

**Wild  
Oceans**  
For the future of fishing

# The Horizon

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LONG-TIME LEADER HINMAN RETIRES, KRAMER STEPS IN

## A change in leadership at wild oceans



Ken Hinman retires and joins the Board of Directors after leading *Wild Oceans* for over 40 years.

After 41 years at the helm, *Wild Oceans* President Ken Hinman will be stepping down on September 30, 2019. Replacing him in the position, *Wild Oceans* Board of Directors has recruited veteran nonprofit leader Rob Kramer, former President of the International Game Fish Association. “I am both excited and honored for the opportunity to lead an organization that has done so much for marine fish conservation over the last 46 years”, Kramer said. “As one of their many outside

partners, I have enjoyed working with Ken and the extremely talented *Wild Oceans* staff on several important conservation initiatives over the years. I now look forward to working with them from the inside as part of the *Wild Oceans* team”.

Hinman will not be going far, as part of the transition plan will have him joining the *Wild Oceans* Board of Directors, thus continuing to provide his leadership and experience to ensure the organization’s continued success.

“I’m very proud of a career that spans the evolution of marine fish conservation in this country and I feel lucky to have had this chance to change things for the better, for future generations,” Hinman said. “My moving on is just another of those changes. I’ve known and worked with Rob for years and I’m confident that *Wild Oceans* will be in good hands to continue our uniquely successful mission.”

Under Ken’s leadership, the organization, among many other things: built an unprecedented network of ocean stakeholders to strengthen federal law to end overfishing and restore deplet-

ed populations of fish; played a leading role in the recovery of iconic species like striped bass and Atlantic swordfish; protected large areas off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts from drift nets and longlines, saving many thousands of threatened billfish, sharks and sea turtles from this deadly gear; and launched a national movement to protect menhaden, herring and other prey fish, the foundation for all life at the top of the food chain. (see [WildOceans.org/history](http://WildOceans.org/history))

A dinner honoring Ken will be held in October in Savannah, Georgia, where the organization was founded in 1973 as the National Coalition for Marine Conservation (NCMC).

“We are extremely excited to have Rob officially join the *Wild Oceans* team”, said *Wild Oceans* Chairman Tim Choate. “Rob brings over two decades of experience in the marine fisheries management arena and an in-depth knowledge of nonprofit administration. With Rob as President and Ken remaining actively involved as a member of the Board of Directors, the future looks more promising than ever for *Wild Oceans*.” ■

## The summing up

.....  
"To every thing there is a  
season.."

— Ecclesiastes

I don't much like the word "retire." It brings to mind turning out the lights and going to sleep. I'm not, far from it. But after more than 41 years with *Wild Oceans* (nee NCMC), the time is right to pass on the leadership of the organization to someone new.

I've been thinking of those TV cop shows where the retiring detective collects his personal belongings from his desk in a cardboard box. I don't have a box big enough, because everything here is personal. Between one and two thousand articles written for our newsletter going back four decades. Hundreds of articles published in fishing and fisheries publications. An incalculable number of comment letters and statements submitted to government agencies and Congress on a wide range of ocean issues. Not to mention dozens of reports and monographs, etc., etc.

I mention these writings because, in addition to being integral to the changes we brought about during my tenure, collectively they define my career. They represent not only the history of my personal involvement in marine conservation, but also my growing understanding of the place of fish and fishing in our ocean world and my developing philosophy toward both. It's all personal.

That philosophy is best summed up in this observation by novelist W. Somerset Maugham: "The study of Ethics is part and parcel of the study of Nature; for man must learn his place in the world before he can act rightly and reasonably." I've learned that acting "rightly", when we fish or interact with the sea in any way, means cooperating with Nature's processes and yielding to Her limits. In a word, co-existence. It's the only way.

A colleague recently asked me, how can I retire when there is still so much to do? Because there is so much I want to do. After an estimated 100,000+ hours

working on ocean fish conservation – compare to Gladwell's 10,000 Hour Rule for mastering an activity – I believe I've done what I can.

I'm ready to let go and take on new priorities in my life, a decision made easy because I know *Wild Oceans* will be in good hands. Pam and Theresa embody both the principles and the style that define our uniquely successful mission, we have a reinvigorated board, of which I will be a part, and Rob is simply the right person at the right time to lead us.

