**Steelhead Managers’ Meeting, March 2023**

**Talk Title:** Washington’s Coastal Steelhead Management: Collaboration and Public Engagement Catalyze Change

**Abstract:** The abundance of wild steelhead populations along Washington’s Pacific coast is in long-term decline, creating an atmosphere of urgency and at times conflict in the fisheries management landscape. Through a small budget proviso, the Washington State legislature presented WDFW with the opportunity to update coastal steelhead fisheries management with the goal of supporting both long-term population viability and angling opportunities. The Department seized that opportunity and developed the Coastal Steelhead Proviso Implementation Plan (CSPIP) and an associated $5.9M budget proposal, which lays out an adaptive management framework based on pre-existing policy from Washington’s Statewide Steelhead Management Plan (2008), increases fisheries monitoring and evaluation to fill pervasive data gaps, and creates a pathway towards Management Strategy Evaluations (MSEs) to re-evaluate harvest control rules that were set decades ago. The CSPIP also acknowledges and addresses the interconnectedness between fisheries regulations, hatcheries, monitoring and evaluation, habitat, and fisheries human dimensions. Successfully crafting this comprehensive vision required a highly collaborative process involving public stakeholders in an advisory group, co-managers, partner organizations, and multiple levels of the WDFW organizational structure across divisions and disciplines. This talk will explain how organized collaboration and the incorporation of multiple perspectives, though challenging, successfully informed the development of the CSPIP in a public and high-stakes environment.