

**Coastal Coho Recovery Project**

**Stakeholder Team  
Fourth Meeting  
Department of Forestry  
Tillamook**

**Facilitator's Meeting Summary  
September 8, 2004**

**Attendees for all or part of the meeting:**

Stakeholder Team Members: Paul Engelmeyer (public at large), Wayne Giesy (Alsea Valley Alliance), Jennifer Hampel (Coquille Watershed Assoc.), Wayne Hoffman (MidCoast Watershed Council), Bob Jacobson (Oregon Salmon Commission), Tom Kartrude (Port of Siuslaw), Kaitlin Lovell (Trout Unlimited), Bill Moshofsky (SOS), Richard Oba (Oregon Coast Sport Fishing), John Phelan (LTM Inc.), Blake Rowe (Longview Fibre Co/OFIC), Terry Thompson (OR Counties), Stan van de Wetering (Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians)

Alternates and Resource Advisors: Bruce Apple (ODEQ), Greg Beamer (WRD), Aaron Borisenico (DEQ), Ed Bowles (ODFW), Tom Byler (GNRO), Debbie Colbert (OWRD), Charlie Corrarino (ODFW), Liz Dent (ODF), Ryan French (Confederated Tribe of the Siletz Indians), Rosemary Furfey (NOAA), Kevin Goodson (ODFW), Rick Hafele (ODEQ), Les Helgeson (Native Fish Society, alternate for Bill Bakke), Dave Jarrett (WRD), Kim Jones (ODFW), Rick Klumph (ODFW), Jeff Lockwood (NOAA), Bridgette Lohrman (NOAA), Ted Lorenson (ODF), Bruce McIntosh (ODFW), Eric Metz (DSL), Mike Mulvey (DEQ), Jay Nicholas (OWEB), Pat Oman (OWEB), Russ Patterson (STEP, alternate for Cindy Heller), Jeff Rodgers (ODFW), Christine Simon-Buell (SWCD, alternate for Shawn Reiersgaard), Heather Stout (TRT), Andrew Talabere (ODFW), Ray Wilkeson (OFIC), Julie Wirth (OSU), Bronwen Wright (Pacific Rivers Council)

Other Interested Parties: Sandy Bell (Tillamook Co. SWCD), Mitch Cummings (NRCS, Tillamook), Lily Defriend (public), Chuck Hurlimon (Tillamook Co. Commissioner), Gus Meyer (Tillamook Co. SWCD)

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

**Action Items**

Action	Who	By When
Update 8/24 summary notes to reflect suggested changes	Facilitation team	September 20
Develop message to share with press about the Coho Stakeholder Team and Coastal Coho Project process	Facilitation team and Steering Committee	September 20
Share criteria for allocating water rights	Debbie Colbert to facilitation team for distribution	September 20
Share information on water quality at urban sites	Rick Hafele to	September 20

	facilitation team for distribution	
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**Welcome/Introductions:**

Facilitator Donna Silverberg welcomed the group to its fourth meeting and led a round of introductions.

**Comments and Follow-up from Last Meeting:**

Team members offered comments to the draft summary notes from the August 24<sup>th</sup> Stakeholder Team meeting as well as general comments about the meeting. Comments and subsequent actions are summarized in bullets below:

**Pinnipeds**

- A more in-depth discussion on predators other than pinnipeds is expected in the draft assessment. There is additional data produced from NOAA’s at-sea researchers on other predators that should be considered, as well as a Nehalem cormorant project.
- A question was raised about last meetings presentation: how in-depth was the study on the sea lion/seal studies? The focus was on specific, known problem areas. From that, the researchers determined that there is an impact on the fish from specific problem animals, but not on the overall sustainability of the fish. It was noted by one member that pinnipeds need to be studied closely because on the ground observations suggest there IS a problem--“Seals are all over the place”! Ed Bowles, ODFW, noted that the State and Federal government are looking at the problem and are hoping to make changes that will allow flexibility in the Marine Mammal Act so pinnipeds can be managed more effectively. It was suggested that managing individual problem seals seems like a ‘low-hanging fruit’ in terms of limiting factors for coho. NOAA and the state took note of the suggestions offered by Stakeholder Team members.
  - **ACTION:** Ed Bowles will provide a follow-up briefing to the Stakeholder Team on the pinniped issue, from a national perspective that he will gain at an upcoming meeting, at the September 27<sup>th</sup> Coho Stakeholder Team meeting.

