



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

**BUILDING STRONGER
FISHERIES
AND COMMUNITIES**

NWSTEELHEADERS.ORG

OFFICE@ANWS.ORG

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders is a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization, 91-1031100

WHO WE ARE

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders (ANWS) was founded in 1960 and is one of the oldest conservation and fishing advocacy organizations in the Pacific Northwest. We are anglers dedicated to enhancing and protecting fish and their habitats for today and tomorrow.

Our programs support youth conservation education, angling instruction, public access to waterways, and advocating for science based fisheries management.

Since 2013, ANWS has proudly been the Oregon affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). We collaborate with NWF for our education programs and on national issues related to salmon, steelhead and the environment.

Northwest Steelheaders members value strong runs of salmon and steelhead, healthy waterways, and growing the sport fishing community.

WHAT WE DO

ANGLING

Our community is built around the shared enjoyment of recreational fishing, and the goal of growing this community with the next generation of ethical anglers.

EDUCATION

NW Steelheaders work closely with our partners providing thousands of volunteer hours every year to support new anglers, and provide hands-on learning experiences.

ADVOCACY

For more than 60 years, we have lead the fight for healthy fisheries, public access, and recreational opportunity.



FISCAL YEAR REPORT

JULY 2024 - JUNE 2025

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders is funded through a diverse mix of grassroots and philanthropic support that reflects the strength of our angling community. Core funding comes from individual memberships and donations, which provide a foundation for our conservation, education, and advocacy work. These contributions are complemented by grants from public agencies and private foundations, as well as sponsorships from businesses and partners who share our commitment to protecting and restoring salmon and steelhead populations.

We also generate support through fundraising events, including fishing tournaments, banquets, and community programs that both raise revenue and deepen public engagement.

Together, these funding sources enable us to advance our mission while remaining accountable to the members and communities we serve.

TOTAL REVENUE	\$118,074.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$132,209.00
NET INCOME FROM OPERATIONS	-\$14,134.00
FY 2025 NET ASSETS	
RESTRICTED CHAPTER FUNDS	\$60,067.00
RESTRICTED ASSOCIATION FUNDS	\$58,932.00
UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	\$59,730.00
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$178,730

2025 GRANTORS

Carol and Velma Saling Foundation

National Wildlife Federation

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders is a 501(C)3 nonprofit entity. We are governed by a Board of Directors. Board membership is comprised of officers, chapter representatives, and at large members. The Association operates under an extensive set of bylaws adopted by the board and updated on occasion to reflect the Association's policy positions, and organizational goals, at the board's Annual meeting.

BOARD OFFICERS

Jeff Hernandez, President
Rob Bitney, Vice President
Brad Garrett, Secretary
Curt Ward, Treasurer
Norm Richie, Immediate Past President
Bob Rees, VP Of Conservation
Bob Oleson, VP OF Government Affairs

AT LARGE MEMBERS

At large members provide needed knowledge and skills and serve as advisors to the board.

Bill Kremers
Mike Myrick
Jürgen West
Ken Johnson

CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES

Chapter representatives ensure our connectivity between the Association and the chapters.

Donald Hyde, Columbia River Chapter
Rod Fosback, Emerald Empire Chapter
Scott Arpan, Clackamas Chapter
Ron Pockrus, Mid-Valley Chapter
Robert Morton, Salem Chapter
Jeff Stoeger, Sandy River Chapter
Jason Fornelli, Tualatin Valley Chapter

FULL BIOS





STEELHEADERS AT WORK

Volunteerism is at the heart of what it means to be a Steelheader. This includes taking time to teach someone how to rig a Steelhead pole, join in a river clean up, provide a seat in your boat, take a veteran fishing, or write a letter to your local legislator.

2025 VOLUNTEER REPORT

FISHERY ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS	2871 hrs
River clean ups, habitat restoration, access projects and hatchery program support.	
COMMUNITY FISHING EVENTS	7224 hrs
Volunteer led veteran and family fishing outings and camps. Learn to fish events.	
ANGLER ADVOCACY	258 hrs
Letter writing, townhall attendance, meeting with legislators	
ASSOCIATION SUPPORT	1287 hrs
Participating in volunteer leadership roles on our board, and supporting events.	
CHAPTER SUPPORT	3010 hrs
Participating in volunteer leadership roles at the chapter level, including local fishing events.	
TOTAL VOLUNTEERS	398
TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS	14,639 hrs
VALUE OF VOLUNTEER TIME	<u>\$149,930</u>

COMMUNITY FISHING PROGRAM

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ANGLERS

Through community driven fishing events, the NW Steelheaders are sharing life long skills and inspiring the next generation of recreational anglers. Our community fishing programs are designed to give new anglers the tools to feel safe and confident on the water. Not only will they enjoy years of outdoor recreation, but they will also become the next advocates for these precious resources.

