



Wild Steelhead Initiative

Managing for sustainability and opportunity



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The challenge of conserving wild steelhead

- The Wild Steelhead Initiative
- Changing how steelhead are managed



Reopening a historic fishery

- Opportunity depends angler's getting involved



Conserving wild steelhead



The bad

- Wild steelhead greatly depleted
- 75% of populations listed under ESA



The good

- Still have some great habitat and strong populations



Challenge

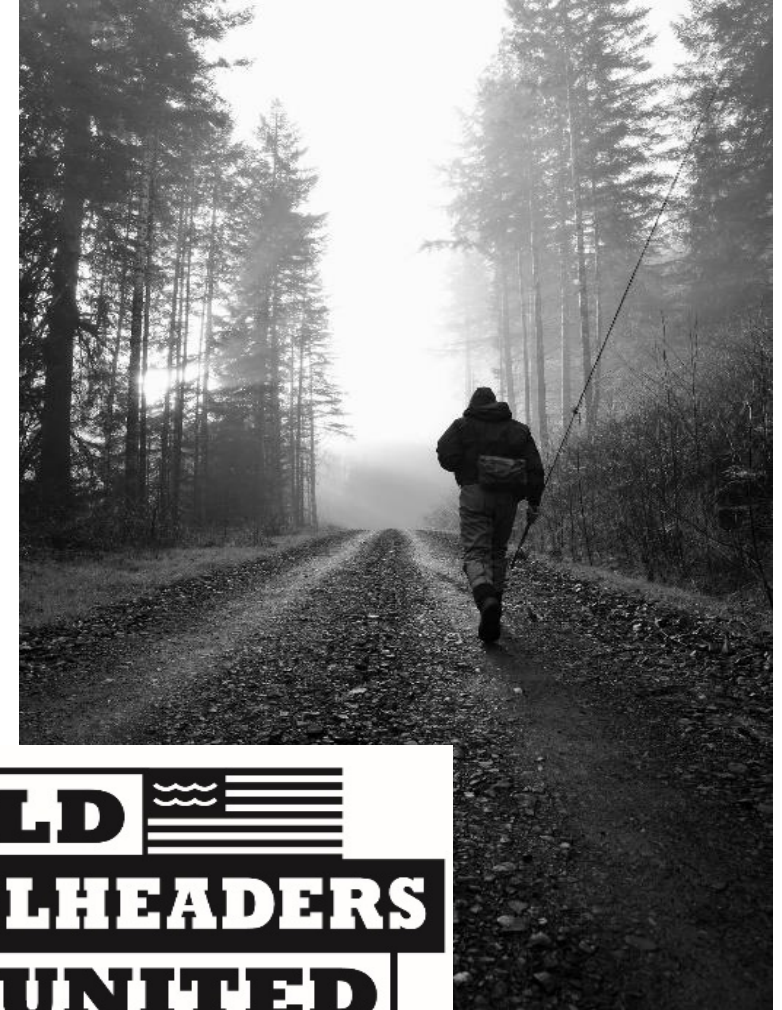
- How to sustain and maximize the best remaining populations?



Wild Steelhead Initiative



- 🐟 Goal
 - Abundant, fishable wild steelhead populations in rivers with a high potential to support them
- 🐟 Science and policy
 - Manage to sustain and rebuild
- 🐟 Working where steelhead are native in lower-48 and Alaska



WILD 
STEELHEADERS
UNITED

Changing how steelhead are managed



- Millions spent on habitat
- However,
 - Few changes in fisheries
 - ...or hatcheries
- Must align management with habitat work to get return on investment



Building an army of advocates



Wild Steelheaders United

The Wild Steelheader - A Publication of TU's Wild Steelhead Initiative.

