

Creel Notes from the



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President's Riffle

It seems like spring has been a long time getting here. Day after day of rain and snow here in the Northwest usually sends me to my tying desk to rearrange boxes of flies and tie up replacements for those that have gone missing. This year though I think getting ready for spring activities needs to take on a bit more seriousness. I'm not talking about getting our tackle together, I'm talking about trying to do something to save the rivers, streams, lakes and coastlines that mean so much to all of us.

Our environment is under attack like never before and with the constant barrage of dismal new environmental policy stories (from the other Washington) it's hard to know what, if anything, we can do. To that end I've asked the conservation committee to cull through the plethora of pending environmental legislation and provide advice on how we can influence those who do the voting. At least one blast from the committee has already gone to our members via email. This message outlined how to contact your representatives and also included a list of pending bills. My hope is that the committee will be able to alert us to specific campaigns that could benefit from all of us contacting our representatives to let them know what we think. We won't inundate you every day but we will keep you apprised of those issues where we think we can and should try to make a difference.



Looking on the bright side, spring always signals new life and this year I am happy to report that we can look forward to some new life in our club. Currently we have about 16 new membership applications in our pending folder! This has to be some sort of record. Our recent campaign to showcase our club to our fly tying class along with some web-based publicity has really paid off.

I can't wait to get these enthusiastic and energized fly fishers signed up and engaged as our newest WFFC members. You can help make this happen in two ways. To start, vote "yes" at our next dinner meeting to revise the bylaw section relating to "becoming a member" process. This will allow the Board to adjust the process from time to time to allow candidates to become members in a more timely fashion. Secondly, make sure you engage these new folks and share your enthusiasm for our sport in general and our club specifically.

Only one last thing I'd like you to do. Call me and

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Northern Pike on the Fly

By Perry Barth

This is a fishing report on a trip several of us took to Gypsy Lake in N.E. Alberta in 1998. If catching a Northern is on your "bucket list" or if you have caught them and looking for a good place to go, this might interest you.

To get to Gypsy Lake Lodge, you first travel to Ft. McMurray. Some of us flew in via Horizon, taking the last leg on a connector provided by the Lodge. Others took the long drive (1058 miles or 17 hours from Seattle) straight to Gypsy Lake.

In either case, make sure you arrive in time for the regular "Happy Hour" and dinner. Four cabins hold 16 guests with showers and toilets down the hall, quite an improvement from the mosquito hotel that doubled as an out-house. The Lodge provides first-rate boats with motors in excellent tune.

After I found out about this place, I did what I always do and called Gil Nyerges to get his thoughts on Northern Pike. He and Al Pratt had been invited guests at another lodge in Alberta years ago and found that the problem was not catching them,

but releasing them and keeping all ten fingers. He reported that the Northern looks like something out of Jurassic Park. We all had to learn about such things as "Jaw Spreaders".

We tried different flies and plugs and got quite sophisticated with our lures. Jay Deeds invented a neat plug when he pulled a 4" length of tubing over a short piece of doweling and "fringed out" the tail. Dry fly-fishing at its best, eh? Worked like a charm. I found out that just rabbit tail tied on at the bend of the hook was also a winner. All purple or all black worked fine; pink and white, not so much. Then I got to mixing colors and using a different color for the last third of the hook. Just for fun I called purple and gold "The Husky", the red and gray "The Cougar" My black and red combination got named "Ballard" for the school where I taught music and also paid homage to Chuck Ballard, long time friend and fishing buddy. Black and Pink combinations, one of my favorites and very popular among the Pike, got called "Victoria's Secret".

Gil even tied a supersized version of his monster on a large hook and

released three real monsters, all in the 35"-40" range, fishing in a small bay one afternoon. Besides Gil, the group included for the record's sake: Lyle Manson, Jim McRoberts, Scott Hagen, Jay Deeds, Bob Bune who taught with me at Ballard H.S., Pete Baird, Hugh Jennings and Gil's friend Dan O'Brien.

Contact information: Phil Jones, Gypsy Lake Lodge, www.gypskylake.com or PO Box 103, Athabasca, Alberta, Canada. T9S 2A2. Phone 780-675-9289 or 780-713-6167. Or call me; I'd love to tell you more.



Gil Nyerges brings home the big monster on Gypsy Lake in 1998.

