

# WILD SALMON CENTER

An aerial photograph of a wide, winding river flowing through a vast, lush landscape. The river is a deep blue-grey color, curving through dense green forests and wetlands. The surrounding land is a mix of vibrant green and golden-brown, suggesting a transition between forest and open wetland areas. The sky is a clear, pale blue with a few wispy clouds. The overall scene is a beautiful representation of a natural, undisturbed ecosystem.





Ben Knight

## LETTER FROM GUIDO

**"We are taking a long term approach, and building programs that will protect salmon strongholds in the face of climate change and other threats to biodiversity."**

June 2009

Dear Friend of the Wild Salmon Center,

In natural ecosystems there is often a species of plant or animal upon which most of the other species depend. Conservation biologists call this a *"keystone species."*

Salmon are the keystone species in the river systems that flow into the North Pacific Ocean. Their flesh feeds brown bears, wolves, eagles, otters, seals, sea lions, killer whales, even Siberian tigers, and hundreds of other species. Even after death, salmon support new life by providing vital nutrients to emerging offspring and the plants and trees that grow in the river valleys.

People also depend on salmon. Native people from the Pacific Northwest to Alaska to the Russian Far East rely on salmon runs for food, spiritual health, and cultural identity. The recreational and commercial salmon fishing industry generates more than \$5 billion dollars a year. And wild salmon rivers function literally as "protein factories," delivering hundreds of thousands of tons of healthy, sustainable and free protein to people and ecosystems each year.

This is not just another issue of a declining species. This is about the health of a vast region that extends from the coastal redwood forests of California north to the Arctic Circle and south to the temperate hardwood forests of Japan. If we care about the ecological, cultural and economic health of this incredible blue Pacific arc that we share with Canada, Russia, Korea, and Japan, we must care about the runs of wild salmon and their river ecosystems.

While the ecological and economic benefits of wild salmon are staggering, sometimes we are moved to act for reasons closer to the heart.

On a personal level, I care about salmon because I am an angler. I tie my own flies, smoke my own fish, and know which rivers to find a bright salmon or steelhead every month of the year.



I also care about salmon because I am a father. I have three sons, my eldest is eight years old and he has begun to join me on trips to the river. More than anything, I want him and his brothers to have the chance to wade and fish the same clear waters, and maybe someday take their own

children to the secret places we fish together.

But by the time my oldest son is my age, in 2050, there will be twice as many people living in the Pacific Northwest, demands on water resources will have increased dramatically, and our climate will be warmer.

**Is it realistic to hope that there will be healthy wild runs of salmon for my sons and their generation?**

I think the answer is yes. But it will take a determined effort by the people of the Pacific Rim to make decisions today about what kind of future they want to live in.

To safeguard wild salmon for our children we will need to restore our endangered salmon populations and our degraded river systems. We will also need to make real changes to the way we manage wild salmon populations. But no strategy will succeed without a focused effort to protect the last remaining healthy salmon ecosystems, the *"salmon strongholds."* These are our crown jewels.

The Wild Salmon Center is focused completely on this mission of protecting and conserving wild salmon strongholds, and **we are succeeding.** We are taking the long view, and building programs with partners throughout the North Pacific that will safeguard salmon strongholds for the long-term.

We would not be able to do this work without the help of you, our funders, our partners, our board of directors, and most importantly, our tireless and dedicated staff.

Thank you.

Guido Rahr  
President and Chief Executive



## North America

The Pacific Coast of North America was once one of the most important salmon producing regions on Earth. But 150 years of habitat loss, damming, overfishing, and pressures from fish hatcheries have reduced wild salmon and steelhead runs south of the Canadian border to less than 5% of their historic levels.



WSC Staff Photo

"We fully support entities like Wild Salmon Center and the proposed stronghold legislation, because both are cognizant of the need to preserve and protect species on a basin-wide basis, before they crash, while diversity of genetics still exists."

– Mel Moon, Quileute Indian Tribe

Above: Tom Miewald (WSC) discusses impacts of logging in Tillamook state forests.

Right: North Fork John Day River, Oregon.

Salmon are an icon of the Pacific Northwest. The decline of salmon runs has triggered a broad regional effort to recover salmon populations that are listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). But the cost of recovery is high, and no salmon strategy will work unless there is also an effort to protect the region's last remaining *healthy* salmon ecosystems. This is a fundamentally new approach to salmon conservation, and it will take a new level of collaboration from state and federal agencies, as well as organizations with expertise in land acquisition and management.

To achieve this ambitious goal, Wild Salmon Center has established the **Salmon Stronghold Partnership** (Partnership). The Partnership is a central component of WSC's North American program strategy and seeks to affect change in salmon conservation by promoting the protection and restoration of our *last, best wild salmon ecosystems* throughout Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, and Alaska. It consists of federal, state, tribal and local governments, land managers, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders in stronghold river basins working together to implement high-value conservation projects across jurisdictional and political boundaries. This *stronghold approach* is designed to complement existing programs that seek to recover endangered and threatened salmon populations; both are necessary for the long-term viability of the species.

