



Greetings friends of the SSBC,

Thank you for reading our annual Winter Newsletter. If you missed the Summer edition of our newsletter, please see the link below:

<http://steelheadsociety.org/news/ssbc-summer-2017-newsletter>

**2018 Annual General Meeting – Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup>**

The Steelhead Society of British Columbia is pleased to host this year's AGM on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> at the same location as previous years: the BCGEU (8555 – 198A St., Langley BC).

We will be welcoming Bob Hooton & Marvin Rosenau as our guest speakers this year. Bob, well-known as a Steelhead advocate across BC and beyond, will be speaking to us about his new book release "Days of Rivers Past", a reflection on BC's historic Steelhead fishery. Marvin Rosenau will be presenting on the geographic comparisons re: salmonids and their relations / proximity to fish farms. We are honoured to have both of these fantastic voices at our AGM this year!

As usual, we will also get updates from President, Brian Braidwood, and also from the Chair of our Northern branch, Troy Peters.

**AGENDA**

- 10:00 a.m. - Opening & Welcome (President B. Braidwood)
- 10:15 a.m. - Speaker
- 11:00 a.m. - Break
- 11:15 a.m. - Speaker
- 12:00 p.m. - Lunch break
- 12:30 p.m. - President's, Treasurer's, and Membership Reports  
- Nomination Committee-elections
- 1:00 p.m. - Adjournment

You must be a member to attend, and of course memberships (and some great swag) will be available at the door. We look forward to seeing you there!

### **Annual SSBC Pub Night Fundraiser**

I feel like an echo whenever I type this about our Pub Night, but: WOW! What an amazing event it was again this year! Thanks to the fundraising efforts of many, the generosity of those who donated, plus all who attended or participated as part of a great crowd, we raised over \$35,000 as a result of this year's Pub Night. And because of our generous donors and hard work by all involved, overhead expenses for this event are effectively \$0 – this means that nearly every dollar raised goes straight back into protecting Wild Steelhead. Thank you once again to everyone who came out and joined us for a terrific event.

### **John McMillan Presentation**

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, John McMillan joined us at the BCGEU building in Burnaby for a fantastic presentation on the biology of Steelhead. During the course of a fascinating two-part discussion, he outlined the genetic and biodiversity of races of Steelhead, including analyzing the differences between wild and hatchery fish. Kirk Gilchrist generously filmed the presentation for us, and we will be releasing clips from the presentation in the coming months – keep your eyes open for news on this!

*In addition to the many meetings we attend, advisory boards we sit on and phone conversations we have, the following is a brief summary of some other significant issues and projects that the SSBC has been involved in since our last newsletter:*

### **Letter in Opposition to the current Fraser River Chum Fishery's MSC certification**

The SSBC signed onto a letter that included the BC Federation of Drift Fishers, the BC Federation of Fly Fishers, and the BC Wildlife Federation in opposition to the Fraser River Chum Fishery's Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification. Given the extreme low levels of Fraser River late-run summer steelhead stocks, we believe it is unacceptable that the BC chum salmon fishery continue to go ahead when they have such a large impact on these runs.

### **SSBC's contribution to the Gold River Study**

This past fall, the SSBC donated \$3,000 to the BC Conservation Foundation, with all moneys to be directed towards a study on the Gold River on Vancouver Island. The study aims to identify possible problems that have caused the significant decline of this once-incredible run of Steelhead, primarily using tagging as a means to assess the current population.

### **Generous Donation(s) from Joel Hanson of Iron Dreams**

Over the past number of months, we have been incredibly thankful for the support and donations from many across the province and around the world in support of our now-famous Pub Night Fundraiser. Alongside this, the SSBC has received a significant amount of support from Joel Hanson of Iron Dreams Fishing this year. In addition to the swag/items he has donated to us, Joel not only also donated \$500 to

the SSBC, he created a contest whereby for every donation you make to the SSBC (min \$10), you receive one entry for a chance to win a Custom Milner reel! What a great contest!

Entries can be made via our webpage (<http://steelheadsociety.org/donate>) or in-store at Sea-Run Fly & Tackle. Thank you, Joel!

### **Coquihalla Canyon barrier removal**

We are pleased to report that after a number of years of talks and planning, this past September finally saw the removal of the large rock barrier that had formed in the Coquihalla Canyon. The work consisted of drilling and blasting the boulder that was obstructing upriver progress of Steelhead in the Coquihalla. Funding for the project was provided by the HCTF, FFSBC, Kingfishers Rod & Gun Club, the Ministry of Forest, Lands, and Natural Resource Ops, and of course by the SSBC.

### **Northern Branch update from Troy Peters, Northern Branch Chair**

Throughout 2017, the SSBC Northern Branch has continued to dedicate our efforts towards conservation and restoration. This autumn, our focus was on habitat protection and enhancing our fundraising, education, and advocacy.

To that end, we continued work this summer on the Exstew borrow pit, where we trapped minnows and saved more than 1,500 steelhead and salmon fry. Unfortunately, we are not finished there yet. Due to delays with our Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's project — the goal of which is to fill the pit with aggregate — monitoring will have to continue throughout winter and more minnow trapping will take place next year.

We are also still working with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) to improve chinook spawning habitat on the Zymoetz and Clore Rivers. With chinook returns down, this project should have a direct and positive impact on salmon-recruitment numbers.

Several small and successful fundraisers were held this fall to support our efforts. These raised approximately \$6,000 in donations for the SSBC.

This fall, we were pleased to be involved, once again, with the Salmon in the Classroom project, which teaches young students the importance of salmon in their ecosystem. We can't overstate how important this is in the long term. Many former participants have cited this program as the reason they got into conservation work as adults. There was concern that this program was going to be cut this year, but after vocal public feedback, funding has continued.

We also participated in DFO's Sport Fishing Advisory Board consultation process and had representation on every local committee, from Prince George to Haida Gwaii. With poor returns of chinook and sockeye predicted next year, it's important for us to have a seat at the table. Our proposal to give DFO Compliance and Enforcement officers the ability to ticket for more offences is particularly noteworthy. This has moved to the consultation stage and will hopefully be enacted in the near future. If passed, it will mean these officers will have more time for fieldwork, which benefits anglers and the resource.

As we get close to wrapping up another year, I'd also like to use this opportunity to thank all those whose selfless efforts have helped the SSBC Northern Branch move closer to achieving our very important conservation goals. We look forward to 2018 and the challenges and rewards it will surely bring. As always, your support is vital.

-Troy Peters

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That wraps up the Winter 2017/18 Newsletter from the SSBC, direct to your inbox. You can always reach us through our website ([www.steelheadsociety.org](http://www.steelheadsociety.org)) and on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/SSBCMMain](http://www.facebook.com/SSBCMMain)). You can also purchase hats, shirts, crests, and other swag in our online store, including our "Northern Branch" section! (<http://steelheadsociety.org/catalog>)

Thank you once again for your support of our goal to preserve Wild Fish and Wild Rivers in beautiful British Columbia.

Kindest Regards,

The SSBC