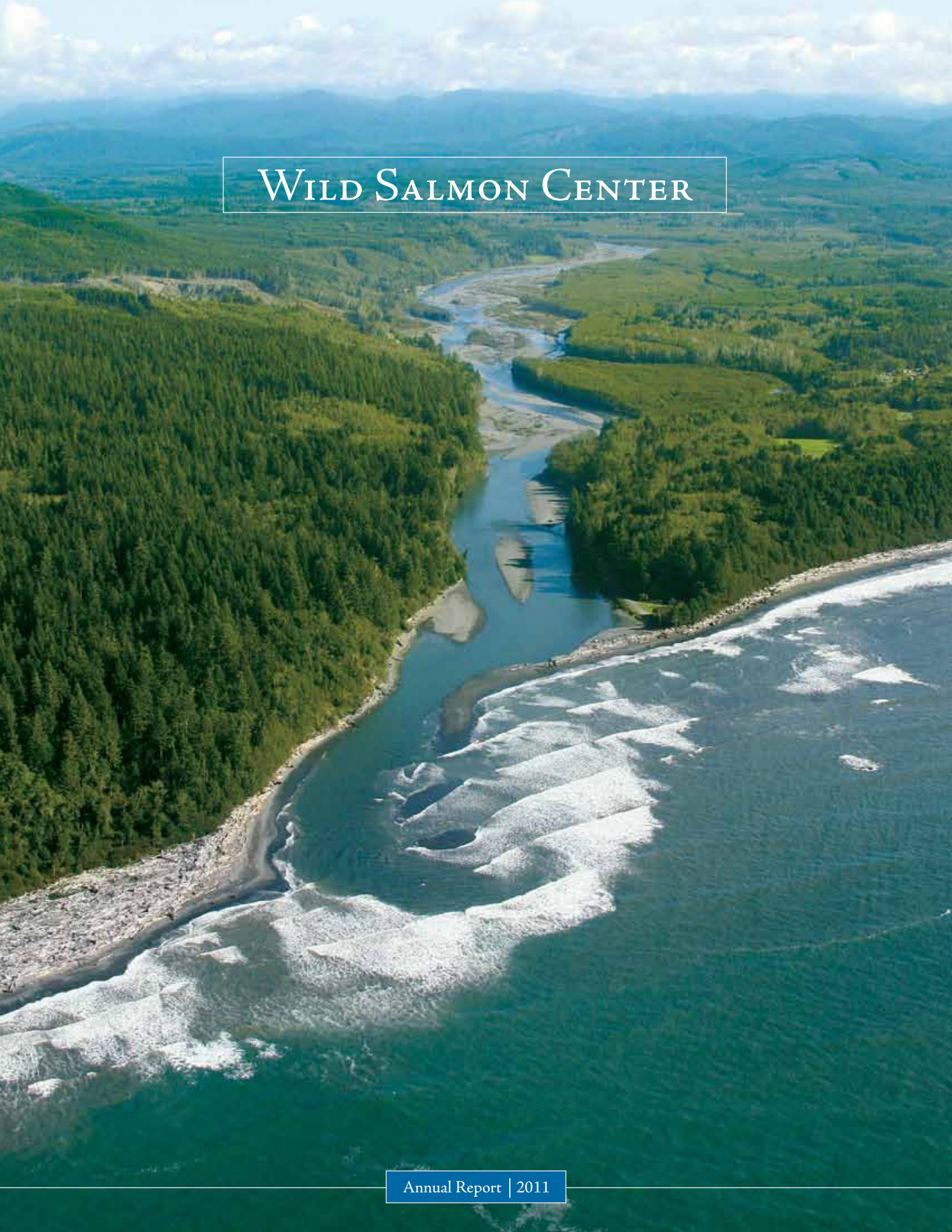


Wild Salmon Center

Annual Report | 2011

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

July 2012

What does it take to really "protect" a salmon river?

The business of conservation sometimes feels like a perpetual rush to confront a crisis, whether it's a proposal to clear cut a forested watershed, a high-impact mining project, or a poacher's assault on spawning salmon in a freshwater stream.

The fundamental problem is that by the time the threat appears, we are often too late—the cause for the collapse of a salmon run has become entrenched or the development proposal is moving forward. We will always need to respond to these threats, and we do every day. But a more proactive strategy is to target the most productive and diverse salmon rivers in each region and establish safeguards that will prevent new threats. This is the paradigm behind the salmon stronghold strategy.

The Wild Salmon Center has developed a three pronged approach to implement this strategy: protect large areas of critical habitat, prioritize wild fish conservation and sustainable harvest levels, and build and support local organizations that will steward and defend the health of wild salmon populations and their habitat in perpetuity.

We are currently focused on the long-term protection of twenty salmon strongholds in North America, Russia, and Japan. These systems are the "best of the best" and are the most important sources of wild salmon biodiversity and abundance in each region of the North Pacific. The Wild Salmon Center is working with local and regional partners in these watersheds to achieve the three habitat, fish management, and local stewardship objectives.

I am very proud to say that we are exceeding our goals in each of the regions where we have programs. We are working to move eight million acres of prime habitat into protected status; we are partnering with fish management agencies to establish "wild fish sanctuaries" in ten watersheds; we are working with 21 fishing companies to achieve Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification; and we are providing support to over 25 local partners and working to secure over $20 million in government financing for local salmon conservation efforts in North America and the Western Pacific.

In five salmon strongholds we are close to achieving each of our three primary goals. An example of this is the Ozernaya River, which flows from Kuril Lake on the Kamchatka Peninsula. This extraordinary river is the most productive sockeye salmon ecosystem in Russia. The habitat of the Ozernaya's river and lake salmon ecosystem is under permanent protection within the South Kamchatka Nature Reserve, and the Ust-Bolsheretsky Watershed Council—the first public salmon council created on Kamchatka Peninsula—is building support and local commitment to protect the Ozernaya Watershed.

And now the third objective is within reach: in April of 2011, the Ozernaya sockeye fishery entered the full assessment phase of the MSC certification process. If they succeed, Ozernaya's sockeye fishery will receive the coveted MSC eco-label, and enjoy access to lucrative salmon markets in the United States and Europe.

We believe the Ozernaya represents an effective conservation model, supported by our three primary strategies—habitat, fish management, and local capacity—that we are replicating in other wild salmon rivers throughout the North Pacific.

In our business, accomplishments do not come easily and can take years, and sometimes decades, to achieve. But when we succeed, the wins are significant and durable, and produce invaluable benefits to ecosystems, communities, economies, and people.

What does it take to protect a salmon river? It takes strategic thinking, strong partnerships, and perseverance.

It also takes you—our friends, colleagues, and partners—and your ongoing commitment to help us leave some of these beautiful rivers and their inhabitants for our children and future generations.

