

Creel Notes from the



P.O. Box 639, Mercer Island, WA 98040



October, 2010



President's Riffle

This has been an interesting year for the club. One area that has really seen a turnaround in participation is the outings. Thanks to our outings chairmen, **Dave Schorsch** and **Mark Pratt**, the outings attendance is up this year and members are enjoying fishing with other members. I would like to thank both Dave and Mark for their efforts this year. The next outing is WETBUNS on November 6th. This is always a great outing fishing for cutts and whatever salmon are around.

From all accounts, the showing of *Rivers of a Lost Coast* was well received at last month's meeting. I noted that not a single member fell asleep during the presentation, which I think could be a first. This month's speaker, Conway Bowman, will definitely be an entertaining show. He is a very intense individual who knows what he is talking about.

The acquisition of materials for the Christmas party is under way. If you would like to help bring items in for the auction or the raffle, please contact **Earl Harper**. He has put together a request letter that you can use in your efforts. The party this year will be at Herban Feast, as it was last year. This is a really great space and will be a great backdrop to our fundraising efforts.

Grab your rod and go fishing.

Ed.



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October Meeting:

Conway Bowman presents *Fly Fishing the Ragged Edge: Mako Sharks on the Fly*

Conway Bowman's name is synonymous with extreme fly fishing. For Conway, home base is San Diego, where he guides for bluewater species on the fly, most notably killer Mako sharks. His exploits have been chronicled in various books and magazines, including *Field & Stream*, *Men's Journal*, *Saltwater Sportsman*, and *Wild on the Fly*. But Conway's fly fishing prowess doesn't stop there. As former host of ESPN's *In Search of Fly Water*, Bowman has traveled the world in search of Atlantic salmon, wild trout, bonefish, and tarpon. Conway has also hosted ESPN's cornerstone adventure series on sharks, *Primal Predator*, and is now the host of *Dollar Wise Fly* on the Versus network. Conway has appeared as a guest host on Cabela's *Adventure Quest*, Versus's *Escape to the Wild*, Shaw Grigsby's *One More Cast*, and ESPN2's *Going Coastal*. He currently holds the IGFA world record for redfish caught on the fly. Bowman is now principal owner of the Ragged Edge Fly Fishing School, and his website is www.bomanbluewater.com.

Meeting tier: **Bob Burdick** tying his Sculpin.

The Creel Calendar

Penrose State Park, November 6th and 7th

Christmas Party, December 21st

Fishing Author Readings by Mike Wearne

On November 9th, there will be two events at Elliott Bay Book Company that will be of interest to club members. At 6:00, Pat McManus will be reading. At 8:00, Tom McGuane will be reading in the same venue.

Club members should refer to the Elliott Bay Book Company website (<http://www.elliottbaybook.com/>) for a location map. Elliott Bay has moved from Pioneer Square to First Hill.

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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.

On the Fly by David Ehrich

It's been a while since my calendar cleared for a meeting, but I heard the call for early adjournment in order to make way for a film spectacular.

Our President, **Ed Sozinho**, started off by calling the meeting to order, wasting no time in introducing **Captain Keith**, who preempted regular business to introduce Justin Coupe. Justin then introduced his film and kicked off a full-length showing of *Rivers of a Lost Coast*.

Justin Coupe and Palmer Taylor spent two years in production of *Rivers*, which covers the Bay Area steelhead loyalists, described as a "small sub-culture of unique characters" who populated the scene around the Northern California steelhead rivers: the Eel, Russian, San Lorenzo, and Smith. Long story short: there were a lot of fish, and these fish attracted guys from the East, guys who in later years might have been surf bums or surf music rock stars, guys who gave up respectable pursuits to follow the big fish, guys returning from WWII and building new fly gear with synthetic materials, guys who would pour oil on the rocks near their favorite hole, guys who were strangers to bills over a dollar, guys who gave up love and families for fishing; in other words, the sort of obsessive guys that California spawns for nearly every pursuit. They lined up shoulder to shoulder and before long, surprise, surprise, with the help of dam building, clear cutting, drought, and deep-well irrigation, the runs disappeared.

Done in the style of a Ken Burns documentary, but with a little more attitude, *Rivers of a Lost Coast* moves from interviews to documentary and novice footage, to newspaper clippings and maps. With a backdrop of electronic, Phillip Glassesque ambient music, and Tom Skerritt narration (from the film *A River Runs Through It*), *Rivers* takes on an almost mythical tone about some crazy guys. Fishermen are no stranger to hyperbole, but you haven't heard anything until you've heard these "pioneers" talk about fifty-pound plus "shark-like" Chinook, fished by "gladiators" who "endured" real hardship and earned the right to shun any newcomer to the scene.