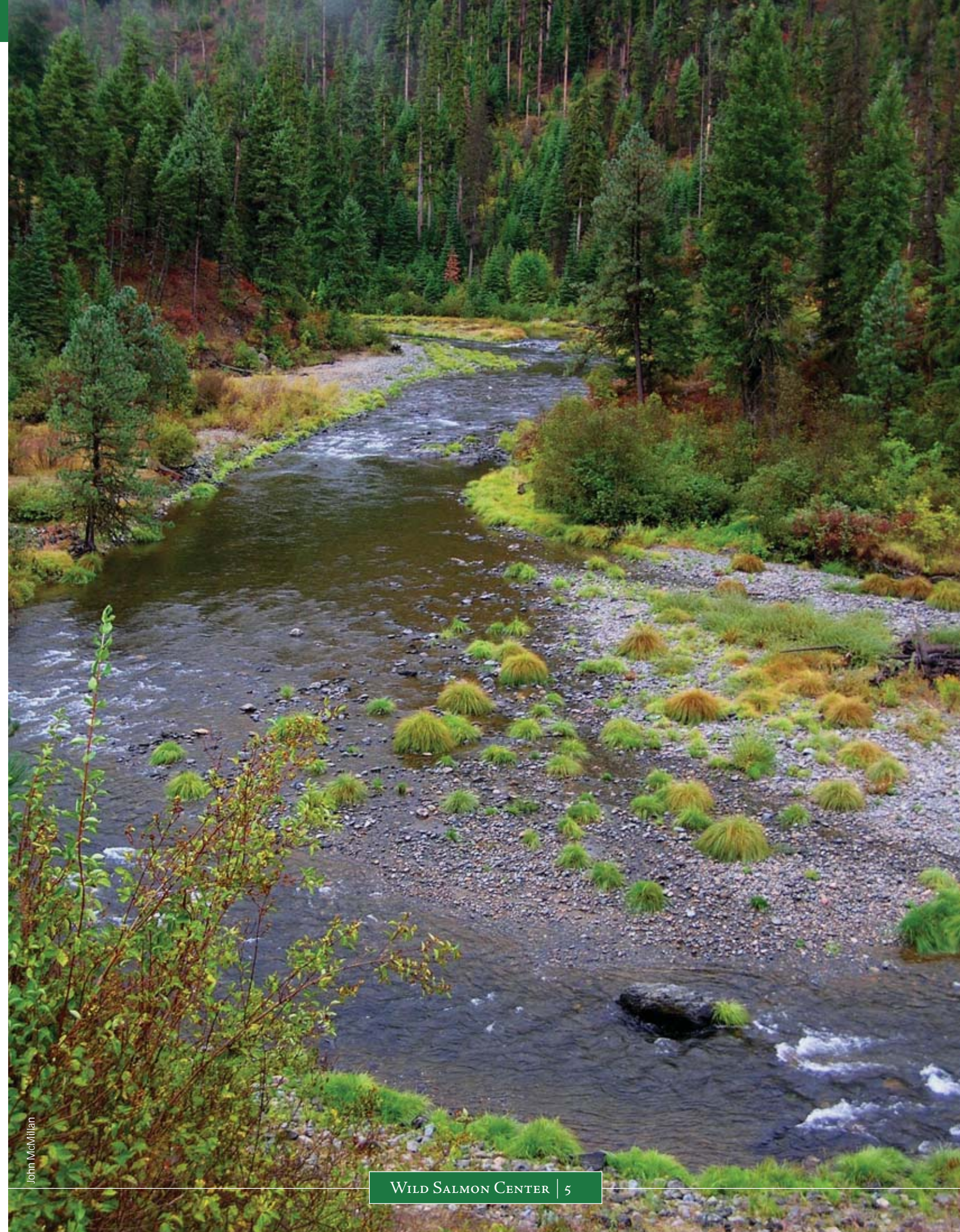
### North America Stronghold River Facts

**Salmon Stronghold:** a watershed, multiple watersheds, or other defined spatial unit where salmon populations are strong, diverse, and the habitat has a high intrinsic potential to support a particular species, or suite of species.

The **Wenatchee River (WA)** is home to the second strongest remaining sockeye population in the lower 48 states, representing a unique genetic source in the Upper Columbia River Basin.

The **John Day River (OR)** is the longest undammed river in the Columbia Basin and supports the strongest runs of wild summer steelhead and spring Chinook in the Mid-Columbia ecoregion.

The **Smith River (CA)** is California's only remaining major undammed river system and supports abundant, and healthy populations of winter steelhead and fall Chinook.



John McMillan



## North America Programs



### PARTNER PROFILE Trout Unlimited Salmon Stronghold Partnership

*Wild Salmon Center and Trout Unlimited (TU) are expanding our alliance on a number of strategic initiatives to forward wild salmon conservation in North America.*

*In Washington DC, WSC and TU are working closely to advance the Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act. In Alaska, we are collaborating on the Pebble Mine Report, a scientific summary of the potential ecological impacts posed by the proposed Pebble Mine project on the Bristol Bay watershed and its extraordinary salmon runs. In California, we are collaborating to identify salmon strongholds and build support for their protection. And in Washington State we are integrating our policies and action plans on salmon harvest, hatchery reform, and habitat conservation.*

**"I am grateful for all the input and collaboration from key stakeholders . . . I am especially grateful for the input from the Quileute Tribe, the Wild Salmon Center, and Bill Ruckelshaus."**

*– U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) in her introductory statement of the Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act*



The Smith River, California's only remaining major undammed river system, represents an important stronghold for winter steelhead and fall Chinook.