Guido Rahr
President and Chief Executive

WILD SALMON CENTER

Protecting Salmon Across the North Pacific

Public salmon councils promote river stewardship

Pg. 14

Russian salmon fishing companies commit to sustainability

Pg. 16

Wild Salmon Center's three-part strategy to secure the health of the strongest wild salmon populations:

Safeguard Habitat.
Designate protected areas to maintain enough healthy habitat to sustain wild salmon ecosystems for the long-term.

Preventing devastating impacts to one of the world's top fisheries

Bob Waldrop

Pg. 9

Establishment of first Wild Salmonid Management Zone

Ken Morrish

Pg. 7

Promote Sustainable Fisheries.
Utilize robust science and global market incentives to reward best management practices and combat illegal fishing.

Build Conservation Capacity.
Build institutions, markets, and human communities that will support wild salmon and their ecosystems over time.

KEY

- WSC Project
- Sustainable Commercial Fishing Project
- Watershed Council/Regional Coalition
- Identified Salmon Strongholds

Oregon, Washington, and Idaho pending state approval

North America


Ken Morrish, Fly Water Travel

The United States Pacific Northwest has been described as "any place a salmon can get to." Salmon rivers traverse Washington, Oregon, California, and much of Idaho, and salmon are a fundamental element of this region's economy, culture, and identity.

Despite broad and enduring public passion for salmon, this region is facing serious long-range challenges to sustain this iconic species. Half of the salmon and steelhead populations have been listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act, and over half of the returning salmon are now bred in fish hatcheries instead of natural spawning beds in streams.

The Pacific Northwest is also facing the steady erosion of river habitat and increased competition for cold, clear river water. These trends will increase as the region's human population continues to grow and will be compounded by the projected impacts of climate change, warming stream temperatures, and declining summer flows. If the Pacific Northwest is to have healthy wild salmon runs in 100 years, a concerted effort needs to be made to secure the protection of the region's salmon strongholds. The stronghold strategy must be integrated into any regional efforts to protect and restore wild salmon and other salmonid species.

The stronghold approach

WSC is focused on **a proactive *three-part strategy* to secure the health of the strongest populations:**

1. **Protect habitat;**
2. **Promote sustainable fisheries and protection for wild salmon; and**
3. **Support local stewardship of wild salmon watersheds into the future.**

Mihael Blikshteyn with aerial support from LightHawk

Salmon strongholds are core areas of abundance and diversity where healthy populations of wild salmon and steelhead are best adapted to thrive in the face of multiple long-term threats like climate change, resource extraction, and pressures from hatchery salmon.

The effort to protect strongholds is gaining significant traction at both the state and federal levels. With the backing of the entire West Coast Senate delegation, Senators Maria Cantwell (D-WA) and Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) reintroduced legislation in 2011 to create a new U.S. policy to prioritize the protection of the nation's best remaining wild Pacific salmon ecosystems. The Pacific Salmon Stronghold Conservation Act also creates a grants program to support cooperative, locally led conservation projects. The Senate Commerce Committee passed the legislation last November, and the House of Representatives is expected to reintroduce its version later in 2012. If passed, the bill will focus federal resources on healthy salmon watersheds as a proactive, preventative complement to recovery efforts.

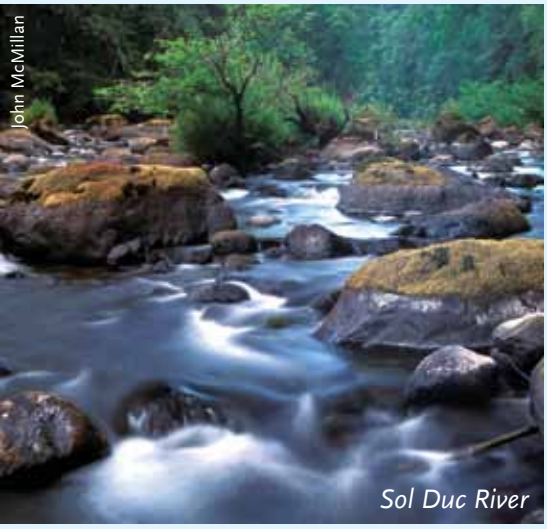
Washington's Shorelines

What's at stake: Washington State's streams, beaches, and wetlands.
WSC's goal: Safeguard priority wild salmon populations in Washington from increased development.
What we've achieved: Provided technical recommendations to the state to ensure strongholds—including 78 miles of the Quillayute—are protected.

Washington's *Quillayute* Watershed is home to six species of Pacific salmon, fed by a network of mountain streams and four renowned salmon and steelhead rivers: the Sol Duc, Calawah, Bogachiel, and Dickey. In an effort to balance conservation with development along the state's shorelines, WSC provided technical input to Washington cities and counties regarding mandatory updates to rules of development. WSC also advised Clallam County, the City of Forks and the Olympic Natural Resource Center on conservation priorities for salmon along the Quillayute. As a result, we expect nearly 78 miles of river front along this salmon stronghold to have increased protection.

Smith River, California

The fate of wild salmon on the West Coast depends on protection of regional strongholds.



John McMillan

Sol Duc River

"Establishing the Sol Duc as a wild salmonid management zone is necessary to protect this amazing salmon river. It is also a critical step in creating a network of salmon stronghold sanctuaries in Washington State."

Guido Rahr, President of Wild Salmon Center

A sanctuary for wild fish

After years of work, WSC and partners achieved a crucial step to balance hatchery production with wild fish health on Washington's Olympic Peninsula. For the first time, the state designated a Wild Salmonid Management Zone, which prioritizes management of wild winter steelhead along the entire length of the Sol Duc River.

In a state where most salmon and steelhead are born in hatcheries, this designation is an important recognition that some rivers need to be managed primarily for wild fish. We simply cannot depend on domesticated stocks for the future of our fisheries—a lesson that California learned when the Sacramento River's Fall Chinook runs collapsed in 2008 and temporarily shut down California and Oregon's commercial fisheries. For salmon and steelhead to adapt and thrive, we must identify key wild populations in each ecoregion and make them a priority. The Sol Duc, one of the best steelhead streams in Washington, exemplifies the kind of watershed that warrants a strict wild fish management policy. Elsewhere on the Olympic Peninsula, WSC has requested the Hoh and Clearwater rivers also be set aside as wild fish sanctuaries, and we are working with local partners and the state to identify and support more areas that can be designated.

WSC continues to advance local support of wild fish management and the stronghold approach through its collaboration with the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership—a grassroots effort to protect and restore wild salmon and their habitats across four million acres of Washington's coast. As a result, we helped draft a conservation plan for the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office that explicitly supports wild fish management, outlines new strategies for improving the market value of wild fish, and links habitat conservation to improvements in wild fish management.

