OREGON COASTAL COHO RECOVERY PROJECT
Stakeholder Team Meeting
Civic Center, Rockaway Beach
Facilitator's Meeting Summary
November 14-15, 2005

Attendees for all or part of the meeting:
Stakeholder Team Members: Paul Englemeyer (Audubon-Public at Large), Tom Forgatsch (Farm Industry), Wayne Geisy (Alsea Valley Alliance), Paul Heikkila (OSU Extension Sea Grant), Cindy Heller (STEP-Public at Large), Wayne Hoffman (Mid-coast Watershed Council), Kaitlin Lovell (Trout Unlimited), Mark McCollister (Oregon Trout), Les Helgeson (alternate for Bill Bakke, Native Fish Society), Bill Moshofsky (Save the Salmon Coalition), Lisa Phipps (Mayor Rockaway Beach-Cities), Shawn Reiersgaard (Tillamook Creamery Association-Diary/Ag), Dennis Richey (Oregon Anglers-NW Steelheaders), Blake Rowe (Longview Fibre Company-Forest Industry), Stan Van de Wetering (Confederated Tribe of the Siletz Indians), Bill Yocum (Freeman Rock, Inc.)

Resource Advisors:
Ed Bowles (ODFW), Rosemary Furfey (NOAA), Louise Solliday (OR Gov's Office)

Alternates and Technical Resources: Greg Apke (ODOT), Bruce Apple (ODEQ), Wayne Auble (ODFW), Carol Bickford (Nestucca Watershed Council), Keith Braun (ODFW), Bob Buckman (ODFW), Mark Chilcote (ODFW), Brandon Ford (ODFW), Dave Godsey (Lower Nehalem Watershed Council), Kevin Goodson (ODFW), Mike Gray (ODFW), Mark Grembemer (OWEB), Dan Knoll (ODFW), Bill Langmaid (Upper Nehalem Watershed Council), Jeff Lockwood (NOAA), Dave Loomis (ODFW), Michele Long (ODFW), Denise Lofman (Tillamook Bay Watershed Council), Mark McLaughlin (Lower Nehalem Watershed Council), Jo Morgan (ODF), Jim Muck (ODFW), Mike Northrop (USDA Forest Service), Maggie Peyton (Upper Nehalem Watershed Council), Andy Schaedel (ODEQ), Tom Shafer (OWEB), Tim Stevenson (ODA), Mark Trenholm (Tillamook Estuary Partnership), Ray Wilkeson (OFIC), Brad Wurfel (ODFW),
Other Interested Parties: Walt Morgan (public)

Facilitation Team: Donna Silverberg, Robin Harkless, Erin Halton

Action Items

Action	Who	By When
Link Biennial Report of the Oregon Plan, Volume II, to NOAA's website.	Solliday, Furfey	December meeting
Share copies of the North Coast power point presentation with stakeholder team	Mark Trenholm	December meeting
"Parking Lot Issue": Discuss role of development in riparian areas	Stakeholder Team	Future meeting
Discuss report on peer reviewed/verifiable data for historic numbers in desired status table	Furfey with NFS	ASAP
Share tribe's report on data re: coho and tide	Stan Van de	When available

gates when it is available	Wetering	
Review agreements on desired status with constituent group, followed by more discussion/decision on desired status at the next meeting	Stakeholder Team	December meeting
RM&E "Parking Lot Issue": Nutrient-carcass placement benefits to coho	Stakeholder Team discussion	Future Meeting
Write draft Progress Report on Coho recovery planning to post on NOAA's webpage	Furfey	December meeting

Monday, November 14

Welcome and Introductions

Lisa Phipps, Mayor of Rockaway Beach, welcomed everyone to Rockaway Beach's new Civic Center. A round of introductions was conducted.

Comments on October 27, 2005 Summary Notes

- Page 5: "Next Steps: Questions that need to be answered prior to the plan". Recommend striking 'prior to the plan' or 'questions included' instead as the plan may not require that the entire list be answered. The steering committee will refine the questions with those that need to be answered for this work.
- Page 6: Include wood from debris flows and landslides (as per the Forestry rules)
- Page 6: 'Suggested strategies'. Add the recommendations from Forestry and flesh out some of the bullets:
    - 'Continue culvert replacement'; 'Riparian thinning'; 'Through incentives, encourage private timber industry to increase probability of availability for wood in streams'; 'Business plan for balancing economics with actions'.
- Page 6: 'Leave it to beaver': Add 'Forestry has seen less beaver control on SOME private lands' to better represent what is really happening out there.
- Page 6: 'Blocking' culverts, not 'tampering with'.
- ODFW pursuing an experimental approach to 'leave it to beaver' is ok. There may need to be some allowance for temperature and nutrients.
- Section on IMST report: Clearly describe the three rule change proposals that are going before the Board of Forestry on 11/22. In the last sentence – DOF, not FPAC, is putting together the recommendation for the Board. FPAC no longer exists.
- At end of Forestry discussion, move 'falling trees into streams' above as a suggested 'strategy' in bulleted list.
- Add that Hinkle Creek research needs to be considered under ongoing Forestry discussions. ODF is putting together a report on this.
- Page 6 typo, change to 'Menasha'.
- Page 7 stakeholder comment re: STEP program success. Add Coquille STEP program to clarify that it was not referring to all STEP programs.
- Middle of page 7: splash -dammed, not slash-dammed.

Follow-up from 10/27 meeting: Rosemary Furfey, NOAA, forwarded NOAA's revised Template for Salmon Recovery Planning, and a memo of Draft Guidelines for Limiting

Factors and Threats Assessments to the group prior to today's meeting. She said the content in the Template has not changed, but the format was revised to simplify the document. The Draft Guidelines document was developed through work with regional TRT chairs and internal NOAA staff. Its purpose is to clarify how to carry out a limiting factors and threats assessment and is intended to be used as a reference for conservation plan development. Rosemary also offered that this is a working document that likely will evolve as it is used. It is being used in other recovery domains throughout the northwest.

> **NOTE**: Rosemary noted that the definition of limiting factors in the Recovery Plan Template should not be used– instead, use the definition as written in the Limiting Factors Draft Guidelines.