The film reminded me of breaking into the beach volleyball scene in SoCal and the royal assholes I had to get around to even get on the court so I could teach 'em a lesson. The film also saddened me to see the lack of care these crowds took to keep their

rivers sustainable. To quote one angler, "conservation didn't mean shit to us." From the demise of the runs, *Rivers* goes on to describe futile efforts to restore the runs through hatcheries.

After the break, Justin answered questions and I got the feeling that I wasn't the only guy a little depressed about watching what once was great disappear in less than two generations.

One astute member asked how they got started on the film. Justin and Palmer dug in right after college, lived poor and ground out the film on margins. Hugh Clark asked if there was any good news on the Eel and Smith? Justin gave a qualified "yes," noting better water flows, selective gear rules, and catch & release for wild steelies. Unfortunately for those who would like to measure results of the changes, studies by wildlife biologists are so poorly funded and scattershot in California, that very few people seem to know what *was*, much less, what *is*. Doug Schaad remembered founder days in Central Oregon that reminded him of the film and contrasted NW fish management to the abysmal job being done in Cali.

In general, the film is not going to change your world, but it got me thinking: someday I hope they make a movie about South Fork cutthroat fishing and the great men who braved the traffic jams around North Bend, meth cooks, and high-school make-out artists in the woods to catch the "big ones" on the SF of the Snoqualmie. Then I'll get interviewed along with all the other "pioneers who endured" the challenge of fishing in Ruburbia.

From there we moved on to regular business.



Bill Redman and Conrad Gowell with guest Bryce Levin

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- Fruit and Flowers: **Pete** gave good tidings of members returning in good health and hopeful back surgery for **Randy Raymond**.
- Christmas Party: **Earl Harper**, this year's chair, called for donations and good ideas. Check the member area of the web site or Creel Notes for details and forms.
- **Keith** reminded us that ESPN regular Conway Bowman (sharks on the fly) will entertain us in October.
- **Greg Crumbaker** bragged about our **Dr. Marve**, who as sixth man for the Monroe High School basketball team, held the opposing gunner to four points, helping take the state championship 60 years ago. Marve was honored along with the rest of the team on September 23rd.
- Homewaters: The building permit is on hand and we hope to start construction soon. Look for emails.
- **Doug Schaad** snuck in a fishing report posing as Conservation Committee chair. The word "deviation" was used too many times for me to follow along.
- Reel Recovery: **Kris Kristoferson** thanked the members who made the program a great success.
- Then came the nomination of the Nominating Committee, easily the most exciting part of any year. The winners are revealed below.

Nominating Committee *by Don Barton*

At the September club meeting, we voted for the Nominating Committee. The five candidates with the most votes among the nine nominees were: **Jim McRoberts, Bill Redmond, Dave Schorsch, Dave Hawkinson, and Don Simonson.**

Bill Redmond received the most votes, and as a result, he will be the chairman of the committee.



The Kulik River *by Scott Hagen*

I arrived in Anchorage September 4th. The Tonkin brothers, Steve Durkee (a friend of **Don Gulliford**), and I stayed the night, and had a wonderful dinner and breakfast at the Millennium hotel. We departed for Kulik Lodge about 9:00 am, and were fishing by 1:30 pm. The next six days, except for Thursday, were filled with large numbers of 18" to 26" trout being caught (and released) by swinging an "egg pooping flesh fly", or skating a foam and deer hair mouse. On Thursday, three of us flew out to the Kamishak River and spent the day fishing for coho. I estimate the three of us hooked around a hundred fish. A weighted white bunny leech seemed to work best. On orders from my new bride, I whacked a couple of bright ones to take home.

The Kulik River was infested with bears! I have never seen so many bears in my life!! At one point, we had seventeen bears in sight! They weren't aggressive, but they weren't very concerned about getting way too close, either.

All went well until my arrival at the Continental counter to fly back to Seattle. When I checked my luggage, the third piece (my eleven pounds of salmon filets) was an extra \$100.00!!! I told the guy



Scott Hagen on the Kulik



And another...

at the counter he should be wearing a mask and carrying a gun. He didn't think it was funny. I will never fly anywhere again without reviewing the baggage charges. A round-trip ticket on Alaska Airlines was about \$100 more, but on Continental the total round trip baggage charges were \$220!!

Dry Falls Outing *by Dave Schorsch*

Attended the Dry Falls outing Oct. 2nd and 3rd with the WFFC. Had a great time! The weather was warm and sunny on Saturday (perhaps a little too sunny, it was damn hot by noon!), and the wind was calm.

