

**Coastal Coho Recovery Project
Stakeholder Team --Third Meeting
Hatfield Marine Science Center
Newport, Oregon**

**Facilitator's Summary Notes
August 24, 2004**

The following notes are a summary of key discussions and presentations that are intended to point out future actions or issues that may need further discussion at upcoming meetings. These notes are not intended to be a verbatim "record" of the meeting, only a reminder for team members.

Attendees for all or part of the meeting:

Stakeholder Team Members: Bill Bakke (Native Fish Society), Paul Engelmeyer (public at large), Tom Forgatsch (Agriculture/Cranberry Grower), Wayne Giesy (Alsea Valley Alliance), Wayne Hoffman (MidCoast Watershed Council), Tom Kartrude (Port of Siuslaw), Kaitlin Lovell (Trout Unlimited), Jason Miner (Oregon Trout), Richard Oba (Oregon Coast Sport Fishing), John Phelan (LTM Inc.), Blake Rowe (Longview Fiber Co/OFIC), Sam Sasaki (City of Newport), Terry Thompson (OR Counties), Stan van de Wetering (Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians)

Resource Advisors

Ed Bowles (ODFW), Tom Byler (GNRO), Rosemary Furfey (NOAA)

Alternates and Technical Resources: Tony Amandi (ODFW), Robin Brown (ODFW), Bob Buckman (ODFW), Charlie Corrarino (ODFW), Ryan French (Confederated Tribe of the Siletz Indians), Kevin Goodson (ODFW), Mike Gray (ODFW), Pete Lawson (NOAA Technical Recovery Team), Jay Nicholas (OWEB), Heather Stout (TRT), Terry Witt (Oregonians for Food and Shelter, alternate for Bill Moshofsky), Bronwen Wright (Pacific Rivers Council)

Other Interested Parties: Lily DeFriend (public), Jeff Jackson (USFS – Siuslaw National Forest)

Facilitation Team: Donna Silverberg and Robin Harkless (DS Consulting)

Action Items

| Action | Who | By When |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| Update 7/19 summary notes to reflect suggested changes | Facilitation team | September 3 |
| Draft abbreviated set of protocols relative to the assessment phase of the Stakeholder Team's work | Facilitation team | September 3 |
| Provide NOAA's public meeting schedule for California | Rosemary Furfey | September 3 |

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|--|---------------|-------------|
| Provide names of the Core Team | Tom Byler | September 8 |
| Provide the State's definition of "Recovery" as noted in the Oregon Plan | Tom Byler | September 8 |
| Post technical papers on the "Coastal Coho Project" web page – Oregon Plan website | Kevin Goodson | ASAP! |

Welcome/Introductions:

Facilitator Donna Silverberg lead a round of introductions and welcomed the team members, resource advisors, and other interested parties to the meeting. Stan van de Wetering explained to the group that, due to Stan's schedule, he has asked Ryan French to sit at the table for the Siletz Tribe. Stan and Ryan will work closely with each other in preparation for meetings. With notice, they will coordinate and provide responses from the tribe on particular issues that the team sees as needed.

Comments on July 19th Meeting Summary and Follow-up from Last Meeting:

Team members offered comments to the draft summary notes from the July 19th Stakeholder Team meeting. Comments and subsequent actions are summarized in bullets below:

- The 7/19 notes need to reflect discussions regarding the difficulty many team members expressed about developing a recovery plan without first providing targets or metrics. Not having targets from the TRT in advance of planning seems a backwards approach.
- In retrospect of the meeting, some members were uncomfortable with the notion that management strategies would be developed within sideboards established by "the Core Team" without knowing who comprises the Core Team nor what specifically those sideboards are. This was noted in the notes and protocols.
 - Tom Byler, Gov's Natural Resources Office, responded that the intent of this idea was to support a collaborative effort between the Stakeholder Team, the state's Core Team that is already in place working on the Oregon Plan assessment, and the TRT who is developing scientific products.

