

royalty-sara-jo-2019-07-27.mp4

Sara Jo Royalty [00:00:10] So my first introduction was when I was a child, I remember being 4 years old and going fishing with my grandpa, on our bass pond. And so that, that kinda started early, there.

James Thull [00:00:25] Was that in Oregon?

Sara Jo Royalty [00:00:26] That was in Ohio, I'm from Ohio. Yep, right around the Cincinnati area. And I didn't think much of it until I was, I wanted to say about 19? And I saw the movie The Perfect Storm. And I was like, man, aside from that storm thing, I'm really curious about the fishing. I may hate it. It looks rough, but I just wanna try it one time. So I started observing on a shark boat, which you're only out three or four days because there's a four thousand pound limit, went from there, to started long lining. Ended up loving it. Did it on and off for six years, along with other types of commercial fishing. And then I moved out west. And when I did, I had children, so I wasn't gonna work commercially anymore. And the conventional just didn't grab me. After catching a hundred pound fish, or even bluefin, thousand pound fish. This didn't really catch me. So I started fly fishing. And started tying my own flies. And then got pro-sponsored by Temple Fork Outfitters, Dr. Slick, are my two biggest sponsors. And now I'm going around, doing education and demonstration and.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:01:49] Yeah, I travel around, and I do tying seminars. I do a lot of clinics; casting instruction, or just basic fly fishing clinics, involving water safety, entomology, casting, knot tying, and any, any sort of community work with the local Lower Umpqua Fly Casters, or Trout Unlimited, Casting for Recovery, Healing Waters. Just kind of, involve myself there, and then anybody who's interested in starting, kind of give them access to rods and supplies.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:02:34] Oregon, especially in my area. Well, there's a huge amount of fishing. Wide variety, all over the state, but I'm on the coast, and it's special because there are no guides or fly shops. The closest fly shop is about two and a half hours away. It's really untapped, which is not easy to find. It's difficult, because you have to make your own way, and the casting isn't easy, but it's very rewarding, cause we have a incredible winter steelhead fishery, and just an hour away, we have a great summer steelhead fishery. There's salmon fisheries, spring chinook. I mean, it's, it's pretty endless.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:03:17] I did. It's interesting, because there's a lot of mixed feelings about commercial fishermen. But I'll say, from being on that side of it, and I have done some observation for NOAA as well, so I've kind of been in all of the points of view positions, to get a real well-rounded understanding. And the interesting thing is, with commercial is, there's only 40 commercial long liners on the East Coast. There aren't going to be any more. There's over 2 million registered sport fishing boats. So, the thought process that the commercial boats are, you know, raping the oceans is, kind of quite the opposite. They're the ones that are at the town meetings, asking for more regulations, because they don't want to do anything else. They want sustainable fishing. So they're the main guys who fund and support sustainable fishing. And, probably, some of the bigger issues come with international fisheries, other countries, kind of poaching international, or coming, encroaching on our waters. Seems to be a little more of an issue, from my perspective.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:04:31] Probably the biggest thing is, limits. So, they do have a lot. There are quite a few fishermen that have cleanup projects that they do, when they're out in the ocean fishing. Any sort of trash they'll collect, and bring back into shore. Which I think is a big deal. But, and lobbying at, like I said, local meetings. And really just helping to supply data to regulate limits like, "Hey, there's there's really not a lot of shark. I mean, we're not catching a lot right now." "Ok. Let's close it down for a while." You know? Or, "I don't know. The swordfish are pretty small this year. We better lay off the numbers." You know, it's, it's gonna. They don't want to spend one season to get, you know, a full pocketbook, and then realize that they don't have a job next year. So.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:05:31] So I think one of the things that we do, here, to protect the fisheries, is change the way we fish. For instance, if netting ends up getting the numbers so depleted, because they're just taking everything. It's like, well, netting isn't allowed anymore. And other countries, specifically like, Japan is a big one, you know, they don't, Russia is another one, they don't regulate, or have any sort of discrepancy as to how they're going to fish. So they come as far as they want. And they use practices that we no longer use, because we're trying to sustain, you know, a planet full of people. And the Coast Guard definitely gets involved there. I mean, there's a lot of, there's a lot of issues with that. I've definitely seen some interaction there.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:06:30] I mean, I think when I started fishing, or really getting into the fly fishing industry, you know, you always hear these stories from the older folk. You know, "We used to catch this many and we, and now it's not like that." And it's just, it's ever, it's just the truth. It's the truth for every generation, it's slightly more depleted. But part of that is because we have so many more people, you know. So when you go from 8 billion, to 12 billion people on a planet, I mean, the fishery can only sustain so much. So, I think that's, you know, trying to, you're just always having to up your game, to catch fish, because the pressure is high on the fish. So you're always changing patterns. But what happens is, is we get better as fishermen, and we grow in population. So it's really tough on the fish, and it makes it, you know, you just have to be almost an expert angler to be catching regularly. As far as fly fishing goes, I think. And that's where regulations come into play, that, that helps us, you know, to be able to keep fishing. Because I think that if we had the regulations that we had when I was younger, which is basically none, there would be no fishing. There would be no fish in the rivers.