We will continue to face threats to the oceans and fishing, maybe more serious than we've ever faced before. How will we fare? Maugham again: "It wasn't until late in life that I discovered how easy it is to say, 'I don't know.' " But I do know we will face them, that we must. And let the immortal words of Capt. Bill McDonald of the Texas Rangers be our guide: "No man in the wrong can stand up against a fellow that's in the right and keeps on a-comin'."

– Ken Hinman

## For the Future of Fishing

*Wild Oceans* is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to keeping the oceans wild to preserve fishing opportunities for the future.

### Our Goals:

- preventing overfishing and restoring depleted fish populations to healthy levels
- promoting sustainable use policies that balance commercial, recreational and ecological values
- modifying or eliminating wasteful fishing practices
- improving our understanding of fish and their role in the marine environment
- preserving fish habitat and water quality

### Officers and Staff:

**Tim Choate**, Chairman  
**Tim Ervin**, Vice Chairman  
**Rob Kramer**, President  
**Pam Lyons Gromen**, Executive Director  
**Theresa Labriola**, Pacific Programs Director

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### Board of Directors:

**Mary Barley** (Islamorada, FL)  
**Bill Boyce** (Saugus, CA)  
**C. J. Bright, Jr.** (Kailua-Kona, HI)  
**Tim Choate** (Coral Gables, FL)  
**Stephanie Choate Oppenheimer** (Tulsa, OK)  
**Larry Dahlberg** (Taylors Falls, MN)  
**Tim Ervin** (Onekama, MI)  
**Ken Hinman** (Lovettsville, VA)  
**Frankie Labriola** (Misquamicut Beach, RI)  
**Peter Truslow** (St. Petersburg, FL)  
**Directors Emeritus**  
**Stanley Arkin** (New York, NY)  
**John Heyer** (Sedona, AZ)



ROB KRAMER

# I am Wild Oceans

As a fifth generation Floridian, I have always been around water; on it, in it, and under it. Having year-round sunshine, there was never much motivation to be indoors growing up. In fact, in my house, the children were generally not allowed inside until it was time for dinner. For this, I am grateful.

Since as far back as I can remember, I have fished. My grandmother on my father's side was the most accomplished in the family and it was she that taught me not only how to fish, but all the wonderful things fishing can teach you. Through fishing I learned patience, hope, excitement, peace and, most importantly, a way of connecting with and understanding nature. Through my fishing experiences over the last 50 years, I have developed a great appreciation of how man is an integral part of the natural world in which we live. It is up to us to be good stewards of the only planet we have.

Shortly after graduating Florida State University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography, I went to work for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Marine Fisheries. My job was to work side by side with fisheries scientists and then communicate what I observed to fishermen who helped fund the scientists' work. My career in the world of fisheries had officially begun.

During my tenure with the State, I also began participating in the complex world of fisheries management, both at the state and federal level. The process is designed to be somewhat

democratic where affected user groups engage with fishery managers and scientists to set policy and regulations. For these user groups to effectively participate in this process, it requires patience, dedication and perseverance.

The next chapter in my life took me from government to the nonprofit sector, where I was hired to run the International Game Fish Association (IGFA). For a decade and a half, I traveled the world working on fisheries issues. It was during this time that I met *Wild Oceans* President Ken Hinman and became familiar with the organization's work, and in fact partnered with them on important conservation initiatives. The *Wild Oceans* team has a great reputation for consensus building in the fisheries management arena. They are known for efficiently and effectively utilizing science to influence decision makers, always putting the resource first. They truly exemplify patience, dedication and perseverance.

Shortly after leaving IGFA to begin my own consulting business, *Wild Oceans* Chairman Tim Choate approached me with the opportunity to join the organization as its new President. Ken was stepping down from the day-to-day management of the organization after 41 years and taking a position on the



**Rob Kramer, *Wild Oceans* President-elect**

Board of Directors. I have accepted the Chairman's offer with honor and will strive to continue the great work of the *Wild Oceans* team.

It is indeed a fortunate few that can combine their profession and their passion. I am one of those fortunate few.

I am *Wild Oceans*. ■

**You can locate the "I am Wild Oceans" blog series from our website's home page, [WildOceans.org](http://WildOceans.org).**

# Turning the Tide

## Wild Oceans News and Activities

### Keeping Longlines Out of West Coast Waters

- From September 11-16, Theresa Labriola, our Pacific Programs Director, attended the Pacific Fishery Management Council in Boise, Idaho. She urged the Council to postpone consideration of a Pacific shallow-set longline fishery until the newly authorized deep-set buoy gear fishery has had the opportunity to grow, stabilize and provide high quality swordfish to Pacific markets.