The Website/Blog -

Education, Policy, Take Action, Campaigns

Social Media

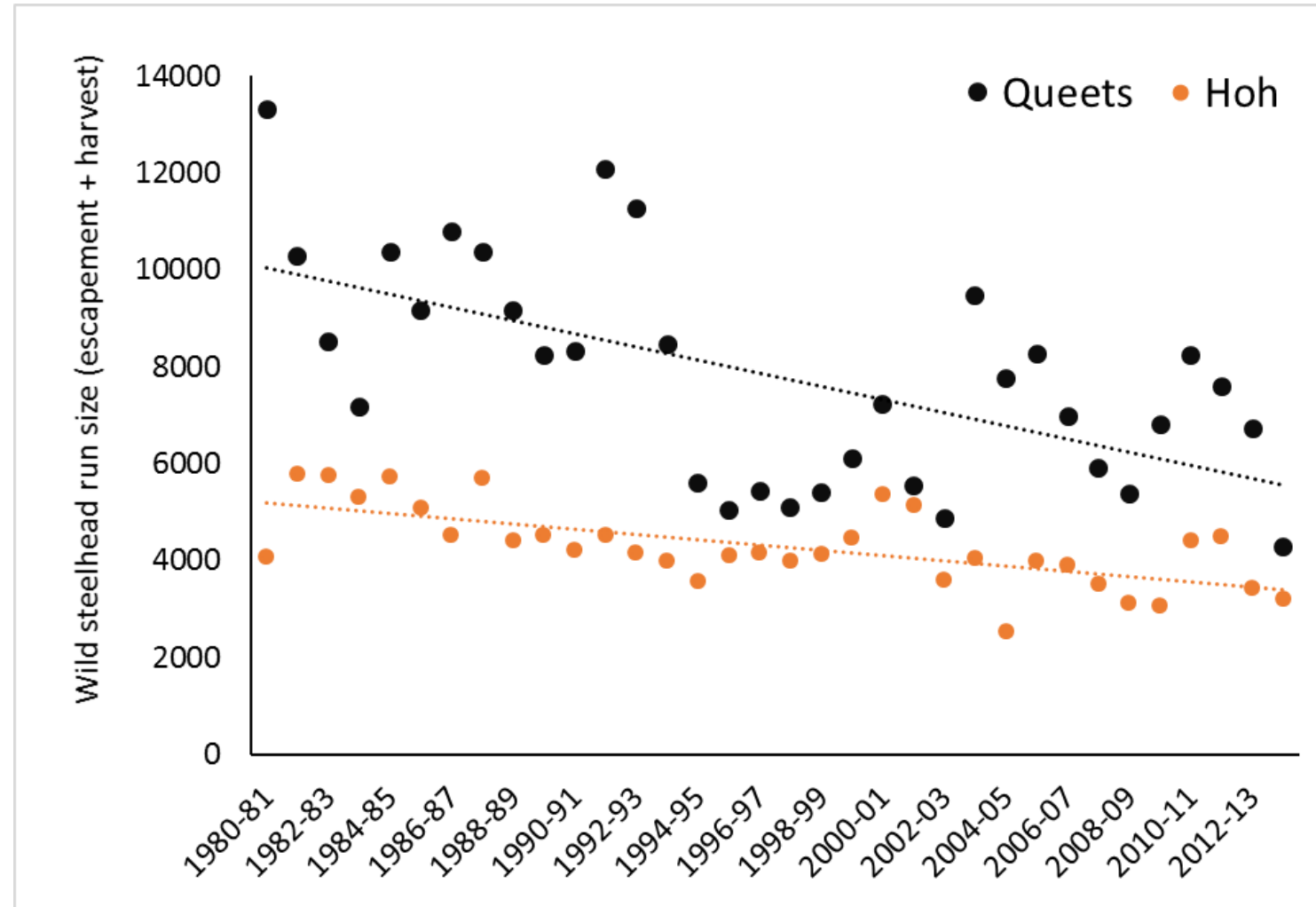
FB – 12,000, Instagram 8300, Twitter 600