Got out on the water just after light with **Pratt** and **Karlovich**. Picked up fish right away during the usual dawn chironomid hatch, and found some nice cruisers along the weeds. Lake was as low as I've seen it, but the fish didn't seem to mind. Raced over to the flats in Brown Bay before the sun got on them and scored big time! The biggest fish of my day usually are there grubbing around for dragonflies and crawdads. I hooked up with almost a dozen fish in an hour, all bigger than my net, which is 14 inches wide by 18 inches long! Fished all over the lake for the rest of the day, picking up a couple fish at each stop. Lots of nice fish along the edges, with fat little planters smacking pretty much anything in deeper water. Finally knocked off about 1:00 and grabbed some lunch. An informal survey indicated everyone was catching fish, with some doing better than others, as usual. Catch rates ran from a half dozen to three dozen fish each! Really! No super big fish this year,

but lots in the 16 to 20 range. Rainbows outnumbering browns and tigers at least ten to one in the catch.

Happy hour was awesome! Great warm weather, tons of food, steaks on the barbie! We served 38 steaks to members and guests. Many slathered with chantrelle mushrooms cooked up by Conrad Gowell! Lots of wives and girlfriends attended, and brought their cooking skills along with their social graces. Desserts aplenty were shared to the musical program performed by Chuck Ballard and Paul Lingbloom. A nice fire and several bottles of wine wrapped up the night. This is a great outing! Don't miss it next year!

Thanks to everyone who pitched in again!

Northern Vancouver Island *by Bob Young*

Over the Labor Day weekend, **Chris Bentsen** and I traveled to a resort at the mouth of the Cluxewe River toward the north end of Vancouver Island. This is on the east side of the island just a few miles north of Port McNeil. The place is known as the Cluxewe Resort and offers a variety of facilities. There are very nice housekeeping cabins, some of which can sleep eight comfortably and are just 25 feet from the high-tide mark. There are also parking slabs for campers, trailers, or fifth-wheelers with all the hooks, as well as rough camping spots for tents or campers w/o hook-up facilities. Chris and I were there chasing coho.

The first evening we arrived we walked up the beach to an area near the estuary. Reports were that not many coho were around, but there were some pinks still lingering about. That evening Chris hooked a couple of smaller coho and a few pinks. We bonked a couple for the B-B-Q. We were feeding four as a couple of Chris's friends were in camp also. The pinks were colored up a bit, but turned out tasty from the grill.

The next day we packed our gear in the truck and headed across the island to a very long inlet from the Pacific side called the Rupert Arm. It is about 10 miles long, and is the only access to west-side water. Fishing had been good there in earlier years. This year, however, there were not a lot of fish about. There were some colored-up coho showing, along with a few pinks, but most appeared to have lockjaw.

Back on the beach at the resort I hooked and landed a nice bright coho of about eight pounds and missed another because I had dropped my backcast

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Bob Young on his trip to the Cluxewe

on the beach and dulled my hook. Things were pretty slow the rest of the day, except for Chris who got a nice, bright, good-sized coho after wading across the low water at the mouth of the river. He stayed over there a little too long and overtopped his waders on the way back.

The next morning we repeated our hike up to the mouth of the river and were a little surprised that all the pinks were gone, apparently heading upstream on the last night's high tide. There were a few more coho showing, however. Chris and his friend each hooked up a fish, but I got the boss fish of the trip. Working our way back toward home, I stopped at a spot and just made a blind cast. Bam! A big coho was on. I was fishing a 6 weight with an old Pflueger Medalist, perhaps somewhat ill advisedly. The fish initially came toward me rather easily, but when the water got a little too shallow, he turned and headed out to sea. The Medalist was vibrating like a car running on three cylinders. Way into my backing, but after several runs and a couple of "Holy cows" and "oh no's", I beached the fish. I didn't get any measurements, but weight guestimates ranged from 12 to 15 pounds. (Guess which one was mine.)

We returned to the Rupert Arm again the next day, but there were no fish showing at all so we came back early. Later that day conditions were not very conducive for fishing, as there was continual surf that was just high enough to knock you off balance. This made fishing pretty tough.

The following morning the pinks were back in good-sized schools. They were so thick you couldn't strip through them without foul hooking. Also the surf was up, so we only fished for a short while.

Yellow Pine, Idaho *by Bob Burdick*

While elk hunting in Idaho in September, I had the opportunity to fish Johnson Creek, a tributary of the East Fork of the South Fork of the Salmon River, as well as the Middle Fork of the Clearwater.