### Supporting Alternative Gear Development

- For the past six years, *Wild Oceans* has supported development and authorization of deep-set buoy gear (DSBG), a commercial fishing gear that targets swordfish during the day at depth. The gear has a very high catch of marketable swordfish and very little bycatch. At the September Pacific Council meeting, Theresa, on behalf of *Wild Oceans*, the International Game Fish Association and Coastal Conservation Association of California, expressed support for authorizing the gear. She specifically asked the Council to approve a limited entry, phased-in fishery in Southern California that minimizes negative social impacts to recreational fishermen while building a strong, economically-viable fishery.

### Restoring a Depleted East Coast Forage Base

- The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, at its August 13-15 meeting in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania voted to maintain the 2020 river

herring and shad bycatch cap of 129 metric tons for the Atlantic mackerel fishery, an amount based on an average ratio of bycatch to mackerel catch. As a member of the Council's Mackerel, Squid and Butterfish Advisory Panel, *Wild Oceans* Executive Director Pam Lyons Gromen opposed options for increasing the cap beyond this amount, pointing out that other federally-managed fisheries capture river herring and shad and that overall bycatch was on the rise, even though populations of river herring and shad remain highly depressed throughout the Atlantic coast. She recommended that a new, more scientifically-sound cap methodology be explored that is inclusive of all fisheries that contribute significantly to the bycatch problem. The Council did initiate an action to establish a long-term strategy for catch caps that are more closely aligned with the status of river herring and shad stocks.

### Engaging our Allies

- On August 11<sup>th</sup>, *Wild Oceans* Chairman Tim Choate and Board member Stephanie Choate Oppenheimer, along with Andrea and Peter Truslow, hosted an evening gathering for about 60 fellow residents at the Truslow's lovely home in Islesboro, Maine. *Wild Oceans* President-elect, Rob Kramer, gave an informative talk on fisheries management in the United States and how *Wild Oceans* has been actively engaged in the process for the past 46 years. After the presentation, the crowd was treated to a set of beautiful acoustic ballads from Stephanie's father-in-law, Mr. Reed Oppenheimer.

### Promoting Ecosystem-based Approaches to Management

- Theresa attended the Pacific Council meeting in September and encouraged the Council to move forward with modifications of its 5-year Fishery Ecosystem Plan review. She supported developing ecosystem goals and objectives that define the ultimate desired state of the ecosystem – including both the environment and people – and charting a course to get there. Ecosystem goals and objectives define what healthy fisheries and a healthy ecosystem should look like and can be strategic, tactical, or operational. Having effective ecosystem goals and objectives will give the Council a useful tool in assessing trade-offs, tracking progress towards multiple and sometimes-competing aims, and identifying win-win strategies.

### Managing Forage Fisheries to Provide for Predator Needs

- The Menhaden Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) voted at its Summer Meeting in Arlington, Virginia to maintain the total allowable catch at its current level, 216,000 metric tons, for the 2020 fishing season. The commissioners rightly chose to wait until they review the 2019 single-species and ecological reference point benchmark stock assessments and peer-review reports, which are expected to be available in February 2020. The new assessments will be used to evaluate the health of the stock and inform the management of the species in an ecological context.



- In related news, on September 3<sup>rd</sup> the menhaden reduction fishery, which harvests nearly 80% of the total east coast catch, was certified “sustainable” by the Marine Stewardship Council. But as we pointed out in last issue’s Ocean View, a forage fishery can achieve certification even if “its role as prey in the ecosystem is unaccounted for,” which remains the case with Atlantic menhaden. Hopefully that will all change next year.
- NOAA Fisheries has announced its review of Amendment 8 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan, an action developed by the New England Fishery Management Council that includes a near-shore buffer zone where mid-water trawling is prohibited,

and a catch control rule designed to leave more herring in the water as forage. Public comment is being sought as part of the review process, and *Wild Oceans* will be submitting comments to strongly support the amendment’s implementation.

