



Howard F. Horton, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus of Fisheries September 6, 1926 - October 15, 2021

Howard was born in Glendale, California. Upon graduation from Glendale High School in 1944, he joined the Merchant Marines and then served in the US Army which allowed him to receive the GI Bill for college. He graduated from California State Polytechnic University in 1953 with a BS in Biological Science. He then attended Oregon State University and received his MS in Fish and Game Management in 1955 and his PhD in Fisheries Science in 1963.

In 1964, Dr. Howard Horton was a freshly minted PhD student and young professor at Oregon State University. It was his vision in collaboration with his colleagues to form the Oregon Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The Oregon Chapter has gone on to become one of the largest and most decorated chapters in the country. In 2014, he returned to the Chapter to lead the plenary session of the 50th Annual Chapter meeting and received the Chapter Lifetime Achievement Award.

Dr. Horton was a professor and researcher in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife at Oregon State from 1958-1990, where he mentored 35 MS and PhD students and published over 40 papers. While at Oregon State he was the administrator of the Foreign Fishery Observer program for nearly 15 years, as well as assistant director of the Agricultural Experiment Station, program leader of the OSU extension/Sea Grant Program, Director of the Pond Dynamic/Aquaculture Collaborative Research Program, and the senior scientist for the Center for Analysis of Environment Change.

In 1982, while still a professor, he was appointed as the Court Technical Advisor to the US District Court in Portland, Oregon. In 1998, he was appointed to also serve the same position in the US District Court, Western District of Washington State. In those positions he provided scientific advice to a succession of US District Court Judges. He was increasingly involved as Columbia River salmon recovery efforts became more intense and controversial in cases heard by Judges James Redden and Michael Simon. Howard was very proud of his role in ensuring that salmon biology was appropriately represented in the court deliberations. He retired from this effort in 2016.

He received numerous professional awards for his research and contributions to fisheries management:

- Wade Foundation Award for Excellence in Teaching, OSU 1970-1971
- Outstanding Published Research Award, W. Agric. Econ. Assoc. 1973
- Award of Excellence in Published Research, Amer. Agric. Econ. Assoc. 1973
- Award of Merit, Oregon Chapter, American Fisheries Society 1979
- W.F. Thompson Best Paper Award, Amer. Inst. Fish. Res. Biologists 1985
- Award for Outstanding Contribution, Pac. Mar. Fish. Commission 1991
- Golden Beaver Award for Scientific Achievement, Izaak Walton League 1993
- Fishery Worker of the Year Award, Oregon Chapter, AFS 1999
- Distinguished Graduate Award, OSU Dept. Fisheries and Wildlife 2002
- Hall of Fame Award, OSU College of Agricultural Sciences 2010
- Distinguished Alumnus Award, OSU College of Agricultural Sciences 2011
- Lifetime Achievement Award, Oregon Chapter, AFS 2014

Outside of his impressive career he also owned and operated a commercial albacore tuna troller. He was an avid hunter and fisherman. You could find him fishing for steelhead in the Siletz River, for salmon in the ocean, or dropping a crab trap into a bay or estuary. He hunted ducks and upland game birds with his many retrievers. He enjoyed big game hunting and was particularly proud of his once-in-a-lifetime bighorn sheep and the six-by-six bull elk he harvested in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness of Idaho.

Howard was a loyal father, friend, teacher, mentor and scientist. He took pride in the successes of his children and his students.

—Submitted by Mike Gauvin