WaterTalk

Alaska Idaho Oregon Washington

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10 Bulletin - EPA 910/9-92-043 February 1998

EPA NEWS

Clean Water Act Weighs In On Columbia Salmon Recovery

EPA Region 10, Oregon, and Washington have officially invoked the Clean Water Act in efforts to restore Northwest salmon populations in the Columbia River.

It all started in December, when EPA, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and the Washington Department of Ecology sent the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers a letter. The letter asserted the responsibilities of EPA, the states, and tribes under the Clean Water Act in the management of the Federal Columbia River Power System. The letter requests the U.S. Corps of Engineers to comply with state and tribal water quality standards with specific focus on water temperature and dissolved gas in and around their dams on the Columbia and Snake River. Corps dams provide cheap, plentiful hydroelectric power to the Northwest. EPA, Washington, and Oregon asked the Corps for a list of measures and a schedule by March 15, 1998. And in a December meeting with Brigadier General Robert Griffin, Pacific Division Commander, Chuck Clarke reaffirmed EPA's commitment to work aggressively with the Corps to uphold the Clean Water Act.

It is a critical time for EPA to get involved. The Northwest is facing an important decision in 1999 on the future of salmon recovery. With the 1991 Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing of Snake River Chinook, the National Marine Fisheries Service developed a "Biological Opinion" on the Columbia/Snake hydropower system. The Opinion recommended a decision in late 1999 on whether expanded fish barging or drawdown was a "reasonable and prudent" alternative under the ESA. The background for this decision is complex and contentious involving four states, thirteen tribes, Alaska fishing controversies, and Canada, on issues such as governance, energy deregulation, harvest, hatcheries, habitat, and hydropower. The final decision may reflect a continuation of status quo, additional technology, and tweaking of the dams to support increased fish collection and barging, or an unprecedented option revolving around drawdown of four federal dams.

What led EPA and the states to this point? The Columbia River was once the most productive salmon river system in the world. Salmon runs have fallen from 10-16 million adults in the mid- and late 1800's, to about 2.5 million or less today. The

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vast majority of these returning fish are hatchery reared fish. The net asset of these lost fish is estimated at $13 billion in lost economic benefits ("The Cost of Doing Nothing," Institute for Fishery Resources, 1996). Historically, Columbia River salmon provided a tremendous economic and spiritual basis for Columbia River tribes. Some of these tribes lost salmon in perpetuity through blockages from dams. Four Columbia River tribes (Yakama, Nez Perce, Umatilla and Warm Springs) negotiated treaties in 1855 with the federal government retaining rights to fish. The treaties, though challenged often, have been reaffirmed repeatedly as legally binding documents by numerous court decisions.

In the Northwest, EPA and the states of Idaho, Washington, and Oregon recently lost three lawsuits about rivers and streams not meeting Clean Water Act requirements. The principle of these lawsuits was that EPA and the states as regulators were not managing those rivers and streams to adequately ensure that they would meet water quality standards. This may be a cause of the recent onslaught of ESA listings; if the standards of the CWA had been achieved in the waterbodies, biodiversity losses in the Northwest might have been less drastic. As a result, EPA, the States, tribal governments, other federal agencies, ratepayers, and private landowners have begun investing millions of dollars in Columbia River watershed improvements to meet Clean Water Act requirements.

Until now, EPA has let the Northwest states and other federal agencies take the lead in a salmon recovery effort that has consumed $3 billion during the past fifteen years without an overall increase in salmon populations. In 1995, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation approached Chuck Clarke and requested that EPA uphold the federal trust responsibility to tribes and enforce the Clean Water Act, with a special focus on water temperature.

Water temperature has been described as the "invisible killer" for fish. High temperatures make it difficult for salmon to migrate and spawn, and fish become more vulnerable to disease. High temperatures may also inhibit growth in salmon and reduce tolerance to stressful conditions. Construction and operation of eight federal Columbia and Snake River dams (in addition to many others) transformed the river into a series of lakes and drastically changed temperature patterns, creating serious impediments for migrating salmon. Even before the dams were built, the Columbia and Snake were known to have high water temperatures in the arid inland plateau. But the river maintained natural habitat which provided cool, deep water pools for the salmon to hang out in the Columbia until the lower Snake cooled down. The dams have not only pushed up temperatures, changed the shorelines, and reduced daily temperature fluctuations, but also forced young fish to stay longer in warm water.