**8/24 Meeting Notes**

- The increased level of detail was appreciated.
- It was noted that the summary conclusions may read to be more final than they were intended to be. **ACTION:** Revise the August 24<sup>th</sup> notes to clarify that no *conclusions* have been made for any of the limiting factors presentations. All summaries are tentative and everything is still on the table as potential limiting factors.

**Core Team Members**

- Tom Byler, Governor’s Office of Natural Resources, provided a handout that described the Core Team and its member makeup, as well as a definition of ‘recovery’ from the Oregon Plan statute. The Core Team, which is made up of cabinet level agency representatives, will play a more interactive role with this group during the next phase (post-assessment) of the Coastal Coho Stakeholder Team process.

## **Protocols**

- The Stakeholder Team accepted the revised protocols dated 9/1/04 with one minor edit: strike the word “consensus” at Section V. (C).
- Team members questioned and discussed how they might talk to the media (and others) about this process to keep a broader public informed. As outlined in the protocols, members are specifically tasked with keeping their constituents informed. Members are strongly encouraged to be constructive, to avoid creating controversy, and to focus on the issues (not the people) when talking to the press. ODFW will have an outreach coordinator on staff by mid-October to help with getting information about this group out to a broader audience. The Team needs to think carefully about the timing of getting the word out to the public and how the message is presented. One suggestion was to share an executive summary of the process and what the group is doing that could be shared with the greater public. Many members felt it is important to let people know that this process is happening and that input can be provided at the meetings.
  - **ACTION**: The facilitation team will work with the State to draft information describing this process that can be shared with the media and/or constituent groups, which contains information that will grab the public’s attention.

## **Habitat Issues:**

Bruce McIntosh, ODFW, introduced today’s presentations on the habitat assessment of the Oregon Plan. He emphasized that these are draft works in progress. He clarified that there has not yet been a coho limiting factors analysis overlaid onto the individual analysis for the Oregon Plan Assessment. The limiting factors analysis is expected to be complete in early Fall. Until then, the state is looking for input and responses from Team members regarding the beginning information coming out of its review.

Consumptive Use: Debbie Colbert, Oregon Water Resources Department (WRD), presented information on the impact of consumptive use of water on streamflow as a potential habitat-related factor for decline. In the 1997 Federal Register, NMFS listed insufficient streamflows as one factor for decline. Using existing datasets, WRD analyzed consumptive water use with respect to natural stream flow.

For the purposes of the analysis, ‘natural’ streamflow is the flow in a stream when there is no consumptive use and no flow regulation or where you have “added back” the consumptive use portion of the streamflow. For this analysis, “natural” streamflow was the 80% exceedance natural stream flow – the streamflow exceeded 80% of the time at a particular point on a stream. There was discussion of whether it is appropriate to refer to the 80% exceedance flow as “natural” streamflow.

Consumptive use is any water use that causes a net reduction in streamflow. In her presentation, Debbie noted that the consumptive use estimates generally assume all water rights holders are using the full extent of what they may divert in the month of August. However, many water right holders do not use all of the water that they are allowed to use during that month. Some water right holders are “turned off” because their water rights are junior to other water rights on a stream. As such, the analysis of consumptive

use as a percent of the 80% exceedance streamflow is a worse case scenario. Consumptive use estimates are monthly, not instantaneous or daily estimates. Debbie presented consumptive use as a percent of the 80% exceedance flow for each monitoring area. Approximately 80% of the North and Mid Coast monitoring areas have consumptive use less than 10% of the 80% exceedance flow. Less than 3% of these monitoring areas had consumptive use more than 100% of the 80% exceedance flow. The mid-south coast and Umpqua monitoring areas had higher consumptive use as a percent of the 80% exceedance flow, with approximately 9% of the total areas having consumptive use greater than 100% of the 80% exceedance flow. A next step for this analysis will be to look at areas where consumptive use has a higher impact on streamflow to understand what type of use is occurring. Once it is understood where and why consumptive use is high, then the actual impacts on fish can be explored.

