the Lower Snake River Compensation Plan, and observations on straying of Tucannon fish.

Joe explained that many Tucannon steelhead stray elsewhere prior to returning to the Tucannon, and some may never return to the Tucannon.

Between 2005 and 2013, monitoring studies have shown that 60% of the Tucannon steelhead will ascend Lower Granite Dam. About 20% percent of those will fall back and return to the Tucannon.

Monitoring also has shown that, of the Tucannon fish passing Ice Harbor, 43% eventually return to the Tucannon, and 46% remain above Lower Granite Dam. The remainder are not detected again after passing Ice Harbor.

Joe also explained how fishery plans are based on natural return levels and on run timing. Natural returns are not meeting management goals, so hatchery releases will occur in separate locations. Harvest releases will occur at Marengo (about 11 miles

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*The original dam (above) on Yellowhawk Creek created a drop of about 17 inches. Two new rock weirs and the dam (left) now each have jump heights of less than 6 inches, creating favorable conditions for juvenile fish passage.*

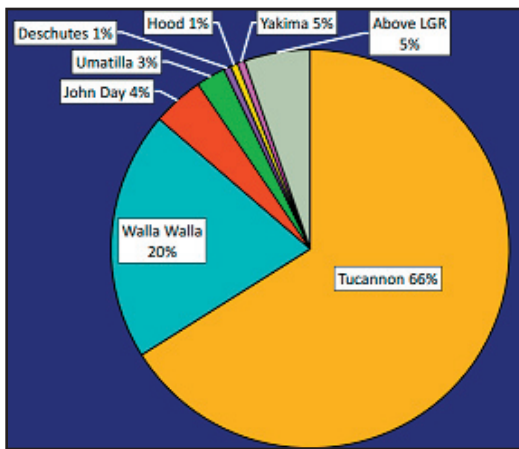


*Annual Meeting, continued*

upstream of Highway 12). Conservation releases will occur upstream at Curl Lake.

In run timing, there's a spike in the number of hatchery fish returning in Sept-Oct, but no wild fish then, so the fishery is open during that period. In Feb-Apr, hatchery and wild fish both spike in numbers, so the fishery is closed to protect the wild population.

Based on monitoring studies, there have been about 250 wild steelhead in the Tucannon each year since 2000. But what constitutes a "wild Tucannon fish?" Wild strays from other basins are about 40% of the returns to the Tucannon. These strays are from the Walla Walla, Deschutes, Umatilla, John Day, Hood



*Source populations of wild steelhead in the Tucannon*

River, and Yakima Rivers. In the past, some of these strays may have contributed to Tucannon hatchery stock, as the traps placed lower on the river were non-selective for strays. Now the hatchery traps are at the hatchery due to the fact that strays don't tend to go as high in the watershed.

Shifting away from Lyon's Ferry Hatchery stock, funding and hatchery space limitations, and a few years of poor hatchery production due to disease led to no adipose clipped steelhead for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 seasons. However, Joe says that expansions planned for 2015 and 2016 should lead to expanded harvest limits.

*From the cover: this barrier culvert on Ireland Gulch was causing the road to wash out (right). It was removed and a ford was created in its place (far right).*



*Mark Your Calendar !*

## Tri-State Steelheaders' Annual Crab Feed Fundraiser



**Thursday, May 14th**  
Walla Walla County Fairgrounds

Doors open at 5pm

Tickets on sale now, \$35

For tickets, call 529-3543

## STEELHEADERS TO RECEIVE SALMON RECOVERY GRANTS

Tri-State Steelheaders has been awarded two new project grants from the WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board. One grant will fund the completion of construction-ready final designs for the remaining phases of the Bridge to Bridge projects. The first phase of Bridge to Bridge was implemented in 2013, with the removal of ½ mile of levee between McDonald Road and Lowden-Gardena Road on the Walla Walla River. This new design project will complete final designs for construction of habitat improvements on the remaining section, downstream to Touchet-Gardena Road. Construction funding will be pursued once the designs are completed, with construction tentatively scheduled for 2017 or 2018.

The second grant will continue passage work in the concrete lined section of Mill Creek. Final designs are complete for the section between 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Implementation of these plans will add 1,200 feet of new passage improvements to the 200 feet completed at 9<sup>th</sup> Ave in 2011. The project will go to bid this spring and is scheduled for construction between June and September. Matching funds for the grant are provided by Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Bonneville Power Administration.