FAMILY FISH CAMP IS BACK!



We are excited to announce the return of Family Fish Camp in 2026! In 2025, NW Steelheaders secured a grant through the ODFW Outdoor Recreation and Conservation Fund to relaunch Family Fish Camp at no cost to participants. This hands-on, family-friendly program brings kids and adults together to learn the basics of fishing, fish conservation, and enjoying time outdoors. Whether it's your first cast or your fiftieth, Family Fish Camp is all about building skills, confidence, and lasting memories on the water—together.

TUALATIN VALLEY CHAPTER LEADS SHERWOOD STUDENT FISHING DAY

Northwest Steelheaders played a key role in helping Sherwood Middle School students experience fishing and the outdoors during a recent trip to Huddleston Pond in Willamina. Thirteen Steelheaders volunteers and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife provided fishing rods, tackle, bait, and hands-on guidance to students in the school's Outdoor Pursuits class. Their support introduced many first-time anglers to fishing, with 18 students casting a line for the first time and 14 catching their first fish, making the event a memorable outdoor learning experience.

SALEM STEELHEADERS VOLUNTEER AT LEARN TO FISH EVENT AT KEIZER RAPIDS



The Salem Chapter of NW Steelheaders rallied volunteer to support the third annual "Learn to Fish" event hosted by the City of Keizer, at Keizer Rapid Parks. A total of 54 kids and family members attended, and learned many new fishing skills from six salem chapter volunteers.

COMMUNITY FISHING PROGRAM

INSPIRING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ANGLERS

CLINICS AND FISH-ALONGS

Our leaders and volunteers get groups of new anglers together for single or multi day fishing trips to share knowledge, get to know each other, and fish, of course. Our Fish-alongs are open to the public and free to attend. We coordinate more formalized fishing clinic events with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. We charge a small fee for these events to cover our costs, and all attendees receive a free membership to the Steelheaders.

FISHING MERIT BADGES WITH STEELHEADERS SUPPORT



In March, scouts working to secure their merit badges embarked on a weekend fishing and crabbing trip to Neatarts Bay, and making camp at Camp Meriweather. The weekend was organized by volunteers from Steelheaders, and the Angler Education Coordinator at ODFW provided licenses for the scouts for the weekend.



Steelheader volunteers recognized at the 2025 ODFW Hunter and Angler Education Conference (L to R): Jack Morby, Ken Johnson, Rob Bitney, Bernie Hoene

GENEROSITY: WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A STEELHEADER



The Tualatin Valley Chapter Fish-Along is an annual spring tradition. This year Bob Rees, local fishing guide, and Robert Bradley, ODFW Fish Biologist, shared details on the local fishery and projected fish runs.

COMMUNITY FISHING PROGRAM

ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION OF THE FISH AND HABITAT WE ALL LOVE

STEELHEADERS SUPPORT FIGHT AGAINST POACHING

With annual financial support from the Association of Northwest Steelheaders and others, rewards recently doubled to \$400 for people who report certain illegal fishing offenses through the TIP program which lead to an arrest or citation in Oregon. The Oregon TIP (Turn In Poachers) program is a critical tool for combatting wildlife poaching in Oregon. We're proud to support this initiative with partners Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Oregon State Police Oregon Hunters Association and Coastal Conservation Association Oregon.



FAMILY FISHING EVENT AT OREGON STATE PRISON

A big part of the Steelheaders mission is creating positive angling experiences that inspire the next generation of anglers—and we're proud to say the 2nd Annual Oregon State Penitentiary Family Fishing Day was a huge success! This collaborative effort brought together the Association of Northwest Steelheaders, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Oregon State Penitentiary Correctional Counselors, and Correctional Officers to create a memorable experience for families. The event offered a blend of fun and education. Children engaged in hands-on activities like fish painting and exploring macroinvertebrate displays. The highlight was the fishing tank provided by AWNS Mid-Valley Chapter, stocked with over 100 fish, where many kids caught their very first fish and received a "First Fish Certificate" to commemorate the moment.