Debbie shared preliminary findings from the study which still need to be connected to the needs of fish. Again, the study looked at just the month of August:

- Consumptive use of water is not a widespread issue.
- Consumptive use generally increases from north to south in the ESU.
- Since 1997, stream flow restoration activities coincide with areas of highest consumptive use impacts on stream flows.
- Consumptive use has not substantially increased since 1999 and is not likely to increase in the future (NOTE: the latter part of this statement was questioned by some of the Team members. The researchers may need to re-think this statement as nearby communities continue to expand and use water.)

Question to NOAA: Do the conclusions drawn in 1997 still hold true today with regards to insufficiencies of flows? It was not clear what limiting factors analysis was done then nor what is the current understanding. Rosemary will report back on this.

Does WRD or ODFW consider winter spawning needs with flow needs? Not in the data presented here, but future analyses will evaluate this.

**ACTION**: Methods and criteria for allocating water rights used by the WRD will be forwarded to the Stakeholder Team.

#### *Estuaries and Wetlands:*

Eric Metz, Division of State Lands (DSL), presented information on analyses of estuaries and wetlands relative to potential factors for decline. He noted that the data from this U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wetland Inventory study and presentation is brand new, and was being shared from a high level, low detail perspective. Initial data suggests that wetland loss has been minimal since 1982 (less than 2 acres per year). Most wetland changes have been from one type of a wetland to another as a result of nearby development. Eric offered that there are many acres of degraded habitat available for restoration and/or management. Options for improvement include freshwater enhancements, dike removal and creating better transitional habitats. Areas for restoration and management include:

- Transitional marshes
- Lowland beaver ponds (enhance corridors linking the habitats)

- Upper estuarine salt marshes

*Stakeholder Team Member Comments:*

- This analysis speaks to potentials, not realities. It was suggested that the next step be to look at a realistic approach to habitat restoration.
- It was suggested that the GIS data concerning updated wetlands/floodplain maps be shared with Gordie Reeves, so that he can incorporate the data into his CLAMS data set.
- Restoration in wetlands/estuaries needs to be done in areas where it will be useful to the coho species based on life cycle, salinity and other needs.
- Many trade-offs will need to be considered with wetlands. Any changes will require balance with other species use and needs – not just for the coho.
- The analysis did not include historic wetlands, which can be located through soils maps.
- One member commented that mitigation efforts relative to wetlands has been ‘marginally successful’, at about 50%.

Eric concluded by saying that the next step is an inventory of the whole coast that will be included in the final assessment report.

*Water Quality Factors for Decline:*

Rick Hafele, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), presented information on water quality, noting that the analysis was a coordinated effort between WRD, DSL, ODF, DEQ, ODFW and federal agencies.

*Findings and details from the analysis (which has not yet been connected with needs of coho):*

- 42% of large river sites have excellent to good water quality
- 58% have fair to poor water quality
- 39% of large river sites show an improving trend, while 0% are declining.
- The reasons for decline include temperature, fine sediment, dissolved oxygen and total solids.
- A more detailed data and analysis from this inter-agency effort will be available in a report.
- Water quality standards were used where available. Where not, reference sites (areas with the least human disturbances) were used to set benchmarks – a document on these reference sites is available to anyone interested.
- North and mid-coast are seeing the most improvements.
- The analysis on wetlands focused on just a narrow strip along the coast.