All classic pool and drop rivers buried in deep canyons, I encountered no other fishermen in this incredibly beautiful country. Fishing was good with good access on Forest Service property and the catching was proportional to how far back on a dirt road I fished. Johnson Creek yielded four fish an hour to 15 inches; the East Fork, three fish per hour to 15 inches; and the Middle Fork, one fish an hour to 18 inches.

Unfortunately, these fish wouldn't take dries despite gorgeous sunny weather, and all were caught nymphing.

For Sale: Phillipson Pacemaker

by Don Gulliford

I have an old Phillipson Pacemaker rod that I found in the crawlspace of a house. Only the first guide nearest the handle is on it, all the rest are missing. Might be a fun restoring project. Each of the three sections is 37" long. I'm offering it by silent auction via email or snail mail. The opening bid is \$25; it closes by next meeting. Winning buyer's money goes to the WFFC Foundation. Don Gulliford, 206-232--0183, dongulliford@comcast.net.

Project Healing Waters

by Jim McRoberts, PHW Seattle VA Coordinator

Well, we had a very active summer of tying flies and using them to catch fish. Those of you who tie your own flies (or used to do it) know the thrill of landing a trout on one of your own creations. Some of you are more creative than others! The veterans

who we work with never in their thoughts imagined they would be doing something like that!

Some are at the VA every Tuesday morning or Wednesday afternoon trying to make hands and minds coordinate enough to do what we take for granted. Not works of art, but “good enough”.

The fish that they catch at Bill’s Fishin’ Hole are destined to provide enjoyment even for those who cannot attend the outings. We have them smoked and they have a party in their dining room once a week. The following photo is from the last outing and will provide for many parties during the winter until we can go out again next spring!

These men who are not as fortunate as the rest of us thank the **WFFC** and the **WFFC Foundation** and all those who support it for giving them the opportunity to have a great day out of the hospital!

Also I want to thank all who have pitched in on a regular or part-time basis to make these dreams come true! Link to video:

<http://www.q13fox.com/news/kcpq-092710-ptsdflyfishing,0,7972444.story>.

Would you like to be a part of this adventure?



WETBUNS *by Dave Schorsch*

It’s time for our most unique outing event of the year! The WETBUNS outing at Penrose Point State Park, November 6th. The WETBUNS is a celebration of the changing of the seasons, rain, saltwater flyfishing, rain, seafood bouillabaisse, rain, and friends having dinner around a fire. To be honest,

we’ve had nice weather a couple years, but we didn’t let that spoil the mood. This is a tradition started years ago by **Dick Stearns** and Co. (if not started, certainly perfected!) to combat cabin fever around the Thanksgiving holiday.

The outing centers around flyfishing for Searun Cutthroat, resident Silvers, and Chum salmon during the day, followed by a group prepared seafood bouillabaisse in the afternoon/evening. The fishing is all over the Sound in the Longbranch area. There is ample beach access at Penrose itself, as well as Joemma State Park nearby. Boat anglers have tons of very good water, with launches at Joemma, Vaughn Bay, Allyn, and Home Bay to name a few. All access, good fishing close in. Longer runs to Hammersley Inlet or Pitt Passage will pay off, too. Fish the usual attractors and candlefish/sandlance patterns for cutts, and don’t be surprised if a coho likes them, too. Chums will be piling up around creek mouths in all the usual places, throw anything green and small.

Intermediate lines work best. If you don’t find fish right away, move to another spot! Cover the acres, the fish are podded up at this time of year—find one, find several!

The Dinner! A lot of folks don’t even fish the WETBUNS. They come for the bouillabaisse! We usually start setting up around 3:00. Deciding how many canopies to set up first. Then the work begins. Cutting up fish, cleaning shrimp, cracking crabs, and prepping vegetables. Several volunteers are needed to make the parts of this seafood stew happen. Takes an hour or so before the ingredients are ready. Then the sauces start to mix, broths start to boil, and bits and pieces are added at just the right time. Much arguing is involved in determining if the clams go in before the halibut or the celery.

This is an enormous pot of soup, and the best thing we cook all year. Served with garlic bread and lots of wine, it’s the best! Bring your own good-sized bowl and spoon, we provide the rest.

We will be set up in the campground at Penrose. They commonly restrict the sites to one area in the winter, so we’ll be easy to find. Bring firewood if you can, and maybe a loaf of crusty bread. Happy hour is rolling by 5:00 for sure, so don’t forget your favorite appetizer or side dish! The club will provide beverages. Hope to see lots of you there this year!



Washington Fly Fishing Club
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Stamp
here

October, 2010

Meeting Announcement



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

The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.

This month:

Conway Bowman presents *Fly Fishing the Ragged Edge: Mako Sharks on the Fly.*