



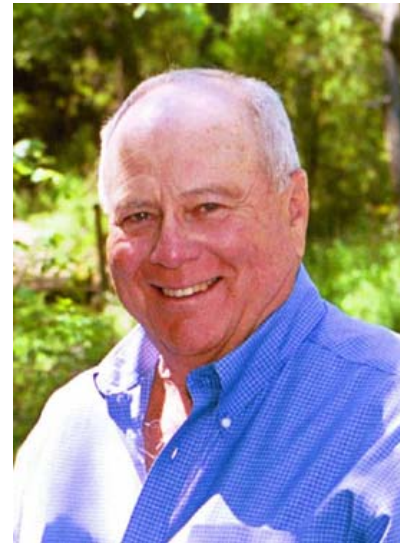
April 2010



CCA Mourns Passing of Walter Fondren

The conservation community lost one of its true visionaries with the passing of Coastal Conservation Association founder Walter W. Fondren III early this year. A passionate conservationist, avid hunter and skilled fisherman, Fondren was a driving force in the grassroots movement to save red drum and speckled trout populations along the Texas coast in the late 1970s, and was one of the first to fully grasp the potential of anglers as stewards of marine resources with the creation of the Gulf Coast Conservation Association (now CCA).

"Walter was one of those unique individuals who saw the whole chessboard," said Venable Proctor, chairman of CCA. "When he saw a problem with fisheries on the Texas coast, he helped build a national organization to safeguard those resources for generations to come. He grew up hunting and fishing, and fully understood that it is the responsibility of all who enjoy such privileges to leave things better than they found them. He lived his entire life by that principle and infused it into every aspect of CCA."



As chairman of CCA, he helped guide the organization's growth into a national presence with 17 state chapters and almost 100,000 members on all three coasts. He served on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council as a member from 1982 through 1992; was Council Chairman from 1989 to 1990; and also served on the Billfish Advisory Committee since 1994. He received the Harvey Weil Sportsman/Conservationist Award in 2000 and the prestigious Charles H. Lyles Award in 2001 from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission in recognition of a lifetime of exceptional contributions on behalf of marine resources.

"Walter was the right man at the right time to organize anglers to fight for conservation," said Bob Hayes, CCA's long-time general counsel. "He really helped shape the ethic of responsibility and stewardship in recreational angling at a time when everyone knew there were problems, but no one was sure how to attack them. Walter brought together a diverse group of individuals in a common cause, without a care for recognition as long as the job was done. We have lost one of the true leaders of saltwater angling, and a great friend, too."

Fondren was inducted into the International Game Fish Association Hall of Fame in 2004 and served as an IGFA trustee for many years. In 2005, he was named one of the 50 legends of fishing by Field & Stream magazine and he was the first recipient of the CCA's Lifetime Achievement Award in 1997.

"He was a remarkable person, as comfortable meeting the president of the United States as he was sight-casting to redfish with his grandkids," said Patrick Murray, president of CCA. "From every local chapter committee to the national board of directors, we will ensure that his remarkable legacy lives on."

EDF raises stakes in catch share lawsuit

Environmental Defense Fund intervenes to thwart CCA catch share lawsuit

Seeking to defend a controversial catch share program for Gulf grouper, the Environmental Defense Fund has been allowed to intervene in a lawsuit filed by Coastal Conservation Association in federal district court that challenges the adoption and implementation of Amendment 29 to the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Management Plan.

"This was not wholly unexpected. After all, EDF has made a considerable investment in its efforts to enact catch share programs in fisheries throughout America so this lawsuit is clearly a threat to their program," said Chester Brewer, chairman of the CCA National Government Relations Committee. "The intervention of EDF simply clarifies what is at stake for recreational fishermen, not just in the Gulf of Mexico, but everywhere in the country."

[See Full Press Release](#)

Council action on Gulf red snapper signals need for reallocation

Recreational anglers were cheered earlier this year by news that after decades of federal management, culminating with a two-fish bag limit and a 74-day season in 2009, scientists suddenly announced that the Gulf red snapper stock is no longer undergoing overfishing, which is a significant step on the road to recovery.

