OREGON COASTAL COHO RECOVERY PROJECT
Stakeholder Team Meeting
Shilo Inn, Newport
Facilitator's Meeting Summary
September 23, 2005

Attendees for all or part of the meeting:
Stakeholder Team Members: Paul Englemeyer (Audubon-Public at Large), Tom Forgatsch (Farm Industry), Wayne Giesy (Alsea Valley Alliance), Cindy Heller (STEP), Wayne Hoffman (Mid-coast Watershed Council.), Tom Kartrude (Port of Siuslaw), Kaitlin Lovell (Trout Unlimited), Bill Moshofsky (Save the Salmon Coalition), Lisa Phipps (Mayor Rockaway Beach) Shawn Reiersgaard (Tillamook Creamery), Dennis Richey (Oregon Anglers-NW Steelheaders), Blake Rowe (Longview Fibre Company), Johnny Sundstrom (Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation Council), Terry Thompson (Assoc. of Oregon Counties), Stan Van de Wetering (Confederated Tribes 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: Jerome Arnold (EDWC/CSWCD), Greg Apke (ODOT), Carol Bickford (Nestucca/Neskowin WC) Brandon Ford (ODFW), Kevin Goodson (ODFW), Mike Gray (ODFW), Dave Jarrett (WRD), Pete Lawson (NOAA-TRT), Jeff Light (Plum Creek Timber Co.), John Lilly (DSL), Jeff Lockwood (NOAA), Justin Mills (Contractor with Mid-Coast Watershed Council), Jo Morgan (ODF), Eric Nigg (ODEQ), Maggie Peyton (Nehalem WC), Jeff Rodgers (ODFW), John Spangler (ODFW), Tom Shafer (OWEB), Tim Stevenson (ODA), Heather Stout (NOAA-TRT), Karen Tarnow (ODEQ)

Other Interested Parties: Joel Gallob (Newport Times), Elaine Hallmark (Oregon Consensus Program)

Facilitation Team: Donna Silverberg, Robin Harkless, Erin Halton

Action Items

Action	Who	By When
"Parking lot issues" for further discussion	Stakeholder Team	October/Nov meetings
Track RM&E needs/issues from presentations	Heller, Lovell, Rodgers, Ritchey	Ongoing
First cut basin by basin apportions, per Hoffman proposal	ODFW	October 27

Housekeeping/Introductions

Meeting Goal: Based on feedback from stakeholder team members and ODFW staff, the facilitation team developed today's agenda to invite direct local input on limiting factors and management actions. To assist with this, the Mid-Coast Watershed Council prepared a presentation, which was followed by small group discussion. Also, a resource user perspective, led by Blake Rowe for the forest industry, was shared. This presentation was also followed by small and large group discussion. Finally, the group was asked to examine if and how the information might fit into the state's conservation plan. This meeting structure was proposed for the meetings in October, focusing on south coast populations, and November, focusing on north coast populations.

Ed Bowles, Fish Chief for ODFW, reported that stakeholder team member Richard Oba was involved in a boating accident. A card was sent around, to let him know that the group's thoughts and prayers are with him and the others involved in the accident.

Comments on July 29, 2005 Summary Notes

- Page 3: There needs to be clarification about why the Salmon and Sixes are not at pass+. The statement at the last meeting was in the context of desired status, not the current status. This will be clarified in the notes to reflect the time aspect.
- Page 3, Societal Benefits: The bullets, as written, could mislead those who have not followed the conversation. To clarify, add hatchery brood stock as a genetic pool for mitigation.
- Page 4, Stakeholder Team member comment on 'recovery = expanding the range'. Do we really mean this? This raises concerns, and should be discussed further.
    - **PARKING LOT ISSUE**: Does recovery really mean expanding the range?
- Page 4, Amendment 13: Note that questions remain and that the state, facilitation team, and Paul Englemeyer are coordinating to get a response.

Solicit volunteers for RM&E focus – A request was made for stakeholder team members to volunteer to track RM&E issues/needs as we move through the upcoming presentations so that later, in December or January, there can be discussions on what this smaller group has been hearing.

ACTION: Jeff Rodgers, Kaitlin Lovell, Dennis Richey, and Cindy Heller volunteered to track potential Research, Monitoring and Evaluation needs that should be included in the Plan.