Question to the group: Rosemary reminded the group of NOAA's goal for December 2005 to post a progress report of various recovery plans on its website. What will the product for the coast coho plan look like? "Progress report", "Drafty Template", Oregon Plan-Volume II, or…?

Comments from group:

- Will a no-list/list decision affect this report? No, NOAA is committed to reporting on the status of recovery planning in this ESU regardless of that decision.

  Action: Louise Solliday, Oregon Governor's office, provided a biennial report of the Oregon Plan, Volume II. This document will also be linked to NOAA's website.

Management Actions to Address Limiting Factors: North Coast Populations

(NOTE: this presentation is available electronically) Mark Trenholm, Tillamook Estuaries Partnership (Partnership), began the north coast presentation suggesting that there are a range of watershed councils and groups and each have varying capacities (technical, funding resources, fish). This must be considered when contemplating how the north coast groups take on issues together. The area covers 2,000 square miles, most of which is forest land. Seven different groups are at work in the area.

Limiting factors: The Partnership has identified limiting factors that impact coho in addition to the state's assessment. As such, they agree with the state's conclusion to use local input to address other factors. A few concerns remain with the state's analysis: its use of a single species approach (instead of watershed health), use of the intrinsic potential model (watershed groups have a range of capacities so the model does not always apply), and not enough emphasis placed on the importance of site specific issues (e.g. water quantity in the Necanicum).

Mark noted that the Partnership is much like a watershed council, in that it is locally driven using local resources/knowledge, and focuses on locally-recognized issues. It is an EPA-administered organization. At the outset, habitat, water quality, flooding and sedimentation were deemed priority concerns for the area. So the Partnership wrote a management plan which looks at coho, chinook, steelhead, cutthroat trout, and other species. The plan set a 10-year target including habitat restoration objectives. It was adopted in 1999.

Stakeholder Team member question: How far along are we with the Plan? The Partnership has acquired property and is now about halfway to its target of 750 acres of wetland. It has addressed 25-30 miles of its 100 upland stream habitat objective. Little upgrading of tide gates has occurred at this point, and a fraction (~150 miles) of the 500 miles of riparian habitat has been addressed.

Question: Do you agree with the Oregon Plan report that water quality is not a primary limiting factor for coho production in this area? The Partnership does believe water quality limits production. Other habitats are deemed important that may not necessarily hold potential for coho production.

Question: If stream complexity remains the primary bottleneck from the state's perspective, and water quality is the Partnership's primary issue, how will you resolve this in terms of prioritizing projects? Mark clarified that while water quality was the original driver for putting the Partnership together, no priority has been set forth for species, habitat component, etc. It is not entirely clear at this point how local groups might be impacted by the state's conservation plan. To the extent that the Partnership's agency partners adopt the plan, then the Partnership will be impacted.

The Partnership developed a woody debris recruitment potential map (which has been used by ODFW – most of the area is state forestland). It overlapped wetlands and tide gate prioritization (the county acquired 375 acres of land, and is currently looking to implement a restoration project).

Mark identified current data needs: Population and distribution data (OWEB is funding a rapid bio-assessment to get at baseline data, measure effectiveness of projects, and prioritize projects); prioritized fish passage barriers (the Partnership is currently prioritizing culverts for replacement); and dissolved oxygen as a limiting factor (data suggests this is so and more research is needed. To address this, the Partnership co-hired, with ODEQ, staff to design a monitoring program).

Examples of Management Actions Being Taken to Address Limiting Factors
Upper Nehalem –Bill Langley offered that the Upper Nehalem was recognized as having the most potential for restoration. The WC did an assessment, and developed an action and work plan. Implementation of the plan is opportunistic in nature.

- *Boxler Creek* – Residents found coho trying to enter the Creek and told the Upper Nehalem WC about it. Partnering with others, including Longview Fibre, a bridge was built to replace culverts, which allowed the brood stock to be recovered and now they spawn in Boxler Creek. Characterization by ODFW as a 'medium to low intrinsic potential' area poses a problem: if looking on a 100-year timeframe, this could be considered low potential, and the Nehalem will require long term work. But for the short term, Boxler Creek is a high potential and has become excellent spawning ground for coho.

Questions from Stakeholder Team Members:
- How deep are the pools? They are relatively shallow.

- Does the lake act as winter habitat? Yes.
- Were sediment tests done? What did the creek beds look like before? There are indications that the pool is natural, not a cut out stream.
- Intrinsic potential issues, where do they come from? Conditions below the lake make for a high intrinsic potential, except that the water temperature is too high. The coho use it to spawn and migrate to the ocean. It should be considered for doing management actions. This issue is found elsewhere: temperature impairs the potential of a reach.

Necanicum – David Godsey, Lower Nehalem Watershed Council (reporting for the Necanicum Watershed Council) suggested disagreement with the state's assessment of the Necanicum. Water quantity <u>is</u> a limiting factor due to water withdrawals by Seaside. However, stream complexity, habitat disconnects, and water quality (from tributaries flowing into the area) are also considered limiting factors.

Mark Trenholm explained that implementation of north coast projects for coho depend on cost-effectiveness, partnerships, fish passage, wetland acquisition, and riparian enhancement. One such project was the acquisition of the Wilson-Trask wetlands, through multi-stakeholder group participation in developing a management plan and a COE feasibility study. Additional funding is now needed for the project. The objective of this project is to improve rearing capacity for coho and provide refugia for outmigrating fish. Potentially, this area could become high quality habitat.

<u>Questions/Comments from Stakeholder Team Members</u>:
- What is the salinity expectation? It depends on flows coming down the system.
- As you move forward with funding requests, suggest recommending net work, similar to what is being done in the Siletz, to study whether fish are staying in the estuary. This would be good information to have.
- What about chum? The Cole Creek project involves removing a dam to address chum. The WC would like to acquire and restore this creek, but it is a long process.

<u>Other Examples</u>: The panel provided information on a number of other areas such as: East Humbug Creek Project - Problems were discovered with five fish passage barriers, so a basin-scale project plan was put together to improve: fish passage, stream complexity, riparian condition, stream nutrient and water quality. The WC partnered with others on a number of actions, including fixing the passage barriers with 3 bridges and two large culverts (Longview Fibre), placing large wood (Longview Fibre), planting native trees (BLM), placing carcasses into the creek (ODFW), and reducing fine sediment.