However, the reward for decades of sacrifice announced at the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council meeting in February is a good news/bad news scenario for recreational anglers who will see their quota increase to about 3.4 million pounds

in 2010, from 2.5 million pounds in 2009, but will also likely see their season shrink to the fewest number of days ever - a projected 54 days in 2010.

"Thanks to a combination of factors, including significant bycatch reduction measures for the shrimp fleet, the stock is improving," said Dr. Russell Nelson, CCA Gulf Fisheries consultant. "But clearly the Council now needs to take into account the problems caused by the increasing average size of the fish being caught and take a long overdue look at reallocation."

[See Full Press Release](#)
[See more Gulf fisheries news](#)

[Send comments to NMFS on 2010 red snapper quotas and season](#)
Enter Keyword: 0648-AY57
Comment are due by close of business April 14, 2010

Legislation Seeks to Protect Boaters and Anglers from E15

National Marine Manufacturers Association Calls for Action

As the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency continues to move forward with a possible approval of E15 for sale, those with boats and other gasoline-powered engines need to be aware of the impact of the hasty, ill-advised introduction of this incompatible fuel in the marketplace. Marine and other small gasoline-powered engines are not designed, calibrated, certified or warranted to run on more than E10. Higher concentrations of ethanol in fuel pose serious problems, including performance and engine durability concerns, increased emissions, fuel tank corrosion, and safety issues. The U.S. Coast Guard has urged EPA not to allow the sale of E15 given many of these concerns.

[See more information on this issue from NMMA.](#)

Building Conservation:

CCA's Commitment to Marine Habitat

[CCA Alabama](#) Derelict crab traps are a boating danger and an eyesore along the shallows of Mobile Bay, and they are perpetual killing machines. Crabs enter the abandoned trap and die. Small fish and crabs feed on the decaying crabs. More crabs are attracted, and the cycle goes on and on. CCA Alabama volunteers took to the shallow flats in March to retrieve and destroy abandoned traps. Partnering with Mobile County Wildlife



Conservation Association and the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the crew met on the Causeway for a morning of in-the-mud fun. The

project is conducted every two years, and it is a favorite activity for CCA Alabama members.

CCA Florida Oyster reefs provide habitat and refuge for a variety of wildlife, including shrimp, blue crab, redfish, snook and sea trout. To date, more 300 species have been identified as depending, either directly or indirectly, on oyster reefs. CCA Florida's Orlando Chapter is committed to creating healthy oyster reefs and has been making oyster mats to support the effort. "This is a great project for CCA to be involved in. It has a significant, positive impact on our fisheries and the benefit is right here in our own backyard, where many of us prefer to fish," said Alan Byrd, CCA Orlando Chapter president.

CCA Georgia The CCA Georgia Athens Chapter held an event for members and anyone interested in oyster restoration co-hosted by MAREX Director Dr. Randal L. Walker. As presented in their efforts and on the web, UGA-MAREX coordinates a community-based oyster restoration project called GEORGIA (Generating Enhanced Oyster Reefs in Georgia's Inshore Areas). The program recycles oyster shell to create new oyster reefs and enhances stewardship and public awareness of the importance of oyster reef habitat along the Georgia coast. Intertidal oysters are described as "keystone" species as they play a critical role in maintaining a healthy coastal ecosystem. Georgia's oyster populations were once immense; however, overfishing, habitat degradation, and disease have considerably impacted these estuarine communities.



CCA Louisiana A large contingent of state and parish officials joined with CCA Louisiana volunteers March 26 to break ground on a new fishing pavilion at Cypremort Point. The facility – to be named "The Pavilion at Quintana Landing" – was originally the vision of the Sugar Chapter, whose members worked with State Reps. Simone Champagne and Sam Jones, as well as St. Mary and Iberia parish officials, to make it a reality.

"This project has been a long time in the making, and it is a much-needed addition to the boat landing," said Corry Landry, chapter president. "Our volunteers, led by David Clement and Blake Fourquier, are proud to have a part in it, and we are so thankful to our friends in state and local government who are making it possible."