An example of potential: Olympic Peninsula steelhead



- 🐟 Runs are in decline
- 🐟 Early run timing depleted
- 🐟 Escapement goals based on old science
- 🐟 No recovery targets



Aligning H's and improving management



- 👉 Lots of high quality habitat
 - Align that investment with management
- 👉 Intense fishing pressure
 - Entire run caught-and-released 2-3 times some years
 - Commercial harvest levels 25-40%
- 👉 Better manage ourselves as anglers
 - Get more fish on the spawning grounds









Changing sport fishing rules to help wild steelhead



- 🐟 TU and Wild Steelhead Initiative
 - Worked with anglers and State
 - Mobilized the steelhead army of anglers
- 🐟 Ban harvest of wild steelhead and rainbow trout
 - 92% in favor
- 🐟 Ban on bait and barbed hooks
 - 88% in favor
- 🐟 Ban on fishing from boat in upper Hoh
 - 77% in favor



Why protect rainbow trout too?







Other changes coming to the OP

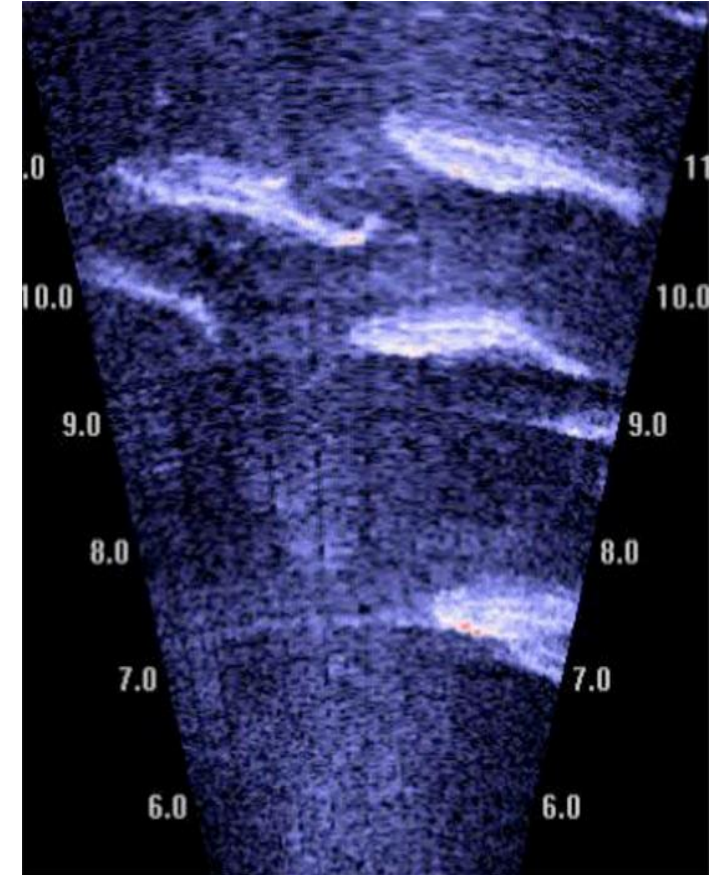


SONAR

- Improved estimates of run size
- Better accounting = better management

Revisiting escapement goals

- Based on analyses from 1980
- We are developing new models
 - Update escapement goals
 - Set recovery targets