  - Question: What about RM&E? This was also part of the plan – the work has just been completed so now monitoring will occur.

- *God's Valley* – In this key habitat area, the project shows that partnering is crucial in the north coast: With ODFW and other landowners, a number of important habitat projects in the valley have been identified. They include large wood riparian restoration and culvert work. Fish passage barriers are still being discovered as the work continues.

- *Vaughn Creek* – Denise Loughman, Tillamook Bay Watershed Council, shared aspects of this project. A diversion dam blow-out occurred at a golf resort on the creek. The WC was asked for help. They replaced barriers, then moved on to another reach of the Creek, partnering with 14 other groups to replace a tide gate, improve instream channel complexity, increase sinuosity, replace culverts, add a livestock crossing and improve riparian habitat. Four landowners are involved in this work. It is a highly visible project and has allowed the Tillamook Bay WC to grow in capacity.

In summary, Mark Trenholm identified key challenges facing the North Coast watershed and partnership groups: Rural communities and limited capacity, rural communities and ideology (mistrust of the government), limited watershed council support, and future risk (e.g. invasive species, land use). State support is needed for engineering assistance, funding help and more volunteers. The state can also help to build trust with locals, invest in community groups and institutionalize support to give full time work to councils. Finally, there is a need to demonstrate the economic value of salmonids (small rural communities do not quantify impacts of development and benefits of salmon as a resource), support controls on land use and resource extraction, and make conservation/recovery a priority.

ACTION: Mark will share copies of the power point presentation.

Questions/Comments from Stakeholder Team Members:

- What is needed in terms of population growth control? Riparian ordinance is a good example; harvest activities in uplands – e.g. ONC lands. Comment: Nowhere else is there addressed the consequences of development, so why bring it up as a concern here? (Note: this issue will be addressed through the local government presentations on Dec. 8)
- What is your budget for projects: It depends on types of projects we are running – $800,000 to $1.2 million for the Tillamook Estuary Partnership; Watershed Councils range from $90,000-400,000, plus matched funds.
- There is a need to address long term issues, e.g. riparian protection and changing land uses from extraction industry to private development. This issue will need to be addressed.
- As in other coastal areas, water storage could help address the water quantity issue.

Small Group Discussions: The Stakeholder Team was asked to consider the limiting factors reported for the North Coast populations and how they match up with the Oregon Plan assessment, what future threats need to be addressed in the conservation plan, and which management strategies need to be included in the Coho conservation plan to address the limiting factors and threats listed.

Limiting factors that could be mentioned in the plan: Lack of money to support work of local watershed councils; lack of monitoring/data gaps; human capacity to get the work accomplished; fish passage/stream crossings; water quantity; invasive plants, animals and people; temperature (for Upper Nehalem) as a limiting factor; flooding & floodplain connectivity--lack of habitat in estuaries; Nehalem hatchery strays.

Future threats: Development pressures; land use practices in riparian/floodplain areas/wetlands; global warming/climate change; timber harvest level rates e.g. once same-age timber is ready to harvest, will it all go at once?; increasing demand for water; new invasive species (e.g. New Zealand mud snail); increased runoff from urbanization; ocean conditions; decaying infrastructure (e.g. sewage systems); bacteria in Tillamook.

Suggested Management strategies:

- Consider alternative development strategies in sensitive areas
- Use site-specific development strategies rather than saying no to development entirely – this includes not just people strategies, but also placement of large woody material
- Land acquisition if can demonstrate a positive impact for coho
- Overall improvement of sewage treatment that might affect coho streams
- Consider alternate water supply/pricing structure and storage options for Seaside, Portland, et al. Consider the possibility of a hotel conservation program
- Implement Goal 5 site-specifically
- Engage ODF in recovery planning as landowners– especially Tillamook, Elliott and Clatsop State Foresters
- Change Administrative Rules around fish carcass placement (to allow for placement)
- Get storm water management plans in place in smaller communities
- Look for opportunities to connect floodplains
- Restore tidal influence
- Monitoring (e.g. fish carcasses) to make sure good comes from projects
- Create and support partnerships that share information and education
- Align coho recovery with economic considerations for coastal communities – and communicate this to communities
- Look for increased opportunities through Forest Practices Act and state Forest Management Plans to provide stream complexity
- Employ a business plan approach to management strategies
- Look for ways to increase flexibility in rules relating to wood placement, site-by-site

"Parking Lot Issue" for future discussion: Role of development in floodplain areas.

Public comment:

- It is important to realize that watershed councils and other groups cannot engage in direct political activities.
- Re: state forest – management plans are a staggered process, but Swiss Needle Cast logging is an issue that could contribute to warming of streams.
- Need to anticipate pulses of large wood falling into streams otherwise wood will be taken out for safety reasons. Build structures to be able to support that.
- How are bacteria in Tillamook a limiting factor for coho? Bacteria is a good indicator of other water quality issues. Be more specific with what limiting factors impact coho. Bacteria issues in shell fish lead to the Tillamook Estuary Partnership, not coho.
- Single-species approach was considered a limiting factor, why was it not mentioned in the small groups? Concern about single-species management was raised as it relates to watershed council work plans and the conservation plan. The approach has a

potential for future biases in watershed council work, but is not a "limiting factor" for coho.

Comment from the watershed councils to the group: Make sure we have flexibility to do site-by-site management strategies. It was noted that while it is possible to get permits, they are very difficult to obtain. So essentially, site-by-site permits are nonexistent. (See management strategy above).

Resource User Perspective – Focus: Agriculture

Shawn Reiersgaard, Tillamook Creamery, said there has been a consolidation in the number of dairies along the north coast, but in the recent years both the number of dairies and the number of cows in the area has remained constant. Tillamook County produces one third of the milk in Oregon and is recognized as producing the best quality milk in the nation. There are 14,000 acres of agricultural land in Tillamook County. Currently, 12,900 acres are required for manure application. This finite agricultural land base limits the number of cows on the north coast.

The Tillamook County Creamery Association's (TCCA) involvement in the coho recovery effort stems from a long standing commitment to environmental stewardship and a commitment made to the Governor regarding Measure 38 to manage streamside fencing.