EPA is now becoming a more active participant in regional salmon recovery forums. In these forums, EPA has advocated restoration of the Columbia Basin as an ecosystem, recognizing the connectivity between the mainstem and the tributaries. This ecosystem connectivity was endorsed by the Northwest Power Planning Council's Independent Scientific Group, "Return to the River." In November 1997, EPA sponsored a successful temperature workshop in Portland which brought regional scientists and policy makers together to discuss and understand water temperature impacts on fish and possible solutions for reducing those impacts. EPA is a cooperating agency in the Lower Snake Juvenile Salmon Migration Feasibility Study Environmental Impact Statement which is developing the plan for how the river ultimately will be configured. EPA Region 10, in cooperation with the States, tribes, and Northwest Power Planning Council, is also conducting an assessment of the influence in temperature pattern changes over the past 50 years.

For more details, call Mary Lou Soscia, EPA Columbia River Coordinator, at 503/326-5873, or email: soscia.marylou@epamail.epa.gov.

Effluent Trading Activities Underway In Region 10

What is Effluent Trading?
Trading pollution is not a new concept to EPA—the Acid Rain Program has demonstrated great success with this approach through several years of trading sulfur dioxide emissions, achieving substantial emissions reductions at considerably less cost than under traditional regulatory methods. Effluent trading is a new application of this method, designed to improve water quality at lower cost to the affected sources and the local community. When applied to

water pollution, effluent trading means that one discharger pays to help reduce pollution from another source in the same watershed, instead of having to make more expensive reductions at its own site. Demonstration projects using this principle have been launched in several watersheds across the country, but EPA Region 10 is attempting to establish a model approach that could be readily copied and implemented in watersheds throughout the region. Properly employed, effluent trading has tremendous potential to reduce the cost of implementing water pollution reductions required under the Clean Water Act's Total Maximum Daily Loading calculations.

Effluent Trading Workshop in Boise: A workshop to build understanding of effluent trading and how it might be applied in Idaho was held by Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in Boise last November. The workshop was attended by 170 people representing a range of interests, including industry, municipalities, agriculture, and state government. Speakers from several states that have developed effluent trading demonstration projects were featured, as well as speakers from Idaho DEQ and EPA. The projects presented provided models for Idaho to consider in designing its effluent trading programs and raised important policy and implementation issues.

Effluent Trading Demonstration Projects: EPA Region 10 and its states are collectively working to initiate effluent trading in the Pacific Northwest through several demonstration projects. The Lower Boise River in Idaho and the Puyallup/White River System in Washington were chosen to be launched in early 1998 and a project in Oregon will be initiated later in the year, once funding is procured. The demonstration projects will feature strong stakeholder involvement, to ensure design of an effluent trading program that incorporates local needs and concerns, as well as achieves important water quality goals. For more information, contact EPA Region 10's Effluent Trading Coordinator, Claire Schary, at (206) 553-8514 or by e-mail, schary.claire@epamail.epa.gov.

More Water Success In Our Backyard

In recognition of the 25th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act, the last issue of WaterTalk featured two clean water success stories, one each from Alaska and Oregon. This issue highlights similar successes in Washington and Idaho.

Spencer Island Habitat Restored

In the Summer of 1995, an entourage of folks from EPA, other government agencies, and the local community climbed aboard boats bound for a "treasure island" of sorts. The event was not a search for buried riches, however. Rather, the short jaunt delivered riders to a special ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate an important environmental event: the grand opening of the Spencer Island Wetland Restoration Project and Nature Park. Spencer Island, which can be seen by passing travelers on Interstate 5, sits between Union and Steamboat sloughs in the Snohomish River in Snohomish County, Washington. The island environment had recently benefited from a major effort to restore lost habitat.

