



April Eboard Meeting - April 13

Meeting Purpose

Review Skamania legal strategy, North of Falcon outcomes, and membership growth.

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 - Absent
Advisory Member – Jacob Munden – Present
Advisory Member – Brandon Wedam – Present
Advisory Member – Gabe Miller – Excused
Advisory Member - Mark Coleman – Present
Advisory Member - Cary Hoffman – Present

Members Present

Wayne Morris
Bernie Balsis
David Loper
Dylan Houfek
Neils Humphries

Key Takeaways

- Skamania County Legal Action: A demand letter was sent to the county, with a response deadline of midday tomorrow. If unresolved, the association will file a Temporary Restraining Order (TRO) to open the fishery for the 2026 season.
- North of Falcon (NoF) Outcomes: Puget Sound Chinook fisheries were severely cut. The core issue is the ocean recreational fleet's consistent failure to catch its full quota, leaving ~10,000 "paper fish" in the model that could otherwise create significant in-river fishing opportunities.
- Membership & Legal Fund Growth: The legal fund has raised ~\$18,720 from 38 donations since March 27. All donors will receive honorary memberships, boosting total membership to 85.

President
Doug Saint-Denis
waguidesassociation@gmail.com

Vice President
Robert Kratzer
anglersguideservice@gmail.com

Secretary
Patric Gaffney
pgaffney253@gmail.com

Treasurer
Jon Blank
jonsnwoutdoors@gmail.com

Member At Large A
Marc Bush
twistedwaters@gmail.com

Advisory Member 1
Greg Kain
greg.kain@me.com

Advisory Member 2
Brandon Wedam
bnrtackle@gmail.com

Fisheries Policy Advisor
Cary Hoffman
cnhguideservice@gmail.com

Advisory Member 4
Mark Coleman
mark@allwashingtonfishing.com

Advisory Member 5
Jacob Munden
risingsonadventures@gmail.com

Advisory Member 6
Gabe Miller
gmiller@farwestsports.com

- Future Strategy: The association will push for a more realistic ocean quota and explore a new, unified negotiation tactic with other sport fishing groups for next year's NoF process.

Agenda

Skamania County Legal Update

- A demand letter was sent to Skamania County officials on April 3, with a 5-business-day response deadline.
- The county's attorney was contacted today (April 13) and confirmed receipt of the letter.
- Strategy: The association's attorney will allow the county until midday tomorrow to respond. This good-faith effort strengthens the case for a TRO, as judges prefer to see parties attempt resolution before granting such orders.
- Goal: Secure an immediate resolution to open the fishery for the 2026 season, then work with the county on a long-term plan for 2027.

North of Falcon (NoF) & PPMC Outcomes

- Ocean Quota: Set at 110,000 Chinook.
 - Significance: This quota triggers a 50/50 split between the ocean recreational and troll fleets. A quota below 100,000 would favor the commercial fleet.
- Puget Sound (PS) Fisheries: Chinook fisheries in Marine Areas 5–13 were significantly cut, with final quotas lower than initial proposals.
 - Silver Lining: Strong coho seasons and a winter fishery in Marine Area 5.
- Core Problem: "Paper Fish"
 - The ocean recreational fleet consistently fails to catch its full Chinook quota, leaving ~10,000 "paper fish" in the model.
 - Impact: These fish are unavailable for in-river fisheries, preventing significant opportunity (e.g., a 3-week non-selective fishery on the Columbia).
 - Cause: The fleet inflates its expected Chinook catch to secure a longer coho season.
- Future Strategy
 - Goal: Push for a more realistic ocean quota.
 - Tactic: Explore a unified approach with other sport fishing groups (Charter Boat Association, NMTA) for next year's NoF.
 - Method: Present proposals to the state and disengage from negotiations, mirroring the co-manager strategy.
 - Pacific Salmon Treaty: The treaty is up for negotiation in two years. This is a critical opportunity, as 92% of Washington-raised fish are caught outside state waters.

- Action: Send two representatives to a March NOAA roundtable to build relationships with key players like Phil Anderson, who will be on the treaty's steering committee.

Membership & Legal Fund Update

- Legal Fund: ~\$18,720 raised from 38 donations since March 27.
 - Attorney Rate: \$295/hour (reduced rate).
 - Reporting: The treasurer will run detailed PayPal reports to track donations and identify donors for membership.
- Membership: Total membership is 85, including 3 lifetime members.
 - Growth: 10 new members + 38 honorary memberships for legal fund donors.
 - New Sponsors: Maxima and Stevens Marine.
- Process Improvement: The two-step online sign-up (form → PayPal link) will be streamlined into a single, integrated transaction to reduce drop-offs.

Code of Ethics

- A draft Code of Ethics was sent to the board via ShareFile.
- Status: Board members have received the draft but have not yet reviewed it due to other priorities.
- Action: The draft will be resent to the board for review.

Lobbyist Role

- Cary is exploring a lobbyist role but is concerned about a potential conflict of interest between that position and his public constituent role at NoF/PFMC.
- Decision: The topic is tabled for now, pending Cary's research into the conflict-of-interest rules.

Next Steps

- Cary:
 - Await Skamania County's response by midday tomorrow.
 - Research potential conflict of interest for the lobbyist role.
- Doug:
 - Deposit Stevens Marine check and update treasurer.
 - Send a member-wide email update on Skamania County and the legal fund.
 - Ask members to review their listings on the website.

- Doug & Mark C:
 - Streamline the online membership sign-up process.
 - Identify all 38 legal fund donors and grant honorary memberships.
- Jon:
 - Run detailed PayPal reports to track donations and members.
- Robert:
 - Request the Stevens Marine logo for the website.
- Mark C:
 - Resend the draft Code of Ethics to the board.