ACTION: To better reflect this, the protocols will be changed: In the Stakeholder Tasks section, bullet 3, delete "Within the sideboards established by the Core Team" and replace with "In concert with the Oregon Plan Core Team and TRT, identify..."
- Page 6, under 'Scientific Assumptions' section: The notes state that the concern raised about CLAMS not reflecting on the ground actions is "legitimate and will be addressed." Because it is not feasible to 'address this issue' through CLAMS, the phrase "will be addressed" should be deleted. CLAMS, like other analysis models, can not do more than it was built to do. Ed Bowles, ODFW, agreed with the comment and further generalized that all analysis models should not be asked to do more than they are capable of doing.

General Comments/Discussion:

- What is the Governor's Office vision for the Stakeholder Team and the effort it is undertaking? Tom Byler responded:
 - Relative to the state assessment, the Stakeholder Team's charge is to review and provide observations and recommendations to the state related to the state's assessment of the Oregon Plan in the coastal Coho ESU and then, eventually, how this assessment relates to Oregon Plan implementation statewide.
 - After the state assessment has been completed, work through Oregon's Native Fish Conservation Policy planning and NOAA's recovery planning to develop recovery and conservation plans specific to coastal coho.

- Questions were raised about how comments from the Stakeholder Team will be incorporated into the assessment and/or given a response from the State. Tom Byler offered that no specific process has yet been identified for documenting and responding to the final recommendations and observations of the Team. Responses to comments could depend on the nature of the comments. For example, any comments that propose or suggest rule or legislation changes would require additional discussion with a broader group of stakeholders and interests before taking any action. There was a general sense from the Team that, if members are being asked to commit their time, it will be important to understand whether and how comments will be incorporated. A request was made to add a chapter in the Assessment Report about this committee, including the comments and issues it may raise.

- How well does the Governor's Office believe the Oregon Plan is working? Tom Byler responded: Generally, the Oregon Plan is working well. Specifically, they do not yet know. The state, through the coastal assessment, is working aggressively to get the criteria for judging the effectiveness of the Oregon Plan on the coast. Once they have this and can complete the analysis, which they are doing side by side with this stakeholder group, then they can answer the question. The state, including the Governor's Office, is not ahead of the group in making a judgment about the effectiveness of the Oregon Plan.

A question was posed to the group: What *IS* the Oregon Plan doing? Team members offered their thoughts:

- Working to get a lot done on the ground
- Bringing local, state and federal folks together to improve watersheds.
- On the ground projects are occurring – timber and other industries are doing well while other areas are not doing so well.
- One goal of the Oregon Plan was to avoid listings – in this regard, the Oregon Plan has not fully served its purpose.
- Seven years later, the Oregon Plan is still, amazingly, right on point: More attention, public involvement and focused agency cooperation has occurred than ever before on an ESA issue. Cooperative work continues to get done involving a number of

different agencies. And the public is still engaged and enthusiastic. The fact that it has endured says something positive and remarkable about the plan and the process.

- Some members want an opportunity to look at additional, “dueling” science. It was noted that there is another team charged with doing that review and stakeholder team members are welcome to attend those meetings. The stakeholder group should continue to look at the social impacts of the Oregon Plan, as charged.

Follow-Up From Last Meeting:

Level of State Effort: Tom Byler provided general estimates of how much time and effort state agencies are putting into the assessment phase of the Oregon Plan. 14 staff are committed at 50% or more of their time (7 at ODFW; 3 at DEQ; 3 at DOF; and 1 at OWEB). Still many others (roughly 50 or more) are spending a lesser percentage of their time on the issues, but helping none-the-less. It is anticipated that there will continue to be additional help as the Coastal Coho Project continues for things from website maintenance to report editing. Needless to say, the state is committed to this project.

Federal Registry: Rosemary Furfey, NOAA, provided a handout with NOAA’s recently extended comment period and schedule of community meetings on the proposed listing determinations and Hatchery Listing Policy. The comment period has been extended to October 20th. Public hearings particular to coho will be held on September 22nd in Newport, and October 7th in Roseburg. All comments can be reviewed after October 22nd either on a CD, on NOAA’s website, or at NOAA’s office. Proposed designations for critical habitat will not be addressed during this round of public hearings.