Science drives conservation results

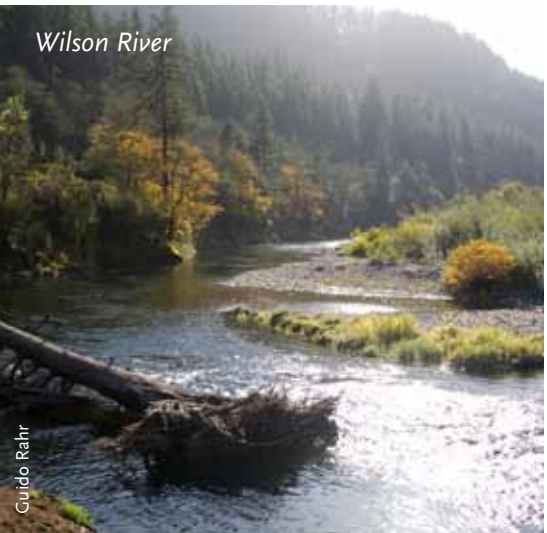
Wild Salmon Center brings science-based strategies to identify and protect the strongest salmon populations and watersheds within each ecological region of the Northern Pacific Rim. Working with regional experts, WSC has identified and mapped distinct wild salmon populations in California and western Washington, and we are completing the process in Oregon. Our research gives us strong footing to help establish and advocate for the best local stewardship of forests and watersheds, working directly with tribes, government agencies, and local stakeholders.

On ***Oregon's North Coast,*** a series of outstanding salmon rivers—the Trask, Wilson, Kilchis, Miami, Nehalem and Salmonberry—flow through a 520,000-acre temperate rainforest that spans the Tillamook and Clatsop State Forests. These rivers support some of the strongest wild populations of Chinook, steelhead, and chum salmon in the Pacific Northwest. For decades these forests have been at risk of large-scale logging, and each year we've had to fight proposals to turn this salmon stronghold into a tree farm.

Then in November, Oregon Governor John Kitzhaber met with the Oregon Board of Forestry and outlined his vision: a network of conservation areas, never before achieved in these state forests, where restoration and salmon recovery take priority over logging and road building. The Governor's approach is a welcome change, backing years of work by WSC and partners including the Sierra Club, Northwest Steelheaders and Trout Unlimited. Together we are helping bring to light the full range of benefits our North Coast forests provide—clean water, carbon sequestration, recreation, forest products, and strong wild salmon and steelhead populations.

In addition to state lands, it is imperative that we protect vital salmon habitat on ***Federal lands.*** Until recently, habitat on federal lands has benefited from a high level of protection within the Northwest Forest Plan, but the current economic downturn has changed that. A key example is the sprawling checkerboard of Bureau of Land Management (BLM) ownership left behind by the 1937 Oregon and California Lands Act. Totaling 2.4 million acres in Oregon, an area larger than Yellowstone National Park, the land harbors 1,400 miles of salmon and steelhead rivers such as the Rogue and Umpqua. With the elimination of Federal timber payments, 18 cash-strapped counties are now proposing to increase logging to industrial levels, fundamentally changing management of these forests.

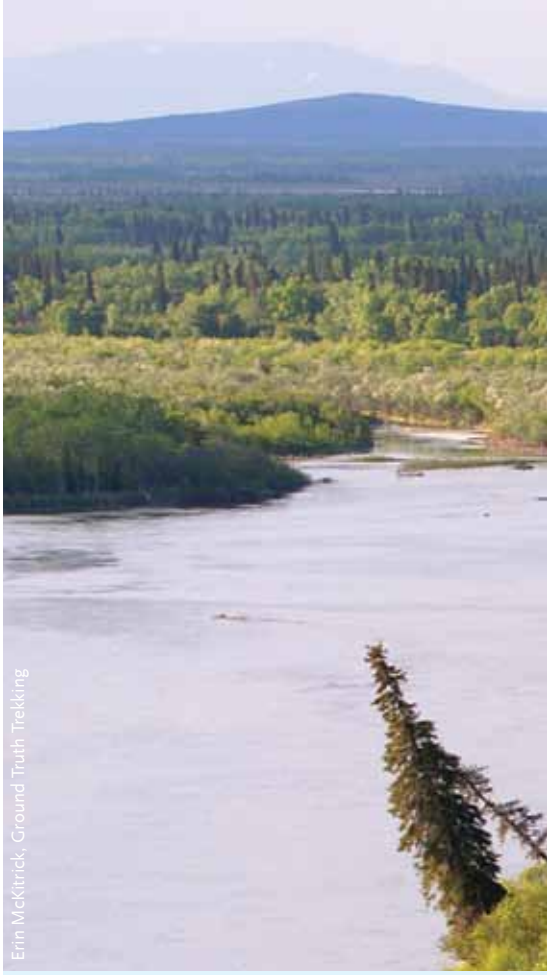
In response, WSC scientists have begun an ambitious effort to identify valuable habitat within these lands so they will remain protected. We are providing the expertise to produce a series of data-driven maps called an "Atlas of Conservation Values" in partnership with The Nature Conservancy. The resulting geo-database is a scientific tool that will help drive efforts to advocate for long-term protection of key watersheds within the BLM-owned lands.


Wilson River

Guido Rahr

Tillamook & Clatsop State Forests

What's at stake: Over 500,000 acres of temperate rainforest and salmon rivers.
WSC's goal: to establish conservation areas where wild salmon take priority over logging.
Progress: Oregon's Governor directed the Board of Forestry to create a network of conservation areas.


Erin McKitrick, Ground Truth Trekking


Bob Waldrop

Bristol Bay Watershed

What's at stake: North America's most important wild salmon watershed and the top sockeye fishery on the planet.
WSC's goal: Prevent the development of the Pebble Mine and a subsequent mining district in Bristol Bay.
Progress: Published a scientific report assessing the impacts of the proposed Pebble Mine—a critical tool in the fight to protect the Bristol Bay salmon fishery.

Nushagak River, Alaska

We can't afford the tremendous risk of large-scale mining in Bristol Bay, a powerhouse of wild salmon production.

Report daylights Pebble Mine risks

Alaska's Bristol Bay, the confluence of six major watersheds including the Nushagak (pictured above), is one of the most important wild salmon ecosystems on Earth. A powerhouse of wild sockeye production, it is a $570 million-a-year salmon industry and employs 12,000 people nationwide.

In 2006, the first formal proposal was presented to construct an enormous copper-gold-molybdenum mine at the headwaters of Bristol Bay. The proposed "Pebble Mine" would dwarf all existing mines in Alaska put together. The initial proposal called for nine miles of dams up to 740 feet high to hold back up to 2.5 billion tons of tailings, or toxic waste rock. If constructed according to preliminary plans, the longest dam—4.5 miles long—would be the largest dam in North America. The entire mining operation could produce an estimated 10.8 billion tons of tailings.