*Stakeholder Team Comments:*

- Statistical concerns were raised because no error band was shown for reference sites as was shown for random sites.
- What was the range of vegetation succession and disturbance used in the reference? General concern was raised about how well reference sites reflect natural conditions.
- It was clarified that this analysis does not focus yet on coho effects; that will come as a next step.

- Concern was raised that for as much political pressure that is put on urban areas, not enough or sufficient data is available to answer questions that may be raised by urban dwellers. While data on urban areas was not used in the analysis, data is available at six urban sites.
  - **ACTION**: Rick will forward information on urban sites to the facilitation team, for distribution to the Stakeholder Team.
- Methods can be found at: [www.deq.state.or.us/lab/qa/techdocs.htm](http://www.deq.state.or.us/lab/qa/techdocs.htm).
- It was stressed again that this is very preliminary information, and researchers are thus far unable to extrapolate from the data any conclusions about particular land-use practices.
- It was noted that some public members may not agree with the analysis based on a contradiction with what they are seeing and doing on the ground (e.g. A DEQ ambient monitoring site shows excellent water quality, but other areas of the watershed have poor water quality based on data from other sites and sources.)
- OFIC's representative gave notice that, as currently characterized in this presentation, it will strongly disagree with the methods and conclusions discussed. OFIC is not in agreement with how DEQ did its work and, especially, how it was depicted in the presentation. (Handouts from this presentation will be distributed after the presenter can correct some labels of depicted graphics).

*In-Stream Habitat Conditions*: Jeff Rodgers, ODFW, presented information on in-stream habitat conditions including channel form, substrate and roughness. Preliminary results of 1998-2003 data taken from sites chosen within the range of coho (and looking at the worst 25% of conditions) are:

- No detectable trends in parameters from random samples (i.e. implies stable conditions)
- Higher channel entrenchment
- Less large wood overall
- Umpqua has less large wood than other areas and therefore has the poorest conditions found in the area
- Public land has more large wood than private lands

*Habitat Restoration Analysis*:

Jeff Rodgers continued with a presentation on in-stream habitat relative to habitat restoration as a potential factor for decline. Since 1997-2003, roughly 451 miles of instream restoration has occurred to address factors for decline. Research shows that increasing large wood debris in streams can increase overall habitat conditions. It will continue to take time to get (and keep) large woody debris in streams to break channeled streams into fully functioning multi-channel streams. It was noted that work may need to be done in other, "better", areas and that it will likely take a long time to do work that will actually show survival improvements. The best place to focus restoration efforts (areas with 'high intrinsic potential') is in low gradient, unconstrained, low-to-moderate mean annual flow areas.

ODFW has found the best sites to do beneficial restoration for coho are:

- 38% agricultural lands (lowland/ low gradient)

- 15% private non-industrial forest lands
- 22% private industrial forest lands

*Stakeholder Team Comments:*

- It seems ODFW is counting on the wood placed to stay in place. In actuality, the wood often gets washed out in flood or flashy weather events. Yes, habitat is continually changing; in-stream restoration work is a band-aid.
- As a next step, link water quality and habitat restoration reference sites to areas known to be good for coho and then compare other areas to that.
- A suggestion was made to work toward building complexity within the pools. It is possible to create pools and complexity through careful restoration efforts.

Riparian Areas:

Liz Dent, ODF, presented information on riparian area conditions, implementation and effectiveness. Shade over the stream channel and large conifers were the focus of the study. In summary, she concluded (and reminded the group, similar to the other presentations, these are preliminary findings) that:

- There is a greater percentage of streams that have lower (less) shade than is observed at reference sites.
- The greatest departures were observed in the Umpqua.
- There is a low level of large conifers in all riparian areas.
- If we assume all restoration projects took place in coho areas, restoration treatments equal about 14% of total coho miles.
- Effectiveness is increased with preparation and maintenance practices, through planting, fencing and voluntary retention.
- Urban and ag/grasslands have substantially “lower” shaded streams than to other land-use categories.
- There is a need to evaluate function and diversity of coho miles.