ENSURING HATCHERIES SUSTAIN NORTHWEST FISHERIES

LETZ CREEK STEP HATCHERY

Since 1992, volunteers from the Emerald Empire Chapter have operated the Letz Creek STEP (Salmon, Trout Enhancement Program) Hatchery, providing thousands of volunteer hours towards enhancing this fishery. Volunteers collecting adult fish, incubate eggs, and rear 15,000 winter steelhead smolts to release into the Siuslaw River system each year.



LETZ CREEK VOLUNTEER HOURS



1,158

1,713

ADDITIONAL VOLUNTEER HATCHERY SUPPORT

Across the state, Steelheaders have established excellent partnerships with local biologists and ODFW hatchery managers across the state, assisting in spawning, rearing and fin clipping of hatchery fish sustaining vulnerable populations of fish and allow for recreational fisheries to exist.

ADDITIONAL HATCHERY SUPPORT HOURS

EXPANDING EDUCATION PROGRAMS

FISH EGGS TO FRY: ANOTHER RECORD YEAR FOR CLASSROOMS

In 2025, Northwest Steelheaders, in partnership with Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) and the National Wildlife Federation, assisted with rainbow trout egg delivery for 81 classrooms across the greater Portland-Metro region participating in Fish Eggs to Fry, 21 more than last year. A record 201 classrooms participated in fall salmon rearing in the greater Portland-Metro region, 28 more than last year. Reaching this large geographic area wouldn't be possible without volunteers donating their time and expertise. Many volunteers speak to classes about where the trout eggs came from, salmon lifecycle and biology facts, fishing information, and more, while giving students a chance to connect with the volunteers and ask questions. Classrooms foster the fish until they are ready for release. Then it's goodbye fry and good luck.



Volunteers prepare to deliver eggs to classrooms.



GARDEN FOR WILDLIFE: CERTIFIED WILDLIFE HABITATS

NW Steelheaders is proud to support NWF in the Garden For Wildlife Program. This program provides simple steps and a wealth of resources to create beautiful spaces that make a big impact for local and migratory species from small window boxes to vast habitat corridors. Reducing water consumption for gardens and minimizing the need for herbicides and pesticides by focusing on native plant species reduces negative impacts downstream, including on salmon and steelhead. There are over 4,300 Certified Wildlife Habitats in Oregon, and the list keeps on growing. In 2025, Oregon had 134 Certified Wildlife Habitat Gardens and 4 School Yard Habitats. We're hoping we can reach even more gardeners in 2026.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Ensuring safe and accessible fishing and boating for all

STEELHEADERS IMPROVE RIVER ACCESS ON THE WILSON RIVER

The Tualatin Valley Chapter of the Association of Northwest Steelheaders, working in collaboration with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), recently completed temporary improvements to the boat slide at Siskeyville on the Wilson River. Following the fall of a tree upstream of the slide, river flows created an eddy that deposited a significant amount of rock at the base of the launch. As a result, boaters were forced to drag their boats 30 to 50 feet to reach the water, replacing what had once been a quick slide-and-splash launch. Steelheader Eric Erickson proposed a practical solution: attaching durable rock quarry belting to the bottom of the slide. This temporary upgrade restores usability during low-water conditions while allowing the river to naturally move the excess rock downstream over time. The design also ensures that ODFW can quickly remove the belting in the event of high flows or flooding.

Thanks to the initiative of Eric Erickson and the support of Mark Hutchinson and the ODFW team, these improvements were completed efficiently and will benefit all users of the Siskeyville boat ramp until natural river processes resolve the issue.



Steelheaders inspecting their work on the Wilson

CLACKAMAS CHAPTER ADOPTS FELDHEIMER LAUNCH

The NW Steelheaders adopted Feldheimer boat launch on the Clackamas River in partnership with Clackamas County parks. Our Clackamas River chapter is committed to keeping the launch tidy, and we will be exploring resources for making improvements to the river access site. Thank you to the Parks and Road Departments for their dedication to enriching outdoor recreation in Clackamas County.



SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE THEIR COUNTRY

VETERAN FISHING EVENTS

Our goal is to reduce the challenges service members face by providing a strong, supportive network focused on restorative angling experiences in the Pacific Northwest. We partner with The Fallen Outdoors and Take A Soldier Fishing to organize trips for veterans from every branch of the military and all generations. We provide lodging, food, boating opportunities, and equipment paid for through donations and arranged entirely by dedicated Steelheader volunteers.