ACTION: Rosemary will provide the schedule of NOAA’s public meeting dates in California to the Stakeholder Team.

In response to the question posed earlier about how comments will be heard and responded to from the Stakeholder Team, Rosemary offered that NOAA is very interested in incorporating comments into the listing policy and the Oregon Plan, and supports a very open discussion along the way. NOAA intends to listen at the meetings, read the state’s report and see how comments and issues are incorporated into the state’s assessment. Heather Stout, TRT, added that co-manager comments are being included as an appendix to the TRT’s technical memos.

OWEB Materials: Jay Nicholas, OWEB, said that summary reports will be available on September 8th, and can be found on www.oweb.state.or.us, with a link to the Oregon Plan website, www.oregon-plan.org. On the Oregon Plan website, on the right hand side of the home page, there is a link to the “Oregon Coastal Coho Project”, where the Stakeholder Team meeting notices, final summaries, the documents shared at Stakeholder Team meetings, and power point presentations will be posted.

Additional Stakeholder Team involvement: Tom Kartrude has joined the Stakeholder Team as the Port representative, from the Port of Siuslaw. The Pacific Fisheries Management Council has been invited to participate in this process. A PFMC contact has

been added to the “interested parties” contact list to receive information about the work of this group. At this time they have not sought to be actively involved with the team.

Comments on Protocols: The following bullets summarize comments on and subsequent changes that will be made to the protocols:

- Section I. “Tasks”, bullet three: Strike “Within the sideboards established by the Core Team” and add “in concert with the Oregon Plan Core Team and TRT...” Tom Byler will provide additional information about the make-up of the Core Team at the next meeting.
 - Related to the “Tasks” section: As noted above, before developing recovery plan management strategy recommendations, there needs to be a recovery plan target. Ed Bowles, ODFW, offered that the two cannot be fully sequential considering the TRT’s schedule. He noted that general goals will not change, even if exact numbers are not known. Still, some members felt that, based on past experiences, goals and targets may change so there is reluctance to move forward with developing strategies.
ACTION: Tom Byler will circulate the definition of ‘recovery’ as defined by the State Legislature for the Oregon Plan.

- Section III. “Consensus”: Leave a definition of consensus and any decision making discussion blank until it is clear what decisions are expected to be made, and until the substance of the product is known. One member suggested that a protocol or understanding that no “Stakeholder Team” recommendation will go forward unless there is a consensus should remain in the document. There was not agreement on this point. Instead, the group asked that the facilitators draft an abbreviated set of protocols that cover just the assessment phase of the Stakeholder Team’s work together. These could then be revised or updated when the Team is clearer about the product and decisions they will be asked to make.

- Section III.G., Regarding the facilitator’s report, will be moved to Section VI. with the other information about the facilitators’ roles. Language relating to any consensus decisions will be deleted. The final sentence will read: Members will have an opportunity to review and sign off on all summary notes and any report that is prepared. The remainder of the sentence will be deleted.
ACTION: The facilitation team will provide a revised version of protocols that includes the noted changes for Phase I of this project only.

What is the Oregon Plan Doing:

Jay Nicholas, OWEB, provided his perspective on what the Oregon Plan is doing. First, the Oregon Plan is a comprehensive, life-cycle based approach. Its goal is to protect, manage and restore fish, water quality and watershed health in Oregon. It is an umbrella of programs, with four elements: 1) Agency actions, 2) voluntary restoration actions, 3) monitoring, and 4) multi-disciplinary collaboration for scientific analysis. In years 1997-2003, \$110 million has been invested in restoration activities and \$15 million in monitoring in the Coastal Coho ESU alone. This funding has been provided by (approximately) 1/3 state, 1/3 federal and 1/3 private contributions. The important

question is not “What do I think about the Oregon Plan?” but rather “What can we show?” Collaboration is critical to the success of reaching the Oregon Plan’s goals.

