



February 14, 2020

Lisa Wood  
SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Habitat Program, Protection Division  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
PO Box 43200  
Olympia, WA 98504-3200

Re: Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) of Calawah Wild Steelhead Broodstock Program at the Bogachiel Hatchery

Ms. Wood:

On behalf of the Wild Steelhead Coalition and our over 3,500 members, I am writing to express support for the WDFW proposal “DNS 20-004: Calawah Wild Steelhead Broodstock Program at the Bogachiel Hatchery.” As a coalition of avid steelhead anglers, we support the increased opportunities this program will provide, contingent upon several criteria listed below being met.

The Wild Steelhead Coalition was deeply involved in the process to declare the Sol Duc River Washington’s first Wild Steelhead Gene Bank back in 2011. As a part of that agreement, the winter steelhead wild broodstock hatchery at Snider Creek was decommissioned. In those negotiations with your department and the Olympic Peninsula Guides Association, a Calawah River Wild Steelhead Broodstock Program was discussed. Standing by our commitment to see that through, we offer conditional support for this program assuming the following conditions are met:

1. We must monitor the effects of the broodstock program on wild fish and set strict criteria for performance. If the program fails to perform adequately and/or has an excessive impact on wild fish, it should be shuttered.
2. If the program performs well and the impacts on wild fish are tolerable, then the department should reduce Chambers Creek stock and move towards a larger implementation of the broodstock program.
3. If this transition does occur then the tribal fishery should shift towards March and April. This shifting of the tribal fishing season would reduce pressure on the fish run from November – January, allowing the critical front end of wild steelhead run to rebound.

These conditions, which entail a long-term vision for how these various aspects of the fishery work together, establish a holistic approach in the Bogachiel watershed that will support the recovery of wild fish as well as create enhanced opportunity for both tribal and recreational anglers. We support the proposed wild broodstock program presuming a complete approach, such as the one outlined above, is implemented. However, if the department fails to take comprehensive approach that closely monitors the success and impacts of the program on wild fish, then we will have serious concerns about this proposed Calawah wild steelhead broodstock program.



Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments on this important program and for your continued efforts to restore Washington's wild fish and recreational fisheries.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Stumpf". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Jonathan Stumpf  
Board Chair, Wild Steelhead Coalition