COLUMBIA RIVER CHAPTER HOSTS VETERANS FISHING DAY

The Association of Northwest Steelheaders Columbia River Chapter — proudly hosted a day of salmon fishing for 86 veterans, including WWII veteran Harry Humason. This annual tradition, which is provided at no cost to participants, brings together volunteers, boat captains, sponsors, and the community to honor those who have served our country.



Thanks to the generosity of 27 volunteer boat captains, each veteran enjoyed a day on the Columbia River equipped with boats, fuel, gear, and plenty of camaraderie. From predawn launches to afternoon weigh-ins, the event was a demonstration of both skill and spirit.

The day resulted in 12 Chinook salmon weighed in, with many more released or lost to the river. Every veteran left with filleted fish packed on ice — a memento of the day's adventure.

GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY

A VOICE FOR SALMON, STEELHEAD, AND THE COMMUNITIES THAT RELY ON THEM

BOB OLESON, VP OF GOVERNMENT
AFFAIRS

NW Steelheaders are the voice for fish and the landscapes they call home. Being able to recreate in our watersheds comes with immense responsibility, not just for recreational anglers, but for all of us who use these public waterways. From fighting for public river access to pursuing more fish-friendly hydro system management, the Northwest Steelheaders has a 60-plus year history of advocating for healthy fish runs and abundant recreational fisheries.

2025 LEGISLATIVE WINS

ODFW BUDGET

Oregon's fish and wildlife budget bills—HB 5009, HB 2342, HB 2343, HB 2345, and SB 5505—establish several funding and policy changes. Resident fishing licenses will rise from \$44 to \$50 in 2026 and \$56 in 2030. The Columbia River Basin Endorsement is extended through 2032, and a new \$9 ocean endorsement will fund marine monitoring. Commercial fees increase gradually through 2030. The budget closes Salmon River Hatchery and the Oregon Hatchery Research Center, but \$1.4 million saves Rock Creek Hatchery. It also invests \$20 million in hatchery improvements and keeps youth licenses affordable.

SB 74: PROTECTING PUBLIC ACCESS

SB 74 authorized the Department of State Lands to make navigation determinations on waterbodies. The state will now be able to protect public access to important waterways from legal challenges, preserving recreational access as rivers and waterways naturally move.

HB 2982: EXPANDING RESOURCES TO FIGHT INVASIVE SPECIES

HB 2982 increased boatings fees and directed more funds into the Aquatic Invasive Species(AIS) Prevention Fund. The bill removed the 10-foot minimum requirement for a waterway access permit while operating a non motorized boat, recognizing that modern kayaks and paddleboards often exceed this length, and are a major user of our waterways and cross state lines. It also increased the AIS prevention permit for non resident boats from \$20 to \$30, and increased the biennial fee for registration from \$5 to \$8. Funds would be split between the AIS Fund and Waterway Access Fund

OUR 2025-2026 AMBITIONS

Our pursuit to protect and improve fisheries begins with productive advocacy and education. We will continue our commitment to raising the bar, pursuing our ongoing goals, and setting new benchmarks for success.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In July, the board approved a budget to hire an executive director. We are targeting a start date of October 1, 2025.

FAMILY FISH CAMP

The Association plans to revive the underserved youth/family focused fishing event with a camp scheduled for May of 2026. We have secured grant-funding and plan to hire a camp director and recruit volunteers to help run camp activities.

FUNDING

The Association is encouraging a shift to sustaining members giving monthly. We will be focusing our near-term efforts on connecting with donors interested in giving annually, establishing corporate sponsorships and aggressively pursuing grant funding for our programs.

NEW CHAPTERS

The Association plans to launch a Central Oregon chapter this fiscal year and will be hosting a kickoff event in October of 2025. All are welcome and encouraged to attend, stay tuned for an official invitation.

RIVER WORKGROUPS

In order to improve our response time and engagement in local recreational angling current events, we are establishing community teams lead by River Ambassadors. As staff and chapters monitor issues, they will consult with River Work Groups to respond to threats and organize association action.



CHAPTERS

The Association is comprised of chapters and individual members. Chapters are the hub of our volunteer activity. They are also a great way to learn how to fish, get involved in the community and support regional projects. Chapters are as unique as the waters they call home, each with their own priority projects and fisheries. There are no additional membership dues to join a chapter, and each chapter has its own governing board.

