



Eboard Meeting Minutes
December 15th, 2025

Executive Board Members

- President - Doug Saint-Denis - Present
- Vice President - Bob Kratzer - Present
- Secretary – Patric Gaffney - Present
- Treasurer - Jon Blank - Present
- Member at Large A - Marc Bush - Present
- Advisory Member - Greg Kain - Present
- Advisory Member – Brandon Wedam – Present
- Advisory Member - Vacant
- Advisory Member - Eric Linde – Absent
- Advisory Member - Mark Coleman – Present
- Advisory Member - Cary Hoffman – Present

Meeting Begin: 5:32 pm

Meeting Purpose

Review year-end business and discuss critical upcoming issues.

Key Takeaways

- Drano Lake Fees: Skamania County proposes a major fee hike (e.g., non-resident guide annual pass from \$100 to \$500) to fund maintenance and manage crowds. The WSGA argues this won't reduce congestion and sets a dangerous precedent.
- Skagit-Sauk Fishery: The fishery is at risk due to WDFW's failure to request 2026 monitoring funds, citing a prior legislative denial. The Washington Fisherman's Alliance will privately fund a placeholder fishery to maintain access.
- Chehalis River Access: A guide's ticket from the Chehalis Tribe for fishing on a navigable waterway threatens statewide access rights. The WSGA will support the Attorney General's defense to prevent a dangerous precedent.
- Bogus Hill Hatchery: A shift from Chambers Creek to wild Quileute broodstock will eliminate the popular Nov/Dec fishery and create new conflict risks with tribal netting.

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Advisory Member 6
Vacant

AGENDA

Drano Lake Management

- Problem: Severe overcrowding and public safety issues during springer season.
 - 14 assault calls last season.
 - Roadside parking blocks emergency vehicle access on Hwy 14.
 - Locals blame guides for congestion.
- County Proposal: A significant fee increase for all users, with the largest jump for non-resident guides.
 - Non-Resident Guide Annual Pass: \$100 → \$500
 - Skamania County Resident Guide Annual Pass: \$200 → \$300
 - Sport Angler Day Pass: \$10 → \$20 (non-resident)
- WSGA Position:
 - The fee hike will not reduce congestion, as guides will absorb the cost.
 - The issue is a general access problem, not guide-specific.
 - Proposed Solution: A county-run shuttle service from an off-site lot (e.g., Dog Mountain trailhead) to manage parking and generate revenue.

Skagit-Sauk River Fishery

- Problem: The 2026 steelhead fishery is at risk due to a lack of state funding for monitoring.
 - WDFW Rationale: The agency did not request 2026 funds because a similar request for 2025 was denied by the legislature.
 - Monitoring Cost: ~\$340,000 for a full season.
- Solution: The Washington Fisherman's Alliance (WFA) will privately fund a placeholder fishery.
 - WFA will determine the weekly monitoring cost and fund a limited number of weeks based on escapement data.
 - Goal: Maintain a fishery and prevent a complete closure.

Chehalis River Access Dispute

- Problem: A guide (Bo Smith) was ticketed by the Chehalis Tribe for fishing on a navigable waterway.
 - Tribe's Claim: Requires a \$500/day permit for non-tribal anglers.
 - Precedent Risk: This could threaten public access on other navigable waterways adjacent to tribal lands statewide.

- State & WSGA Response:

- The Attorney General's office is supporting the state's position.
- The WSGA will draft a letter to the AG's office to support the defense of public access rights.

Bogachiel Hatchery Program Changes

- Change: Phasing out Chambers Creek steelhead stock for wild Quileute River broodstock over 4–5 years.
 - Rationale: To address concerns from a pre-assessment for a potential coastal steelhead ESA listing, which cited Chambers Creek stock as a risk.
 - Impacts:
 - Loss of Fishery: The popular November/December fishery will be eliminated, as wild broodstock return later (Jan/Feb).
 - Increased Conflict: Hatchery returns will now coincide with the wild run, increasing pressure and potential for conflict with tribal netting.
 - New WDFW Volunteer Policy:
 - A new policy requires extensive training (e.g., Swiftwater 1-3, backcountry first aid) and insurance for all volunteers.
 - Impact: This policy, a reaction to two WDFW employee drownings, effectively ends most volunteer-led programs, including broodstock collection.
 - WSGA Action: Investigate workarounds (e.g., waivers, CG licenses) to preserve volunteer involvement.

Annual Meeting at the Sports Show

- Logistics:
 - Date: Thursday, 6–8 p.m.
 - Location: 2nd floor, Pavilion.
 - Admission: Free entry after 5 p.m. via the gold gate (show guide card).
- Food: The WSGA will provide food to increase attendance.
 - Action: Doug will get a quote from the fairgrounds caterer.
- Banners: New banners will be ordered to increase WSGA visibility.
 - Plan: Order 3x6 ft pop-ups and potentially 10x5 ft ceiling banners, pending fairgrounds approval.

Next Steps

- Marc:

- Email the board the Drano Lake fee proposal (current vs. new).
- Ask Skamania County about the fee revenue's allocation.
- Doug:
 - Get a food quote from the fairgrounds caterer for the annual meeting.
 - Contact designer for new banner concepts.
 - Send the North of Falcon compensation email to the board.
- Robert:
 - Get the Hatchery & Wild Coexist banquet revenue total from Don.
 - Investigate the new WDFW volunteer policy with Kelly Cunningham.
- Cary:
 - Forward the WDFW legislative liaison contact info to Doug.
 - Prepare to draft a letter to the Attorney General's office regarding the Chehalis River dispute.
- All Board Members:
 - Recruit candidates for the upcoming board elections.