

NEWS RELEASE

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Industry, Agencies Partner to Grow Oregon Jobs

Oregon City, OR. – Last week the directors of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) and Travel Oregon met with the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association (NSIA) to initiate a pilot project designed to grow participation in the Columbia River summer steelhead fishery. The meeting was held in conjunction with the Pacific Northwest Sportsman’s Show in Portland, the third largest consumer show of its type in America.

NSIA representatives included major retailers such as Fred Meyer and Fishermen’s Marine and Outdoor, tackle manufacturers, outdoor advertising and media, and guides. Facilitated by ODFW, the participants brainstormed ways to leverage their collective communication platforms and resources for better outreach to attract new customers to this thriving but underappreciated fishery.

“Steelhead are one of Oregon’s most prized game fish, known for their fight,” said Todd Davidson, Director of Travel Oregon. “Great conditions and stable fishing seasons make summer steelhead a solid draw to Oregon for visiting anglers and their families.” Davidson continued, “The statewide potential of this pilot project is tremendous.”

Last year, nearly half a million of these summer steelhead, often nicknamed “freight trains” entered the Columbia River and were pursued by anglers from the bank and from boats. For 2011 the steelhead returns will be down, but only slightly. “This is the perfect fishery for the families that shop Fred Meyer,” said Cheryl Kindwall, sporting goods buyer. “A Columbia River steelhead is easily caught from the river’s many public beaches, turning a fishing trip into a picnic and fun family outing.”

For families and friends who prefer beach fishing, the Columbia River has many islands. The President of Northwest Guides and Angler’s Association, Bob Rees, envisions guided adventures to island beaches with transportation, licenses, gear and food chartered by the Association’s professional guides.

Focusing print media, social media, broadcast media and online media on a single fishery will produce results that can be benchmarked through increased license and boat registration sales, tackle and equipment sales, and angler trips. An event celebrating steelhead at a Columbia River park with how-to clinics for bank and boat anglers put on by local experts is being explored. Additionally, the group will work to develop a multifaceted online presence for fishing that will link where-to—boat launches and public beaches shown using mapping software and how-to—with videos and technical brochures. This site could link to guide and charter business and retail tackle outlets, as well as other hospitality services, such as hotels, wineries and other uniquely Oregon offerings.

Collectively, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Travel Oregon, the Oregon State Marine Board and the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association can pool their resources to grow jobs from a sustainable natural resource by generating demand for products and services related to sportfishing. Through license sales, these new customers will also fund the conservation mission of ODFW, ensuring that future generations of Oregonians and the visitors to our beautiful state can enjoy the unparalleled family and friend bonding that sportfishing supplies.

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About NSIA

The Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association was founded in 1993 by a collection of sport fishing industry business leaders who understood the need for a strong voice in the local, state, regional and federal governments. NSIA is not a sports club but an industry lobby group representing the business interests of the many members that depend on the sport of fishing for their livelihoods. For more information on Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association, visit www.nsiafishing.org