## WELCOME TO THE NEWEST STEELHEADER!

We offer our warm wishes and congratulations to Tara and Steven Patten as they welcomed a son, Wyatt, in December.

Tara spent five years with the Steelheaders as coordinator of the Creating Urban Riparian Buffers (CURB) Program. We understand that the whole family is happy, healthy, and doing well.



## STEELHEADERS ANNOUNCE NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Brian Burns has been named as Tri-State Steelheaders' Executive Director. Brian began working with the Steelheaders in 2002, helping with stream gaging efforts in the Walla Walla watershed. In 2004, Brian became the Steelheaders' Project Manager. Since then, he's completed more than 25 projects that include engineering and design, passage barrier removal, and instream and riparian habitat improvement.



*Brian, and his wife, Cindy, at Cannon Beach*

## THAT'S A WRAP!

As part of the 2013 Mill Creek fish passage project between Spokane and Colville streets, a ford was constructed in the channel. The ford was needed because the fish passage "roughness panels" installed for passage eliminated the ability for Walla Walla County Public Works staff to install a bridge for their maintenance vehicles. The ford now allows maintenance vehicles to cross without the need to install and remove a temporary bridge each year.

If you noticed some activity in this stretch of the channel in July, it was some work to modify the ford to improve its utility. A small amount of concrete was cut and removed, and after some adjustment to the sub-grade, new concrete was poured. This brings to a close this phase of Mill Creek work known as the "Reach Type 6" project. The project was funded by the WA Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and Bonneville Power Administration.



## SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED TO WA-HI GRAD

Lea Davidson is the recipient of the 2014 Paul G. Ancich Scholarship.

The scholarship was established in 2011 by the Washington State Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Coalition in honor of Paul G. Ancich. Paul was a dedicated Coalition member, lifelong commercial fisherman, and a passionate advocate for the preservation of wild salmon. This scholarship is supported by each of the fourteen Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups that make up the Washington State Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group Coalition.

Lea is now a freshman at Macalester College in Saint Paul, MN, with a double major in Environmental Science and Biology, and a minor in International Affairs and Latin American Studies.

She was selected for the award based on her academic and extracurricular achievements at school, and for her history of volunteer service in the community.

Lea would like to combine her interests into a career managing and conserving natural resources in developing countries.

The scholarship is awarded to a graduating high school student accepted to a two or four year college or university, or to a current college undergraduate attending a two or four year college or university. The student must plan to major in environmental or natural science, fisheries, biology, ecology, hydrology, or related field. Contact the Steelheaders for information on this year's application cycle.



### YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE!

Would you like to support the Ancich Scholarship Fund?

Or perhaps you would like to donate raffle or auction items for the Crab Feed?

Give us a call at (509) 529-3543, or email at [tssf@tristatesteelheaders.com](mailto:tssf@tristatesteelheaders.com)

## SNAKE RIVER REGION PROJECT AND DATA SHARING SYMPOSIUM

This one day workshop will be held at the Walla Walla Community College on March 17th, and will feature presentations from researchers, managers, and project implementers from the region on the following topics:

- project effectiveness monitoring
- fish population monitoring
- watershed and habitat assessments
- nutrient cycling
- bull trout movement
- presentations on 12 local habitat projects

The event is free and open to the public. For information contact the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board office at (509) 382-4115.

## OPPORTUNITY WITH WASHINGTON CONSERVATION CORPS



The Washington Conservation Corps, an AmeriCorps program, is hiring crewmember positions in the Walla Walla area beginning April 1<sup>st</sup> 2015. Applicants must be between the ages of 18-25, a Washington State resident and able to pass a background check. Pay is \$9.47/hour. An AmeriCorps Education Award of \$2,675 is earned after completing 900 hours and 6-month term. Insurance and training are provided.

Work will be a variety of natural resource/restoration work and could include fencing (deer and riparian), planting, chainsaw/ forest health work, invasive plant removal, stream restoration and more. There is potential for wildland fire and disaster response. Crews work 10-hour days, M-Th. Travel will be required for some projects. Food and lodging will be provided during travel status. Co-op internship work experience credits are available through Walla Walla Community College's Water Technologies & Management Program. Please contact Roland McGill at (360) 407-6077 for more information, or visit <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/wcc/>.



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is a 501(c)3 non-profit  
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*The date by your name reflects the date through which your dues are paid.*

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**Thank you for your support!!!**

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