Follow up: Fish carcass information: Karen Tarnow, ODEQ, and Eric Nigg, ODEQ's TMDL expert, responded to questions that came up at the last meeting about restrictions the agency might put on fish carcass placement in streams. ODEQ sees no problem with more fish coming into Oregon streams. While ODEQ does require ODFW to have a permit for human placement of carcasses in-stream (which is intended to provide guidelines that will help prevent problems such as depletion of oxygen), the agency does not enforce policy against natural influences in the environment. This includes fish returning to streams and bringing nutrients from offshore. In fact, the agency does not have nutrient standards and does not see that a problem would exist if large numbers of

fish were to return. A potential management challenge might come from distinguishing between fish bringing the nutrients naturally vs. other occurrences, such as land use. For example, if large fish numbers were to begin returning, than human sources may need to be reduced at the point source level.

'Possible Action': Fish carcasses in streams: changes to ODFW manual? Possibilities might exist for local coordination of carcass placement in streams.

Follow-up: Water Rights/Use: Louise Solliday, Oregon Governor's Office, reported that she followed up with the Water Resources Department (WRD) on water rights/use for Gold Beach, Bandon, and Portland. Gold Beach and Bandon each have 6 water rights in various streams; each uses less than 1/10 of its right. In Portland, there had been some violations of movement of water in the past, but those issues have since been resolved. Well #1 on the Columbia slough is one problem that is being corrected. Louise noted that water use and rights reporting is available on the WRD website. Water rights in Gold Beach and Bandon are voluntarily reported because they are "older" water rights. A suggestion was made that there should be required monitoring on older water rights, and also on bigger water users. Louise noted that Mitch Lewis, watermaster, is a good contact on water rights questions for Bandon and Gold Beach.

'PARKING LOT ISSUE': Water rights: Monitoring requirements for older rights?

Clarification of limiting factors and threats definitions: Rosemary Furfey, NOAA, and Kevin Goodson, ODFW, are working with other recovery teams for each domain in the region to develop draft guidance based on comments from the stakeholder team, and to be consistent throughout the region. The draft guidance should be available by the next meeting. 'Conditions under which the species evolved' will be addressed if this language is left in the definitions.

Local Perspectives on Management Actions to Address Limiting Factors and Current and Future Threats

Justin Mills, contractor with the Mid-Coast Watershed Council, presented on a GIS tool, the Basin Browser that has been used by the Mid-Coast in their limiting factors analysis. A handout was provided. Justin noted that this tool brings affordable resource assistance and expertise to rural environments. A simple program to use, it allows you to pull up reports on useful information, and compare it to other watersheds. He also noted that there needs to be more focus on analyzing the data that has been gathered—monitoring and evaluation need to go hand in hand.

Data management issue: It would very useful if there were an interface between Jeff Rodger's maps (posted around the room during today's meeting) and the maps in the Basin Browser. Major data sources in the Browser include juvenile snorkel surveys, ODFW/MCWC/SWCD aquatic habitat inventory surveys, and culvert information.

Stakeholder Team Member Comments and Questions:

- Is there built-in historical information as a comparative to current information? No, the data goes as far back as 2001 and would require additional resources (funding and

personnel) and time to pull together that information.

- How much would it cost to build in an updating system? Updates cost about $2000. ODFW has identified that data access and management is a need and they are working with OWEB and others to provide funding for a more coordinated, consolidated, and updated information system. This would include layering in watershed council information. Funding should be made available soon, and the next step will be coordinating all the data sources.
- What are the analysis capabilities of the program? The program is not designed for analysis; once the data is run, it requires a person or a more sophisticated system to analyze the data.

Wayne Hoffman presented the Mid-Coast Watershed Council approach to geographic prioritization and limiting factors analysis. A handout was provided. Wayne noted that geographic prioritization is done using snorkel surveys, aquatic habitat inventories and GIS analyses. Results of the prioritization included: 60 of 218 6th-field subbasins ranked as high; larger subbasins are more likely to be a high priority; and high priority 6th fields are clustered. The Council also looked at ownership to determine which areas were most appropriate for the watershed council's work. More details on the prioritization process might be added to the Mid-Coast Watershed Council's website (which was down at the time of this meeting).

A limiting factors analysis was done on 20 high priority areas, in groups of 5. A coho-centric stage by stage analysis was done to determine which life history stage(s) experienced bottlenecks. From that, a prioritized list of potential restoration projects was developed. The watershed council sought grants to undertake the highest prioritized actions on the list. The watershed council received about $7,500 for each 6th field from OWEB.

Question: How do you assure that restoration work is not affecting other species? E.g. a wooded riparian area developed in an area for coho that comes into direct conflict with elk. Wayne offered that they consider other salmonids and species when doing restoration projects, and that in practice there are very few conflicts.