Cycles in Ocean Productivity – Pete Lawson:

Pete Lawson, NOAA Fisheries, presented data and information that supported his 1993 paper on Cycles of Ocean Productivity. His paper was circulated to the group prior to today’s meeting. Pete discussed coho abundance from 1960-2003, provided a conceptual model of ocean cycles and compared coho cycles to other life cycles. He said there seems to be a correlation between coho survival and periods of El Nino and La Nina weather patterns. As such, there appears to be a decrease in favorable ocean conditions since 1976. Pete provided graphs and analyses of both long and short term cycles. Improvements in climate and decreased harvest correlate to improved survival numbers. (Stakeholder Team members noted to keep in mind the time lag of fish counts and harvest, and natural mortality factors.)

Pete’s overall message from the presentation was that when conditions in the ocean are good, stock status seems to also improve. He cautioned that people should not be overly optimistic about these stock status numbers unless and until extreme measures (habitat improvements, harvest changes, etc.) have already been put into place that helps to support the stocks. Successful assistance to the fish can be determined only after a long period of time. The types of measures that will be needed to support healthy stocks will require long term vision and commitment—both of which may be difficult to maintain in political and social circles without a continued focus and refocus on the issues.

Comments from Team members:

- The “dead zone” is a local characterization of an area that is overly nutrient-rich and causes mortalities. This zone likely does not have a large effect on salmon because they are a highly migratory species.
- Habitat conditions may be more improved than we are aware. There could be a more encouraging habitat trend than what was presented in the past. This assessment should acknowledge that, if true.
- More human interference in the streams could have an impact on the survival trend presented.
- The real question remains: Are we doing enough to reverse the decline?

Oregon Plan Assessment: Introduced Fishes:

Mike Gray, ODFW, presented information in a power point presentation on introduced fishes and their potential impact to coastal Coho survival. His team has looked at the impact on three scales: population, Oregon Plan monitoring area, and ESU. Introduced fishes seem to have a variety of impacts on Coho which are difficult to confirm, although those impacts are not widespread on the ESU as a whole. Any risks seem to be on the population level and even those are not high.

Overall, evidence does not suggest that introduced fishes have a significant impact on the recovery and sustainability of coho in the Umpqua/Mid-Coast. The strongest potential for impacts occurs in the Mid-South coast, where coho appear to be remaining stable. The

Lower Umpqua shows a low impact to coho, and a greater potential to impact chinook. In the Coos and Coquille, there appears to be a potentially moderate level of impacts.

In summary, and noting that none of the conclusions about limiting factors are final at this time, risks appear to be greatest at the population scale, and appear to be greatest on the South coast. Impacts can be difficult to confirm. Exposure is not widespread on the ESU level. Elimination of introduced fish would be difficult, if not impossible. However, control/reduction of introduced fish is possible and impacts are being managed by those tools available to ODFW.

Comments from Team members:

- No mention is made of the density dependence of predators (which some introduced fishes are) on the overall abundance levels of Coho.
- There is a hope that the assessment will address not only how to avoid extinction, but rather how to sustain Coho over the long term.

NOTE: A much fuller discussion than was presented today is in the report, which will be posted to the Oregon Plan website in the near future.

Oregon Plan Assessment: Fish Health:

Tony Amandi, ODFW, presented information about potential health impacts on the overall survival of coho salmon. He began by noting that fish health was not found to be an issue impacting the decline of Coho in 1997 and that this still holds true today. That said, there are a number of causes for disease in coho salmon: parasites, bacteria, fungi, viruses – infectious and non-infectious, environmental, nutritional, genetic, and unknown. Pathogen susceptibility comes when there is a host, agent, and an environment which supports the pathogen (e.g. warmer water and lots of fish in that water). Coho are most susceptible to coldwater disease, bacterial kidney disease (BKD), EIBS and coho anemia disease. Most pathogen detection occurs in hatcheries. Tony acknowledged that there is very little known about pathogen levels in natural environments. He also noted that there is little that can be done by way of pathogen control in the natural environment, but improvements can be made in hatchery environments. To reduce the impacts of pathogens on naturally reared stocks, ODFW developed the Fish Hatchery Management Policy and the Fish Health Management Policy in 2003. BKD has the highest potential for impacting naturally reared stocks of coho. Tony mentioned that efforts have begun to collect baseline information on pathogens present in natural environments through sampling of naturally produced fish collected through other monitoring projects currently underway.