"This will be a great addition to our facility here at Quintana, and it is long overdue," said St. Mary Parish President Don Naquin. "We are so thankful to CCA for stepping up to the plate."

CCA Oregon The Rogue Valley Chapter has partnered with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to help wild steelhead and salmon reach the upper reaches of Larson creek by manually bypassing them around a concrete culvert that blocks their passage. The upper portion of the creek is important rearing habitat for juvenile steelhead and Coho –some ESA listed – during winter freshets. Thanks to the work by CCA volunteers, fish can now reach this critical habitat. Similar projects are under consideration for two other area streams.



CCA Texas Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD) recently completed Phase I of a 25-acre marsh restoration project within the Goose Island State Park in Rockport, Texas. CCA Texas Aransas Bay Chapter President Karen Wiatrek, and CCA Texas Assistant Director John Blaha recently surveyed the completion of Phase I work with TPWD officials and Charles Belaire of Belaire Environmental. After surveying the site, Wiatrek handed Belaire a \$25,000 check from the CCA Texas

Habitat Today for Fish Tomorrow program for the planting of 10,000 marsh plants that finished out the 12 acres as part of Phase I. Phase II construction is planned to begin this summer and will result in the restoration of 25 acres of lost wetlands and marsh along the Aransas Bay shoreline.

CCA Washington Derelict gill nets, or “ghost nets” are a well-documented problem in the Puget Sound, but this issue receives much less attention in our fresh water rivers. That’s starting to change. A group of CCA Washington members documented 62 derelict ghost nets in the Nooksack River, an important salmon and steelhead stream with imperiled fish runs. The nets, littering the waterway and shoreline, cause untold damage to salmon, steelhead and other marine life. Net locations and photos were provided to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Department along with a request to clean up the gear. Unfortunately, gill netting is still legal on the Nooksack River during limited seasons.



For a complete listing of CCA habitat projects, click [HERE](#).

CCA Continues Advocacy for Harvest Reform, Recovery of Oregon's Salmon Runs

The following is a statement from Dave Schamp, Chairman of Coastal Conservation Association's Oregon Board of Directors and a chief petitioner for the Protect Our Salmon Act (POSA), in response to changes made by the Oregon Attorney General's Office to the ballot title for the Act.

"The changes made by the Attorney General's office do not reflect the intent of the initiative, which is to end the non-selective over-harvest of Oregon's native fish runs while maintaining a healthy commercial salmon fishing industry. The objective is to transition to commercial gear capable of selectively harvesting abundant hatchery fish and allowing for the release of wild fish."

"We are disappointed with the changes that were made by the Attorney General's office. The over-harvest of Oregon's native salmon runs has been ignored far too long by many leaders in Oregon. Since launching POSA it has become very clear that when the public understands the horrific and wasteful toll that gillnets take on various forms of marine life — including endangered fish stocks — and that a better method of harvest exists, reform is strongly supported. CCA Oregon membership has increased sharply since launching POSA, providing another indication of the commitment to these needed reforms."

"Banning the use of gill nets and tangle nets and using selective gear that allows for the release of wild fish is an effective, achievable way to create a sustainable commercial and recreational fishery for the citizens of Oregon. It provides a greater return on the investment that taxpayers have contributed to salmon recovery, and is consistent with Oregon's commitment to the responsible and sustainable use of the state's natural resources. Now more than ever, CCA members remain committed to advancing these vital reform efforts, and we intend to amend and re-file the ballot initiative to address the interpretation of the Attorney General's office."

[More information on fisheries issues in the Pacific Northwest](#)

International Community Fails Bluefin Tuna

Meeting during March in Doha, Qatar, the members nations of the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) defeated an attempt by Monaco, the United States, Norway, the European Union (EU) and other nations to prohibit international trade in Atlantic bluefin tuna, an extremely valuable sushi ingredient.