In December of 2011, WSC and Trout Unlimited completed a scientific report coauthored by fisheries and mining experts entitled "Bristol Bay's Wild Salmon Ecosystems and the Pebble Mine: Key Considerations for a Large-Scale Mine Proposal." The report concluded that acid mine drainage from the Pebble Mine would be the primary threat to Bristol Bay and could have a devastating impact on the region's world class wild salmon fishery, aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, and the communities of Bristol Bay. In addition, the Pebble Mine could consume three times the water used by the entire city of Anchorage each year and the infrastructure required to develop the mine could pave the way for a sprawling mining district ten times the size of Washington, D.C. The mine poses many other risks to salmon and aquatic organisms, most notably increased sedimentation, food web disruption, and altered hydrology and water chemistry.

By highlighting these risks, the report serves as an essential tool for decision makers, and at just the right time. In May 2012, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a Draft Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment, reflecting the same conclusions as our report—that large-scale mining would adversely impact Bristol Bay's wild salmon fishery. The EPA initiated the assessment in response to a request from Alaska Native tribes and corporations, commercial and sport fishing organizations, and others to protect Bristol Bay under the EPA's Clean Water Act authority. Under the Clean Water Act Section 404(c), the EPA can restrict dredge and fill activities, such as discharge of mine tailings, if the activities will have unacceptable adverse effects on the fishery. Based on our report findings, we believe that such proactive restrictions are warranted.

For a full copy of the report, visit www.wildsalmoncenter.org.

Western Pacific

Like a window back in time, the Russian Far East is a place where abundant wild salmon return by the tens of millions to their home streams. In remote coastal areas, unfragmented expanses of forests, tundra, and wetlands harbor ancient fish species and an abundance of wildlife. Forty percent of all wild Pacific salmon are born in Russian rivers, with up to a fourth from the California-sized Kamchatka Peninsula alone.

Russia is one of few places on Earth where large, pristine wild salmon ecosystems can still be preserved. Its people are beginning to forge a stronger commitment to their expansive salmon resource, unique in the world and a keystone of their economy. In addition to the Kamchatka Peninsula, wild salmon strongholds include mainland Khabarovsk, which holds large expanses of intact boreal and deciduous forests, as well as the more populated Sakhalin Island, the third most abundant salmon region on Earth.

Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation

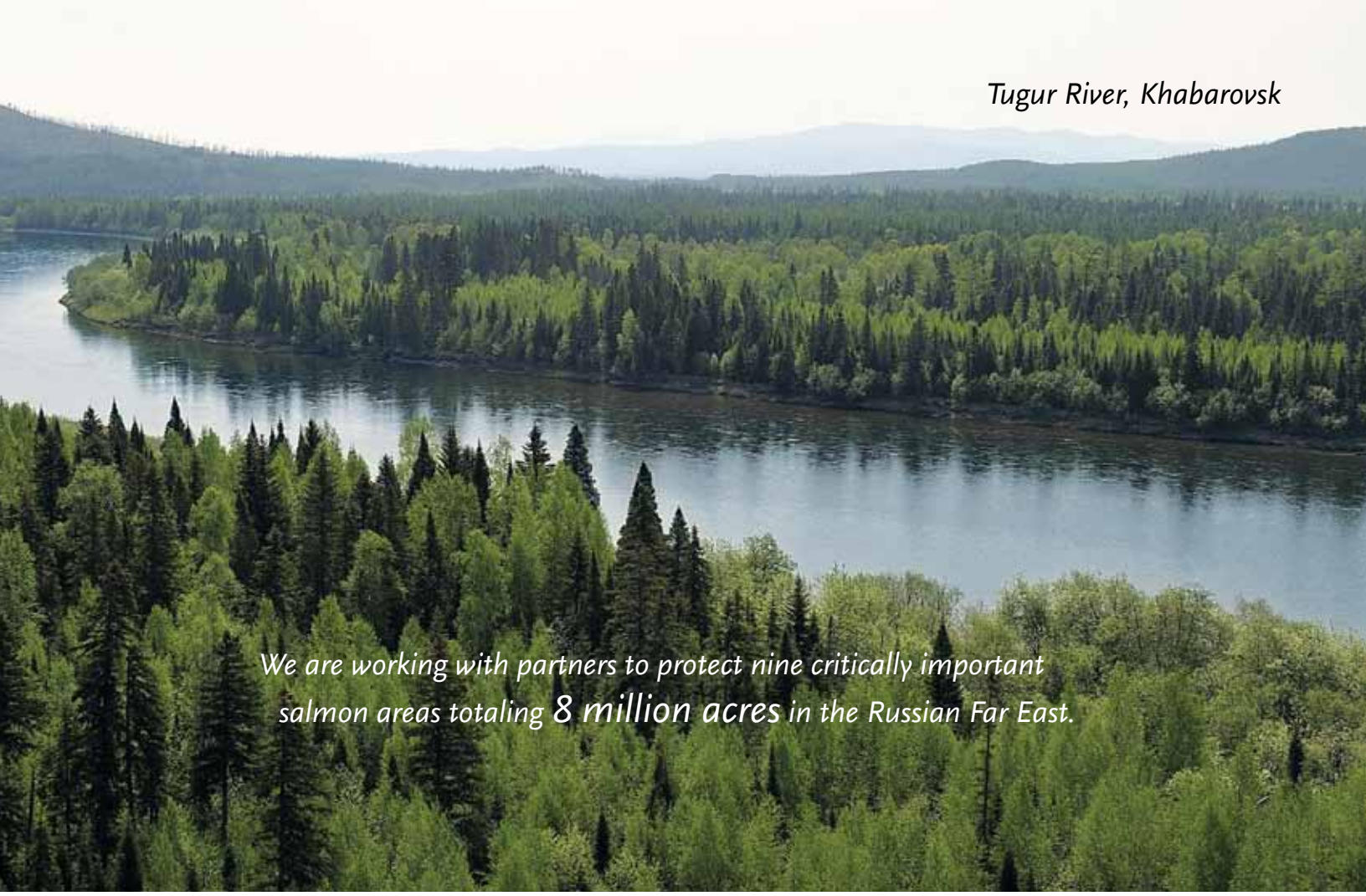
Shantar Islands

After more than a decade working to protect the biologically rich archipelago in Russia's Sea of Okhotsk, the Russian government has slated the creation of Shantar Islands National Park for 2012, protecting a combined land and marine area of 3,200 square miles. This accomplishment is the result of years of efforts by WSC, the World Wildlife Fund, and the Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation, a longtime partner of the Wild Salmon Center. Popular with hunters and fishermen, this group of 15 islands is largely uninhabited, but faces threats such as logging and energy development. Protection of these islands will benefit not only wild salmon, but also the only rainbow trout population west of Kamchatka, as well as brown bear, gray whales, several endangered bird species, diverse marine life, and a distinctive mixture of plant communities.

The Tugur River flows through the Tuguro-Chumikansky region of Khabarovsk and into the Sea of Okhotsk. Because of the low population density of the region and the absence of roads and industry, the conditions for salmon populations are very favorable. There are 23 species of freshwater fish in the river, including numerous populations of chum and pink salmon, lenok, grayling, and taimen.