Creel Notes

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Club officers and chairmen can be contacted by logging in the WFFC website in the roster area.

Conservation Committee Report: a Call to Action

How to Save Puget Sound as suggested by Washington Environmental Council & others. We will not save Puget Sound by hoping for it – we need to act. We will continue to roll out actions each week for people like you to get involved. Here's how you can help: 5 ways you can stand up for Puget Sound:

Talk to your state legislators about why we must adequately fund Puget Sound protection and recovery at the state level. State support for natural resources programs as a whole and Puget Sound protections specifically has declined dramatically over the past several years. Right now, we have the opportunity in our state legislature to fund toxic cleanup and prevention for sites all across our state, including Puget Sound. **Take action here.**

Become an informed activist. WEC and our partners at Latino Community Fund are partnering to offer an online training on how to influence political processes, no matter what your interests. You can find our first training on phone banking, rallying, and amplifying your voice **here**, and our second one on being a town hall activist **here**.

Thank the Congressional Puget Sound caucus for championing our region at the national level. They have their work cut out for them, and saying “thank

you” is important. **Click here to remind them that you have their backs.**

Thank a federal employee. We need them to remain in their jobs, which will not be easy for the next few years. They need our support. Sign our open letter to federal employees **here**.

Join the conversation and share your ideas. Each week we will identify one action you can take to work with us on durable solutions for Puget Sound. Let's reinvigorate approaches for Puget Sound recovery, from the state legislature to federal engagement to grassroots activism. We at the People For Puget Sound Program of WEC, along with our partners and allies, are fighting for Puget Sound at the national, state, and local levels. **Click here to join the conversation.**

President John Gravendyk has asked the Conservation Committee to advise the club on current conservation issues in the Legislature.

The 2017 session began on January 9th and runs for 105 days until 4/24/2017. This session is the budget session for 2017 & 2018. There are two major budgets:

(1) Operating; (2) Capitol for land acquisition and construction. This is where you learn how to contact your Legislators and find bills: **<http://leg.wa.gov/>** Legislative **HOTLINE: 800-562-6000**; **Email** is the fastest way to reach your legislators There are more than 20 environmental organization involved: **<https://wecprotects.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Past-Priorities-Report-Executive-Summary.pdf>**

There used to be one **Environmental Lobby Day** during each legislative session. However, that has been changed to allow each group to push their own agenda. Each organization lists the bills they support and those they oppose. Some samples are: **Audubon Washington** sample: **http://wa.audubon.org/sites/g/files/amh546/f/static_pages/attachments/audubon_legislative_update_2.23.2017.pdf?=&utm_source=ea&utm_medium=email** **Washington Environmental Council** sample: **<https://wecprotects.org/environmental-priorities-coalition/hot-list/>** **Washington Wildlife & Recreation Coalition** sample: **<http://www.wildliferecreation.org/>** **Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife** has its own Conservation page on: **<http://wdfw.wa.gov/>** **Washing-**

ton State Council IFFF has a legislative section on their web: **<http://wsciff.org/>** **Wild Fish Conservancy NW** has a link for legislative action: **<http://wildfishconservancy.org/>**

WFFC Conservation Committee

Outtings, Outtings!

Outtings! Outtings! Outtings! I just want to repeat the dates of March 25th for the day trip to Nahwatzel lake near Shelton, and April 15 and 16 for Dry Falls. Check the web site for all the details, and sign up! We've been getting the bugs worked out of the sign up system, and I think it works pretty well now, thanks to webmaster Jim!

We will have a scouting trip report on Nahwatzel by the next meeting, and Dry Falls opens April 1 for you early birds. Lets go fishing!

President's Riffle continued

let me know you would like to lead our crackerjack holiday fundraiser team as our 2017 3rd Vice President. The project plan is documented and in place, key experienced committee members have pledged their support. All we need is you!

Ok, enough. I'm heading to the vice to tie up some mayfly patterns.

Tight Lines,
John

p.s. The 3rd VP position pay is twice that of the other officers. Give it some thought...

Club Aims and Purposes

The purpose of this club shall be:

1. To improve and increase the sport of Fly Fishing in the State of Washington.
2. To promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
3. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout, steelhead, and salmon in state waters.
4. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
5. To encourage and assist others — particularly young persons of high school age—to become fly fishers and true conservationists.