A listing by CITES would have prohibited all international trade (i.e. exports to Japan) while allowing recreational and commercial harvest in national waters. Heavy pressure from Japan overcame the arguments of most international conservation organizations and scientists from the U.S and EU that the eastern Atlantic stock of bluefin is extremely overfished and potentially facing a collapse in the face of mismanagement by the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Extreme overfishing and illegal harvest has recently exceeded even the generous annual quotas set by ICCAT (*A Passing of Giants*, July/August 2008 TIDE).

The Japanese delegation contended that the present management system was working and could adequately manage a recovery of the stock. At a CITES meeting

dominated by economic interests, polar bears and several threatened shark species were also denied new protection from trade.

Stock declines will continue

Bluefin tuna in the eastern Atlantic and Mediterranean have declined in excess of 80 percent over the past 20 years and spawning potential in the Mediterranean is severely threatened. Recent scientific investigations have revealed that bluefin catches off the U.S. now consist of more than 50 percent of fish from the eastern Atlantic stock. The western stock, which spawns only in the Gulf of Mexico, was heavily fished by purse seines targeting juveniles for canneries 40 years ago, and although constrained by severe annual quotas for 20 years, shows no real sign of recovery to pre-1980 levels.

The revealed linkage between east and west has created a sense of alarm for U.S. anglers who enjoy pursuing these giant predators that thrilled the likes of Ernest Hemingway, Zane Gray and others during the 1950s and 1960s. Without a recovery of the rapidly disappearing eastern stock, U.S. anglers face a bleak future. The current regulations put in place by ICCAT last November will not increase the spawning stock in the east. Given past history, ICCAT is quite likely to react to the CITES vote by again liberalizing future catch restraints. The future for bluefin across the entire Atlantic seems dire.

Can we save the western Atlantic stock?

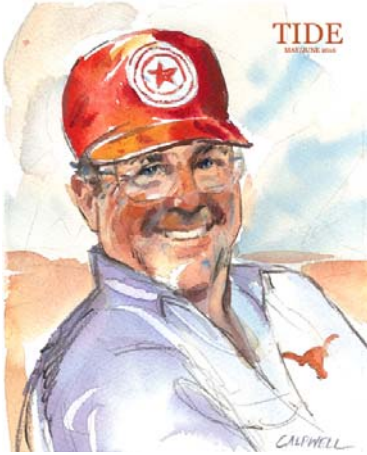
U.S. anglers may face future threats to fishing opportunities for bluefin. Continued declines in the east will reduce the flow of eastern fish to our waters. The failure to secure a CITES listing this year may spur some marine conservation organizations to pursue more drastic measures here in the U.S. An attempt to list bluefin under the Endangered Species Act is not to be dismissed. Strong unilateral action by the U.S. to protect the remaining western spawning stock in the Gulf of Mexico has become an absolute necessity.

While no targeted fishing for bluefin is allowed in the Gulf, there is a substantial take and allowed bycatch retention in the Gulf yellowfin tuna longline fishery. This gear also takes large numbers of billfish, sharks and sea turtles. The U.S. can no longer allow the loss of our dwindling spawning stock in the Gulf. The Highly Migratory Species Office of our National Marine Fisheries Service must immediately take action to shut down the Gulf pelagic longline fishery and protect what we can only hope is not the last of the western giant tuna.

Dr. Russell Nelson is CCA's Gulf of Mexico Fishery Consultant, a member of the U.S. Advisory Committee to the International Commission for Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, Chief Scientist for The Billfish Foundation, and a 20-year veteran of marine fisheries conservation, management and research.

[See more information on Bluefin Tuna](#)

Look for the May/June issue of TIDE magazine.



Walter Fondren: A Principle-Driven Life - by Pat Murray

Rollover Pass - by Larry Bozka

Front Row Seat - by Scott Null

Lessons From a Lure Professor - by Dave Lear

Harvest Reform in Action - by Don Freeman

Déjà vu All Over Again - by Charles A. Witek III

Complicated and Crabby - by Ted Venker

CASTING COMMENTS - **International Community Fails Bluefin Tuna** - Dr. Russell Nelson

CAPITOL IDEAS - **Credit Where It's Due** - Bob Hayes

Coastal Conservation Association

6919 Portwest, Suite 100

Houston, Texas 77024

www.JoinCCA.org