

THE CONSERVATION ANGLER

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As anyone who enjoys angling in the Pacific Northwest knows, 2022 has not been the best year for wild steelhead. However, we have seen a marginal improvement in Columbia Basin returns over 2021… and I'd like to think that 2022 has been a ***better*** year for wild steelhead conservation.

Here at The Conservation Angler, we've been working doggedly in every public forum to advocate for state and federal management plans and policies ***that make wild steelhead matter.*** As a result of our work, TCA's key accomplishments/activities in 2022 include:

- Securing, with the North Umpqua Coalition, an all-wild steelhead North Umpqua decision by the Oregon F&W Commission which voted to end the hatchery summer steelhead program on Oregon's iconic steelhead river.
- Filing an extensive and scientifically robust petition to list Olympic Peninsula steelhead under the federal Endangered Species Act. Taking this action now will increase chances to protect and rebuild these quintessential wild steelhead populations.
- Executing the 28th Year of our Kamchatka Steelhead Project by implementing partial science, conservation and anti-poaching operations in tough conditions. We hope adventurous sponsors can travel to Kamchatka in 2023.
- Advocating for conservation-oriented steelhead management in Columbia River Basin, resulting in agency actions that reduced the impact of angler effort on wild steelhead productivity on the Deschutes and John Day Rivers and Drano Lake.
- Operating *The Osprey Journal* under a cooperative international management committee, creating a solid financial footing and increasing its distribution of essential science and policy articles.
- Professionalizing TCA's staff with key hires/promotions, including:
  - Hiring John McMillan as TCA's Science Director. John formerly served as science director for Trout Unlimited's Wild Steelhead Initiative, and he is one of the preeminent steelhead scientists in North America.
  - Promoting Sarah Lonigro as Director of Finance and Operations; Sarah has served multiple roles for TCA since 2018, and worked previously at the Confluence Project, Ecotrust and Wild Salmon Center.
  - Hiring Rob Kirschner (in mid-2021) as Legal and Policy Director; Rob formerly served as General Counsel for Freshwater Trust.





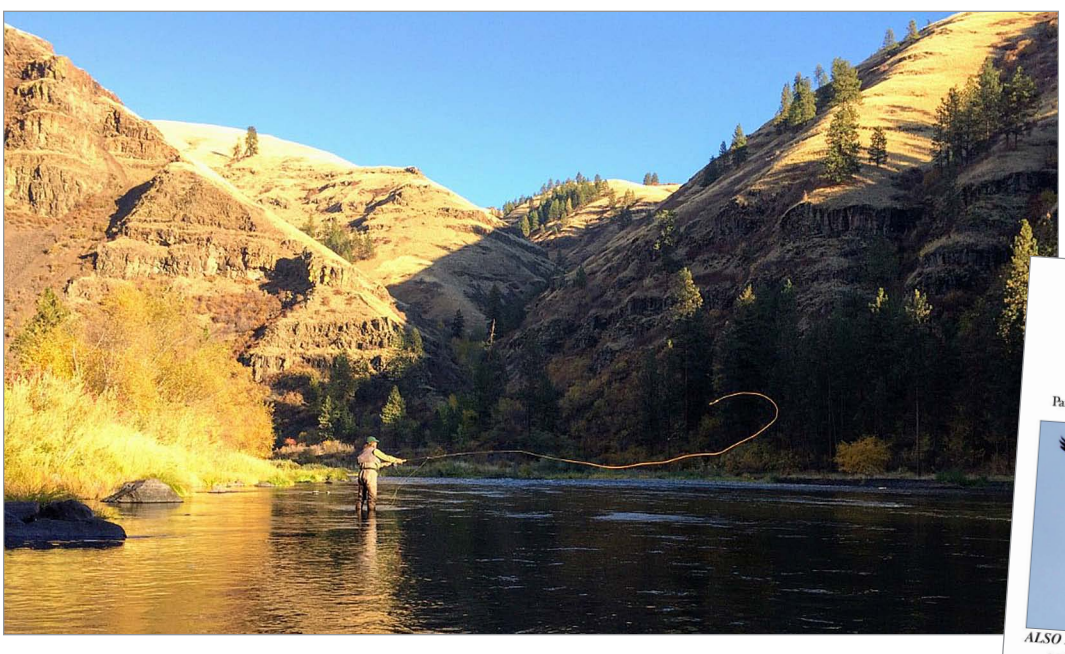
John McMillan (above) was named TCA's Science Director, bringing one of the West's most esteemed steelhead experts to our fight for wild fish.

(left) TCA operated the 27th season of our Kamchatka Steelhead Project, including our anti-poaching operations.