CLACKAMAS RIVER (FORMERLY MCLOUGHLIN CHAPTER)

Monthly Meeting Location: Round Table Pizza, 16550 SE McLoughlin Blvd, Milwaukie, OR 97267

Monthly Meeting Time: Fourth Tuesday at 7:00pm

COLUMBIA RIVER

Monthly Meeting Location: Prairie Tavern 14925 NE Caples Road Brush Prairie, WA 98606

Monthly Meeting Time: 2nd Tuesday of each month, at 6:30pm

EMERALD EMPIRE

Monthly Meeting Location: Sizzlers Steakhouse
1010 Postal Way, Springfield, OR 97477

Monthly Meeting Time: First Thursday at 6:30pm, September through June

MID-VALLEY

Monthly Meeting Location: The Santiam Place
139 N Main, Lebanon, OR 97355 - picnic off-site in June

Monthly Meeting Time: First Wednesday at 7:00pm, September through May

SALEM

Monthly Meeting Location: Keizer City Hall 930 Chemawa Rd N, Keizer, OR 97303

Monthly Meeting Time: Third Tuesday at 7:00pm

SANDY RIVER

Monthly Meeting Location: The Sam Cox Building 1102 E Historic Columbia River Hwy, Troutdale, OR 97060

Monthly Meeting Time: First Thursday at 7:00 pm

TUALATIN VALLEY

Monthly Meeting Location: Hillsboro Elks Lodge #1862
7553 NE Quatama St, Hillsboro, OR 97124

Monthly Meeting Time: Second Tuesday at 7:00pm

4.5K

SUPPORTERS

- 3,911** Subscribers
- 750** Members
- 139** New Members
- 29** Sustaining Members
- 338** Lifetime members
- 28,896** Social Media Followers

Numbers add up to over 4.5K because some supporters fill multiple roles.



Association of Northwest Steelheaders are proud to be the official NWF affiliate for Oregon

A special thanks to National Wildlife Federation(NWF), for providing us with support in our region and leveraging our voice at the national level.

CONSERVATION PARTNERS

- Avidity wines
- B&R Tackle
- Beckman Fishing
- Bellingar Estates
- By land by sea by air
- Camp Angelos
- Candlelighter of Mid-Willamette Valley
- Clackamas River Basin Council
- Columbia Snake River Campaign
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
- Congressional Sportsmen Caucus
- Curt Currey Guide service
- D&G bait Inc
- Dave's Tangle Free

CONSERVATION PARTNERS CONTINUED

Davey Jones Fishing Locker and Guide service
Dean's Guide Service
Deschutes River Alliance
Duck's unlimited
Fisherman's Marine
Frenchglen Hotel
Get Hooked Foundation
Hatchery and Wild Coexist
Jeremy Gravon Guide service
KGNU New Country 93
Knipe Realty
Lincoln City glass center
Littleleaf Guide Service
McKenzie Guides Association,
McKenzie River Trust
McKenzie River watershed Council
McMenamin's
Mo's seafood and chowder
National Wildlife Federation
Native American Youth Association
Newberg Grocery Outlet
North Country Lures and Flies
Northwest Guides and Anglers
Northwest Sportfishing Industry Assoc.
O'Loughlin Trade Shows
Okuma Fishing Tackle Corp
Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Oregon Hunters Association
Oregon Sportsmen Conservation Partnership

CONSERVATION PARTNERS CONTINUED

Oregon Tackle
Parrett Mountain Cellars
People of Color Outdoors
Pike Road Wines
Portland Marine and Electronics
Press & Barrel Wine Collective
Procure bait and scents
Red's Guide Service(Trevor Storlie)
Save Our Wild Salmon Coalition
Steven's Marine
Stryker Rods
Swanson Bros. Lumber Co.
Talon Made IN USA
Team Hookup Guide Service
The Carlton Winemakers Studio
The Fallen Outdoors
The Guides Forecast
The Orvis Company
The Portland Fly Shop
Tires Les Schwab
Trader Joe's
Tresori Family Vineyard
Trevin Hoyt Guide Service
White's Meats
Work Sharp Sharpeners
Yakima Bait Company
Zenger Farm

ASSOCIATION OF NORTHWEST STEELHEADERS

CONTACT

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