

The 2005 Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium: Status, Management, Biology, and Conservation



Post-Symposium Summary

The 2005 Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium was held on September 29 through October 1, at Fort Worden State Park, Port Townsend, Washington. The objectives of the 2005 Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium were: 1) update coastal cutthroat trout information presented during the 1995 Sea-run Cutthroat Trout Symposium, in Reedsport, Oregon, 2) enhance knowledge on all facets of life history and ecology, 3) provide current assessment of the status of populations coast-wide, and 4) encourage development of a coordinated, range-wide conservation plan. Technical sessions included Status, Trends, and Management; Biology; and Conservation Planning. Other Symposium highlights included an angling seminar by two noted coastal cutthroat trout angling guides, an evening poster/mixer session, and a Banquet Keynote presentation by Dr. Bob Behnke. In brief summary, 10 years after the first Symposium, we still lack information about the status and trends of coastal cutthroat trout. However, significant progress has been made in the areas of coastal cutthroat trout genetics, habitat use, movement and migrations, and life history strategies. Significant opportunity remains to collaborate on range-wide conservation efforts.

A total of 110 people attended the Symposium, representing California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and Alaska. Coastal cutthroat trout aficionados trekked from as far away as Maine and Massachusetts to attend the Symposium. Participants reflected the broad array of interests associated with this fascinating fish and included anglers, environmentalists, scientists, managers, academics, media, and tribes.

Thirty-five technical papers and 10 posters were presented. Most presenters submitted extended abstracts or full papers prior to the Symposium, and the Symposium's Publications Committee is planning on publishing the Symposium Proceedings in the near future. After the Proceedings are printed, copies will be available for purchase through the Oregon Chapter, American Fisheries Society.

Significant financial assistance for planning and hosting the Symposium was provided by Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission, and Symposium leadership, organization, financial assistance, and personnel support was provided by U.S Fish and Wildlife Service. Loretta Brenner, the Oregon Chapter AFS' Administrative Assistant, provided excellent services as the Registration Coordinator. In addition, several fishing organizations provided financial and personnel assistance towards the 2005 Symposium, and several individuals donated fine art and books for the auction and raffle. Almost \$20,000 in donations was raised prior to the Symposium. All these financial contributions allowed for inexpensive Symposium registration fees, as well as significant travel, food, and lodging subsidies to students. A total of nine students attended the Symposium with full travel, food, and lodging costs provided. In addition, \$4,500 in travel, lodging and food awards were provided to participants lacking travel support.

Symposium "profits" will fund a one-time, \$5,000 coastal cutthroat trout graduate student research scholarship, to be advertised via Western Division, American Fisheries Society's Scholarship Committee. In addition, approximately \$5,000 in "seed money" from the Symposium's revenues will be provided for a 2006 Coastal Cutthroat Trout Research, monitoring, and Evaluation Workshop. The multi-state/provincial workshop will review coastal cutthroat trout status information, discuss and agree on key uncertainties, information needs, and research issues, review monitoring activities underway in each state and province, and search for consistent approaches to undertake key monitoring activities. Additional workshop support has already been offered by the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission to fund, organize, and host this workshop.

In summary, the 2005 Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium was a great success. Excellent technical presentations and posters have improved our knowledge of coastal cutthroat trout. A large audience of broadly-divergent interests participated and enhanced dialog during the Symposium. Significant contributions helped defray travel, lodging, food, and registration costs, especially for students. The Symposium will use its proceeds to fund a coastal cutthroat trout graduate student research scholarship as well as a multi-state/provincial research and monitoring workshop. We hope the follow-up Coastal Cutthroat Trout Workshop will generate interest in range-wide research and monitoring agreements, and efforts to gather more information on this fascinating and important fish species. We also hope the Symposium and the follow-up workshop yield broad-scale collaborative efforts that lead to better-informed fishery management and conservation efforts. Finally, we hope that

another Coastal Cutthroat Trout Symposium will be hosted in approximately five years. While no single entity has volunteered to host the next Symposium, it seems appropriate that the next Symposium be held in British Columbia. We hope to see you at the next Symposium, to review the newly generated information resulting from the 2005 Symposium's Graduate Student Research Scholarship, as well as information, activities, and plans generated from the Coastal Cutthroat Trout Research, Monitoring, and Evaluation Workshop.

Doug Young, Tim Cummings, and Joe Jauquet
"The Original Three Symposium Planners"