Shantar Islands

WSC Staff



A global salmon stronghold

Wild Salmon Center has worked in Russia for two decades, forging partnerships and sharing knowledge across continents. We are the only international organization working in Russia focused exclusively on conservation of wild salmon ecosystems. Our Western Pacific Program, which extends from the Russian Far East to Japan, is deploying **WSC's *three-part strategy* for long-term wild salmon health:**

1. **Support creation of new protected areas;**
2. **Work with commercial fisheries to achieve certification of sustainability and work with extractive industries to implement best practices; and**
3. **Help establish and support community-led salmon councils and other local conservation initiatives.**

Currently, WSC is working with partners to protect nine critically important salmon areas totaling eight million acres in the Russian Far East. Creating these watershed-level protected areas in Russia is not quick or easy. It requires broad government and public buy-in, backed by rigorous scientific assessments. It also requires the government's commitment of funding for long-term success. Along the way, WSC works with governments, citizens, organizations, and businesses to shepherd these salmon rivers through the protected area designation process.

The benefit is worth the effort, and the Koppi River's story is proof. After a decade of work, the *Koppi River Nature Reserve* was established in 2010, safeguarding 94,000 acres along 200 miles of the Koppi for cherry, pink, chum, and coho salmon, Dolly Varden and Sakhalin taimen, as well as Siberian tiger and a diverse assemblage of wildlife and plant species.


Guido Rahr

The Kol River Refuge is also a testament to the protected areas strategy. The Kol River hosts five million returning salmon each year and is the site of the world's first headwaters-to-ocean salmon preserve which WSC helped establish in 2006. WSC continues to support the management plan and research and monitoring on the Kol, where we established a biostation now fully managed by Kamchatka State Technical University to give scientists and students the opportunity to study this pristine salmon ecosystem.

A promising future

Other protected areas are on the horizon in Khabarovsk. Our longtime partner, the Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation, won public approval in 2011 for the proposed *Tugur River Refuge,* a vast and pristine watershed that produces world-record Siberian taimen that can weigh more than 70 pounds. The Foundation also ensured the Tugur and four other rivers—the Nimelen, Dui, Im, and Hor—are included in the regional government's official plan for new protected areas. This plan will direct efforts through 2020 to establish and support protected areas.

On the *Kamchatka Peninsula,* the Zhupanova, Opala, and Utkholok rivers are one step closer to enjoying protected status like the Kol. WSC provided expertise required to justify new regional protected areas, which will safeguard an incredibly rich assemblage of salmonids that includes Chinook, sockeye, pink, chum, coho, masu salmon, steelhead, and rainbow trout, as well as Dolly Varden, white-spotted char, and grayling.

WSC's work across the Russian Far East was specifically written into a U.S.-Russia bilateral plan describing how the two nations will work together to protect the environment. This inclusion in the 2011-2012 Work Plan of the U.S.-Russia Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources creates significant political traction for our efforts in Russia and paves the way for future conservation success in the Western Pacific.


Guido Rahr

Utkholok River

Russia's Salmon Strongholds

What's at stake: Some of the last fully intact habitat in the Western Pacific, home to nearly 40 percent of Pacific salmon.

WSC's goal: Protect nine important salmon areas totaling eight million acres.

What we've achieved: Three new protected areas with nine more in development—two of which are expected to be designated in the next year.

RUSSIAN FAR EAST SALMON STRONGHOLDS


Igor Shpilenok


WSC Staff

"The last wild, untouched salmon rivers, which we are trying to save on our island, are the embodiment of beauty, power and freedom of wild nature. I'm convinced if we lose them, our planet would be poorer, because we will never be able to get them back."

Dmitry Lisitsyn, Chairman of Sakhalin Environment Watch

Kuril Lake, Kamchatka

Public watershed councils are becoming an emerging force in the stewardship and conservation of local salmon watersheds throughout the Russian Far East.

Champion for wild salmon

Dmitry Lisitsyn

Dmitry Lisitsyn grew up in a small village near Siberia's Angara River. When he learned in school about the environmental devastation happening across the developed world he felt moved to do something to help protect Russia's relatively intact habitat and abundant wildlife, but saw little opportunity for political action in the Soviet Union's totalitarian system. He moved to Sakhalin Island and with the political changes happening across Russia in the 1990's, Dmitry felt a sense of possibility for the future. In 1996, he joined the newly formed Sakhalin Environment Watch (SEW) and a year later was leading the organization as one of the foremost defenders of the environment.

Sakhalin boasts some of the world's greatest marine biodiversity with globally significant salmon spawning grounds as well as a number of endangered species such as the Western Pacific Gray whale. Since discovery of vast fossil fuel reserves in the 1990's, Sakhalin also represents the world's largest integrated oil and gas project. Rapid industrialization and road building have allowed easier access to remote areas of the island—resulting in an exponential increase in salmon poaching.

In 2001, WSC partnered with Dmitry and his team at SEW to support their work to protect Sakhalin Island's marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Dmitry and SEW have been successfully fighting salmon poaching on Sakhalin—working to increase enforcement efforts by coordinating with local watershed councils and establishing public watch dog groups to protect priority salmon rivers.

In 2007, WSC and SEW helped create permanent safeguards for one of Sakhalin's most important wild salmon watersheds—the Vostochny. Lisitsyn's leadership led to the creation of the Vostochny Wildlife Refuge, a 165,000 acre protected area that includes two entire ocean-draining basins, the Vengeri and Pursh-Pursh rivers, and protects habitat for healthy populations of pink, chum, and coho salmon, as well as char and other salmonids. Since the development of the Refuge's monitoring program, poaching has been virtually eliminated on the refuge.

In 2011 Dmitry was one of only six recipients of the Goldman Environmental Prize, one of the most prestigious environmental awards in the world. We applaud Dmitry's accomplishments and look forward to a long, productive partnership on Sakhalin.

Communities mobilize for salmon

Salmon are a way of life for the people of the Russian Far East, where one in five coastal communities rely on healthy salmon for their job or to meet basic needs. There was a time when salmon seemed an endless resource, but growing threats like illegal fishing, habitat loss, and development are casting doubt on their security. The same people who rely on salmon are now uniting to establish local control over watershed health. Over the past three years, Wild Salmon Center has worked with on-the-ground partners to establish seven public watershed councils (called "public salmon councils" in Russia) throughout the Russian Far East.

Home to 11 salmonid species, *Sakhalin Island* supplies an astounding one-fifth of the global Pacific salmon catch, generating $500 million for local fishermen each year. About the size of Massachusetts, the island is one of the most populated areas in the Russian Far East. The island's growing population has increased pressures such as illegal fishing, but is also providing an opportunity to empower more local stakeholders to conserve their wild salmon resources.

