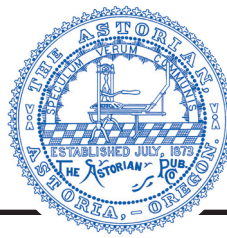


# OPINION



# the Astorian

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## OUR VIEW

# Return to evenhanded salmon management

In Astoria in April, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission learned there's still plenty of life in commercial fishing. This may have come as a surprise, considering how some sport fishing groups have mischaracterized the industry as irrelevant.

Since Washington state and Oregon co-manage Columbia River fisheries, the commission's policies take on great importance for all who value the continuing economic and social benefits of traditional industries. Of these, salmon fishing is so deeply entwined in local culture that it may be said to comprise a key element of our heritage.

Oregon commissioners visiting local fish processors observed a diverse workforce whose wages make a meaningful contribution to Clatsop County's overall economy. In a region now best known as a tourist destination, commercial fish harvests support middle-class families on both sides of the Columbia. This fresh "fish money" is multiplied several times as it goes into making house payments, buying cars and groceries and creating jobs in everything from local schools to espresso stands.

Under the leadership of Mary Wahl, the commission's chairwoman, the commission is demonstrating a willingness to address complex issues confronting Oregon's natural resources. Their approach to diversity, equity and inclusion opportunities and commitment to addressing climate change and its impacts are laudable. The strong commitment of today's commission to conservation is correct.

Still in need of a course correction are misguided policies dictated by former Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber. In 2012, Kitzhaber, with the support and assistance of sport fishing advocates, usurped the commission's longstanding leadership and expertise in managing Columbia River salmon. The top-down Kitzhaber



Gillnetters, like this one working in Youngs Bay, have honed ways to target hatchery and net-pen salmon.

plan was an ill-disguised mandate that took away the share of salmon allocated to small businesses in the form of gillnetting boats, attempting to replace them with unproven alternative fishing methods and places.

The Kitzhaber plan purported to consider the needs of all user groups and to prevent serious economic harm to any single community. Instead, it incorporated tactics familiar to marginalized communities throughout history — big promises and thoroughly inadequate follow-through.

Harvest shares for traditional small-boat commercial fishermen were reduced up front in exchange for assumed future production without any guarantee of implementation or success. Areas of the Columbia River which supported traditional fishermen for generations were deemed to be off limits for all but sportsmen. Millions of dollars were spent testing new types of fishing gear that proved to be ineffective or too expensive. Traditional gear carefully designed and used to target hatchery salmon was unilaterally

condemned. New off-channel fishing areas were not identified or funded.

In short, the economic damage to the lower river fishing families was immediate and the remedies promised only existed in an uncertain and unproven future.

Local communities thoroughly appreciate sport fishermen. Their purchases, charter trips and guide fees, lodgings and friendly enthusiasm make tremendous contributions to our economy and character.

But the Fish and Wildlife Commission ought to correct an injustice by returning salmon management decisions to its well-qualified staff, guided by overarching principles of equitable sharing, fair treatment and social justice. By returning to a balance that recognizes the value of small commercial fishing boats, commissioners can preserve the last of these important small businesses — boats that provide delicious salmon for the majority of local non-fishing families who may otherwise never enjoy this iconic Pacific Northwest delicacy.

Salem-based decision making

has generated a strong pushback in rural counties, leading a number of them to declare a wish to split off into Idaho. Clatsop County clearly will not be among them. But its residents are no strangers to the impression that decisions affecting them are warped by urban politics and lack of understanding. The commission can aid in healing this divide.

At its core, Columbia River policy should be grounded in the same values and urgency that guided earlier decisions. It is not necessary or required that commissioners become experts on fisheries management to form good policy. Oregon and Washington state fisheries staff is more than capable of drafting rules that will meet standards determined by the two commissions.

We trust that opening a frank discussion with all stakeholders and forming a policy based on fair treatment, equity in both burden and benefit, and social justice will lead the Fish and Wildlife Commission to a policy that they can be proud of and under which all user groups can thrive.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Personal stories

Thank you, Nicole Bales for the May 7 article about Police Officer Kenny Hansen, "With community resource officer, Astoria invests in homeless outreach," and how he helped the O'Neal family.

The family had weathered personal challenges and Officer Hansen helped the couple get married and find housing. Congratulations to the O'Neal's son for making the honor roll at school.

Please continue to write personal stories of the unhoused in Astoria to help us understand their situations and needs.

JUDITH HUCK  
Astoria

### Fiscally smart

As a 15-year veteran of the fire service in Arizona before moving here, I will be voting "yes" for the Gearhart fire bond.