This project, with Clean Water Act funding and EPA coordination and monitoring, represents a strong model for how federal, state, and local community representatives can successfully work together to achieve a common vision. Local volunteer citizen monitors also are contributing, through a program funded by EPA as part of a long term educational and stewardship program.

The project restored tidal influence to a portion of the 400-acre island and enhanced the diversity of habitat for waterfowl and other birds. The island's numerous freshwater wetlands are home to many species. The restored 50 acre tidal marsh and mudflats provide food and refuge for juvenile salmon and other fish

species as well as habitat for shorebirds. The tidal marsh was restored by cutting through dikes and letting the tide rush in. Water levels in the northern part of the island are regulated by weirs. The park now has three miles of trails and provides fantastic bird watching and other educational and recreation opportunities. Osprey, talons clasping small salmon, are chased by bald eagles. Shovelors, widgeon, and teal dabble in open water ponds while great blue herons and shorebirds feed on mudflats. The island truly is a treasure now---an environmental treasure.

Idaho Dairies and Clean Water

Idaho's dairy industry has experienced rapid growth in the past several years, and runoff from these milk operations can pose serious threats to local waterways. The amount of waste produced by dairies is astounding by any measure. A single cow can produce 120 pounds of waste each day. There were 223,000 dairy cows in Idaho in 1995, up from 170,000 five years before. When manure and other organic material gets into water, it can harm fish and wildlife, degrade water quality, and threaten human health. Proper dairy waste management is essential for curbing such pollution.

Compliance with discharge permits issued by EPA under the Clean Water Act is one cornerstone of good waste management for dairies. With the large number of facilities, however, it's more than a challenge for EPA inspectors to visit dairies regularly.

An innovative effort is now underway, making sure that dairies and water quality can go hand-in-hand throughout the state. Thanks to a partnership among EPA, Idaho State Department of Agriculture, Idaho Division of Environmental Quality, and the Idaho Dairymen's Association, efficiency in government and some cleaner local waterways have been realized. Additionally, industry compliance with their Clean Water Act discharge permits has improved and the dairyindustry enjoys a more level "economic playing field."

Waste management systems in *every* dairy are now inspected during routine milk inspections conducted by the Department of Agriculture. In the past two years, the Department has conducted over 4000 inspections. This achievement contrasts with less than 100 inspections that EPA would have conducted under the traditional approach. The inspections are an opportunity to pinpoint potential problems and begin making any needed corrections. Additionally, inspectors may now revoke a dairy's license to sell milk when wastes are illegally discharged to waterways. This model approach presents strong incentives for proper waste management, with benefits to the agencies, the industry, and the environment---a notable clean water success!

Washington WaterWeeks: Hands On For Healthy Habitats!

Washington WaterWeeks 1998 is celebrating 15 years of helping Washington residents explore, understand and take action to protect the state's water resources. Every September, community and environmental groups, non-profit organizations, state agencies, businesses, cities, and counties plan salmon celebrations, stream restorations, wetlands tours, beach and lake cleanups, and wildlife watching adventures. EPA Region 10 invites you to plan an event for Washington WaterWeeks 1998, August 29 - October 4. This year's theme is *Hands On For Healthy Habitats*. As a WaterWeeks planner, you will receive planning assistance and promotional support, including posters, banners, press releases, and a listing in the Washington WaterWeeks Activity Guide and on the proposed Web site. For more information, call the WaterWeeks office at 360/943-3642 or write to P.O. Box 1354, Olympia, Washington, 98507-1354.

Submit a WaterTalk article for the March issue. Contact Andrea Lindsay, Editor, at 206/553-1896, 1-800-424-4EPA x1896, or email: lindsay.andrea@epamail.epa.gov.

SPOTLIGHT

My Own "Sound Experience"

The following story was contributed by Mike Marsh, an enrollee in EPA's senior environmental employee program. He can be reached at 206/553-2876, or email:marsh.mike@epamail.epa.gov. This story is an example of how getting involved in hands-on environmental protection activities can be a rewarding experience. Opportunities to become involved in personal stewardship abound in every community. With Earth Day rapidly approaching---April 22---EPA encourages *you* to find a way to "Act Locally, Think Globally."