Liz described the logic path used by the habitat assessment team as: First, what is the status or condition? Then, what practices are affecting the conditions (How is land being managed)? Positively? Negatively? And finally, what can be done to change and improve the condition?

Implementation: Since 1997, 1372 restoration projects over 938 miles have been underway—almost twice as many riparian projects as in-stream projects. Projects have included riparian planting and fencing, voluntary tree retention, and hardwood conversion, to name a few. They have learned that survival of trees can be increased by site preparation and protection against herbivores and that there are other practices which can enhance the success of riparian restoration efforts.

*Stakeholder Team Comments:*

- The team was encouraged to include red alders, not just conifers as trees for successful restoration efforts. Red alders also provide the side benefit that if cut (by a beaver or other) then four more trees will likely grow!

- **ACTION:** Wayne Giesy, Alosea Valley Alliance, will share information with Liz on red alder studies.
- Clarify in the presentation that hardwoods were included, not just conifers.
- Suggestion: expand the data set on total conifers to include those less than 20” dbh, for long term potentials and trends. Liz noted that there will be additional work and analysis done in this area.
- Depict more clearly the severity of the problem.
- Call it “stream cover” instead of “shade”.
- Productivity may depend on some in-stream sunlight, which was not presented from the studies. Look into this further before setting a firm belief that more shade equals better productivity.

**Presentation Wrap-Up:**

Bruce McIntosh, ODFW, thanked the stakeholder team for their input and respect shown to the presenters. The analysis team is trying to bring a lot more data to the table than ever before and they are continuing to figure out the best way to present it. At the same time, they are listening to the input from the stakeholder team and making every effort to fold their ideas into the final work product. He expressed appreciation for the level of patience offered and was pleased that the process is still moving forward as well as it is.

Ted Lorenson, head of the Habitat Team for ODF, shared his thoughts on the process, offering that the stakeholder team and the people working locally on the ground are in a data gathering phase together. What was shared today was the beginning of their analysis. He said that they are trying to understand how we got where we are in the landscape and with what conditions. He is hoping the data will help make sense of which actions are making a difference and which are not. This is an opportunity to make good decisions based on good data that is now available. He encouraged the group not to view the presentations as a threat, but instead as an opportunity to have an upfront discussion of the data and facts. He prodded the group to be disciplined in its discussions by being clear about what are facts and what are interpretations of facts. Once this is clear, then the group can have open and fair discussions of the differences--with an overall focus on making the Oregon Plan effective and efficient.

Question to Ted: What is ODF doing to further contribute to the Oregon Plan? The agency is developing rules and approaches to meet needs identified through the Oregon Plan work.

**Public Comment:**

Heather Stout, TRT, distributed the TRT Historical Populations document to the group. She noted that the TRTs work on ‘intrinsic potential habitat’ is in Appendix 3. The document will be rolled out to the public on September 23<sup>rd</sup> in Newport. The TRT is meeting in Ashland on September 28<sup>th</sup>. All are welcome to attend either of these meetings. Comments on this document are due November 15<sup>th</sup>.

**Next Meeting, September 27, 9am-4pm in Charleston:**

*Follow-up from today:*



- Information to share with media/constituents about the Stakeholder Team group and process
- Water Resources Dept. criteria for allocating water rights
- Follow-up on seals from national perspective – Ed Bowles
- Follow-up on stream flows as potential limiting factor: NOAA’s perspective
- Continue from 9/8: Habitat restoration--fish passage and roads
- Presentation on Hatcheries Assessment for Oregon Plan
- Status update on Oregon Plan assessment

**Stakeholder Team Meetings Schedule:**

Based on the availability of the stakeholder team members, the next scheduled meeting dates have been set for: Monday, September 27 (Charleston); 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

*email changes or comments on these notes to [robin76@cnnw.net](mailto:robin76@cnnw.net)*

*DS Consulting*