TCCA's environmental goals were set before coho became an issue, and include:

1) Keeping cows out of the state's waters (by funding materials for streamside fencing, and by promoting management practices that minimize cattle 'loitering' in the state's waters);
2) Restoring riparian areas;
3) Keeping manure out of the state's waters (sponsoring manure management seminars, working with OSU extension and NRCS, funding a buffer width study, requiring CAFO permits and nutrient management plans from member dairies);
4) Maintaining a functional agricultural land base (through a consistent policy of no net loss of farmland and opposing any legislation to change land use from agricultural land); and
5) Improving fish passage (through a grant from DEQ the Association conducted a culvert survey on the agricultural portion of the Tillamook Bay watershed; also funding culvert replacement projects).

Shawn noted that agricultural land is very valuable in Tillamook County and thus it is difficult to get landowners to participate in conservation easements. However, landowners are often more willing to participate in a voluntary restoration project if their loss of useable agricultural land is offset by the installation of fence that benefits their operation.

Impacts to Coho: Although TCCA's environmental actions predate the coho crisis, those actions that implement TCCA's environmental goals are the same actions that have been identified as necessary to address limiting factors for coho. Shawn highlighted an example of an action taken by TCCA at the cheese production facility: TCCA instigated and implemented a project that cools the water from their onsite wastewater treatment

plant by using a cooling tower and discharging the water to a wetland. The wetland further tempers the water so that when it finally reaches the Wilson River the water is cool and has no impact on the coho's use of the river.

In summary, the dairy industry has changed the landscape along the north coast. The dairy industry plays a significant role in the local and state economy. Dairy farmers are committed to environmental stewardship and that stewardship has an effect on coho.

Questions/Comments from Stakeholder Team Members:

- What levels of financial contributions come from TCAA? Roughly $30,000-55,000 per year is contributed for fence building. Most farms in the area are now fenced.
- Has TCAA also done riparian planting, along with fences? Over time, will they provide large wood complexity? Riparian planting is part of each project, but typically is done by others. Most all of the riparian planting is on agricultural lowlands and does not generate large wood.
- Do you use the CREP program? Due to the high value of agricultural land, working dairies do not use this program. The same is true for the wetland reserve program.
- Future question: What will the impacts be on quality, land price, etc. with the new factory in Boardman? Although the diet of Tillamook and Boardman dairy cows will differ, the quality expectation for the milk is the same.
- Are you seeing a loss of agricultural land? Impacts of Measure 37? Loss of agricultural land is not yet happening but if/when it does, the sustainability of a local dairy industry is jeopardized. Because the Creamery provides living wage jobs, 70% of the houses in Tillamook are owned year round by homeowners; Shawn emphasized that if the dairy industry were not viable in this community he would expect a shift to 70% of the homes in Tillamook becoming second homes. At this point measure 37 has not impacted the Creamery or the Association, but it remains a concern.

Tim Stevenson, Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA), reported on ODA's programs addressing coastal coho issues. While state agricultural land is small along the coast, it is significant. As an industry, ODA wants to make sure it is responsive to the needs of the state. ODA contributes in the following ways:

- The CAFO (Confined Animal Feeding Operations) program has been expanded, and provides educational outreach and coordination with other partners.
- Pesticides – review and enhancement of labels when necessary; regulation of commercial pesticide applicants.
- Weeds and Invasive Species Program – this is a priority for fish enhancement, watershed health and wildlife.
- SB 1010 agricultural Water Quality Management Area Plans – are meant to prevent pollution from agricultural activities and meet standards. The program is not prescriptive, but rather watershed and outcome-based; it is both voluntary and regulatory. Currently, all coastal areas have 1010 Plan's associated with them.
- Relationships with the SWCD and agricultural services partnership (provide education and outreach particularly for 'horses and mud', receive advice regarding program implementation, assist landowners with management plans, provide technical assistance on conservation practices and management systems).

Current SB 1010 implementation activities include: Plan reviews, compliance investigations, program evaluations, outreach to landowners, and technical assistance. Basin plans can be found on the ODA website, http://egov.oregon.gov/ODA/ .

Question: How do TMDL's fit in to SB 1010? When there is a SB 1010 review, it gets appended to TMDL's to show what the industry is doing to meet water quality standards. A specific riparian area requirement was added to the TMDL process.

Tim provided examples of agricultural land that has undergone 1010 projects, particularly in the riparian area. He noted that 2,100 acres are enrolled in the CREP program on the coast (in Coos, Curry, Umpqua, Lane, Lincoln, and Columbia Counties).

- Question: What about land being too valuable to enroll in CREP? How do we modify that situation? Usually landowners enroll when agricultural practices are not working for them. Louise Solliday offered that OWEB has negotiated a higher CREP rate with Farm Services Agency to alleviate some of this, so there is flexibility with the CREP program. The message about the benefits to enrolling in the CREP program needs to be shared with landowners in some areas, e.g. Lincoln County.
- Question: At the end of a CREP lease, what happens? The landowner regains control. Potentially, land could revert back to pasture, but the landowner might change his/her ideas about landownership and may not want to go back. Providing this flexibility has made for a more attractive CREP agreement, and more positive actions.
- Question: What percentage of land is enrolled in the CREP program? Do not know but do know that many landowners are stewards without being involved in state or federal incentives programs. A cultural shift is taking place. Tim emphasized that changes have been affected on the ground not through civil penalties, but other means.

Small Group Discussions: Stakeholder Team members were asked to consider what agriculture practices are supporting or adding to the limited factors and threats for this region, and what management strategies should be included in the Coho conservation plan.

Limiting factors and threats – Riparian management; agricultural lands effect on connectivity of wetland/floodplain/estuary for over-wintering; tide control & diking; increase in nutrients and organic matter can be a limiting factor (e.g. dissolved oxygen); channelization; summer irrigation and effects on water quantity; invasive species via agricultural practices and feed; and herbicides/pesticides

Agricultural management strategies:

- Provide adequate funding and support to make CREP more attractive
- Improve incentive programs
- Go beyond 'prohibited conditions' to increase effective practices and monitor effectiveness of SB 1010
- Enforce CAFO
- Protect/restrict farmland from residential conversion
- Look for opportunities to impact coho wetlands via dairy practices beyond fencing – incentives?
- Create incentive programs for hobby farms to increase ecological practices

Comments from Stakeholder Team Members:

- It is impressive how many marshes and wetlands remain in the area, as a result of good planning.
- An observation was made that there is no requirement for a provision of stream buffers/large wood rules and regulations for the agricultural industry. (Tim offered that riparian rules are included in every SB 1010 management plan. He forwarded those rules to the team after today's meeting.) Still, requirements for agriculture are different than for forestry.