We "took a trip on a sailing ship" last summer. Last fall my wife and I joined the volunteer organization that helps to maintain the ship, to sail her, and to bring a practical conservation program to Puget Sound. ***Sound Experience*** *is a non-profit educational organization based in Port Townsend which owns and operates the* Adventuress, *a 101 ft, 85 year old, two masted schooner. Jane and I sailed last summer as part of an Elderhostel program, spending five nights aboard, sailing (sometimes booming along!) the waters of the San Juan Islands, putting into quiet coves overnight, walking the beach and hunting fossils on Sucia Island, and learning a lot about sailing a big ship, about simple living, and about the impact of people on Puget Sound.*

Adventuress *sailed with a crew of 11, including six volunteers. The 32 Elderhostelers were divided into three* watches, *with a volunteer crew member responsible for each. It was not a cruise for lounge-lizards. We were up by 7 AM. The watches took turns at galley duty, at anchor watch, at swabbing the decks after breakfast, and at sailing the vessel. I don't know how many square feet of sail* Adventuress *carries, but it takes six deck hands on the throat halyard and 6 on the peak halyard of the gaff to raise the mainsail. We Elderhostelers learned to "haul-away, Joe" in time to a sea chanty. The best part was taking the helm when the wind was humming at 15 knots. While she is lightly built and nicely balanced on the helm,* Adventuress *is long, and has plenty of momentum. Steering her is an experience, for it takes her 20 or so seconds to respond to the helm! In addition to pulling on lines and taking the wheel, we learned to navigate inland waters with chart, log, and sighting compass.*

Sound Experience projects a strong practical conservation message as part of their maritime program. The ship serves only vegetarian meals to indicate how a tasty diet and eating low on the food chain can co-exist. We attempted (but failed) to get through our 6 day cruise without visiting a port to take on water and to pump the sewage holding tank. Drinking and cooking water was not rationed, but dish washing was practiced with real economy of fresh water use. There are no showers. The ship has 3 heads, and the stated rule for their use is "4 squares of toilet paper is enough!" We used the ship's diesel engine only when in close quarters, for example, when we anchored for the night. Every day, usually after supper, we gathered to discuss a conservation topic and sing a few songs.

Sound Experience operates day, overnight and week-long cruises for a variety of groups including Scouts, schools, special adult groups, and the general public. Their Internet address is <http://www.drizzle.com/~soundexp/>. By teaching, and then demonstrating how to enjoy life, adventure, and the company of others with minimal impact on the environment, this group provides a valuable service. We were so pleased with our experience that we have signed up as volunteers with the organization.

Water Awareness Week Celebrates Idaho Treasure

Celebrating Idaho's greatest treasure is the aim of **Water Awareness Week**, set to take place May 4-8 throughout the state. Years of drought, combined with ever-increasing demands on this finite resource, spurred organizers to intensify education efforts and create this inclusive, neutral umbrella event that pulls together diverse private and public organizations. While a variety of organizations will conduct water awareness activities around the state, at the heart of the event is a water resource educational and environmental awareness curriculum program for Idaho sixth graders.

Now in its fifth year, Water Awareness Week brings water education materials directly into the classroom, and in some cases takes kids out of the classroom for field learning activities. With funding support from many sources, including EPA, the program reaches thousands of students, with the goal of building their understanding of the importance of water---the state's "treasure"---and laying the foundation for dealing with critical water issues they will face as adults. For more information or to get involved, call Dick Larsen, Idaho Department of Water Resources, at 208/327-7933. Or, visit the web site: http://www.idwr.state.id.us/idwr/info/h2oweek/main.htm

Columbia Slough Gets A Boost

The Columbia Slough played an important role in Portland, Oregon's growth and history. Today it is paying the price of progress. The 18-mile slough in north Portland flows through some of the city's poorest neighborhoods, and it may be Oregon's most polluted body of water. For years, industries dotting its banks poured waste into the slow-moving water. Pollutants fouled the slough and contaminated aquatic life.