James Thull [00:08:06] Yeah. I grew up in the Great Lakes in Wisconsin, and we, I mean, we destroyed them. Through lack of regulating.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:08:12] Look at the History of Cod. I love that book. That book is incredible. But it just goes to show they were dipping baskets in the ocean, and now that that species of cod is completely extinct. So, easy to do.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:08:34] I think it's really important. I mean, you at least have to vote, you know? I think utilizing the areas that are given to you, is important. It's kind of like, if you have the rights, you need to utilize them. Or people want to tend to take them away. So act- activity can be kind of minimal. It's almost like, it, it's almost like recycling, you know, it's like you just do it one person, but you're helping a collective. And I think it's important to remember, that just a little difference, whether you're picking up tippet when you walked along, or whatever it is, that it is going to add, add to the collective of, you know, protecting what we love to do. I mean, it, it goes beyond fishing. It's, it's environmental health. You know? It, it's making sure that we have I mean, it's like the

movie Wall-E, you know, making sure that we still have plants around, and nature around, and that we don't just completely bulldoze it, to build something, you know?

Sara Jo Royalty [00:09:43] I mean, I'm, my biggest concern is that we won't be able to consume the fish. I think that fishing, and catching and releasing will be an option. But I'm worried that the fish are going to be so toxic, due to water toxicity and how we are treating our planet, that it just, it won't be a viable food source anymore. So I think that's probably my biggest concern. Which, again, becomes totally outside the, you know, the, the, the solution to that problem, is completely outside of "the fishing industry." It doesn't mean the industry shouldn't have a huge part in helping with it, but it's just, you know, at that point it becomes world related and not fishing related, so much.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:10:35] Oh, 100%. And a lot of that, too. I mean, it's all basically human meddling. I mean, they're introducing hatcheries, which, which, you know, directly, negatively affects the wild runs. Right. They're, like, re-engineering waters. You know, in my area, they're going to take out a bridge, so the tide can come in, and throw down some gravel from the salmon. And I'm like, "Are we restoring what was there before? Or are we re-engin, like, what are we doing here?" Because there are gonna be effects that we won't see, for a while. I mean, just. That, that sort of meddling, causes a lot of problems. You know?

James Thull [00:11:18] Yeah. No, I was just in Iceland last, well May, June. I was there in June. And one of their concerns there were the salmon farms.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:11:29] Mmmhmm. Salmon farms are a problem, yeah.

James Thull [00:11:29] They're just so massive. Like they talk about, if there's one, one major fault, one major kind of escape, it could wipe out the entire population.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:11:38] They infect, the wild runs, and then when they, if they co-breed, then they have sterile offspring. That's an issue with trout sometimes, too. Yeah. Yeah. That's definitely an issue. I mean, I understand why they're trying to farm them. Basically, to sustain so many people, but it's causing more problems.

James Thull [00:11:59] Yeah, well.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:12:00] And then like the dams, dams, for instance, not a good idea. And, and the way that they can regulate, for instance, on the Deschutes, they have, instead of lifting the bottom of the dam, and letting cold water run through, the way they've been doing for, since they've had the dam, they decided to start doing it the other way, and letting the warm water. And it has destroyed the steelhead fishery there. So it's just like, somebody, somewhere decided, "Hey, let's do this." And it's. The meddling is just throwing the ecosystem off, by large proportions.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:12:42] Oh, God. There are so many places, I mean, one of the benefits for traveling, to do the events, is that I can fish the area. Like, "Oh, there's a show in Montana. Have to go fish Montana, too bad." But I would love to go down and just. Bahamas, Costa Rica, all of the islands, and do some saltwater fly fishing. Great Barrier Reef, you know, the South Pacific. I mean, you name it. It would be incredible. I know there's some awesome water up in Norway, too. That would be another really great trip so. But there's some great fishing here in the United States, and I get to experience quite a bit of it. So, pretty lucky.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:13:42] Probably, one that was pretty recent, which was neither commercial nor fly, just happened to have some catty friends that wanted to go out for Lingcod. I did bring a fly. I brought one of my shrimp patterns, and just threw it on a conventional rod with a weight, and was going, like I said, for Rockfish and Lingcod. So I think we were maybe dealing with, like an eight pound braid, and I'm sure the leader was stronger, just because they tend to bite through it. It was probably a 15, 20 pound leader. On top of the braid. But I ended up hooking in eighty five pound halibut, and it broke the reel, but I got the fish in. So that one was pretty, I got sixty five pounds of meat out of that.

James Thull [00:14:35] Nice.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:14:35] So, that was a pretty, pretty intense one. Yeah.

James Thull [00:14:39] Excellent.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:14:39] And then, you know, the North Umpqua, summer steelhead. That's probably some of my favorite fishing. I've caught some twenty five pounds steelhead on seven weight, and you can catch them on the dry, on the swing, or you know, sink floating stoneflies. You can catch them just about any way you want to. And it's some of my favorite fishing, for sure.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:15:08] I do. I mean, I still support the guys that I used to fish with. We still get together. Usually once a year, every other year, we'll go hang out at NASCAR, and talk about fishing, and maybe do a little bass fishing around the pond there, at the Daytona 500. But, you know, they're feeding, they're feeding people. You know, they're feeding millions of people a year. And that food source has to come from somewhere. So, I mean, the best way to do sustainable food source, is to get it from a number of places, not just to, you know, over, overdo one animal. Otherwise, you're going to offset the ecosystem, as we've been doing. Repeatedly. Yeah, absolutely.

Sara Jo Royalty [00:16:01] I guess, advice wise, I would think. You know, just watch your footprints. Just think about how you want to leave it for your kids, even if you don't have any, you know, a lot of the mentality as well, "I'm not going to be there. So it doesn't really matter." But, it matters. You know?