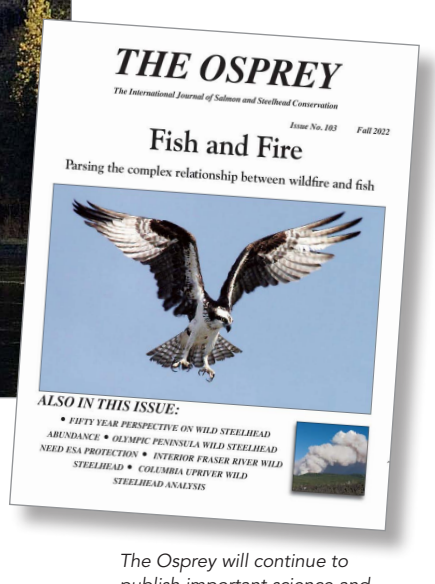
(top) TCA helped to end the summer hatchery program on the North Umpqua, one of the world's iconic steelhead rivers.



Sarah Lonigro was promoted to Director of Finance and Operations.



In 2023, TCA will continue to press legal challenges against hatcheries in multiple watersheds.



The Osprey will continue to publish important science and policy articles concerning wild salmonids.

Looking Ahead to 2023

While it's mission critical that a watchdog group like TCA remains ready to respond to day-to-day developments, we have a punch list of objectives for the coming year, including:

- Defending the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission's decision to make the North Umpqua River Oregon's only all-wild winter and summer steelhead river west of the Cascades.
- Supporting the Olympic Peninsula Steelhead ESA Petition through the administrative process, with a listing decision anticipated in 2023.
- Continuing our legal challenge of water quality permits for two hatcheries that pollute the McKenzie River – the source of Springfield and Eugene's drinking water and the home to wild spring chinook, bull trout and rainbow trout.
- Advancing our litigation (with Wild Fish Conservancy) challenging Washington's out-of-control salmon hatchery expansion that threatens wild chinook and Orcas in Puget Sound and the Columbia River.
- Pursuing reform of Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead hatchery practices that harm wild fish and fail to recover ESA-listed wild steelhead and salmon populations in Idaho, Washington and Oregon.
- Executing our Kamchatka Steelhead Project for 2023 with adventurous travelers to continue our science and conservation effort expanding knowledge and understanding of Russia's wild steelhead stronghold.
- Contributing to efforts to remove dams on the Snake River, Klamath River, Skagit River while advocating for natural recolonization of native steelhead and salmon populations upstream of these river-damaging structures.



Rob Kirschner brings more than a decade of experience as TCA's new Legal and Policy Director.

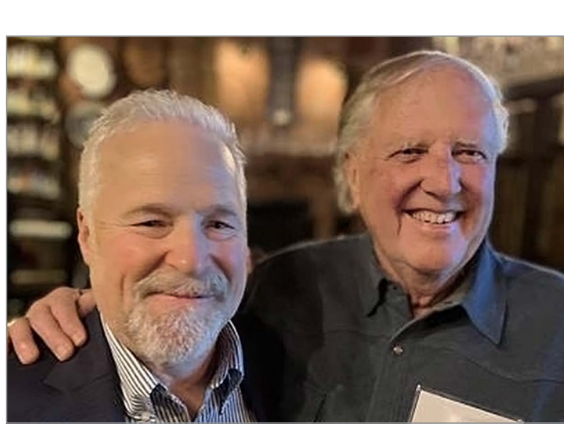
Your Help Goes a Long Way

TCA's staff and Board Chair – Rob Kirschner, Sarah Lonigro, John McMillan, Dave Moskowitz and Pete Soverel – work diligently to hold the powers that be accountable for decisions that impact wild steelhead and other salmonids. We work smart. We work lean. We get results.

TCA works very cost-effectively. In the most recent Washington Secretary of State Charities Section report, we achieved a percent to program services score of 92%.

I know that many organizations working to protect the fish you love are seeking your support. As you assess whether TCA is deserving of your contribution, consider these questions:

- Does the presence of steelhead, especially wild fish, enhance your appreciation of life in the Pacific Northwest?
- Do you agree that – as good science has shown – policies that support wild steelhead productivity have the most promise for one day returning our fish to their former abundance?
- Do you hold hope that future generations will experience the thrill of the grab from a wild steelhead on their line, or the sight of wild fish climbing waterfalls to reach their natal waters?



Board Chair Pete Soverel and Executive Director David Moskowitz bring more than 70 years of wild fish advocacy to the fore.

If wild steelhead and the promise they hold for rebuilding fish populations are important to you, we invite you to support The Conservation Angler.

From all of us at TCA, many thanks for your ongoing support.

Tight Lines,
David Moskowitz
Executive Director