Today, the once forgotten, much abused Columbia Slough shows signs of new vitality, and the award of a $10 million EPA grant in 1995 jump started its restoration. As Portland enters its final year of support from the grant, the City is assessing the many projects the money helped fund. Restoration of the Columbia Slough will take many years, but the EPA grant funded numerous projects aimed at getting the process started.

-The Columbia Slough Sediments Project pinpointed contamination hot spots, and is now assessing potential public health risks and recommending cleanup options.
-The City started construction of the Columbia Slough consolidation conduit to intercept combined sewer overflows to the slough.
-The Ramsey Lake Constructed Wetland, completed in 1996, treats north Portland stormwater before it flows into the slough.
-Community and corporate volunteers removed acres of non-native vegetation from the Columbia Slough's banks and reintroduced native plants to shade the water, stabilize slough banks, filter stormwater runoff, and enhance habitat.
-Environmental educators raise public awareness of the pollution challenges facing the Columbia Slough.

The Columbia Slough represents a microcosm of the many water quality challenges facing American waterways: legacy pollutants, widely varied land uses, sediment contamination, environmental justice, contaminated fish. Despite those challenges, says Dean Marriott, Director of the City's Bureau of Environmental Services, "The slough's recreational opportunities, wildlife habitat and history remain enormously important to Portland. The partnership with EPA helped move the City forward in its effort to reclaim the Slough for future generations." For more information about the Columbia Slough, contact Amy Chomowicz, City of Portland, at 503/823-5323.

ECOSYSTEM

Alaska Composting Goes To The Dogs

Thanks to a $17,000 grant from EPA, dog waste has now gotten in on the compost act, at least in Alaska. In the Fairbanks North Star Borough, a 7,000 square mile region with an estimated 20,000 dogs, dog waste can present some real challenges. This is a land of dog mushers, and many dog lots are on or near wetlands. Their waste can harm these important aquatic ecosystems and water sources. Also, with limited disposal options (the landfill is not designed to handle animal waste), dog mushers can face "mountains" of manure.

A recent study conducted by the Fairbanks Soil and Water Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service was aimed at maintaining local water quality and finding a way to deal with the "mountains." The study demonstrated that composting of dog waste is a viable option. With proper care and a mix of two parts waste and one part carbon (hay, straw, sawdust, leaves), mushers can establish composting systems that maintain the temperatures necessary to destroy fecal parasites and pathogens.

The project team recommends that dog waste compost not be used on food crops; instead, it should be reserved for annual and perennial beds. Also, they say, don't mix it with regular compost. The final product reportedly smells like potting soil. Please, get more information before you try this at home. For details, call the Natural Resources Conservation Service Fairbanks Alaska Field Office at 907/479-2657 or Amy Ash, Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation, Fairbanks at 907/451-2136.

Citizens Watch Over AK Forests

The Alaska Community Forest Watch (CFW), a citizen effort funded with an EPA Community Based Environmental Protection grant, is doing what its name suggests: watching over Alaska's forests. Their efforts to monitor Alaska forestry activities to determine compliance with the Alaska Forest Practices Act---a key state tool for preventing nonpoint source pollution and protecting salmon habitat---recently resulted in some real environmental protection.

The Alaska Forum for Environmental Responsibility trained citizen volunteers in selected Best Management Practices that the Act requires. The group focused its monitoring efforts on state land in the Moose Pass area of the Kenai Peninsula. The area contains critical brown bear habitat and is the headwaters of the renowned Kenai River fishery. The project benefited from cooperation and assistance from staff in the Alaska Department of Natural Resources.

Biologist Lorvel Shields, CFW project director, led crews of trained citizen volunteers in monitoring two sites near Moose Pass. Under his leadership, the project identified what appear to be serious violations of the Act on one of the two sites. Some of the violations had the potential to introduce sediment into a salmon spawning stream down slope from the logged area. At the other site, the Act and regulations were generally followed, with one or two exceptions that had the potential to impact water quality.