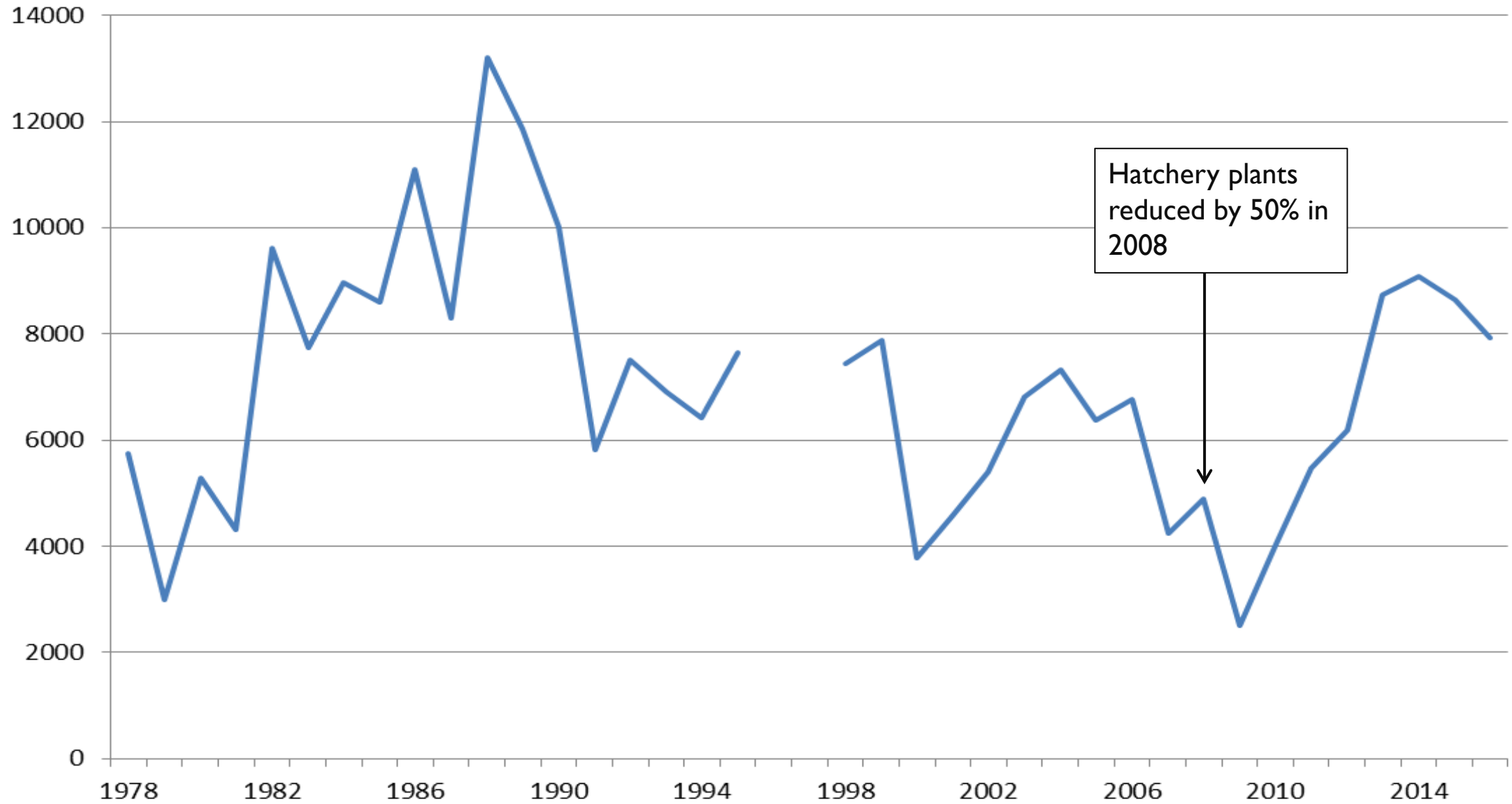
How can we help OP and provide more opportunity?