The Sakhalin Salmon Initiative (SSI) was established in 2006 to rally residents around healthy fisheries and a strong economy. A committee of more than 20 local organizations, educational institutions and businesses coordinated the SSI, including founding members WSC, Sakhalin Environment Watch and founding sponsor Sakhalin Energy Investment Corporation. In 2008 Sakhalin's first public salmon council was created, and residents began to mobilize around wild salmon protection in the face of threats like oil and gas extraction and large-scale poaching. Sakhalin is now home to five public salmon councils, operated with guidance from WSC and regional partners. In 2011 Sakhalin watershed councils achieved a number of accomplishments, including 348 anti-poaching raids, open community forums, conservation planning sessions, and salmon education campaigns.

Kamchatka soon followed Sakhalin's successful watershed model. The first public salmon council on the peninsula, established in 2011 in the Ust-Bolsheretsky district, now covers three large rivers: the Bolshaya, Opala, and Ozernaya, which harbor one of the most productive sockeye salmon fisheries in Russia (see sidebar "the full package" on pg 17). For the first time in Kamchatka's history, the council is bringing together local communities, municipal and regional governments, fishermen, scientists, NGOs, and the commercial sector for the purpose of conservation and sustainable use of salmon ecosystems and resources. In addition, the "Save the Salmon Fund" was created and formally registered as a regional nonprofit organization to coordinate salmon conservation efforts across the Kamchatka Peninsula.

PUBLIC SALMON COUNCILS


Save the Salmon Fund

Improving fisheries

KAMCHATKA

Ust-Bolsheretsky Council

- Anti-poaching hotline in operation
- Developed 4 yr conservation strategy
- Submitted recommendations on sustainable management of salmon resources in the district
- Organized first "Save the Salmon" outreach campaign

Kol River Salmon Refuge

- Added 18 new patrol areas and conducted 181 raids across 7,568 km
- Inspectors implemented tighter enforcement with cooperation and support from the Vityaz Avto Fishing Company, Gazprom natural gas company, and Kamchatka State Technical University
- Organized 65 outreach events with 3,500 participants
- Created a 22-mile interpretive hiking trail

Educating youth and citizens


Kol Salmon Refuge

KHABAROVSK

- Coordinated a series of anti-poaching raids with the Wildlife Protection Service
- Collaborated with logging companies to promote best practices
- Created a ranger station to protect the Koppi River watershed

SAKHALIN

In 2011, 23 new educational institutions started using SSI-designated salmon education curriculum (for a total of 63). Over 1,000 people participated in the salmon festival and drawing contest, bringing the total number participating in SSI-sponsored education and outreach activities to almost 6,000 people since its launch in 2007.


SSI

Organizing locally

Poronaisk Council

- 74 anti-poaching raids uncovered 41 violations
- 2 anti-poaching hotlines in operation
- 2 "Clean Coast" city-wide campaigns
- 9 public salmon presentations

Aniva Council

- 170 anti-poaching raids uncovered 179 violations

Uglegorsk Council

- First district ecological festival "We Are Together"
- 15 anti-poaching raids
- 4 river expeditions and public workshops

Smirnykh Council

- 3 public salmon conservation forums conducted
- 73 anti-poaching raids

Nogliki Council

- Anti-poaching hotline in operation
- 16 anti-poaching raids uncovered 11 violations

Combatting poaching


SSI


Sakhalin Island
SSI

On mainland *Khabarovsk* the people of the Koppi Basin spearheaded their first public salmon council just months after the Koppi River Nature Reserve was established. The newly formed Council is fostering collaboration between neighboring Botchinsky Nature Reserve, forestry companies, the indigenous community Oroch, and local residents. In 2011 the council coordinated a series of anti-poaching raids with the Wildlife Protection Service and began work with logging companies to monitor illegal harvest and promote best practices.

For the first time, Russian councils are now coordinating across rivers and district boundaries. They are defining long-term conservation strategies utilizing WSC's expertise and technical support and are eager to exchange lessons learned. These strategies include collaboration with environmental law enforcement agencies and public monitoring of poaching, outreach and education, co-management of watersheds, and community projects to further engage and empower locals living in these watersheds. In 2011 WSC and the Siuslaw Institute invited Russian council members to tour Oregon rivers, meet with local watershed councils, and hear success stories for involving citizens in local river stewardship. The visitors were impressed by the power of Oregon's networks—shared knowledge between councils, educators, conservationists and federal and state agencies—a level of cross-pollination they hope to achieve on their side of the Pacific.

Sustainable Fisheries

Salmon nourish and sustain diverse peoples, ecosystems, and economies across the Pacific Rim. They power a $3 billion-a-year industry, provide tens of thousands of jobs, and serve as a protein staple to millions of people. Yet the long-term livelihood of every fishery, and every fisherman, depends on whether we can shift the tide toward sound management of wild salmon. This is the goal of Wild Salmon Center's sustainable fisheries programs: to utilize robust science, on-the-ground collaboration, and global market incentives to reward best management practices that not only protect wild runs but also yield healthy profits for responsible fishing.

Ultimately, the world's seafood businesses and consumers of salmon have tremendous buying power to influence the health of wild salmon ecosystems. We are working with our partners to establish a sustainable, legal, and traceable supply chain so that seafood buyers and consumers can direct their purchases toward responsibly harvested salmon.

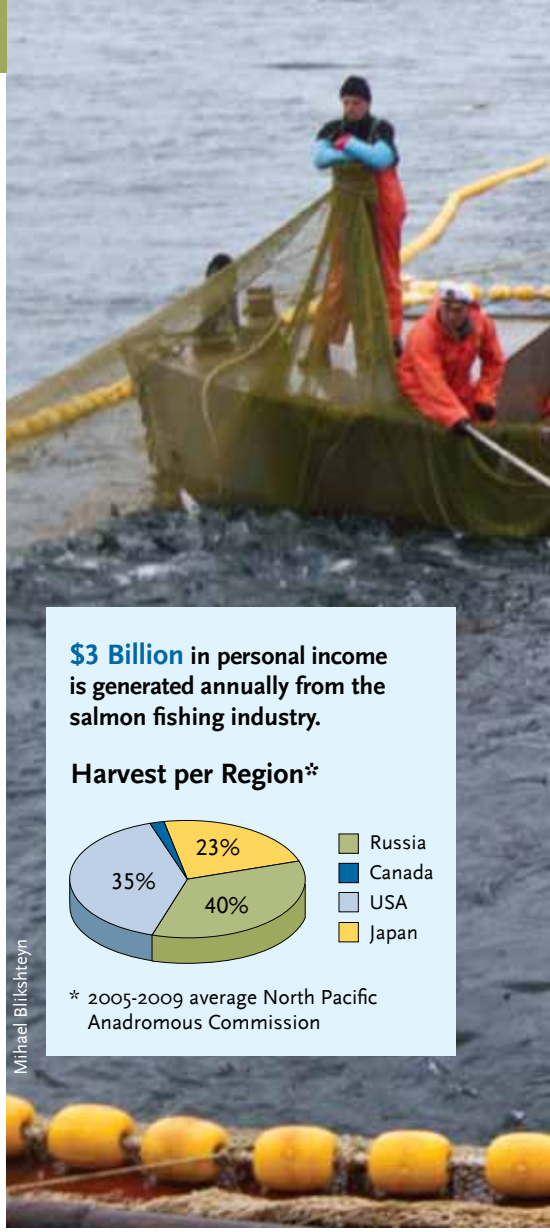
Hidden threats of the Pacific

WSC is working globally to combat harmful harvest and hatchery practices, as well as illegal, unreported or unregulated (IUU) fishing. In the Russian Far East, poaching is one of the most urgent threats to wild salmon, with the illegal catch estimated to be about 1.5 times the actual reported catch. Without proper enforcement, tracking and certification systems, customers in the U.S. and Europe may unknowingly buy these illegally caught fish. Winning the fight requires strict enforcement of laws that make the risk of penalty too high for perpetrators, while at the same time encouraging good actors with market advantages.