The Alaska Forum believes that their efforts demonstrate the value of an independent analysis of compliance with the Forest Practices Act. Project results have been brought to the attention of the Alaska Board of Forestry. The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation has announced that it will support a second phase of CFW using funds provided under a Performance Partnership Grant from EPA. This phase may focus on the Kenai Peninsula or another area within Southcentral Alaska.

For more information about this project, call Lee Daneker, EPA, at 206/553-1380 or 1-800-424-4EPA x1380, or E-mail: daneker.lee@epamail.epa.gov OR contact the Alaska Forum directly at 907/835-5460, E-mail: afermjr@bendnet.com.

Environmental Justice Grant Applications Due

EPA's **Environmental Justice Small Grants** Program is now accepting applications postmarked no later than March 6, 1998. The purpose of this grants program is to provide financial assistance to eligible community groups such as community-based/grassroots organizations, churches, or other non-profit organizations and federally recognized tribal governments that are working on or plan to carry out projects to address environmental justice issues. While state and local governments and academic institutions are eligible to receive grants, preference will be given to community-based/grassroots organizations that are non-profit and incorporated, and tribal governments.

Funds can be used to develop a new activity or substantially improve the quality of existing programs. EPA Region 10 (covering Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington) expects to award a total of about $250,000. The maximum award for any one grant is $20,000. A copy of the Application Guidance can be obtained by contacting Susan Morales, Environmental Justice Grants Coordinator at 206/553-8580 or writing to: US EPA (OI-085), 1200 Sixth Avenue, Seattle, WA 98101; email: morales.susan@epamail.epa.gov.

Proposed Rules for Industrial Laundries: On December 17, 1997, EPA proposed pretreatment standards for Industrial Laundries that discharge wastewater to municipal sewer systems. Limits for a number of organic chemicals, as well as copper, lead, zinc, and "oil and grease" have been put forward for industrial laundries that launder at least one million pounds of laundry and at least 255,000 pounds of shop and/or printers' towels/rags per year. The comment period is scheduled to close February 17, 1998. For more information, call Sharon Wilson, EPA, at 206/553-0325 or 1-800-424-4EPA x0325, or email: wilson.sharon@epamail.epa.gov.

WA Water Access Grants Offered

Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announces the start of the 1998 **grant cycle for aquatic lands enhancement** account, or ALEA, grants. DNR distributes these grants through a competitive process to local cities and counties, ports, tribes, and state agencies. The purpose of the grant program is to assist in the acquisition and development of sites that enhance public access to the state's marine and freshwater shorelines. The ALEA grant program provides funding on a two-year cycle. Applications are due May 1, 1998. With approval by the legislature, funds will be available July 1, 1999, through June 30, 2001. For an application package, contact Mike Ramsey, ALEA Project Manager, 360/902-1259 (email: mike.ramsey@wadnr.gov); or Carol Lee Gallagher, ALEA Project Manager, 360/902-1090 (email: carollee.gallagher@wadnr.gov).

Video Spotlights Youth, Environment Program

EPA invites you to check out a new release. While it's not on the "top box" shelf, it is worth seeing, especially if you care about youth and environmental restoration. This scenic video, called *Youth Restoration Corps*, focuses on a model program which benefits both young people and nature. The program combines paid work with in-the-field education for highschoolers. The video documents how ten youth are undertaking efforts to repair and eliminate further damage to the banks of the Russian River, a tributary to the Kenai River in Alaska. The Kenai River is a world famous salmon stream that is threatened by nonpoint source pollution. Details about the restoration effort, including the erosion matting and revegetation work, are highlighted. EPA's 319 Nonpoint Source Program is one of many sponsors of the program. State Senator John Torgeson, who supports the program "with his chainsaw and positive mental attitude," says the program represents a "good combination of government, private enterprise, and the youth of our community." To check out the video on short-term loan, call EPA at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4EPA.

