



Annual Membership Meeting Minutes

1-11-2020

Executive Board Members

President - Doug Saint-Denis - Present

Vice President - Bob Kratzer - Present

Secretary - Ryan Gausman - Present

Treasurer – Jon Blank

Member at Large A - Marc Bush - Present

Advisory Member - Greg Kain - Present

Advisory Member - Cameron Black – Present

Advisory Member - Camrin Johnson – Present

Advisory Member - Eric Linde – Present

Advisory Member - Mark Coleman – Present

Advisory Member - Cary Hoffman – Present

Guides in attendance, Brent Geisler, Casey Wiegel, Charlie Cooper, Erik Brigham, Jack Mitchell, Joel Baxter, John Fiskum, Jon Calivas, Killian Burriss, Lael Johnson, Luis SD, Matt Eleazer, Nick Tucker, Patric Gaffney, Paul Ockerman, Ryan Davey, Tim Morrison, Ty Wyatt

Call Meeting to Order: 1842 hrs

Welcome new members to WSGA – Doug

Welcome to all of our new members, it’s great to have you along with us... WSGA stickers will be sent out at the end of the month. Current members, if you need another sticker email Doug and he will include yours in the mailing.

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Treasurer’s Report: Doug

2020 Financials Total income: \$6,483.00 Total Expenses: \$1,792.76

As of today, we have \$1,476.95 in PayPal and \$4,653.85 in the Bank checking and \$5.00 in savings.

Old Business: No old business items to discuss

Appoint Treasurer: E-board Discussion

Randy Lato has resigned as treasurer so we need to appoint a replacement.

Doug St Denis: Jon Blank is a member in good standing who is qualified and interested in serving as Treasurer. The by-laws allow the executive board to appoint a qualified member to fulfil the remainder of the position. The by-laws also allow for a current board member to hold more than one position.

No current board members were interested in adding treasurer to their current responsibilities. This is an option but would reduce the number of members on the board to 10, an even number, so there wouldn’t be a tie-breaker vote in the instance of a tie in voting.

After discussion, Doug nominated Jon Blank to serve as treasurer for the balance of the current term, Marc Bush seconded the nomination. The board members voted unanimously to appoint Jon as WSGA treasurer, and the motion passed.

Update on Coastal Steelhead: Robert Kratzer

A Steelhead working group consisting of 6 major groups, including WSGA, has been formed to address this issue with the state.

All of us agree that our coastal steelhead runs are having difficulty, we also agree this needs to be addressed because it is in all of our best interest to have healthy fish populations. We all want to save the Steelhead. What we are opposed to is arbitrary, knee jerk actions, such as no floating device rules, being put into place without interaction with all of the stakeholders in the system who will be seriously impacted by the consequences of such actions. We feel that we, as those stakeholders, and their representatives, should be consulted and have input on the actions that make the most sense for helping the fish while minimizing the

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negative impact on businesses and the economics of whole communities in these areas. The current decision is causing most local guides to immediately suffer 50-100% reductions in their income for this year.

The Quillayute system fish returns are projected to be 3400 fish higher than the escapement goal for these rivers but the closure affects this system as well for no apparent reason. Since it is presented as a solution to low, below escapement goal, steelhead returns.

The steelhead work group has been able to get a legislative hearing to address the issue on Tuesday, January 12. 4 presenters will appear for the work group position.

Rep Chapman, Chair of the natural resources committee in the state house has also agreed to hold a hearing with WDFW representatives to review their information and hear their discussion.

The short goal would be to get the regulations revised for this year, this may be a low percentage goal, the long goal is to get the rule overturned or revised for future years. If this doesn't occur the steelhead guide industry on the local communities may vanish along with the hundreds of thousands of dollars benefit it provides for coastal communities.

Another major issue included in this discussion is the Regional Steelhead Management Plans WDFW was supposed to have produced by 2013. None of those plans were ever produced and they would have addressed this issue and all of its impacts, probably preventing us from being in the situation that we currently see. We are pushing hard to require WDFW to finish these plans, and to involve those stakeholders who are impacted in the discussion and decision making to ensure the plans are successful for both the fish and the communities.

Cameron Black: He is involved in this effort as well, he stated this is the first time we, as a guide community, have had the opportunity to do some of these things. It is the result of our becoming organized and now having a voice. He encourages all of our members to contact these managers, legislators, and the commission on these issues to let them hear from their constituency. Your comments carry a lot of weight.

Paul Ockerman: Paul appreciates the effort which is going on. He stated that no floating device rules have a serious impact on the disabled community and their ability to enjoy the outdoors. There is a disabled persons advisory group which reports to the commission who were not consulted on this issue even though, the process is supposed to include them.

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Review of what WSGA accomplished in 2020: Doug

The Executive Board met each month in 2020, with one additional emergency meeting.

- Six eboard members are also members of the WDFW Guide Advisory Committee, which WSGA was instrumental in the organization and approval of the WDFW guides Advisory Committee. We have had several meetings thus far in 2020, since Covid 19 started, many of these meetings have been emergent and held online.
- Met with Jeff Davis & Director Susewind of WDFW to discuss the 25-year plan. We shared some of the proposals and suggestions developed at our January general membership meeting and received a positive response from Davis and others regarding these suggestions.
- Conference with WDFW Director and Fish Program Director frequently.
- Held two guide meetings in Eastern Washington March 7th, Ellensburg and Tri-Cities.
- WSGA was invited by the WDFW director to attend a meeting on April 14 with representatives from 23 other outdoor organizations in our state. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss strategies for reopening fishing, hunting, and state-owned facilities. Subsequently, WSGA met with WDFW and other stakeholders several times on this issue.
- North of Falcon with WSGA representatives attending.
- Worked with WDFW, Coastal Charter Associations and the Governor’s Office to get guides and charter operators back to work. WSGA structured a Covid 19 Business Safety Plan, which allowed this to happen.
- Developed a business plan for WSGA to allow growth into the future and gain more membership and standing with WDFW and the lawmakers in Washington State. (May Meeting)
- Due to Covid 19, the “Take a Legislator Fishing” day on the Cowlitz River was postponed until further notice.
- WSGA is continually invited to the WA State Sportfishing stakeholder’s conference calls. We have had 3 meetings in 2020.
- WSGA worked in cooperation with GHGA, GHSC, & OPGA to successfully request a legislative hearing for WDFW.