### PARTNERSHIP CONSERVATION MILESTONES

In its first full year of operation, the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership convened over 80 partners for its annual meeting, drafted a strategic plan, and officially **endorsed nine stronghold river basins**. To identify and prioritize salmon strongholds, WSC developed a tool that incorporates species abundance and diversity from over 900 geographically distinct salmon populations throughout North America.

Wild Salmon Center achieved another significant milestone for the North America Program with the introduction of

the **Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act**. This bipartisan legislation was introduced by Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) in the U.S. Senate, and Representatives Mike Thompson (D-CA 1<sup>st</sup>) and Mike Simpson (R-ID 2<sup>nd</sup>) in the U.S. House. If passed, this Act will establish a new, proactive policy to expand federal support and resources for the protection and restoration of North America's healthiest Pacific salmon ecosystems. It will also create a grants program to support locally-led, high value cooperative conservation in salmon stronghold basins, creating green jobs and enhancing coordination among stakeholders across jurisdictional boundaries.

Left: Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and WSC President Guido Rahr celebrate the introduction of the Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act with partners at WSC headquarters in Portland, Oregon.

Left Above: Robyn Thorson (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), Laurele Fulkerson (WSC), and Rob Masonis (Trout Unlimited) discuss Stronghold Legislation.

### 2008 Highlights

- **Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act of 2008** was introduced with co-sponsorship from eight West Coast Senators.
- **Nine stronghold river basins** were endorsed last year, providing the foundation for future identification of priority watersheds and local community engagement.
- **Released reports** on salmon ecosystem analyses of the Hoh River in Washington and the Oregon North Coast that are being used to prioritize habitat and inform conservation activities.



WSC Staff Photo



## North America Programs

### KEY NORTH AMERICAN RIVER BASIN MILESTONES



Science team on the Hoh.

Washington State's magnificent **Olympic Peninsula** hosts some of the most productive salmon rivers in the Pacific Northwest. Last year WSC released the Hoh River Tributary Report, a comprehensive watershed level analysis of Pacific salmon habitat in the basin.

This report has already helped direct the acquisition of 13 land

parcels, and will guide partners as they continue to prioritize habitat restoration projects, conservation easements, and land acquisitions to benefit wild salmon and steelhead populations. Additionally, WSC provided key testimony at Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission hearings in support of conservation policies that were subsequently adopted to protect and rebuild wild steelhead stocks throughout Washington State.

**The Oregon North Coast**, which encompasses the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests, is the largest expanse of unprotected, contiguous coastal rainforest south of the Olympic Peninsula and one of the most important remaining strongholds for wild salmon and steelhead. In response to proposals to convert these forests into industrial tree farms and increase clear cutting, WSC helped complete the Oregon North Coast Salmon Conservation Assessment, a

Devona Ensmenger (WSC) in the Olympic Peninsula describing the biological elements of a salmon ecosystem to local students.



Jeff Mishler

Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests combine to represent the largest expanse of unprotected, contiguous coastal rainforest south of the Olympic Peninsula and one of the most important remaining strongholds for wild salmon and steelhead.

forward-looking plan for Northwest Oregon's forests that identifies habitat refuges for salmon and other species as well as areas suitable for logging. WSC analyzed the effects of timber harvest increases on sensitive watersheds and proposed that clear cutting be eliminated on 50% of the state forest lands and that 35% of state forests (totaling 200,000 acres) be managed with enhanced protections for salmon and other aquatic species. These findings have been included in management proposals submitted to the Oregon Department of Forestry and will be considered for adoption in 2009.

The Salmonberry River is one of the healthiest wild winter steelhead streams in Oregon. The Tillamook Railroad follows the Salmonberry from its mouth upstream 20 miles into the river's headwaters. In 2008, catastrophic floods washed much of the railroad away sending tons of mud and sediment into the river, burying habitat that is critical for steelhead and salmon. WSC submitted a report

to Governor Ted Kulongoski and Oregon state fishery managers recommending that the railroad not be rebuilt. Taking into account economic considerations, as well as the long-term impacts on the Salmonberry's wild steelhead and salmon, the Port of Tillamook announced it would not rebuild the railroad.

**The John Day River** in the Columbia River Basin is a key stronghold for healthy populations of native summer steelhead and spring Chinook. WSC is playing a leadership role in the recently formed Lower John Day Conservation Workgroup, a partnership of conservation organizations, soil and water conservation districts, counties, and landowners committed to conservation throughout the basin. With our support, the Workgroup has completed several restoration projects in the John Day's lower basin tributaries in order to promote natural stream processes and allow steelhead to move freely upstream to spawn. WSC also successfully helped the Workgroup advance an

agreement to permanently restore summer flows to the lower two miles of Rudio Creek, an important spawning and rearing tributary of the John Day's North Fork.

**Bristol Bay, Alaska** and its primary tributaries, the Nushagak and Kvichak rivers, represent the most productive strongholds for salmon in North America, producing more sockeye than any place on Earth. The Pebble Mine, an enormous gold and copper mine proposed for development at the headwaters of Bristol Bay, poses significant threats to the long-standing ecological and economic viability of this salmon-rich region. WSC and Trout Unlimited are collaborating on the development and publication of a technical report that examines the threats posed by a mining operation of this magnitude on the health and productivity of the Bristol Bay Basin and neighboring watersheds.



## WILD SALMON CENTER PROGRAMS

# Kamchatka

The Kamchatka Peninsula in the Russian Far East is one of the last, great unspoiled natural wonders of the world. With 28 active volcanoes, endless expanses of mountains, valleys, lakes, wetlands, and forests as well as thousands of miles of virtually untouched rivers, it is truly one of the most spectacular wilderness areas along the Pacific Rim.