I have carefully reviewed the arguments against. They all show a dangerous lack of understanding of the physical needs and realities of emergency fire and police operations, as well as the realities of the impact a natural disaster will have on our local communities.

Complaining about the location and its distance from downtown ignores Gearhart's growth, and where that growth will continue to happen. It says you think the lives and property of "Gin Ridge" residents and downtown are more important than those living off Highlands Lane or the streets west of U.S. Highway 101.

Most important, it ignores the primary factor that impacts response times: where the majority of the volunteer force currently lives, and will continue to be drawn from in the future. Spoiler alert: It ain't downtown.

Opponents claim to "support" emergency service personnel; but, all they can see is the cost while, ironically, their continued opposition keeps driving the cost up. A "no" vote will cause taxpayers to pay as

much, or more, to get less in the future, and has the potential to expose the city to civil liabilities.

More important, they are denying Gearhart fire and police the basic necessities they currently need to safely and effectively do their jobs. Nothing in the fire bond proposal is extravagant or unnecessary.

A "yes" vote is the fiscally smart thing to do.

BILL GRAFFIUS  
Gearhart

### Huge success

Our first 100 Women Who Care Clatsop meeting was held May 2. It was a huge success! We were able to award \$7,000-plus to Ten Fifteen Theater to repair water damage to their basement.

I attribute the success of this newly formed organization to Kari Borgen and Nicole Bales, who initiated a front-page article. We now have 85 members.

Thank you to The Astorian for supporting our local nonprofits. One hundred women meeting four times a year donating \$100 each to a local nonprofit.

JAN JOHNSON  
Astoria

### Honor her memory

I recently became aware of the passing of Elizabeth Furse. She died about a year ago. I wanted to honor her memory. She served as the congresswoman for the 1st Congressional District from Oregon from 1993 to 2000.

She was one of those people who exuded magnetism of presence. I suspected it was like being in the presence of an Eleanor Roosevelt or Clara Barton: powerful, caring, kind; one who rallied other people to good causes.

Prior to her service as a congresswoman, she supported United Farm Work-

ers, and advocated for low-income women. She helped restore federal status to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde and others. She was founder and director for the Oregon Peace Institute, which advocated for marginalized communities and peaceful resolution of conflicts.

As a congresswoman, she co-sponsored an amendment to the 1994 Defense Authorization Act, which she said "killed an entire generation of nuclear weapons." Other accomplishments while in Congress were support of light rail in Portland, funding of research for diabetes and early childhood issues.

Her interest in a clean environment led to the creation of Clean Water Columbia and Columbia Riverkeeper. She continued to participate in tribal issues and animal protection initiatives. She was also co-owner of Helvetia Winery.

She truly was a constructive and a lovely human being.

POLLY MINER  
Warrenton

### Second draft

Dear Justice Samuel Alito: Right from the first sentence of your majority opinion draft, you had me. Thank you so much for crushing almost 50 years of reproductive choice for women.

As a grandmother of four young girls, I am grateful that they will no longer bear the burden I shouldered, freedom over the fate of my own body. What a bother! I leave my treasured girls' organs in your supreme all-knowing hands.

I do have a request, however, for inclusion in a second draft. Please create a mandatory national registry of all DNA-identified fathers of these children born as a result of this decision.

If listed fathers are unwilling or unable to provide at least 50% of all care and monetary costs incurred by each of their spawn through age 18, even if these fathers are rapists, or, God forbid, grandpa, please

mandate the sterilization of these deadbeat dads so we can completely break the cycle of unwanted pregnancy.

As a taxpayer, I don't wish to pay for another man's choice. Sound fair?

KATHLEEN ZUNKEL  
Warrenton

### Prudent

Governmental experience does not make one the best at fulfilling the needs of Clatsop County. A county commission should have people from diverse backgrounds and walks of life. The commission relies upon the county staff and hired experts to guide them in these governmental decisions.

Being a long-term generational member of this community qualifies any of us to serve our county.

We are in uncertain times and costs are continuing to rise. Our timber dollars are potentially decreasing while the need for services and funds to run our new jail increase expenditures. However, revenue is not increasing at the same rate. If we increase services by spending down our fund balance, it is potentially unsustainable.

For these reasons, I find it prudent to vote for Nate Pinkstaff, as he brings a fresh perspective, promotes transparency and encourages others to be involved. I have heard him speak about deregulation and better communication and collaboration to focus spending on needed services.

He has attended this year's budget committee and been involved in commission meetings without being elected. He is engaged and volunteers in our community, which gives him an understanding of its challenges, needs and the ability to find creative solutions. He does not rely upon his own life experiences alone, but also draws from the experiences of others.

Vote Pinkstaff for county commission.  
GRETCHEN ALLEN  
Astoria