### **Saving the Stripers**

- Striped bass are overfished and overfishing is occurring, according to a benchmark stock assessment released in April. *Wild Oceans* joined with anglers and conservationists on the east coast urging the ASMFC Atlantic Striped Bass Management Board to act swiftly to end overfishing and rebuild the stock within ten years as the current fishery management plan requires. On August 9<sup>th</sup>,

the Management Board approved Addendum VI to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Striped Bass (Striped Bass FMP) for public comment. Addendum VI would reduce striped bass removals by 18% from 2017 levels, an action that carries a 50% chance of ending overfishing in 2020. Addendum VI does not include measures with better odds of ending overfishing and does not include the explicit rebuilding measures we asked for, but it is a big step in the right direction. The Management Board is scheduled to deliberate on more significant changes to the Striped Bass FMP at its Spring 2020 meeting.

For more information on Addendum VI, see [www.asmfc.org/species/atlantic-stripped-bass](http://www.asmfc.org/species/atlantic-stripped-bass). ■



## **Wild Oceans Joins Florida Forage Fish Coalition**

The Florida Forage Fish Coalition was formed to secure Florida’s legacy as the “Fishing Capital of the World” by encouraging the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to adopt measures that conserve the forage base which is so critical to healthy populations of popular game fish like snook, tarpon and dolphinfish. Coalition partners include the International Game Fish Association, the Florida Wildlife Federation, Snook and Gamefish Foundation, The Pew Charitable Trusts, the American Sportfishing Association and now...*Wild Oceans*!

“Joining the Florida Forage Fish Coalition was a natural fit for us,” said *Wild Oceans* Executive Director Pam Lyons Gromen. “Protecting the prey

base has long been a major *Wild Oceans* initiative, and we are excited to expand that work in the South Atlantic with like-minded leaders in fisheries conservation.”

In addition to advocating for management measures that conserve forage fish, such as habitat protection and accounting for predator needs when setting catch limits, coalition partners play an important role in promoting and communicating forage fish research to managers, stakeholders and the general public.

The Forage Fish Research Program (FFRP) is a public-private partnership among the Florida Forage Fish Coalition, leading academics, and FWC’s scientific body – the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). The

research program was established in support of a 2015 FWC resolution to keep Florida forage fish healthy. Funds raised through the program provide fellowships to graduate students at Florida universities who collaborate with FWRI scientists to advance our understanding of forage fish. The program produces high-quality research on the value of forage fish to predators and marine habitats, builds collaborative partnerships between academia and FWRI, and fosters the next generation of fisheries scientists.

**Join the Florida Forage Fish campaign! Visit [floridaforagefish.org](http://floridaforagefish.org) to sign our petition and to learn more about the Florida Forage Fish Research Program. ■**

# Big island concert brings new members



*Wild Oceans Board member Jody Bright with the legendary blues artist Jimmie Vaughan at the Big Island Marlin Tournament*

By Theresa Labriola,  
Pacific Programs Director

**Last month, *Wild Oceans* teamed up with blues legend Jimmie Vaughan and the Big Island Marlin Tournament.**

New *Wild Oceans* members received access to an exclusive concert with Jimmie Vaughan at the Hawaii Big Game Fishing Club. We are excited to welcome our new members from the Big Island, especially now as we accelerate our work to conserve important Pacific Ocean fish stocks.

For 46 years, *Wild Oceans* has pursued a mission to conserve highly migratory species to ensure their long-term availability for sport fishermen and small-scale commercial fishermen. When we worked to pass the Billfish Conservation Act to end the import and sale of billfish, except swordfish, to the mainland U.S., we included an exception for Hawaii. This exception acknowledges that marlin are an important component of traditional Hawaiian fisheries. Small boats often catch marlin close to shore, and the fish is eaten, shared or traded.

Recently, we turned our attention towards protecting overfished Pacific stocks, like striped marlin, which have languished at historically low levels for decades. Striped marlin and other big fish support culturally and economically important recreational, subsistence and small-scale commercial fisheries throughout the Pacific. However, they are often caught as bycatch by large longline vessels targeting swordfish and bigeye tuna. This indiscriminate catch has led to the stock's fateful decline.