In summary, and noting that none of the conclusions about limiting factors are final at this time, Tony noted that extreme environmental events could correlate to impacts of pathogens on survival, but that pathogens currently present minimum risks to the overall status of the ESU as a whole. He noted that pathogens that can be managed are being managed effectively.

Comments from Team members:

- Team members appreciated the thoroughness of the presentation and that it was held AFTER lunch, not before!

Oregon Plan Assessment: Predators:

Robin Brown, ODFW, presented information on predators as a potential impact to the survival of Coho salmon populations. His presentation today focused on the stellar sea lion, California sea lion, and Pacific harbor seals. A task force comprised of NMFS, State Fish and Wildlife agencies, University of Washington, Yukon Nation, Humboldt State University, and Moss Landing Marine Labs looked at study development, analysis, and approach to answering questions about pinniped predation on salmonids. A number of studies were conducted, which Robin highlighted during today's presentation. They are summarized in bullets below:

- Willamette Falls study – California sea lions impacts on winter steelhead and spring Chinook were concluded to be negligible except when low numbers of winter steelhead were expected to return.
- Lower Alsea River – Harbor seals, found 4.3-9% of fecal samples contained coho and chinook; also found a small percentage of the 59 seals studied did most of the river activity – most of their upstream migration occurred at night.

The conclusions drawn from these and other studies were that only a few particular, individual animals are responsible for a disproportionate amount of predation on salmonids. Predation on healthy stocks is not a significant concern. However, predation on weaker stocks may have an impact that could be reduced by management actions. Although Robin's studies did not go into any detail, he noted that avian predation also is believed to be a minor factor in coho survival.

Overall, relative to other factors, predation is not believed to be a major limiting factor, but unabated predation could be a problem. Predation issues are most important when stocks are in a depressed state and would likely require management changes. Note that none of the conclusions about any of the limiting factors are final at this time.

Comments/Questions from the Stakeholder Team:

- This was new and very useful data – will it be available to others? Final reports will be posted on the NOAA website and the Oregon Plan/Coastal Coho Project website. It was noted that funding on predation may not go beyond this or next year.
- Paul Englemeyer will provide additional information on avian predation, via a website of good bird studies and analyses of avian predation on salmon.
- There was no discussion of habitat conditions relative to predation areas – could this be a potential next step?
- Predation should continue to be considered as a potential impact for which there could be mitigation to help improve survival – nothing is insignificant.
- Another outcome to consider: A bad situation could be made worse if predation stays fixed in specific areas.

General Comment for consideration:

While each of the presentations today suggested that the overall impacts of the particular issue studied are small, it is important to note that, taken in bulk, they may have a larger impact on the species. No conclusions about the effect of limiting factors have been made at this time. On top of this, the group should bear in mind that it could cost less overall (financial, political and human resources) to get a 2-3% survival improvement in many areas than to get 20% improvement in just one area.

Prior to adjourning the meeting the group was reminded and informed of the following:

Next Meeting, September 8, Tillamook:

A draft agenda was distributed to the group today. Between now and the September 8th meeting, Team members will receive the following documents:

- Final July 19th notes;
- Draft notes from today's meeting;
- Updated protocols
- Names of the Core Team;
- Schedule of NOAA public meetings in California;
- Technical papers up on the Coastal Coho Project web page (even if in DRAFT form)
- Final Agenda for the September 8th meeting

Stakeholder Team Meetings Schedule:

Based on the availability of the stakeholder team members, the next scheduled meeting dates have been set for:

- Wednesday, September 8 (Tillamook);
- Monday, September 27 (Charleston/South Slough Estuarine Reserve);
- Tuesday, October 19 (TBD); and
- Tuesday, November 16 (TBD)

Thank you all for your continued participation in the Coastal Coho Project. We appreciate your efforts and commitment to the collaborative process.

DS Consulting Donna Silverberg and Robin Harkless

E-mail changes or comments on these notes at
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