Input from guides for priorities for 2021:

We want to identify some regional directors who would represent different parts of our state. We need to hear from all of Washington to help us be more responsive to the needs of guides. Some ideas on regions would be northwest, southwest, OP, Columbia and Snake rivers, Central or North Central Washington, may

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Eastern or Spokane area. If we could have somebody be our eyes and ears in all of the guide communities state wide it would increase our ability to be effective and to respond to local needs. It would also help guides in those areas to stay in touch with what we are doing state wide and in Olympia.

We have identified a legislative working group which has been sidelined some for 2020 due to covid restrictions. We plan to continue building alliances and relationships with our lawmakers in 2021.

Charlie Cooper: Charlie stated that the NOAA Steelhead plan for the Skykomish river has been completed. We need input for the NOAA public comment session from as many people as possible. For information regarding how to make these comments contact Doug.

Matt Eleazer: Matt commented on the non-resident Oregon guide license fees. It currently costs approximately \$2600 to obtain a non-resident guide license in Oregon. Washington’s fees were rolled back but Oregon did not do so. Oregon guides coming to Washington no pay significantly less than we do if we go there. This applies to waters on the Columbia below the Longview Bridge. Cameron Black suggested we may want to investigate the political climate surrounding this issue, as it relates to Butch Smith. Bob Kratzer said that he and others have already started these conversations and they will continue to seek a solution.

John Fiskum: Stated he guides primarily on the Yakima and is involved in multiple other conservation type associations. He sees tremendous value in what we are doing and would like to see us spreading the word of our activities to other groups around the region.

Ty Wyatt: Stated he would like our information forwarded to him for inclusion in his social media groups.

Bob Kratzer: He said there are approximately 86 senators and representatives in Olympia. The more we can communicate our message to these people the more effective we can be. We need to let them know of the good we do for their communities. Cameron Black suggested maybe we should consider making a video which documents what we are doing and what we are about to send it out to these people for their education. Marc Bush has been doing the take a legislator fishing program through WSGA. In 2020 we were unable to make it happen but it is still a priority. Marc has observed that the legislators who have participated in the past were very unaware of the situation and issues which exist in our fisheries and the time we spend with them is critical to helping them learn.

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Jack Mitchell: Jack stated that he appreciates the work we are doing. He suggested we consider or explore solutions to the “pigeon holed” fisheries we have state wide where small areas have special openings that attract so much pressure. Also know as “gold rush” fisheries. He suggested maybe we work with WDFW and push for solutions to open wider areas of rivers by possibly special lottery permits or some other option to spread out the angling pressure, thereby reducing concentrated pressure on small localized fish populations. Bob Kratzer commented that WSGA has opened discussions on this topic several times without too much interest from WDFW but that we are still interested in doing this and will continue to work on it.

Involvement with the legislators & senators: Doug

This is accomplished through “Take Your Legislator Fishing” day. – If you want to be involved, you can do it in your own area. There are some rules for this, so reach out to Marc Bush for more information.

We are also in more one on one communication with Senators and Legislators. This said, we need to focus some effort on the Democrats in the House. They are the least likely to back sport fishing.

Preparation for Elections for 2022: Doug

2022 E Board elections: A number of the eboard positions are up for reelection at the end of this year. Any members who are interested in serving on the board should start thinking about it now. There are “all member” meetings during the year, quarterly, make it a point to be involved in those and pay attention to our business during this year to become acquainted with what the board is doing.

Ryan Gausman: Ryan and Camrin Johnson are working on building a stronger relationship with WDFW enforcement on the Yakima system We are attempting to schedule a meeting with he command staff to request more responsiveness to problems. We and other guides notice significant violations during the year such as fish being killed, littering, non-licensed people guiding, and have had difficulty getting WDFW wardens to respond.

For the good of the order:

Greg Kain: It’s important to remember that what we are doing is for the good of everyone. Our efforts will result in a stronger industry for our members as well as stronger communities and healthier fish populations.

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WA State Guides Association

Representing WA State Sport Fishing Guides & Charters

waguidesassociation.org

Cameron Black: Reminded everyone that we solicit input from all members. If members have ideas, pro or con, on what we are doing we want to hear from you. Email the board and we will consider your input. We only require that it be done in a positive manner and spirit.

Mark Coleman: The results of all the things we do will be for positive changes for the future.

Cary Hoffman: Thanks to all of our new members

Doug St Denis: We want to emphasize business sponsors and sport angler sponsor members this year. We have quite a few of these folks join this year. The fee to do so is extremely inexpensive and it helps us so much with our budget. If you know of businesses or clients who would be interested check out the website or contact a board member to help with this!

The issue of party fishing on rivers, which is legal on salt water, has been discussed with WDFW this year. What it means is that all members of the group on a boat are allowed to continue fishing until all limits for the party are filled. We are seeing WDFW beginning to support this idea and will continue working on it.

Close Meeting: 2019 hrs

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