Fortunately, there is a growing marketplace for sustainable seafood. Globally, the demand for premium, eco-labeled salmon exceeds world supply. WSC works with fishermen and regulators to provide a road map for fisheries to work towards certification. With support from WSC, 21 Russian fishing companies have entered into the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification process—the international gold standard for eco-labeling.

On both sides of the Pacific, fisheries are making important progress. To support sustainable certification of the Aniva Bay pink salmon fishery, located at the tip of *Russia's Sakhalin Island,* WSC and partners supported one of the first studies in Russia to gauge hatchery straying into wild salmon rivers using salmon ear bones (otoliths). Like the rings of a tree, patterns on an otolith reveal changes in fish growth. Manipulating hatchery water temperatures marks the otoliths of juvenile salmon, a telltale indicator of hatchery origin identifiable into adulthood.

In *Alaska,* the Annette Island Reserve discontinued its fall chum salmon hatchery program in 2011 and reopened passage for wild fish to critical spawning grounds. These changes contributed to the fishery achieving MSC certification last year, a significant achievement for the health of this productive wild salmon ecosystem and the long-term livelihood of the Metlakatla Indian Community on Annette Island.



In *Japan,* the Hokkaido Fall chum salmon set-net fishery entered the MSC assessment process in late 2011. While Japan accounts for nearly one third of the Pacific Rim's annual salmon catch, its commercial fisheries rely almost completely on hatchery production because of Japan's extensive loss of freshwater habitat over the past century. Although there may not be enough wild production to merit MSC certification, Hokkaido fisheries managers are developing a Wild Salmon Policy and working to set wild salmon escapement goals for the first time. These steps represent a fundamental shift in the way chum salmon are managed in Japan.

Ozernaya River, Kamchatka

As the first fishery on Kamchatka to enter the ***sustainable certification*** *process, the Ozernaya signals a hopeful future for other world-class Russian salmon fisheries.*

A 'Complete Package' of conservation

A crown jewel of Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula, the ***Ozernaya River*** hosts the largest sockeye fishery in Asia. It is an extraordinary example of a complete conservation package for wild salmon, including habitat protection, sustainable fisheries and community engagement. The volcano-encircled Kuril Lake—spawning grounds for sockeye salmon migrating up the Ozernaya River—is protected as part of the South Kamchatka Nature Reserve. Here wild salmon runs are unimpeded by dams or hatchery development. And now that the Ozernaya commercial sockeye fishing companies have entered the MSC assessment process, representing over twelve metric tons of annual catch, they are working to improve their fishery by monitoring and reporting bycatch (unintentionally netted fish and marine life). Moreover, the people of the Ozernaya established a watershed council to serve as a local champion and watchdog for wild fish. WSC is committed to continue its work with international and local partners to help ensure the Ozernaya sockeye fishery serves as a leading example of a healthy wild salmon ecosystem that provides food and economic security for generations to come.

Pacific Fisheries

What's at stake: The future health and viability of our Pacific salmon fisheries.
WSC's goal: Combat illegal fishing, harmful practices, and help fisheries achieve certification through taking steps towards sustainability.
What we've achieved: 21 Russian fishing companies have entered into the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) certification process.

Igor Shpilenok

State of the Salmon

Seven nations comprise the entire range of Pacific salmon, each home to great scientists, collaborative problem-solvers, and dedicated on-the-ground watershed stewards. It is only together that we can succeed in securing a future with wild salmon.

State of the Salmon (SoS), a program of the Wild Salmon Center, convenes fisheries experts, resource managers, commercial fishermen, and other key stakeholders to build and share knowledge across borders and address the most pressing threats to long-term wild salmon health. SoS also partners with international organizations to promote the adoption of practices for fisheries harvest and hatchery operations to ensure the sustainability of wild salmon populations.


Clemens Ratschan

Knowledge to bridge an ocean

Climate Change. Few long-range threats are more daunting than climate change. To gather the most current expertise on the issue, SoS hosted an international symposium—"Salmon in a Changing Climate"—in November 2011. More than 200 researchers, resource managers, conservationists, and fishing industry representatives attended from as far away as China, Russia, and the United Kingdom. Experts shared emerging science on risks like ocean acidification, which likely will have profound impacts on complex ocean food webs. In rivers, salmon survival will be put to the test by low flows and higher water temperatures in the southern extent of their ranges, while increased annual fluctuations in river flows are expected in the north. Wild salmon may be forced to adapt rapidly. Given the scope and magnitude of these challenges, salmon diversity is critical to survival. Researchers at the symposium presented case studies showing that wild salmon runs composed of higher genetic and life-history diversity will be more resilient to expected environmental change.


WSC Staff

Ellen Martinson, Research Fishery Biologist, NOAA Fisheries

Hatchery Salmon. SoS is also compiling research on how "straying" of hatchery salmon affects wild salmon health. When hatchery fish stray into wild salmon spawning grounds, they can interbreed and potentially weaken the productivity of wild salmon runs. SoS brought together researchers from Alaska, Russia, and Japan in October 2011 to better understand how much and how far hatchery fish stray, particularly pink and chum salmon, and how this affects wild runs. This gathering sparked a collaboration to develop a risk assessment model to predict the level of straying under different production scenarios. This tool will help managers gauge the likely effectiveness of different management actions to reduce interactions between wild and hatchery salmon on spawning grounds. In addition, 23 peer-reviewed papers from international scientists were published as a result of SoS's 2010 conference on ecological interactions between wild and hatchery salmon. The papers were published in 2012 in a special issue of the journal ***Environmental Biology of Fishes.***

Monitoring Methods. One of the largest barriers to sound salmon management is accurately measuring and monitoring the health of populations. The problem is compounded by disparate monitoring methods, with no standard approach to compare information. To address this challenge, SoS convened experts to create a set of standards and adopt a common methodology, which is now featured in the online tool monitoringmethods.org. Signaling the importance of this work, the Bonneville Power Administration, one of the largest funders of salmon restoration and recovery in the world, formally adopted the methodology and took the next step by requiring all of its grantees to adhere to it as well. For the first time, this will allow for "apples-to-apples" comparisons of rich volumes of data to create a clearer picture of the status of Pacific Northwest salmon.