Tuesday, November 15

User Perspectives: Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians

Stan Van de Wetering, Siletz Tribe, provided a tribal perspective on what actions have been taken to address limiting factors and threats facing Coastal coho. He noted that many of the Tribe's projects are not completed today, and many do not focus on coho. A brief history of the Siletz Tribe: By 1930 Siletz land had been eliminated. The Tribe was re-recognized by Congress in the 1980's. A treaty was signed between the state and the Tribe that included a 'Consent Decree' which said the Tribe would not raise issues of hunting and fishing. Because of this, the Tribe does not have treaty tribe co-management status. This has allowed the Tribe to focus its own work without formal consultation with the Federal and State governments. Enduring a long history of mistrust, the Tribe and the state have been working to rebuild their relationship, and have in recent times engaged with one another more frequently and positively.

The Tribe has chosen not to be actively involved in assessing coho populations or limiting factors specific to coho, but they do believe the fish will continue to be in danger and need to be addressed. They track the state's policies and make decisions based on how the policies may affect the Tribe. The Siletz' interests are in clean water and air; appropriate limits on fisheries harvests; support of ocean and freshwater conditions; and support of Tribal families.

Stan highlighted a number of RM&E projects that the Siletz Tribe is involved with:

- Nutrient cycling
- Algal communities and the food chain
- Herbicide research and monitoring related to the TMDL process (the Tribe is currently preparing for a TMDL process in the Mid-Coast)
- Suspended sediment research and monitoring
- Stream temperature research and monitoring
    - Using Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) photography, the Tribe studied differences in temperatures on various reaches, and used the model for predicting how changes to the landscape (e.g. growth of or cutting of trees) might influence temperatures.
    - The Tribe is also looking at stress levels of fish with shifting stream temperatures.
- Stream flow research and monitoring (studying decay of streams, etc. the Tribe focused mostly on municipal water withdrawals and how to best plan for growth.)

- Patterns of juvenile salmonid use in the mainstem Siletz and its tributaries – how different species use the mainstem and how they move to/from tributaries.
- Estuarine research and monitoring (funded through NOAA and in partnership with USFWS, the US Forest Service, and the Mid-Coast WC, looking at how well restoration projects are working, specifically how fish are using large wood in the estuaries).

Questions and Comments from Stakeholder Team Members:

- How many tribal members make up the Siletz? 4,002. Does the Tribe have a catch and release policy opinion? No, this has not been discussed. Generally if an action keeps populations from dropping, the Tribe will support it. And, there are a wide range of opinions within the Tribe.
- What about pinnipeds? Stan does not know of data that shows the historical relationship between the Siletz and pinnipeds.
- Is there data that supports that the fish use tide gates? Recent data, yes. The data shows, generally, that fish reside behind tide gates, there is limited daily migration, and they tend to grow well – 90% increase in size of smolts that are associated with the same watershed that went out that spring. It seems to offer a beaver dam type of habitat.

  ACTION: Stan will share a report on this tide gate research when it is available.
- How many smolts are seen in the Siletz area? About 100 smolts (all salmonids).
- What happens to coho in the mainstem? The fish appear to do well through the summer period, move out in late summer/early fall, and then it is unknown what happens to them. There is a site in the Drift Creek portion of the estuary where there is a beaver dam where the fish over-winter and migrate out the following year.
- Are other coastal tribes directing their efforts at coho? Stan clarified that he is not answering for other tribes. He does know that the Coos, Lower Umpqua, Coquilles, Cow Creek, Grand Ronde, and Siletz each have one wildlife biologist, and one fish biologist. With relatively little funding, not much can be done. The Coquille Tribe has put forth a concerted effort to do an assessment and restoration plan for coho and want to be involved with this conservation planning process. Rosemary Furfey, NOAA, noted she is working with the Tribe to link up with this project.

Stan also discussed the Rock Creek watershed project. The Tribe bought the land around a state hatchery that was no longer used and dug up raceways to make ponds. In 1998 the Creek began seeing fish but survival was known to be limited. So it was used as an acclimation site where fish were also incubated for awhile. The Tribe built a spawning channel to rear the fish in the ponds to full term. The Tribe is currently working with ODFW to improve spawning habitat upstream to get the fish into the ponds and allow them to rear until the following year. In recent years, up to 7,000 fish have been produced. The goals are 10,000 fish, a produced fish that has the least impact on wild fish, and increased contributions to traditional tribal fishing harvests in Rock Creek.

Large group discussions: Stakeholder team members commented on areas for additional/continued RM&E, and suggested strategies for moving forward:

RM&E

- Support the expansion of innovative monitoring and research, e.g. underwater cameras
- Develop better stress analyses that can be done
- Tide gate studies – request that the tribe share this information ASAP
- Continue and do more of the dike analysis currently underway
- Need to better understand: Are salt/freshwater areas equally important for coho rearing habitat or is one more important and needing extra support?

As a strategy

- Need a mechanism to share and coordinate the breadth of data/work being done
    - Get to wider audiences (Use the state-wide data base being developed and compiled. It does not include research projects, just monitoring. Find a way to link this in.)
- Use forward looking infrared (FLIR) techniques for studies; this method gives a lot of information, quickly.
    - When data is collected, someone will need to analyze it—keep this in mind as more data is being contemplated for collection.
- Follow-up on the tribe's Little Rock Creek work (wood chips) to help make future decisions for hatchery efforts.
- Need more (strategic) effectiveness monitoring to support adaptive management
- Use a life-cycle monitoring stream to experiment with habitat changes to study effects more specifically on the population and eliminate 'noise' in other monitoring settings.
    - Ed Bowles responded that this would require a shift in management, away from broader-scale applications. And agreed it is a good approach to consider.
- Look for ways to increase lowland backwater. Study more on tide gates.
- Need to design ways to communicate the overall effectiveness of all coho efforts to the public if there is a desire to continue coho/salmon conservation efforts beyond 2014.