The peninsula is comparable to California in land mass, but has roughly 1% of its population and only one passable road to the Russian mainland. Kamchatka's salmon runs, long protected by virtue of their remoteness, are now facing serious threats from oil and gas development, mining, dam building, and an unprecedented wave of illegal fishing. The poaching of spawning salmon for caviar, also known as "ikra," has reached epidemic levels, and according to a recent report, at least 55,000 tons of salmon (the equivalent of five times the annual catch of Washington state) were harvested illegally in 2007. WSC and our Russian partners are working to protect salmon habitat and reduce poaching pressure in these remarkable river basins.

Research team on the Kol River collect salmonid life cycle data.



### CONSERVATION MILESTONES

Wild Salmon Center is collaborating with our partner in Kamchatka, Wild Fishes and Biodiversity Foundation (WFBF), to establish protected areas ("zakazniks") on the peninsula's most important salmon watersheds. The first of these "salmon protected areas" was established in 2006 to protect the 550,000 acre Kol River Basin. WFBF has also signed a three-way agreement with the Kamchatka Ministry of Natural Resources and the Kamchatka Pacific Institute of Geography to advance the Kamchatka Protected Area Development Plan. This plan will guide the future creation of four additional salmon refuges on the peninsula: the Opala, Oblukovina, Utkholok/Kvachina, and Zhupanova — in all, over 6,000,000 acres of pristine wild salmon ecosystems.

**"Without the efforts of the Wild Salmon Center, we would never have the Kol River Salmon Refuge."**

— Vladimir Belyaev, Director of the Department of Science and Education, Russian Federal Agency for Fisheries

The Utkholok River, currently in the process of becoming a protected area, is one of the most productive steelhead rivers in Kamchatka.

WSC and our Russian partners are working to ensure the Kol River Salmon Refuge, and future protected areas, are managed to enforce anti-poaching activities and support sustainable commercial fishing efforts.

Because Kamchatka features virtually untouched wilderness, it is also an ideal laboratory to conduct wild salmon research. The **biostation** on the Kol River Salmon Refuge has served as a platform for this research, which has been led by scientists from Moscow State University and the University of Montana. Their findings have shown that the Kol is one of the most productive and diverse salmon rivers ever studied, and data from this project are being used to define conservation success and priorities for other rivers in Kamchatka and around the Pacific Rim.

The Kol River's inherent ecological and biological value created an opportunity to go one step further. In partnership with the University of Vermont Gund Institute, WSC released the Kol River Salmon Refuge's Ecosystem Services report. This study is the first attempt to approximate the economic value of the "ecosystem services" associated with a healthy wild salmon river. These services include carbon sequestration,

### 2008 Highlights

- **Kamchatka Protected Area Development Plan** will guide all future Protected Area creation in the Kamchatka Peninsula.
- **Salmon protected area** nomination has been completed for the Opala and Oblukovina rivers and two additional salmon refuges are also under consideration.
- **WSC worked with National Geographic Magazine** to support development of a feature article highlighting key salmon rivers in Kamchatka and issues affecting their long-term viability.

water filtration, protein delivery, and other economic benefits that healthy ecosystems contribute but have not been previously quantified. The Kol report and similar studies will provide WSC and its Russian partners with the preliminary information needed to create incentive based market mechanisms to support wild salmon conservation.



## Sakhalin Island

Russia's largest island, Sakhalin, is the site of some of the most important salmon river systems in the Russian Far East. Millions of pink, chum, cherry and coho salmon, dolly Varden, white spotted char, as well as the ancient and endangered Sakhalin taimen, return to Sakhalin's rivers each year.



"There is a lot of work ahead of us but the results will confirm that in joining forces, the community and governing bodies can achieve more than working alone."

– Deputy Sergei Sedov, Sakhalin Regional Duma member

Above: Watershed Council Exchange participants and Council members discuss methods for improving conservation and restoration of salmon habitats.

Right: An auger (or screw) trap is one of the new monitoring methods being used to count outmigrating salmon on the Taranai River.

Sakhalin is also home to the largest integrated natural gas and oil development project in the Western Pacific. In 2004, WSC brought together energy companies, indigenous groups, commercial fishermen, local government, and other stakeholders to develop a broad scale conservation strategy called the **Sakhalin Salmon Initiative (SSI)**. The SSI is managed by the Sakhalin-based SSI Center and overseen by a Coordinating Committee of 23 organizations that operate locally, including the Sakhalin Oblast Administration, the governing body on the island.

In early 2008, WSC and the Sakhalin Energy Investment Company Ltd. (SEIC) established a landmark agreement that funds a three-year, \$8.8 million program for wild salmon conservation efforts on Sakhalin Island. The conservation work is conducted through local SSI partners with a focus on the following key areas: creation of a watershed council network, development of an island-wide salmonid conservation plan and monitoring program, support of sustainable fisheries efforts, and education initiatives including the construction of an aquatic education center.

WSC and its SSI partners are committed to promoting the conservation and sustainable use of the island's wild salmon ecosystems and are working to ensure that habitat is protected and restored, poaching reduced, and that wild salmon production continues in perpetuity for the long-term benefit of Sakhalin's people and communities.

