

Directors Report



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National Hunting and Fishing Day

On September 28, the Department hosted the 5th National Hunting and Fishing Day celebration. This year's event took place at the Tacoma Sportsman's Club, which did a fantastic job and continues to be a valuable partner.

This year, well over 600 youth attended with parents or guardians. Educational activities and information included firearm and archery target shooting, catch and keep trout fishing, and many other educational activities and information associated with conservation and outdoor recreation. Partners included over 30 conservation organizations, federal agencies, national and local retailers, and local private companies. Of special note, the South Sound Chapter of Puget Sound Anglers staffed the trout ponds, and the Northwest Chapter of Safari Club International donated a fishing rod and reel to every child.

Over 100 volunteers worked the event, including Hunter Education Instructors, Master Hunters, staff from the Tacoma Sportsman's Club, and nearly every Department Program.

If you would like additional information on specific conservation activities offered or our large list of partners, contact Hunter Education Division Manager David Whipple at David.Whipple@dfw.wa.gov.

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Box Canyon Fish Passage Efforts

The Department has an annual contract with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation to monitor stream flow and fish passage at seven locations in four reservoirs during the summer and fall months. These reservoirs are Rimrock Lake, Bumping Lake, Lake Keechelus, and Lake Kachess. Water levels recede each summer as the reservoirs are slowly drained to provide water for irrigation, fish passage, and recreation throughout the Yakima River Basin.

One of these regularly monitored locations is the confluence where Box Canyon Creek enters Lake Kachess. At this location, streamflow is too low during drought years for adult bull trout to reach their spawning areas. Since 2001, there have been four occasions when the Department has constructed a temporary

fish passage flume to make this passage possible. If bull trout cannot migrate upstream and spawn within a specific time frame, they may resorb their eggs instead of spawning. If they cannot spawn, reproduction will not occur and recovery time is lengthened. As an Endangered Species Act-listed threatened species with very depressed populations in the upper Yakima River basin, creating conditions for spawning is critical.

On September 23, 2019, Fish Passage and Screening Biologist Josh Rogala, who has led the monitoring effort for the past three years, oversaw construction of a 650-foot temporary flume built by securing a plastic lining over straw bale walls with T-posts driven through to hold them in place. Additional straw bale wing walls were also constructed to help channelize flow. The end result was a deeper stream channel that allowed for greatly improved fish passage conditions. The effort could not have happened without the 32 individuals who assisted with construction including Department employees from across the state, representatives from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group, the Washington Department of Ecology, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kittitas Conservation Trust, as well as consultation from the U.S. Forest Service and the Yakama Nation.

The effectiveness of the flume was documented during a snorkeling survey on September 30 by Biologist Scott Kline who spotted ten adult bull trout just upstream of the flume.

Online Web Calendar to Help Public “Get Involved”

The Department’s website now features a [calendar](#) in the “Get Involved” section of the website where the public will be able to find:

- Upcoming Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings
- Advisory committee meetings
- Public meetings
- Outreach and special events
- Key season start dates
- Notable volunteer opportunities
- Educational presentations

The goal is to make it easier for people to engage with the Department. As with the rest of the site, the calendar is designed to serve those using both desktop and mobile devices. Next steps include sharing region-specific adaptations of the calendar on Region/Weekender webpages.

The screenshot shows the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife website. The navigation menu includes Home, Species & Habitats, Fishing & Shellfishing, Hunting, Licenses & Permits, and Places to go. The 'Get Involved' section is active, displaying a calendar for October 2019. The calendar lists several events:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Verle's Fishing Contest		11a Jointstate Col	11a WDFW at the			Banka Lake Bass C
Casey McKern's P Castmasters Bass			Sp Spokane Public			Columbia Basin B Mt. St. Helens Bas
+4 more						+4 more
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Banka Lake Bass C Columbia Basin B Mt. St. Helens Bas				Sp Public meeting Sp State of the W		Capital City Bass C Eastern Washing Long Lake Bass C
						+4 more

Irv Conner Dedication



On Saturday, October 5 the Department's Fish Program Director, Community Affairs, and Region 2 Director put together a memorial dedication for a fishing access site on the lower Methow River. Twenty-five people attended the event in the memory of the late Irwin "Irv" Conner, a central Washington fly fishing enthusiast who came up with the idea for the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement program that funded most of the Columbia River fishery monitoring and enforcement for mixed stock salmon fishing in compliance with the Endangered Species Act. The dedication included the placement of a monument at the site and for friends and family to speak about their fond memories and Irv's passion for fishing and the importance of adequate funding of the Department's work in the Columbia and tributaries to having recreational fishing opportunities while maintaining conservation and ESA compliance for listed salmonids. Mrs. Conner attended and thanked the Department and participants for the dedication and the recognition of Irv's contributions to recreational fishing and conservation.

Update on Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery and Task Force

The SRKW Task Force final meeting was on October 7, 2019. The Task Force completed the draft Year Two Report which will reiterate the urgency of funding and implementing the Year One Report's 36 recommendations and provide an assessment of progress to date. The 2019 draft Year Two Report and Recommendations will undergo additional public comment from October 14 through October 25 before being sent to the Governor on November 8. Department highlights on implementation of Year One Recommendations include:

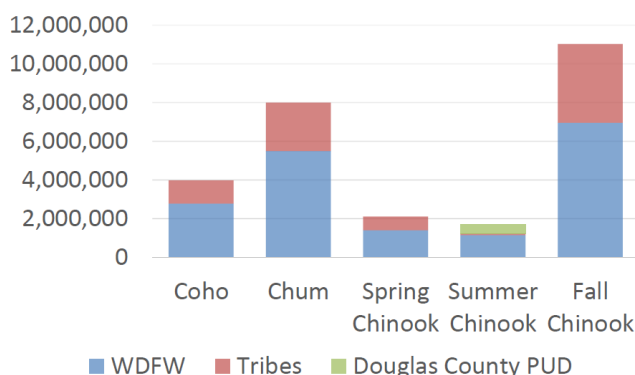
- Increased hatchery production in 2019 (see figure below). The Legislature provided \$13.4 million to increase production starting in July 2019 (Recommendation 6).
- New legislation enacted to better protect shorelines and waterways (Recommendations 3 and 4). To implement the legislation, the WDFW Habitat Program has begun rulemaking to implement HPA civil authority.
- Increased spill over the Columbia River hydro dams through modifying the total dissolved gas criteria, intended to improve survival rates for returning salmon (Recommendation 8).
- Enacting legislation to decrease predatory fish impacts and pinniped predation (Recommendations 13 and 14). The Department's Fish Program has begun rulemaking to liberalize bag limits in the anadromous waters.
- 2,000 hours of SRKW enforcement patrols to ensure quieter waters around the whales.

Working with our tribal co-managers and Douglas County PUD, nearly 27 million additional smolts are being produced in hatcheries throughout Puget Sound, the coast and Columbia River (see figure below).

Producing prey



HATCHERY PRODUCTION:
2019 BROOD YEAR



Total fish:
26,820,200