Wayne explained that one of the main goals is to develop an ecosystem that can support itself and provide protection from anything that might degrade productivity. All work is voluntary so the watershed council works with landowners who want to preserve or improve conditions on their land. Restoration work includes: Stabilizing slopes, voluntary easements, large wood placement, managing landslide areas to benefit habitat in streams (e.g. so that large wood will be delivered to the stream during a slide), replenishing stream bed gravel, and removing human barriers.

Areas for addressing limiting factors include: Core habitat, anchor sites, secondary branch sites, critical contributing areas, barriers (the Watershed Council does not currently act on removing natural barriers) and lowlands (wintering and rearing habitats, which may be downstream from the 6th field area).

Wayne provided examples of an analysis done on the North Fork Yachats River, in

partnership with the Siuslaw National Forest, Lincoln SWCD, ODF and the Siuslaw SWCD.

In-stream work is typically done from July to September to least disturb instream migrants, while helicopter projects are implemented from mid-September to mid-October, to least impact nesting birds. Data is inventoried for the whole basin. Additional measures are taken at particular areas to get a more complete picture, and the watershed council works to fill in the gaps.

Wayne also discussed work on gravel reaches and large wood placement, and partnership work done designing thinning areas with a goal of maximizing large wood inputs from landslides. It was noted that the thinning concept implemented to maximize wood inputs could be quite different from thinning for other objectives, such as getting re-growth of as many trees as possible.

Analyses were also done at: North Fork Beaver Creek; Ollala Creek; Steer Creek (working with the Siletz Tribe as a major partner); and Rock Creek.

Management Strategy of Choice: The Oregon Plan 3-legged stool model – local grassroots efforts, combined with voluntary efforts by landowners, and salmon-sensitive regulation by agencies. The third leg of the stool, salmon-sensitive regulation by agencies, is wobbly.

Desired Status: Full seeding, ubiquitous distribution, enough fish to support healthy fisheries, and enough fish to serve coho sustainability (e.g. carcasses), escapement in all years, all populations adequate to avoid genetic impoverishments and local extirpations. Use smolt production as the primary currency for setting desired status goals for coho, based on what it takes to get a minimum return during bad ocean years.

From Wayne's perspective (he clarified that his proposal for an iterative process is not necessarily that of the Mid-Coast Watershed Council), smolt production is the most important aspect for recovery. His smolt production goals include reaching smolt numbers that are 4 times the current estimated numbers, with adult escapement at 2 million during good ocean condition years and 200,000 during bad ocean condition years.

Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District

Johnny Sundstrom presented information to the group about the Siuslaw Basin Partnership. He noted that the watershed contains over 50% federal land, and that his federal partners were not able to attend the meeting, but are currently out doing restoration work. He handed out a brochure with information on the Partnership. The 200,000 adult escapement target from Wayne's presentation, he offered, was a reality prior to 1880 in the Siuslaw.

Limiting factors addressed by the Siuslaw Partnership: High water/high velocity resulting in smolt flushing; 303(d) listing of several tributaries for sediment and temperature; excess bedrock in the system; lack of nutrients (fish carcasses); fish passage; calcium and lead problems (toxics); and social and cultural perspectives. The group's prioritization

process involves ½ biological potential, and ½ social opportunity. The latter is essential in order to get support from local communities, funding resources and bodies to help get the work done.

Management actions have included: sixty thousand trees delivered to private landowners to support riparian habitats; in stream structures (logs on site, hauled in, flown in, small woody debris); riparian planting and protection, including assistance to landowners to maintain riparian areas; fish passage; road maintenance and repair; channel modification and stream reconstruction; monitoring for water quality conditions (toxins and lack of nutrients like calcium through the study of mussels); upland management; and landowner education and training.

Desired status/recovery goals: Include a 'business plan' to get state-wide and national buy-in for long-term commitments. Show what it will take to get thriving coastal communities, healthy people, and economic gain. What are we investing? How many fish over how many years? What are we expecting? Johnny noted that the Siuslaw Soil and Water Conservation District's mission is a 'sustainable, harvestable and fully functional temperate rainforest ecosystem'; fish are a critical component of this mission of the Siuslaw.