### Sakhalin Island Facts

About the size of Massachusetts, Sakhalin is home to 11 salmonid species and is the third most abundant salmon region in the world after Alaska and Kamchatka.

**Stronghold Rivers:** *Langry, Bolshaya, Vengeri, Pursh-Pursh, Kura, Naicha, Dagi*

**Salmon Species:** *Pink, chum, coho, masu/cherry, sockeye;*  
**Additional salmonid species:** *dolly Varden, kundja, lenok, Arctic grayling, Amur whitefish, Siberian and Sakhalin taimen*

**Indigenous People:** *Nivkh, Orok, Evenk*

**Jobs:** *50% of rural communities employed by salmon fisheries*





## Sakhalin Salmon Initiative



### PARTNER PROFILE

#### The Freshwater Trust Salmon Watch Education Program

*With our ongoing partnership with The Freshwater Trust, WSC has been able to expand our conservation efforts in Sakhalin.*

*The Freshwater Trust's Salmon Watch curriculum, a salmon ecology and biology education program, was adapted for Sakhalin students and teachers. This partnership offers students and professionals from Russia and Oregon an opportunity to share and learn about salmon ecosystem conservation from an international perspective. In 2008 a new education center opened offering advanced scientific training.*

Above: New education center at Sakhalin State University.

Below: As part of the Salmon Watch curriculum, students on Sakhalin Island help clean up the coastline and riverbanks.

**"Creating lasting international relationships between Russian and Oregon students, and preparing them with the knowledge and skills they will need to work collaboratively with their neighbors, is key to safeguarding wild salmon ecosystems."**

*– Traci Price, Director, Healthy Waters Institute, The Freshwater Trust*



SSI Center

Sakhalin Island and its surrounding waters contain both some of the Pacific Rim's rarest salmon species and some of the most commercially valuable populations of salmon.

### CONSERVATION MILESTONES

In 2008, the Sakhalin Salmon Initiative made important progress in developing regional watershed councils and furthering monitoring efforts in key river basins.

The formation of **watershed councils** is gaining traction on the island with three of Sakhalin's municipal regions having successfully created councils. Over the course of the year, the Aniva and Smirnikhovsk watershed councils have launched independent conservation programs in their respective regions including community anti-poaching efforts, fish passage restoration (the first known watershed restoration project in the Russian Far East), and salmon-oriented education initiatives.

The SSI Center has also been making important strides in its monitoring efforts, and collaborated with Sakhalin Fisheries and Oceanography Institute (SakhNIRO) and Federal Fisheries Agency (Sakhalinrybvod) to establish an **island-wide monitoring plan** to determine status and detect trends among six salmonid species and their habitat condition.

The first year of this monitoring plan was completed with successful field work conducted on the Taranai, Kura and Naicha rivers of the Aniva Bay region. A rotating smolt trap, the first to be used on Sakhalin Island, was used to monitor juvenile outmigration. Local scientists were trained in remote sensing habitat analysis using the most advanced monitoring and tracking technology.

WSC, SSI Center and our other partners have also continued efforts to protect and conserve Sakhalin Island's most outstanding salmon river basins. Two research expeditions were conducted on the **Langry and the Bolshaya** rivers, and both trips yielded important data that were synthesized and drafted into protected area nomination proposal documents. Simultaneously, WSC and the SSI Center developed a conservation action plan for the Langry River region that resulted in a community anti-poaching effort focused on protecting wild runs of pink and chum salmon.

### 2008 Highlights

- **Two scientific expeditions** were conducted that will provide data for a conservation plan for the Langry and Bolshaya River basins.
- **The first year of a successful public/private regional salmonid monitoring program** was completed in partnership with SakhNIRO and Sakhalinrybvod.
- **The formation of the first watershed councils** on Sakhalin is resulting in new anti-poaching efforts, fish passage restoration, and education initiatives.



SSI Center



## WILD SALMON CENTER PROGRAMS

### Khabarovsk Region

Along the remote eastern coast of Russia, between the clear blue waters of the Sea of Japan to the south and the rugged landscapes of Magadan to the north, lies a pristine and beautiful region known as Khabarovsk.

Khabarovsk offers one of the largest remaining expanses of unfragmented temperate rainforest in the North Pacific. These primeval forests are home to a tremendous diversity of plant and animal species including Brown bears and Siberian tigers. Its rivers host a rich assemblage of salmon, char and taimen species that flow from the headwaters of the Amur east into the Sea of Okhotsk.

"By bringing together all their partners from the Russian Far East, the Wild Salmon Center creates an opportunity for an exchange of ideas and brings their expertise of stronghold protected area strategies."

— Alexander Kulikov, Director of the Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation

Seals off the coast of the Shantar Islands — one of many species that depend on salmon for survival.



Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation

### CONSERVATION MILESTONES

With our Russian partners, we have conducted assessments of the biological diversity, habitat quality, and conservation potential of priority river basins in Khabarovsk, and are working towards advancing salmon ecosystem conservation, promoting sustainable use of natural resources and creating local conservation capacity.

In partnership with the Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation (KWF), WSC made significant progress in the past year toward the creation of three wild salmon protected areas in the Khabarovsk Region. If successful, over one million acres of pristine wilderness, including the Shantar Islands and most of the Koppi and Nimelen Rivers, will be safeguarded.

