

Summary

Oregon's Middle Columbia River Steelhead Conservation and Recovery Plan Public and Other Outreach Meetings

May 2009

Public meetings were conducted and other meetings and forums attended to present Oregon's Proposed Middle Columbia River Steelhead Conservation and Recovery Plan (Plan) as part of the State's outreach efforts prior to, during, and after the public comment period. The public comment period was from September 24, 2008 - December 23, 2008. Outreach was a combined effort with ODFW, the Governor's Natural Resources Office, and NOAA Fisheries. This summary provides information on these informational meetings, including planning, promotion, meeting venue, participation and attendance, and questions and comments received, together with a list of public comments received by Oregon. ODFW, the Governor's Natural Resources Office and NOAA Fisheries will prepare a Response to Public Comments which will be available to the public when the final Plan is adopted in 2009.

Planning

The planning team was comprised of state and federal staff and Sounding Board members involved with Plan development.

Mid-Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan Outreach Team

Sue Knapp – Governor's Natural Resources Office

Rich Carmichael – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Jessica Sall – Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Rosemary Furfey – NOAA Fisheries

Brian Wolcott – Umatilla/Walla Walla Watershed Council, Sounding Board member

Bill Blosser – Mid-Columbia Sounding Board facilitator

Jeff Blackwood – Sounding Board member and Snake Recovery Plan facilitator

Meeting Preparation:

Planning Materials: Mid-C Outreach Plan, contact list, event calendar

Timeline: Planning commenced early in 2008 and continued on into the public comment period for the Federal Register Notice (Sept. 24, 2008 – Dec. 23, 2008)

Oregon's Outreach and Meeting Materials:

- Executive Summary for Oregon's Management Unit (MU) plan
- Power point presentations and handouts
- Tri-fold brochure (highlights of planning process and plan content)
- Press releases
- Newsletter articles
- Sign-in Sheets
- Comment Sheets

- Legislative Briefing Document (information on background and current action, website location for plan, Mid-C domain map, Oregon’s brochure)

NOAA’s Outreach and Meeting Materials:

- Executive Summary for the Bi-State, Distinct Population Segment (DPS) Plan
- Overview: Middle Columbia River Steelhead Proposed Recovery Plan
- Questions and Answers for ESA Recovery Planning for Middle Columbia River Steelhead
- Tri-fold brochure on the DPS Plan
- Power point handouts
- Press release
- FRN Notice
- CDs of DPS and Oregon’s MU plans
- Map of Middle Columbia DPS Domain and Oregon Management Unit

Promotion

- Email Legislative Briefing Document to key legislators: Rep Whisnant, Rep Burley, Rep Gilman, Rep G. Smith, Rep Jenson, Rep Boquist, Rep Bentz, Rep Clem, Rep Cannon, Rep Dingfelder, Rep Huffman, Rep Roblan, Sen Girod, Sen Westlund, Sen Nelson, Sen Whitsett, Sen Ferrioli, Sen Bates.
- Email notification of public meeting dates and locations (attached brochure, Oregon’s news release):
 - *Congressional Delegation*
 - *OSU Extension Offices:* Crook, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Sherman, Umatilla,
 - *Watershed Councils:* Bridge Creek, Gilliam-East John Day, Mid-John Day, North Fork John Day, Upper South Fork John Day, Middle Deschutes, Umatilla Basin, Upper Deschutes, Walla Walla Basin, Wasco County Area, Crooked River, Sherman County, Willow and Trout creeks
 - *Soil and Water Conservation Districts:* Grant, Morrow, Sherman, Umatilla, Wasco, Wheeler, Deschutes, Gilliam, Jefferson, Monument
 - *Farm Bureau (County Leads):* Crook-Wheeler, Deschutes, Gilliam, Grant, Jefferson, Sherman, Umatilla/Walla Walla, Wasco, Oregon Wheat Commission, Oregon Grains Commission
 - *Oregon Cattlemen’s Association*
 - *Irrigation Districts:* Central Oregon Irrigation District, Deschutes Valley Irrigation District, Arnold Irrigation District, North Unit Irrigation District, Swalley Irrigation District, Three Sisters Irrigation District, Tumalo Irrigation District, The Dalles Irrigation District, Columbia Improvement District, Butter Creek Irrigation District, Echo Irrigation District, Hermiston Irrigation District, Stanfield Irrigation District, Walla Walla River Irrigation District, West Extension Irrigation District, Westland Irrigation District, Ochoco Irrigation District
 - *Others:* Crook County Natural Resources Advisory Committee, Wy’East RC&D