<u>Question to ODFW</u>: Where are we in completing research to understand how well watershed councils are performing to support juvenile fish?
Answer: Effectiveness monitoring is an issue, and intra-state, not just on the coast. Monitoring will occur at the population scale first, then there will be a closer look at site-specific areas. The state will make educated guesses for now and then wait and see how the fish respond. ODFW is doing sensitivity analyses of effectiveness of habitat parameters at this point. It was noted that OWEB has approved funding for implementation of broad-based effectiveness monitoring, an example of which is on Green River. Effectiveness monitoring of large wood placement has shown a doubling of capacity of that stream to rear fish. *See strategy above.*

<u>Question to the State</u>: If, after 10 years of monitoring, we find coho have/have not come back, will funding continue? What is the parameter?
Answer: Measure 66 funds are the cornerstone for implementing the Oregon Plan. Voters will have an up or down vote on whether funding should continue in 2014. So, it will be important to express the value of watershed stewardship so society can support it even at a level that it competes with other needs, e.g. education. Across stakeholder lines, there

needs to be demonstration that the Oregon Plan has value, e.g. in moving away from an ESA listing, providing healthy populations and more fisheries, etc. There is also a need to demonstrate that monitoring is important. We need a good story in 2011 so we can continue in 2014, when the measure is put back on the ballot. (It was also suggested that we focus on the fish, making the most of what we have now.) *See strategy above.*

Desired Status for Coastal Coho: What is the desired status the group would like to see represented in the state's conservation plan for coastal Coho?

Kevin Goodson, ODFW, suggested that the goals for developing desired status were based on the agreed-on stakeholder principles for coastal coho conservation planning. He provided a handout of his power point presentation that included a list of the principles. The goals with desired status are to:

- Identify a level of abundance and productivity for coho that provides economic, cultural and ecological benefits.
- Explore what has been proposed and what has been seen or estimated.
- Decide with your constituents what is reasonable.
- Decide with your fellow stakeholders what is reasonable.
- Adaptive management allows for reconsideration of desired status goal.

A comparison of the three options (ODFW, Hoffman, and Lovell) with current and TRT historic numbers was shared. Stakeholder Team members provided comments and asked questions (summarized in bullets below):

- Why is ODFW proposing a desired status that puts some rivers below the current status? The analysis is based on an average full-seeding for the population, and also represents a desired status during the worst of ocean conditions.
- What are the TRT historic numbers based on? Intrinsic potential habitat in each population and assumptions about how productive areas would be without land management constraints. Also they looked at historic records, cannery records, and 'straying' in relation to other fish. Generally, the numbers are pre-settlement.
- Uncertainty exists in regards to assumptions made in the models. The models are based on best information and our best educated guess. Still, concerns remain for some stakeholders with the concept of intrinsic potential. ODFW responded that the numbers shared today are a first cut to see if the options were in the same range. ODFW recognizes that their numbers are indeed an educated guess. Historic numbers too are a best guess. A suggestion was made that ODFW be transparent about what they do not know. There is not necessarily enough information to make an educated guess. ODFW also noted that intrinsic potential is NOT part of ODFW's desired status equation (but IS part of the historic scenario).

  ACTION: Rosemary Furfey/NOAA will talk more with Native Fish Society and others interested about the TRT's historical population report.
- Showing desired status scenarios side by side with historic numbers might diminish the important realistic ambitions of what we are trying to accomplish. On the other hand, it shows a trajectory of movement toward that goal, and shows that we are moving in the right direction. Concerns were raised about how we convey our message to the public so they understand and can support the desired status. One suggestion was for the group to address how to craft a message to the

public after we have decided on a desired status.

- Will there be discussions about allocations to the various populations? Yes, so management strategies can be focused in each area.
- Habitat has changed over time, so comparing historic, current, and future status does not work. There is support for showing trends of movement in the process, and historic numbers as a reference point.
    - ODFW comment: Historic numbers were included strictly for reference, not as a desired status option.

      ACTION: Clarify this on the web and elsewhere if the numbers are more widely distributed. Separate out current and historic numbers from the three desired status options to distinguish them from each other.
- We risk losing legitimacy by showing that we are far from historic and have not been doing the right thing for the fish. It was also noted that some stakeholder team members believe it may be possible to reach historic levels.
- Red flag is raised about 'historic TRT estimates': The Native Fish Conservation Policy work group agreed in their process not to try to get back to those estimates. Natural production at historic levels is still not enough to support the various fisheries. This suggests we may need to bring hatchery fish into our targeted levels if we intend to support fisheries and Oregon's economy.
- What is the timeframe for getting to desired status?
- Where do the counts come from? Smolts out of the gravel, not released from the hatchery – i.e. 'naturally produced fish'.
- Show the public where and how their efforts have made a difference. Choosing the number ultimately will give us a chance to show success, but will not change what we are doing. So, when we reach ODFW's goal, we celebrate. Then, we move on to the next level and when we reach the next goal, we celebrate. And so on. We need to look at what it would take to meet each of these goals, and also look at trade-offs.
- The ODFW targets support the concept of adaptive management: If on the ground work results in movement toward the targets, it will signify to us to keep going. If not, we will reassess and change our focus. If we reach our target, we can then reassess and decide if we want to do more. ODFW responded that there will be reviews and updates of the plan.
- Look at the desired status options as various benchmarks, the two ends being current and historic. Don't focus on numbers; instead, look at what they represent – ecosystem health, nutrient cycling, etc. The Lovell option is a 100-year plan. ODFW's might be the 20-year plan. Build in steps along the way to capture progress. Use numbers as a way to gauge how we are doing, but don't make them the target.
- Is there a different scientific way to allocate among populations without conveying 'winners' and 'losers'? Meaning, in some places there is a lot to do and others, not as much.
- Based the goals on a marine survival number.
- Each of the models exhibits flaws with certain populations. Adjustments will need to be made for each of them, so don't weigh the options against one another.

Kevin Goodson suggested that if the disagreement about the numbers is due to how much ODFW relies on habitat in their proposal, the group might agree on desired status as 'managing populations at 80% of full seeding under worst ocean conditions'.