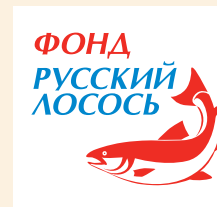
Through the efforts of the KWF, the total acreage for the proposed **Koppi River Protected Area** (PA) was expanded to include important salmonid spawning and rearing tributaries within the watershed and other critical habitat for fish and wildlife. A new watershed council, comprised of government, academic and NGO representatives within the Khabarovsk Region, will help develop conservation and management planning for the Koppi PA. This will help

WSC is working with our Russian partners to protect one million acres of temperate rainforest and wild salmon rivers, including the Nimelen River.

ensure the Koppi PA conserves its wild salmon resources for the long-term and maintains broad support from the District government and other stakeholders in the region.

In the Shantar Islands, an extremely biologically diverse and unique archipelago, preliminary approval was secured for a National Park proposal. A federal commission has been established to assess the nomination documents, and if favorable, the **Shantar Islands National Park** could be recognized by the Khabarovsk government as early as 2010.

WSC and the KWF is also moving forward with plans to create a federal fisheries reserve, a new type of federal protected area mandated by Russian fishery law, on the **Nimelen River**. The first of two planned scoping expeditions was successfully conducted in 2008 and a variety of data were collected that will help inform the reserve nomination process for the Nimelen. WSC and its Russian partners are navigating the other necessary steps to create this federal protected area reserve on the Nimelen River in hopes that this unique and remarkable wild salmon ecosystem will be managed and regulated under robust federal fisheries law.



### The Russian Salmon Fund

The Russian Salmon Fund (RSF) was founded as an all-Russian vehicle to work with government, businesses and NGOs to promote conservation and the sustainable use of salmon throughout the Russian Far East. The RSF Board of Trustees was established with high ranking Russian government officials, business leaders, and key academicians and stakeholders providing leadership. In 2008, the RSF held its opening ceremony in Moscow and was well attended by important representatives from the Russian government and conservation movement.



## State of the Salmon

The Wild Salmon Center and Ecotrust created State of the Salmon (SoS) to track the health, status and trends of wild salmon populations, and inform salmon management and conservation improvements across the Pacific Rim.

"The challenges are daunting ...but there has been a real effort to focus on solutions. Wild Salmon Center is providing a leadership role in salmon conservation and the Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council is now undertaking a review to see how the 'strongholds' concept might be used in Canada to complement existing strategies."

– Mark Angelo, Chair, Rivers Institute at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (2009 State of the Salmon Conference)

Since its inception in 2003, SoS remains the only non-governmental program dedicated to evaluating status and conservation challenges of wild North Pacific salmon across the six nations that comprise their entire range.



In 2008 the Salmonid Specialist Group (SSG) of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), led by SoS conservation biologist Dr. Pete Rand, completed a range-wide assessment of sockeye salmon. As a result, the IUCN added

the first anadromous (sea run) Pacific salmon species to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. While the assessment characterized current status of sockeye as a species of 'Least Concern', nearly one-quarter of the world's sockeye salmon subpopulations were listed as threatened or endangered. This IUCN assessment established a new system of cataloguing the tremendous biodiversity of Pacific salmon and can be used to assess the overall condition of wild salmon based on international standards.

Sockeye salmon are the first anadromous (sea run) Pacific salmon to be added to the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species.

### 2008 Highlights

- The Salmonid Specialist Group conducted range-wide research resulting in the addition of the first anadromous Pacific salmon to IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species.
- State of the Salmon Conference attracted over 400 attendees from six nations to discuss the latest challenges and opportunities for wild salmon conservation.

Nearly 400 people gathered for the 2009 State of the Salmon Conference in Vancouver, British Columbia. The conference was likened to "the Olympics of Pacific salmon conservation" with attendees and speakers hailing from Korea, Japan, Russia, Canada, and the United States. In this unique international forum, scientists and resource managers, educators and artists, tribal and First Nations representatives, and non-governmental conservationists found common ground and inspiration for creating a more holistic approach to management and for exploring solutions to the most pressing challenges in wild salmon conservation.

Above Left: Dr. Pete Rand of the Salmonid Specialist Group presents research on sockeye salmon at the IUCN conference in Barcelona.



Scientific monitoring on the Sarufutsu River, Japan.

## Japan

The Wild Salmon Center is collaborating with Oji Paper Company, the largest paper company in Japan, and local partners on efforts to create a protected area in the Sarufutsu River Basin in Hokkaido, Japan. The proposed Sarufutsu Biodiversity Conservation Forest (BCF) would protect spawning and rearing habitat for the critically endangered sea-run taimen and other wild salmonids in one of the last free-flowing rivers in Japan.

WSC and our regional partners have also supported the Hokkaido government's development of a new regulatory system to protect critically endangered sea-run taimen in Hokkaido Island. Under this new regulation, the Hokkaido government will apply the "Rare Species Conservation Act" to taimen (previously only applied to mammals and birds) and ban all sport fishing on rivers with highly threatened sub-populations of taimen, including the Shirebetsu and Shari rivers. Watersheds with healthy populations, such as the Sarufutsu River, will continue to rely on voluntary catch and release regulations.