"EPA in Alaska" Brochure

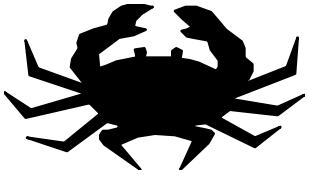
A brochure describing EPA's role in Alaska will soon be available from EPA's regional Public Environmental Resource Center. The two-page document briefly outlines activities EPA undertakes to protect and promote the quality of Alaska's air, water, and land. It also describes the mission of EPA Region 10 and provides contact persons and phone numbers for different program areas. For a free copy visit EPA's Anchorage or Juneau Offices, or call 1-800-424-4EPA or 206/553-1200 and ask for the ***EPA In Alaska*** brochure.

Volunteer Stream Manual Now Ready

Volunteer monitors will welcome the news that the long-awaited **Volunteer Stream Monitoring: A Methods Manual** is now available from EPA. The 210-page manual gives the reader an introduction to streams and watershed survey methods, and offers detailed, step-by-step approaches to monitoring macroinvertebrates, habitat, water quality, and physical conditions. It also presents a chapter on managing and presenting data. For a free copy, call EPA's PublicEnvironmental Resource Center at 1-800-424-4EPA or 206/553-1200. Or, visit the EPA volunteer monitoring homepage at www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/vol.html.

National Index Assesses Watershed Health

The **Index of Watershed Indicators** presents EPA's first national snapshot of watershed health. Available on line or hard copy, the index provides aquatic resource information, organized on a watershed basis, and characterizes watershed condition and vulnerability. Fifteen indicators of health are combined to determine an overall score for every watershed in the nation. Anyone wanting a sense of the health of a particular watershed will find the index useful. In can be found at: www.epa.gov/surf/iwi/. Or, call EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4EPA for a free copy (quantities are limited).



Guide for Monitoring Grazing Impacts

Here's a document of interest to natural resource professionals involved in assessing grazing impacts on water quality in stream of the Western Unites States. Called **Monitoring Protocols to Evaluate Water Quality Effects of Grazing Management on Western Rangeland Streams** (Oct 93), this 200+page document describes protocols developed to assess water quality improvements resulting from stream restoration projects funded under the Clean Water Act and Coastal Zone Management Act.

The guidebook presents methods that reduce sampling frequency, minimize needs for specialized equipment, and reduce costly laboratory analyses. It focuses on attributes of the stream channel, stream bank, and streamside vegetation which are impacted by grazing and important to aquatic life. For a free copy, call EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center, at 1-800-424-4EPA or 206/553-1200.

Hanford Report On Line

Contaminant effects from Hanford to the Columbia River are the subject of a comprehensive assessment now available on line. This project includes a human and ecological risk assessment of 28 Hanford contaminants, on 52 species and humans under twelve exposure scenarios (including five Native American tribal scenarios written by tribal members on the project). This risk assessment evaluates current conditions and provides a downstream perspective on the metals coming from the upper watershed. The document is on-line at http://www.hanford.gov/crcia/reports/doe-rl_96-16/crcia04_97.htm. For more information, call Larry Gadbois, EPA, at 509/376-9884, or email: gadbois.larry@epamail.epa.gov.

Willamette Sediments Investigated

EPA's Superfund Site Assessment program, in cooperation with Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ), is conducting a sediment sampling investigation of a five-milestretch of the heavily-industrialized lower Willamette River in Portland. This investigation is occurring because previous localized sediment sampling efforts have shown some areas of significant contamination, and ODEQ considered it a high priority to conduct a more systematic evaluation of this entire stretch of the river. This latest sediment sampling in the lower Willamette took place in September and October 1997.

EPA expects to have a summary of the analytical data sometime in February, and a complete Site Inspection report by this summer. For more information, call John Meyer, EPA, 206/553-1271, or 1-800-424-4EPA x1271, or email: meyer.johnr@epamail.epa.gov.

Website Focuses On Wetlands Restoration

EPA recently unveiled a new website for public and private, large and small organizations interested in river and wetlands restoration. Users can visit river corridors and wetlands restoration sites, sorted by watershed, and receive and contribute information concerning their own projects, programs, or organizations.