Tierra del Fuego Report: Big Browns

by Hugh Clark

Jay Deeds, Scott Hagen, Bob Burdick (world's greatest, and most modest fly tier), Hootie Clark, my son, and I spent the week of Jan 28th on the Estancia Maria Behety, a ranch in southern Argentina, and fished for sea run brown trout on the Rio Grande. We landed 8-25 fish, more than a third over 15 lbs.

The river was very low due to low snowfall in the Chilean Andes the prior winter and the fish were holed up. Thus the purists who stuck to skating and streaming caught fewer fish than the pragmatists who spent more time nymphing. A 28.5 pound fish caught by Jay was the largest fish of the season, and each of us caught at least one fish over 20 lbs. Bob landed two fish over 20 lbs.

Over the week our group of 11 fishermen landed 197 fish. Other cultural treats included views of guanacos, foxes, condors, gauchos herding several hundred sheep, and delicious grass fed beef with famous Argentine Malbec wines.

Leaving the Rio Grande and the big sea run browns, my son and I stayed at two ranches in the San Martin de Los Andes area, Tipiliuke and Quem Quen Treu (kem kem treo). These huge ranches came into private hands in the



Above, Jay Deeds shows off a massive sea-run Brown with his guide Marcos on the Rio Grande in Argentina, below, Bob Burdick waits until the dead of night to bring in this big Brown employing yet to be gragged about skill.

last century in payment to commercial millionaires who gave the government money to build and support a military, at least according to local sources.

We fished three rivers and one lake. Ten mile long Lake Lagog was at the end of a miserable road, hugely picturesque in the mountains, think upper Chelan, and very windy at times. Trout up to 18 inches were taken on dry/dropper combinations, usually cast to risers near cliff walls. The Mallo River (ma shay ho) is small, very brushy and hunted by sight for wary browns. Guided from the shore and behind brush, the fisherman down stream was guided for one cast to large browns in skinny water. Very challenging, but we each caught a couple.

The Chimihuin and the Collo Curu, (cosho curu) are like large western rivers, up to a hundred yards wide with riffles and pool. Long, long casts with floating lines and a variety of streamers and minnows led to crushing hits by rainbows and browns up to 24 inches, but mostly in the 14-18 inch range. Access to the fishing sites was via four-wheel drive roads and took 20 to 40 minutes.

The second ranch of 500,000 acres
Continued on next page



Inbox: Awards, Grip and Grin, Nice Fish



Above, Richard Brening, Chuck Ballard and Jim McRoberts subject Ron Little to ritual “dunking” in reward for some past digression into the deep. Minutes later Jim, right, earns the Wet Sock award for a transgression involving fishing through lunch at the Lake Hamman Chili Feed. Chuck Ballard looks on. This second award is new and involved criteria that few living anglers have seen.

Tierra del Fuego Continued

supports 3-5000 head of cattle at an average of 50 acres per cow/calf pair. Four hundred horses are also on the ranch, 50-100 for the gauchos, some for training for polo and some wild. All the livestock live off grass, with no grain-ing or harvested hay in the diet. Our last night included a fabulous asado or bar-becue with lamb, beef, kidneys, sweet breads, intestine, cooked for hours over a huge open fire. Argentine wines accompanied all meals, including picnics on the river banks at noon before siesta in the grass! Patagonia River Guides were our agents for the second portion of our trip.



David Schorsch prepares to fillet a nice trout on Nahwatzel lake March 12

Editor's Note

Thanks for all the great material. As readers new and old can see, Creel Notes gives anglers the opportunity to tell their story, show off their fish and show off. While I can't vouch for the truth of any of these reports, it's fun to find out where people have been and what they have been doing.

Please send in your stories and photos, preferred in Word and as .jpeg.



Washington Fly Fishing Club

P.O. Box 639

Mercer Island, WA 98040

March, 2017

Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Seattle Tennis Club, 922 McGilvra Blvd. E.

This month's program is on March 21. The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.

This month: Everyone, The subject of our March meeting is one that is a concern for all residents in the Northwest and one that you might want to invite your significant other, family, or friends to attend with you.

The pros and cons of tearing down the four Snake River dams to improve the deteriorating Columbia River salmon and steelhead runs has been debated for 10 to 20 years now, and as you can tell from recent newspaper coverage, the federal courts are now pushing the BPA and others harder to do more and dam removal is said to be a significant solution to re-rehabilitating the size of the runs.