Questions/Comments from Stakeholder Team Members:

- How did ODFW come up with '80% of full seeding'? The agency recognizes that Amendment 13 is based largely on a seeding level, which is not fully understood. However, in Amendment 13 there is a matrix, of which the top row shows the sub-aggregate, at the highest level, at 75% of full seeding to get the highest levels of harvest. ODFW tweaked the number up to 80% for the desired status to get to an even number, roughly 100,000 fish. Also, the intent is to make full use of the habitat in all watersheds, even during the poorest of ocean conditions.
- There is apprehension, from a legal perspective, with not fully defining full seeding. Is ODFW leaving this open to interpretation? No, ODFW will need to define full seeding, and, acknowledges that at this point they do not know, that understanding needs to be further refined. Is full seeding based on current availability, or on what we think we want for full seeding? Should/does it also tie in a productivity component? The seeding level could change, because capacity might change. It will depend on habitat improvement.
- Does ODFW intend to try to improve the situation for coho, even if we meet our goal? Yes. Regardless of what we do, there will be ups and downs. As long as ODFW maintains a goal to improve, we will be moving in the right direction. It is ok not to have a specific number to define success; but if a bar is set, it should be realistic.
- If the recruitment model approach is used, categorize watersheds into 'like' systems, e.g. the lakes systems, basins with a lot of potential for more lowlands and marsh development, etc. Set different targets for each type. Restrict use of the model to those basins that the model is best designed for, and use different, more appropriate, models in other areas.
- Change the objective: let ODFW take its assessment out to local watershed councils and ask them what they think they can accomplish over the next 'x' number of years. Then build the number of where we want to be, driven by watershed council input into how limiting factors will be addressed. Build recommendations on limiting factor types, and then go to watershed councils to talk about what can be done. (This has been an on-going discussion amongst watershed councils.) Implement action plans first. These ideas are in line with OWEB's approach to a bottom-up approach, by allowing the watershed councils to do their work based on site-specific needs. Encourage action plans to be built that are realistic, and opportunistic.

NOTE: ODFW responded that the state cannot punt the conservation plan to the watershed councils. Part of the maturation of the Oregon Plan is looking to address, on an ESU-wide scale, what is ailing the fish. The suggested process would not help prioritize limited funding and where it needs to go to be most effective. We now need to make difficult decisions about where to put our resources to do what is best for coho. Treating everything equally would be a disservice. Another perspective was shared from watershed council members: There is a need for ESU-wide guidance, and we also need to look system-by-system at potentials and how well potentials can be realized without

requiring extraordinary events or breaking the budget, and then prioritize actions. Ed Bowles responded that we need a process and scientific basis for making those decisions.

- Can we use the lakes systems as a model for a goal or desired status, (biological and social parameters) and work backward to look at what it takes to get there? And what will be required of other systems? This would meet both a top down and bottom up approach.
- Is there a guidance document to look at what is meant by recovery? What are our goal posts, on a watershed by watershed basis? Ask what, realistically, each watershed area is capable of doing that will meet the overall conservation/recovery effort?

  ACTION: The stakeholder team members asked the facilitator to put in writing the agreements reached on desired status, to take back and discuss with their constituents. (*See italics below.)*
- Next step suggestion: Break into regional watershed groups and ask: Can we set goals? What do we know? What do we need to know to be able to set goals to distill what is available on a local basis to put into decision-making? Another suggestion –allow watershed councils to receive guidance from the state on how watershed councils can best do their work. Ed Bowles responded that the process does not necessarily need to follow one or the other line of thinking. The intent is to provide guidance to the conservation/recovery process. The recovery plan will set ESU-wide sideboards, and watershed councils (and many other partners) will implement the plan. The ODFW desired status is a population-based number. The other options are ESU-wide. ODFW's expressed hope is that as a group we can agree on what we want out of a worst-ocean year. Do we want smolts to remain relatively constant (as many as possible)? Or, smolts plus additional fisheries, or… other ideas?
- Caution against referring to this as NOAA's ESA recovery process. Maintain that this is a state conservation plan. Response: NOAA and the state intend to work in coordination with each other so that the plan meets both the goals of the state and ESA requirements, and so that the plan is community-based and locally driven.
- Suggestion: Put the statutory definition up for all to see so we do not spend time discussing/debating required key components of the plan (e.g. gauge on bad ocean conditions, include abundance, diversity, 'naturally produced', etc).
- Suggestion: 100,000 fish is probably realistic for now as a minimum/baseline. Use this number to set limiting factors, then determine which watershed councils need to address what. And finally, support them in their work
- There appears to be agreement about the need for overall ESU-wide guidance, with input from local watersheds. Cautiously support 80% of full seeding as a starting point, but do not support the other numbers included in ODFW's proposed desired status.
- How are watershed councils coordinating with ODFW? What authority does ODFW have with respect to watershed councils? Who decides what the limiting factors are? ODFW has a seat on the Mid-Coast WC, habitat fish biologists design and implement restoration projects in cooperation with the WC (funded through the WC), a WC liaison does project development, etc. So ODFW and the Mid-Coast are closely linked. WC's also partner with timber companies, US Forest Service, BLM and others. This is much the same in the north coast and south coast. Most watershed councils on the coast work very well with the agencies.

- What series of management actions can/will it take to double the number of current smolts? It *is* possible to attain –the numbers in 'current' status are artificially lower than what is really going on, as there was unused spawning habitat. How long will it take? In terms of watershed councils setting goals (determining desired status): as was mentioned before, capacity varies greatly from group to group. We are on a continuum of top down-bottom up in the Oregon plan process. The conservation plan is another step along the continuum, to inform local groups and help local efforts be even more strategic.
- None of the stakeholder team members fully understand the numbers. If not clarified somehow, this could pose a problem for everyone when the plan goes out to the public.

For today, the group agreed: *There <u>is</u> a need for a state-wide, ESU level perspective to provide guidance to local implementers (e.g. watershed councils and others). Guidance should come in the form of reference numbers, current status of the fish and goals. Continued assessment of limiting factors and implementation measures must continue at the local level with coordination with the state.*

Questions remaining: What is/are the timeframe(s)? How should the timeframe be articulated? What are the goals?