Small Group Discussion

In small affiliate groups, participants were asked to consider the following questions relative to the presentations*: What should be included in the conservation plan? Are there modifications to the State's assessment and management plans that stand out? What did the proposal spark re: desired status?*

Given that many of the answers were similar, the following is a compiled list of suggestions, comments, and questions from the different small groups:

Liked from Presentations

- Hands-on examples and modeling – a balance of both is needed
- Good examples of local watershed planning
- Reach by reach approach, in context of the larger watershed
- Goal of restoring ecosystem health
- Consistent themes as were in the assessment
    - Good examples to help get local level specifics into the plan

Challenges

- Level of analytical detail was great–this will be hard to duplicate at other watershed councils, as well as in the Plan
- Historic number issue will be affected by land uses based on geographic location
- Funding limitations will necessitate prioritizing restoration efforts:
    - Need a business plan (see below for more detailed suggestions)
- Built in conflict between protecting against degradation and supporting natural processes—sometimes one creates the other (no suggestions for changing this, just needs to be acknowledged)
- Economic consideration of wild fish recovery (corrections to hatchery practices might

help)

- There is always a role for hands on management—and that need might be great
- Data/modeling inclusion. How much detail for the state plan needs to be carefully considered
- Fresh water actions impacting ocean production
- These examples point to the need to be proactive in turning missed opportunities into opportunities
- There is the potential for watershed councils re-inventing the wheel and assessing in ways inconsistent with others—consistency and cooperation would be good
    - Conservation plan could help this?
- Any sacrifices to support recovery will need to be shared across society
- Look at natural barriers individually – some may need fixing, others will not

Suggested Inclusions to Conservation Plan

- Include these examples and acknowledge that such work can be produced at the local level -- allow for updates at that level as well(detail issue)
- Use similar level of detail, ESU-wide
- The plan should answer: What can you do? When? What is the cost? (From local perspective, as a separate section in the plan)
- Include new and cutting edge work being done in the field
- Educating the public: Need to include feel-good, accessible projects for social impact (more than just the biological focus)
- Include methods and reporting for evaluating success and failure—be honest about what we have and have not done
- Include mention of pesticide use, fire retardants, hormone issues, floodplain development, water quantity and quality as 'future threats'. Address these future threats in both watershed council planning and conservation planning.
- Write a plan that describes the process for setting priorities, data/numbers (where available), and addresses time/cost (based on averages of projects done)
- Explain that the Legislature told watershed councils to put state funding 'on the ground'
    - Do this to avoid blaming WC's for lack of monitoring/evaluation—they would have done more of this had funds been allocated for that use.
- Include a 'business plan' that answers what can you afford to do?
    - How much funding exists?
    - Where is funding available?
    - Subsidies?
    - Effects on jobs/food?
    - Multiple/tangential benefits of coho work
    - Range of costs (more than one alternative)
- Be careful that the plan does not delve into so many areas that it is too complex, controversial, and (as such) un-workable
- Keep the plan forward looking, not constrained by current conditions

Additional comments

- Re: natural barriers: At the watershed level, agree with the 'do not disturb', but on a

state wide level, we should not be constrained by an all or nothing approach.
- Heather Stout (NOAA) provided a handout paper on conservation hatcheries. If you want a copy, contact Heather.

Resource User Group Perspectives: Forestry

Blake Rowe offered that, as a foundation, OFIC is committed to: Maintain a private forest land base; support, maintain and improve the Oregon Forest Practices Program; maintain the productive capacity of our forestland; and protect our forest resources from wildfire, disease and insects. These basic commitments from Forest landowners are critical to the coho conservation plan.

What restoration contributions have private forest landowners made? Major efforts include

- Stream surveys, including data collection and funding. This work actually started before the OPSW was created. The data, collected in cooperation with ODFW, forms the foundation for much of the assessment.
- Fish passage
- Road surfacing and drainage. Several of these voluntary efforts have been so successful that they have been incorporated into the Forest Practice rules with the support of forest landowners.
- Riparian work. Numerous alternative voluntary measures to enhance buffers on fish bearing streams through additional tree retention or active management.
- Placement of large wood/boulders to enhance stream complexity; included into rule incentives for landowners to place key pieces of wood in return for limited harvest of riparian trees. It is clear that this work improves fish habitat, but it is difficult to quantify the benefits in terms of more fish.
- Helped create and fund habitat biologist positions to develop project design and permits –this has proven critical to initiating restoration projects
- Research and monitoring – this continues to be a key focus for private landowners both small and large

From the private landowner perspective, the most effective measures are fish passage work, road improvements, habitat biologists who can facilitate improvement projects, and research and monitoring. Wood placement is not considered the most effective by some landowners because it is difficult to see/quantify results compared to fish passage work.

Blake noted challenges that could be addressed:

- Lack of funding and maintenance of current funding mechanisms (e.g. attempts made by the environmental community to cut funding from landowners to support public education and research through the Oregon Forest Resources Institute and to shift a greater share of fire protection to forest landowners);
- Interference with good ideas, e.g. 'basal area credit' not currently available because it wasn't supported by federal partners;
- Perception that landowner's work is never good enough – in spite of all that is done, they are still expected to volunteer more. Forest practice regulatory reviews are more rigorous, burdensome and frequents than other land uses.
- The rush to regulate before key scientific research. Examples of research that should

be complete before more regulatory changes are made include Hinkle Creek; the relationship between shade, food supply, and fish productivity; headwater stream temperature work.