EPA's goals in establishing this resource are to provide a depository of information to help federal and state agencies understand local needs and to give local groups access to what federal and state agencies have to offer. Also, restoration practitioners at the local level can use the site to communicate with their peers, share their experiences, and "Put Your Project on the Map" to get some national exposure. The site also includes information about proposals for future restorations to help foster partnerships. The restoration website is at: http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore. For more information concerning this site, contact John Pai, U.S. EPA (4501), 401 M Street, SW, Washington, DC 20460. Phone 202/260-8076; email:pai.john@epamail.epa.gov.

CALENDAR

February

9-10: Green Crab: Potential Impacts in Pacific Northwest, Vancouver, WA. Washington Sea Grant Program, Terry Nosho, 206/543-2821.

11: Future of Our Public Lands: Symposium on Federal Land Policy, Boise, Idaho. Andrus Center for Public Policy, 208/385-4218.

March

12-13: Puget Sound Research '98, Seattle, WA. Puget Sound Water Quality Action Team, 360/407-7321.

31-April 1: Partnerships in Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Workshop, Wenatchee, WA. Bill Hashim, Washington Department of Ecology, 360/407-6551.

April

American Wetlands Month

3-May 29: (Fridays) King County Land/Water Stewardship Volunteer Training, Seattle, WA. Marilyn Freeman, 206/296-3986.

21-24: Alaska Water Wastewater Management Conference, Anchorage, AK.

22: Earth Day

27-30: Toward Ecosystem-Based Management in the Upper Columbia River Basin, Conference, Castegar, British Columbia, Canada. Don MacDonald, 205/753-1583 or email: ssf-mesl@island.net.

29-May 3: Rivers: The Future Frontier, River Management Society's Symposium on River Management and Planning, Anchorage, AK. River Management Society, 406/549-0514, email: rms@igc.apc.org.

May

3-6: Watershed Management: Moving From Theory to Implementation, Denver, CO. Water Environment Federation, 703/684-2400.

4-8: Idaho Water Awareness Week. Dick Larsen, Idaho Department of Water Resources,208/327-7933.

4-10: Drinking Water Week

9: Penn Cove Water Festival, Whidbey Island, WA. WSU Beach Watchers, 360/679-7391, or bertas@wsu.edu

21-22: Pacific Northwest Chapter of Society of Wetland Scientists, Annual Meeting, Tacoma, WA. Fred Weinmann, EPA, 206/553-1414 or 1-800-424-4EPA x1414.

June

8-12: Alaska's Wetlands, From Tundra To Sea: Annual National Meeting of Society of Wetland Scientists. Terry Brock, tbrock@ptialaska.net, 907/780-5869, 907/586-7863, http://www.sws.org.

July

12-15: Residuals and Biosolids Management Specialty Conference, Bellevue, WA. Water Environment Federation, 703/684-2442.

Small Communities Product Guide Announced

The National Small Flows Clearinghouse---a nonprofit, EPA-funded environmental health program for small communities---announces release of its new product catalog, the 1997 Products Guide. The catalog lists hundreds of free or low-cost educational products about small community wastewater treatment. Included are design manuals, posters, videos, software, newsletters, and other material. To order the guide, call 1-800-624-8301 and request item #WWCAT. Or, access the catalog on line at http://www.nsfc.wvu.edu, on the site's "Products" page.

Top 10 Watershed Lessons Shared

Folks interested in successfully involving their whole watershed in monitoring and protection activities may wish to get a copy of a new publication from EPA. Called **Top 10 Watershed Lessons Learned**, the 59-page document shares ten fundamental lessons from dozens of watershed practitioners. Each lesson includes a list of related resources. For a free copy, call 1-800-490-9198 and request publication #EPA 840-F-97-001. Or see it on line at: www.epa.gov/owow/lessons.

"Our Northwest Environment" Highlights EPA Activities

Folks curious about what EPA's been up to lately might be interested in a new resource. Called **Our Northwest Environment 1997**, this colorful 25-page booklet provides information about EPA program activities, and points out that all of us have a role to play in preserving the quality of life we enjoy. For a free copy, call EPA's Public Environmental Resource Center at 206/553-1200 or 1-800-424-4EPA.

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