Stakeholder comments:

- I need to understand the model enough to say it is reasonable and one that will support adaptive management to allow new information to be added when available.
- Need definition of full capacity. Want to make sure we are not moving backwards, so desired status should include 'no net loss' of full capacity as defined in the 1990's. In other words, don't go below actual numbers observed and don't reduce 'capacity' to below what it is now. Avoid ratcheting down of habitat. There is a lack of trust with ODFW that the target number will not continue declining. Is there a way to ensure that this target will not go down? Put language in that says there is a commitment to *avoid backsliding from assessment*. (See below.)
- This plan is not the place for social commentary on land use decisions. We need to put a plan in place that we can balance with other social decisions and still reach our goals.
- Do not change the goal if you don't meet it. Rather, say you didn't meet the goal – be honest.
- "Full capacity" is based on current spawning capacity of the system. Full capacity is not being fully realized right now. (This needs to be further clarified, by the December meeting.)

<u>Next steps</u>: Stakeholder Team members agreed on the following components of desired status, which the state will take back and refine for further discussion/decision at the December meeting.

- The group is looking for 80% full capacity under bad ocean with no backsliding from the status achieved in the state's assessment
- ODFW will continue to refine the model and numbers at the population level
    - They will treat the lake systems differently than currently modeled because they are different than other stream settings

- Full capacity will be defined (current spawning capacity – 2005)
- A timeframe for the effort will also be defined

Additionally, the group agreed that:
- Uncertainty exists with regards to assumptions made in models
    - The models were based on best information and best educated opinion
- Historic levels have been used as a reference point, not as a target.
    - Caution: Pre-settlement numbers may be viewed as highly unrealistic: if used in desired status, will need care in description.
- To clarify, ODFW will separate TRT, current and desired status levels (graphically)

ODFW requested specific help on borderline independent/dependent populations, and how to deal with dependent populations. The revised desired status will be further discussed at the meeting on December 8 in Roseburg.

Draft Chapter for Conservation Plan: Mid-Coast

Bob Buckman, ODFW, presented a rough draft of the Mid-Coast chapter of the conservation plan. Setting the context, he noted that the priorities for coho are: 1) independent populations to achieve and maintain pass+ (a level of health beyond viability);and 2) to achieve desired status, smaller basins with consistent late spawners and corresponding juveniles are of equal importance for habitat improvement and protection. Also, consider co-occurring fish while managing for coho: fall Chinook, winter steelhead, cutthroat trout, other salmonids, lamprey, and other non-game fish.

Limiting factors in the Mid-Coast were due to: High harvest in the 1970-80's, low smolt survival in the 1990's, and freshwater habitat constraints today.

Habitat

Based on watershed council and user group presentations at the Stakeholder Team meetings, ODFW included the following habitat limiting factors in the chapter: channel complexity or winter habitat; summer rearing; connectivity/passage for juveniles and adults; limiting life stage can vary (floods and droughts, e.g.); multiple life stages; other areas remain uncertain, e.g. lakes.

Habitat strategies include: protecting existing habitat, advising and coordinating with local groups, and pursuing additional voluntary measures. Restoration projects are opportunistic and should utilize the Mid-Coast WC 6th filed watershed assessment approach when possible.

Question: The Mid-coast is almost half federal forest land. Is there any study on big flood effects on these streams? Likely yes, but Bob was not aware of that data. There are also state and private forest lands in the Mid-Coast. Beyond what is being done, ODFW suggests focusing on full flood plain areas and managing for coho and using incentives and voluntary actions to support a cost-effective approach. Also, artificially add large wood.

Agricultural areas are limited in the Mid-Coast. To address limiting factors, ODFW

recommends looking for high intrinsic potential areas and, where farmers are willing, re-establish floodplain connectivity.

To address land use in low water areas, minimize any new buildings so the focus can be on coho habitat.

To address water quantity issues, find alternatives to direct stream withdrawals, e.g. Rocky Creek Reservoir.

Beavers supply good coho habitat, so coordinate with landowners and trappers to leave them in these areas. Also additional research on management of beavers is recommended.

Nutrients-carcass placement is beneficial but benefits may be limited relative to other habitat factors.

Connectivity and good juvenile passage is most beneficial for fish.

ACTION: Add this 'Parking Lot Issue' to the RM&E list for further discussion.

Harvest

Harvest has been reduced, although some harvest is allowed through Amendment 13. Additional ocean harvest constraints exist due to other listed species. From ODFW's perspective, the potential exists to open more harvest opportunities in the Siletz, Yaquina, Alsea and Siuslaw. There is a need for more habitat, not more spawners in the Mid-coast. This speaks to the potential for increased harvest opportunities in the future.

Hatcheries are no longer a broad risk factor. In the Salmon River, hatchery coho are the key limiting factor. ODFW recommends either doing something different with the hatchery program, or ending it. ODFW recommends against hatchery coho smolt releases elsewhere unless for research.

Question: What is the potential for restoring habitat? There is some potential. Research ideas include studying the life history, habitat use and adult contribution of juveniles that migrate out of the tributaries; determine juvenile coho distribution and habitat use in coastal lakes; better inventory and understanding of high intrinsic potential habitats; better understanding of predator impacts.

Finally, ODFW is seeing a positive response to local work; generally we are on the right course for habitat, etc. Bob noted that this area needs some refinements in management to improve already good work.

Next steps: ODFW requested feedback from the stakeholder team on the Mid-Coast chapter before the next meeting. Bob requested that any major concerns in the chapter, be sent to him by Friday, 11/18 (or as soon as possible) so he can flesh out other parts of the plan that do not cause concern and discuss concern areas at the next meeting.

Next Meeting, December 8, Roseburg

The Stakeholder Team will discuss any concerns with the Mid-Coast chapter, continue

desired status discussions, begin reviewing the South Coast draft chapter and hear from municipalities (including ports). NOAA will share a draft progress report for the recovery plan with group before the next meeting.

Other Items

- Dan Knoll was introduced as the new ODFW outreach coordination for Oregon Plan activities, including the work of the coast coho stakeholder team process. Most recently, Dan did public information work with ODOT. He said he is looking forward to learning from this group.
- Suggestion: A hard copy of the presentations at future meetings would be helpful.