Ben Knight



WILD SALMON CENTER PROGRAMS

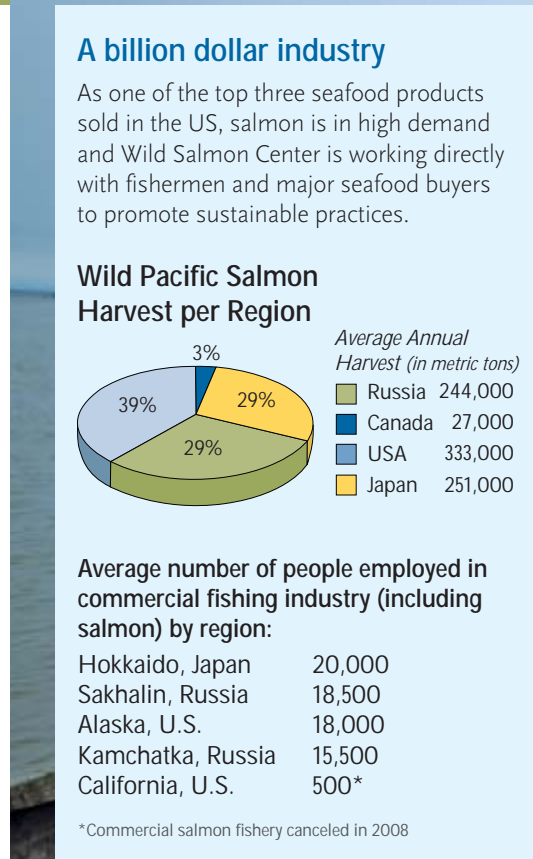
# Sustainable Fisheries

Salmon inspire us with their beauty and resilience. However, it is easy to forget that for millions of people salmon are — first and foremost — food. To the seafood industry, salmon are a highly sought after commodity and a significant source of revenue. And for tens of thousands of salmon fishermen across the Pacific Rim, salmon are the foundation of their livelihoods and their communities.

"We believe the partnership between Wild Salmon Center and Sustainable Fisheries Partnership will foster greater understanding of the role the marketplace can play in protecting valuable wild salmon stocks."

— Jim Cannon, President, Sustainable Fisheries Partnership

Sustainability can provide a competitive advantage to fishermen and seafood retailers, such as this one in Kamchatka.



Ben Knight



Over 75,000 people depend on the commercial fishing industry for their livelihood, including these fishermen in Bristol Bay, Alaska.

## PROGRESS THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Our goal is to ensure that enough fish return to spawn in the great salmon rivers of the North Pacific. Finding common ground between the interests of wild salmon conservation groups and a billion-dollar-a-year salmon industry is a critical stepping stone to the long-term viability of this amazing species. We all benefit from healthy salmon ecosystems that support abundant salmon runs.

Over the past several years, WSC has developed a program to harness the power of the global marketplace to advance the principles of sustainable salmon fisheries in Asia. We are doing this by using market incentives such as the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification and the interest of major seafood buyers and retailers in sustainability. These tools can help motivate fishermen to adopt sustainable practices.

We are also capitalizing on our relationships with key stakeholders in Russia and Japan, our technical and scientific capacity, and our strategic partnerships to leverage change.

WSC is just one organization among many with an interest in the future of Pacific salmon. We recognize that we need strategic partnerships to advance sustainable fisheries. As such, we continue to build on established relationships while creating new and unconventional relationships with groups that share common interests including: World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Sustainable Fisheries Partnership, Marine Stewardship Council, Hokkaido Federation of Fishermen's Cooperative, Sakhalin Regional Administration, as well as major seafood buyers and retailers.

## 2008 Highlights

- The largest Marine Stewardship Council project to date for Russian salmon was completed with a pre-assessment of Sakhalin's pink and chum fishery.
- Japan's first ever Wild Salmon Policy was developed by the Hokkaido Government with WSC assistance.
- Supported a region-wide assessment of Hokkaido wild chum stock abundance, the first in 50 years.
- WSC hosted tours to the Russian Far East with major seafood buyers to promote sustainable practices in salmon fisheries.
- WSC convened several meetings, including the second Annual Sustainable Salmon Fisheries Coalition where key players in NGO, private, and government sectors were brought together to advance sustainable salmon fisheries in Russia.



# The North Pacific Ecosystem

## Why Salmon?

Salmon are key to the ecological and economic health of the North Pacific. When we conserve salmon we protect clean water, ensure food security, support food webs, promote sustainable economies and communities, preserve cultural identity, and protect the intrinsic beauty of wild places.



- Shantar Islands
- Tugur & Nimelen
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- Taranai, Kura and Naicha
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- Shiretoko
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- Bering Sea
- Wenatchee
- Hoh, Queets/Quinault, & Quillayute
- Lemhi
- Nehalem & Tillamook
- Sandy
- Siletz
- John Day
- Rogue, Smith, Illinois, & Elk



WSC Staff Photo

### Sakhalin Island

The sea-run taimen, one of the largest of the salmonid species, can weigh over 80 pounds, is critically endangered and only found in select rivers in Japan, the Russian Far East mainland, and Sakhalin.

The Sakhalin Salmon Initiative is working to create watershed councils in five island districts that will promote education and anti-poaching efforts.



Ken Morrish, Fly Water Travel

### Kol Basin, Kamchatka

Approximately one quarter of all Pacific salmon make their way through the rivers and streams of the Kamchatka Peninsula each year.

WSC is working with Russian partners to create a network of protected areas that will safeguard salmon abundance and diversity. The Kol River Salmon Refuge was created in 2006 and three more protected areas are anticipated by 2010.



Ben Knight

### Bristol Bay, Alaska

Indigenous and local people around the Nushagak and Kvichak rivers depend on salmon for sustenance and livelihood.