Siberian taimen, Russia

Armed with emerging research, *WSC is leading efforts to conserve taimen, one of the most ancient and extraordinary living members of the salmon family.*

Spotlighting threatened species

Taimen are an ancient and mysterious group of species that can live for 50 years and reach two meters in length—the largest salmonids in the world. Massive but vulnerable, taimen face an uncertain future with the threats of overfishing, habitat loss, and climate change. The sea-run *Sakhalin taimen,* found in the Russian Far East and Japan, has **lost 90 percent of its abundance** and is now listed as "Critically Endangered" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Resident species of Siberian taimen range across mainland Russian Far East rivers, but have also seen significant declines.

To protect taimen, we must first fill gaps in understanding about their health. State of the Salmon is leading work with partners to shed light on this unique group of fish. In December 2011, we hosted the first-ever international symposium on taimen, held in New Zealand. Experts from Asia, Europe, and North America gathered to review emerging science on the status of taimen and uncover opportunities to protect them across their range. Armed with this knowledge, we can begin to move toward more comprehensive conservation strategies.

Sockeye salmon are one of the most valuable and commercially important salmon species in the world. But they have seen sharp declines in their populations since the 1990s, highlighted by the collapse of British Columbia's Fraser River sockeye populations in 2009, when just one-tenth of the expected run returned to the river. In response to this and other losses, the IUCN Salmonid Specialist Group (SSG) completed the first global assessment of sockeye health. The IUCN is the authority on global salmon health, and SSG is chaired by SoS and led by WSC Senior Conservation Biologist Pete Rand. The sockeye assessment concluded eight years of work including an exhaustive catalogue of the biodiversity of Pacific salmon, identification of important knowledge gaps, and the assessment of the overall condition of wild salmon based on international standards.

Ben Knight

Sockeye conservation took a step forward when the IUCN completed an amendment to the 2008 Red List assessment for Pacific sockeye salmon. While sockeye are still listed as "Least Concern" globally, **nearly a third of sockeye subpopulations were listed as "Threatened,"** including seven Fraser River sockeye populations. To showcase this new information, SoS launched Visual Sockeye, an interactive, web-based tool to explore sockeye health in different watersheds and to gain a deeper understanding of this species and the threats to its sustainability.

View this tool at stateofthesalmon.org.

Statement of Activities

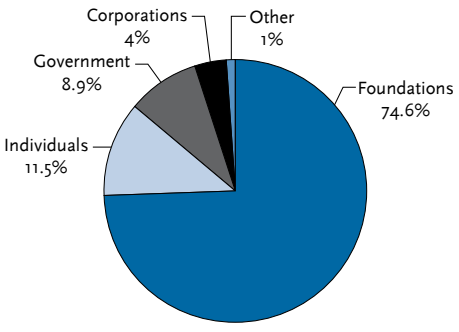
For the fiscal year ending December 31, 2011

	2011
REVENUE	
Foundations	$6,816,697
Individuals	1,046,663
Governments	815,829
Corporations	366,215
Investments and other income	83,208
Total revenue	9,128,612
EXPENSES	
Program Services:	
North America Program	792,953
Western Pacific Program	2,179,591
Sustainable Fisheries	634,926
State of the Salmon	771,924
Total program expenses	4,379,394
Support Services:	
Management and General	454,085
Development and Fundraising	559,640
Total expenses	5,393,119
Change in net assets	3,735,493
Net assets at the beginning of the year	4,257,732
Net assets at the end of the year	$7,993,225

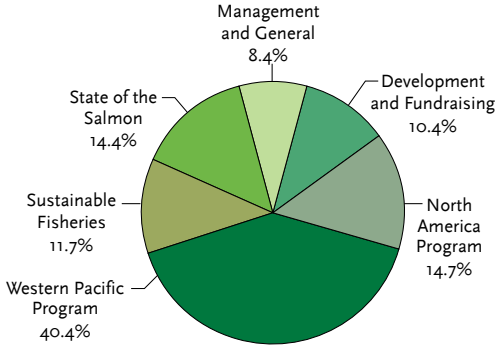
Ethan Smith, The Kamchatka Project

The 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 2011 Operation Revenue: $9,128,612*



FY 2011 Total Expenses: $5,393,119



*FY 2011 Operation Revenue includes revenue received to cover our 2011 annual expenses plus revenue received and recorded for work to be carried out in 2012 and future years.

Top: Local leaseholders and fly fishing guides (pictured: Ryan Peterson of The Fly Shop) are promoting catch and release as part of an emerging ecotourism business on Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula.

Right: Russia's South Kamchatka Nature Reserve is home to the largest sockeye salmon population in the Western Pacific, supporting wildlife and thriving fishing economies.

Shane Robinson, *The Kamchatka Project*

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United Nations Development Programme/Global Environment Facility
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Right: An exploratory expedition on the Koppi River with Tricia Melnik (WSC), Alexander Kulikov (Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation) and members of the Khabarovsk government and community.

Khabarovsk Wildlife Foundation

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Joe Furgerson (right) with Jeff Hickman and a bright winter steelhead from Oregon's North Coast.

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Anonymous in honor of Patrick Bryant
The Miriam Mazow Findley Trust in memory of Miriam Mazow Findley
Karol Dondero in memory of Kenneth Guinasso
James Rubin, Clifford Rose, James Costan, Presley Reed, Amanda Pope, Emma Hand, Peter Thieman, and Margaret Kavalaris in honor of Sydney McNiff Johnson
Martha B. Stimpson in memory of Cargill MacMillan, Jr.

Gifts-in-Kind

Nelea Covaliova-Waer
Elephants Delicatessen Catering
ESRI Conservation Program
Fleurish Floral Designs
Lagunitas Brewing Co.
McDonald Jacobs
NOAA Fisheries
Guido and Lee Rahr
Randy Tunnell Photography
Siuslaw Institute
Techsoup.org
Westfly, Inc.
Wynne Terlizzi and Wine Insiders

Randy Tunnell

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Jeanne Modderman

Guido Rahr addresses partners and guests at a special event in Washington D.C. to celebrate Alaska's Bristol Bay.

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Front cover: Hoh River (Lori Alexander Howk with aerial support from LightHawk). Inside cover: Zhupanova River (The Kamchatka Project, Ethan Smith). Back cover: Kuril Lake, Kamchatka (Igor Shpilenok).

Special thanks to: Igor Shpilenok (shpilenok.com), The Kamchatka Project, and Ken Morrish (Fly Water Travel) for their beautiful photos.

Wild Salmon Center

The mission of Wild Salmon Center is to promote the conservation and sustainable use of wild salmon ecosystems across the Pacific Rim.

We identify science-based, pragmatic solutions to sustain wild salmonids and the human communities and livelihoods that depend on them.

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