Rebuilding stocks such as striped marlin to support local fishing opportunities takes a concerted, collective international effort. Commercial fleets must be asked to reduce their catch of striped marlin through conservation and management measures, such as

- changes to hook depth or hook configuration to set gear in water deeper than 100m in order to reduce interactions with striped marlin that reside in the upper water column;
- time and area closures to avoid

fishing in areas with large amounts of juvenile or spawning striped marlin; and

- post-capture handling and release methods to reduce the mortality of discarded fish including juveniles. Recent research shows high post-release survivability for billfish released from longline gear, implying catch-and-release as a viable management option that protects parental biomass and the fishery.

These conservation measures can help turn the rebuilding goals into management success that sustains recreational opportunities and small-scale commercial and subsistence fishing.

In Hawaii, the Kona gyre is a spawning ecosystem for many pelagic species, including the overfished and depleted striped marlin. Upwelling provides nutrient-rich waters for the larvae and fry. *Wild Oceans* is looking for ways to protect these spawning grounds as a means to protect striped marlin, increase survivability of juveniles, and rebuild the species. ■



**Double  
your  
impact**  
*Donate now!*






Photo courtesy of Wild Oceans Board member, Bill Boyce.

**Two generous donors have agreed to match all new donations in 2019  
up to \$200,000!**

We have raised \$173,000 so far, but we need to raise just \$27,000 more by the end of the year to take full advantage of this generous offer.

***Help us reach our goal for the Future of Fishing!***

Here's what we will do with the money raised:

-  Strengthen our campaign to keep longlines out of West Coast waters and maintain longline closed areas in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.
-  Advance forage fish management strategies that protect the prey base for predators.
-  Fight for the recovery of our iconic game fish, including Pacific striped marlin and Atlantic striped bass.

**Count me in!** I want to help Wild Oceans continue to fight for the future of fishing! Please match my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and double my impact.

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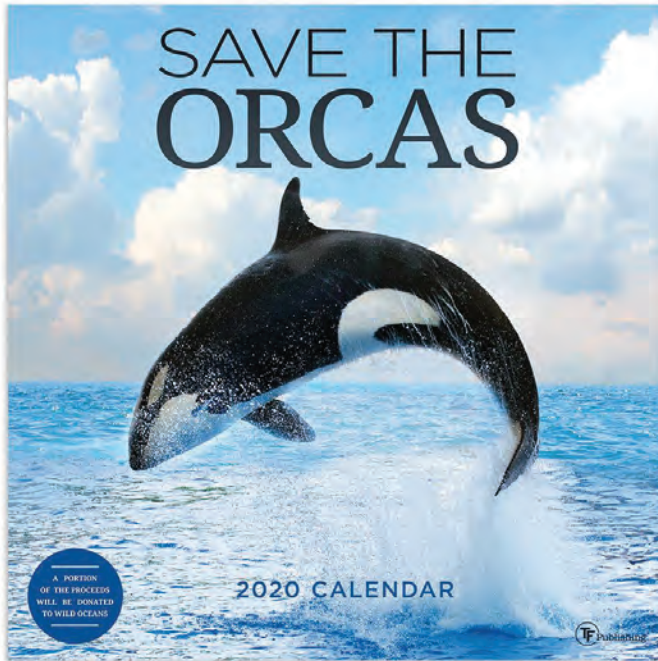
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Make checks payable to Wild Oceans and mail to: Wild Oceans, P.O. Box 258, Waterford, Virginia 20197, or pay by VISA/MC on our website, [WildOceans.org/Donate](http://WildOceans.org/Donate).



## TF Publishing's 2020 Orca Calendar Raises Funds for *Wild Oceans*



It's hard to imagine an ocean future without orcas, the most iconic marine mammals of the Pacific Northwest. Yet today, the resident population has dwindled to less than 100 individuals. The reason? The staple prey they depend on, Chinook salmon, is in short supply.

For over two decades, *Wild Oceans* has worked with fishery managers to protect critical predator-prey relationships, like the relationship between orcas and salmon. The Pacific Fishery Management Council was one of the first of our federal councils to develop a Fishery Ecosystem Plan – a plan that prioritizes ecosystem health and helps managers understand and account for fishery impacts on ocean wildlife.

Our friends at TF Publishing are donating a portion of the proceeds from the sale of their majestic **Save the Orcas** calendar to *Wild Oceans* so that we can continue to promote ecosystem approaches to fisheries management.

Calendars feature 13 full-color images printed on 12" x 12" premium gloss paper. Price: \$14.99 plus shipping

Visit our store at [www.WildOceans.org](http://www.WildOceans.org) ■

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