The forest industry feels that the approach laid out in the Oregon Plan should continue in the conservation plan. The industry will continue to meet its commitments in the OPSW, e.g. funding research, monitoring, and evaluation, supporting watershed councils, voluntary efforts on roads and stream protection, etc.

Additionally, Blake shared some ideas that could be added to the new Plan: Hard falling trees into streams to increase complexity – work with ODFW staff to identify suitable stream reaches, identify trees and direct fallers on placement. Also, sediment routing: placing debris and sediment behind culverts on the downstream side of the current thereby allowing natural mechanisms to move sediment instead of loading it into dump trucks and trucking it away, out of the stream system.

Question: What is the view of the IMST report on the Forest Industry? Recommendations were sent to the Board of Forestry and addressed through that process.

Jeff Light, fish biologist for Plum Creek Timber, provided examples of specific restoration projects implemented by private landowners in the mid-coast. He noted that landowner participation occurs through watershed councils, research advisory committees, weed boards, road and culvert inventories and fish surveys.

Projects included: habitat improvement, passage barrier removal (Jeff noted that there are some remaining passage barrier removals to be addressed, but the major work is complete), road sediment reductions, estuary enhancement, riparian conifer regeneration, biodiversity maintenance, culvert replacement (expensive but provides an instant benefit), falling trees directly into streams, research on placing buffers only on the south side of the stream, and Newton's research. In response to Blake's comments, Jeff noted that he has indeed found tree placement to be a very effective restoration activity.

Questions relating to on-going research and monitoring needs: How effective are current practices? What influence does forestry have on aquatic ecosystems? What culverts are significant barriers, cost-effective solutions, and can we measure results of barrier removal? How effective are current buffering strategies and alternatives? How does the amount of 'fish food' affect temperature sensitivity? While some of the research does not directly address smolt productivity, the information could be put into context to show the impacts of activity in one area on other areas. The research could help in prioritizing important restoration projects, and further research could be done to add perspective to the impacts on coho.

Blake concluded by saying that we need to allow the science to be fully understood, examine how things are inter-related, and continue to monitor results. These are dynamic questions with dynamic answers, and research needs to continue.

Next Steps

- The next meeting, scheduled for October 27, will begin with small group discussion of the Forestry Industry presentation, and work toward answering what, if anything, from today's presentations is needed to reach agreement on concepts for inclusion in the conservation plan (relative to habitat concerns).
- Paul Englemeyer requested a review of the IMST report on forestry.
- Ed Bowles, ODFW, thanked the presenters for providing their ideas and information and suggested that what he heard reinforced the gratitude owed by all Oregonians to local efforts. These on the ground efforts provide an excellent foundation for future work of the state and others. Recognizing ownership on the ground, ODFW will make certain that the conservation plan captures the local work, so as not to reinvent the wheel. The state will put the effort into the context of a coho-centric recovery plan. Ed also appreciated hearing from the Forest Industry some potential future action ideas, and suggested others consider this aspect (relative to coho) in their presentations. ODFW's district biologists will be taking the lead as authors of the conservation plan and will begin drafting pieces for Stakeholder Team feedback at the next meting.

ACTIONS:

- ODFW will do a first cut at apportioning the Hoffman goals on a basin-by-basin basis.
- The conservation groups will be providing their ideas regarding desired status
- A request was made for an economic presentation on projections, from OCZMA et al. How much would be required to provide a fishery? Rosemary Furfey, NOAA, noted that her agency is developing an economic approach proposal and will brief the Stakeholder Team in October.

Meeting Schedule/Agendas

October 27, Bandon Dunes: South Coast Populations

- Desired status
- Follow up on Forestry
- Local perspectives on limiting factors and management strategies
- Resource User perspectives: Agriculture presentation: Cranberry and…
- Economic approach

November 14, Rockaway Beach/Tillamook: North Coast Populations

- Follow up on Agriculture – dairy
- Local perspectives on limiting factors and management strategies
- Resource User perspectives: Local government
- TRT status update

Meeting Evaluation: What Worked/Didn't Work?

- Two-day meeting might be better (facilitation team will check with group on-line about their availability for November)
- Liked small group idea generation, possibly get feedback in between meetings?
- Didn't like set up of room because not everyone could see. Suggest setting up so everyone can see and so presenter can use computer without blocking the view.

- Larger space allowed for multiple discussions (and this was good for small group discussions).
- Shorten small group discussion time; include facilitators to keep small groups on task.