WSC is leading development of a technical report evaluating the potential ecological impacts of Alaska's proposed Pebble Mine on the Bristol Bay watershed and its extraordinary salmon runs.



Jeff Mishler

### Tillamook, Oregon

In the coastal mountains of Oregon lie the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests, a 550,000 acre temperate rainforest that includes some of the region's most important wild salmon rivers.

WSC is leading a coalition to permanently protect "salmon anchor habitats" and prevent dramatic increases in clear cutting and road building that would threaten salmon habitat and the Tillamook's biodiversity.



# Statement of Activities

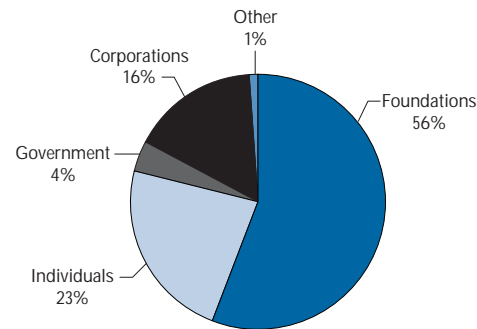
For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2008

	2008
	<i>In thousands</i>
<b>REVENUE</b>	
Foundations	\$5,125
Individuals	2,085
Governments	348
Corporations	1,463
Investments and other income	107
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>9,128</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	
Program Services:	
North America Program	1,198
Western Pacific Program	3,603
Sustainable Fisheries	485
Conservation Finance	681
State of the Salmon	490
Conservation Design & Monitoring	105
Support Services:	
Management and General	673
Development and Fundraising	500
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>7,735</b>
Change in net assets from operations	1,483
Net assets at the beginning of the year	4,175
<b>Net assets at the end of the year</b>	<b>\$5,658</b>

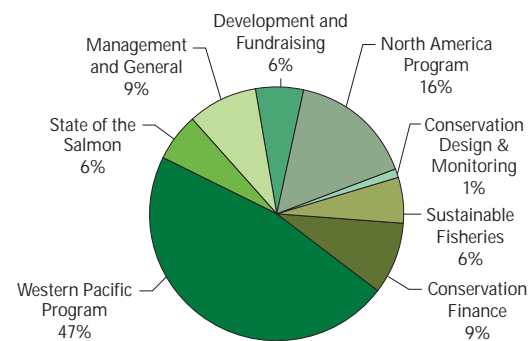


Wild Salmon Center has been awarded The Independent Charities' "Best in America" Seal of Excellence by the Independent Charities of America and Local Independent Charities of America. This signifies that, upon rigorous independent review, the organization met the highest standards of public accountability, as well as program and cost effectiveness.

### FY 2008 Operation Revenue: \$9,128,000



### FY 2008 Total Expenses: \$7,735,000



Right: Brown bears are one of many species that depend on salmon. There are an estimated 15,000 in Kamchatka and 35,000-45,000 in Alaska.





## PARTNERS

### United States

Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Audubon Society of Portland  
Bonneville Power Administration  
Bureau of Land Management  
California Department of Fish and Game  
California Trout  
Coast Range Association  
Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission  
The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians  
The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs  
The Conservation Angler  
Conservation International  
CIPAM - Consortium for Int'l Protected Area Management  
Earth System's Institute  
Ecotrust  
Environmental Protection Agency  
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Hoh Tribe  
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International Socio-Ecological Union  
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ISAR-Far East (Vladivostok)  
Kamchatka Ecotourism Society  
Kamchatka League of Independent Experts  
Kamchatka Pacific Institute of Geography  
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**"The Wild Salmon Center's progress on their goals is due in large part to their clear understanding of the scientific, economic and social factors that influence wild salmon and the organization's ability to create partnerships centered on producing proactive results."**

*– Mike Finley, President, Turner Foundation*

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Right: Christina Friedle, WSC Conservation Geographer, collecting water quality data at Frying Pan Lake, located near the proposed Pebble Mine site in Alaska.



WSC Staff Photo



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James Wolfensohn and Ted Turner in Kamchatka.

**"As we grapple with the great environmental challenges of our time—climate change, increasing demands on freshwater, declining biodiversity—I'm comforted to know that the Wild Salmon Center is pursuing solutions to these issues through the conservation of intact salmon ecosystems."**

— James Wolfensohn, former President of the World Bank

Below: Justice Sandra Day O'Connor and Guido Rahr enjoying a day of fishing on the Deschutes River, Oregon.



**"The Wild Salmon Center employs a new and forward-looking vision for salmon conservation — protecting the healthiest wild salmon rivers that still remain. This is not only strategic; it is also practical and achievable."**

— Justice Sandra Day O'Connor



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Front Cover: Opala River,  
 Kamchatka (Guido Rahr).

Back Cover: Sockeye salmon  
 (Ken Morrish, Fly Water Travel).

Special thanks to Ken Morrish  
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## WILD SALMON CENTER | MISSION STATEMENT

The Wild Salmon Center is an international science-based organization whose mission is to identify, understand and protect the best wild salmon ecosystems of the North Pacific.

We are committed to conserving for future generations the productivity, abundance, and biological diversity of wild salmon runs, and the healthy freshwater and coastal systems that sustain them.

We envision a future where people throughout the North Pacific work together as stewards to sustain wild salmon and the immense benefits they provide people, rivers, and their watersheds.



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