- 🐟 Reopen CnR fishery on Skagit River
 - Closed since 2010
 - One of most revered fisheries in PNW
 - Angling opportunity key to conservation
- 🐟 Run abundance increasing
 - Easily enough for a fishery
- 🐟 Important fishery for Puget Sound anglers



Skagit Wild Steelhead Escapement



Skagit River – Reopening a historic fishery



How we are doing this

 Occupy Skagit

 Agencies

- WDFW
- NOAA

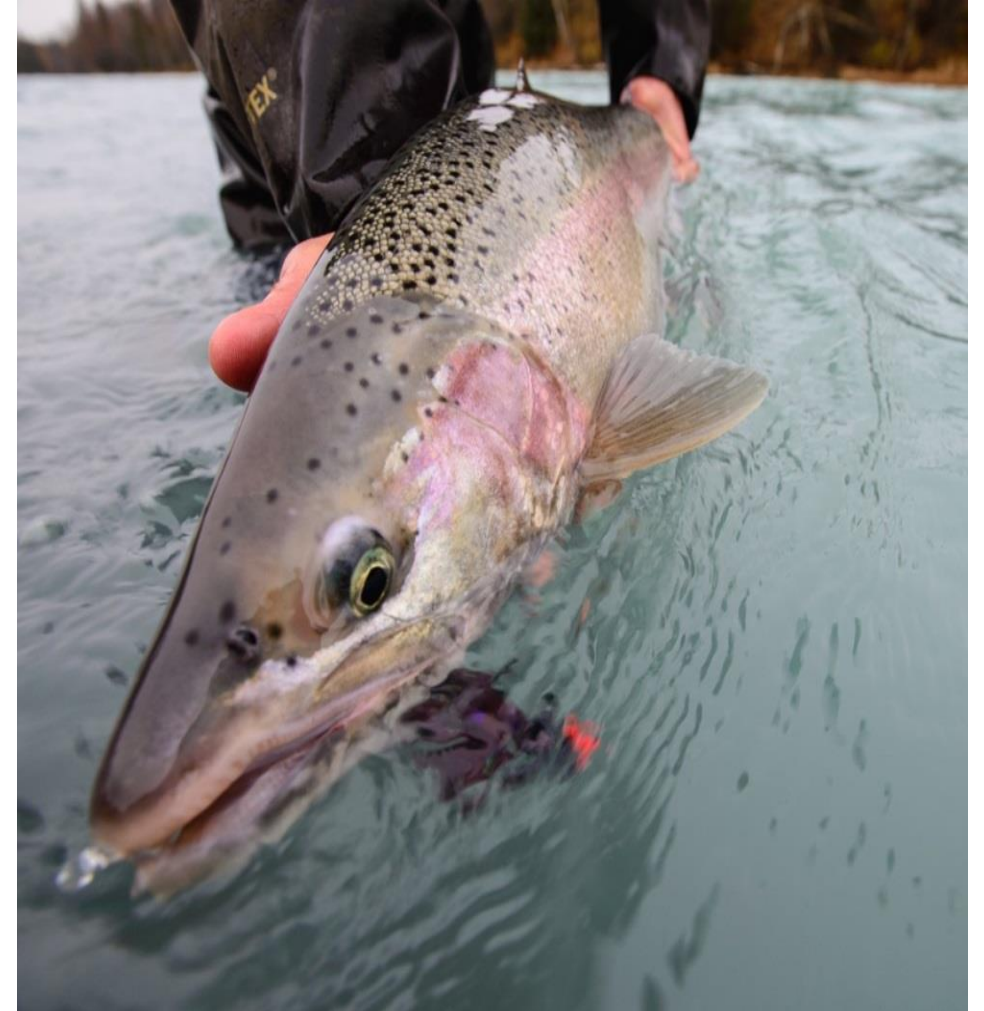
 Local communities and businesses



What is holding up the Skagit fishery?



- ☞ State and tribes submitted a fishery management plan
- ☞ NMFS has not approved it yet
- ☞ Need to get the process moving
 - Sooner the better
 - Steelhead army must get involved



Sign up, get involved, be heard – Open the Skagit!



- ✎ Sign our credo at www.wildsteelheaders.org or sign one of our sheets at the TU booth
- ✎ Sign our letter requesting that NMFS approve a fishery management plan
 - <http://www.wildsteelheaders.org/it-is-past-time-to-open-the-skagit/>



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United for the recovery of WILD STEELHEAD



Specialty Steelhead Tackle