- Written notification of public meeting dates and locations (enclosed brochure):
 - *County Commissioners:* Umatilla, Morrow, Grant, Sherman, Wasco, Deschutes, Wheeler, Crook, Gilliam, Jefferson
 - *City Mayors:* Adams, Athena, Arlington, Bend, Boardman, Canyon City, Condon, Culver, Dayville, Dufur, Echo, Fossil, Granite, Grass Valley, Helix, Heppner, Hermiston, Ione, Irrigon, John Day, La Pine, Lexington, Long Creek, Madras, Maupin, Metolius, Milton Freewater, Mitchell, Monument, Moro, Mosier, Mt. Vernon, Pendleton, Pilot Rock, Prairie City, Prineville, Redmond, Rufus, Seneca, Shaniko, Sisters, Spray, Stanfield, The Dalles, Ukia, Umatilla, Wasco, Weston
 - *Fruit and Wheat Growers:* Mid-Columbia Fruit Growers, Oregon Cherry Growers, Orchard View Farms, Polehn Farms, Cooper Family Orchards, Ayres Orchards, Renken Farms, Oregon Wheat Growers
 - *Sport Groups:* Central Oregon Flyfishers, Young’s Fishing Service, Blue Mountain Anglers and Fly Shop, Blue Mountain Flycasters,
 - *Conservation Groups:* Deschutes Land Trust, Deshutes River Conservancy, Native Fish Society, Oregon Trout
 - *Colleges:* Central Oregon Community College (Bend and Redmond campuses)
 - *Private Citizens*
- Conference Calls:
 - Oregon and Washington Delegations (hosted by NOAA)
- News Releases and Newsletter Articles
- Radio Announcements: KODL

Recovery Plan Outreach Meetings

Meeting Type	Location	Date	Presenters	Convenor/Moderator
Oregon Plan Core Team	Salem	February 5, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C ^a : Sue Knapp
Recovery Implementation Science Team	Portland	April 8, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: NOAA
House Environment and Natural Resources Committee	Salem	July 29, 2008	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Rep Dingfelder
Joint Legislative Committee Meeting	Newport	September 12, 2008	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Reps Roblan and Bates
Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team	Portland	September 17, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: NOAA
OPSW Central Regional Mgt Team Meeting	The Dalles	September 29, 2008	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Sue Knapp
Oregon Plan Core Team	Portland	October 7, 2008	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Sue Knapp
Federal Caucus Meeting	Portland	October 7, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: NOAA

Mid-Columbia Council of Governments	The Dalles	October 28, 2008	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: John Ahrens
OWEB Conference	Eugene	Nov 5 – 7, 2008	Display Table (ODF)	C: OWEB
Public Meeting	John Day	November 6, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW) Rosemary Furfey (NOAA)	C: Commissioner Britton M: Bill Blossser H: USFS
Central OR Board of Control (Irrig. Dist)	Terrebonne	November 12, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C:
Public Meeting	Redmond	November 12, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW) Rosemary Furfey (NOAA)	C: Commissioner Baney M: Sue Knapp
OFW Commission Meeting	Salem	November 14, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW) Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Chair- Marla Rae
Public Meeting	Walla Walla	November 20, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: Steve Martin (Snake River Salmon Recovery Board)
Public Meeting	Hermiston	November 24, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW) Rosemary Furfey (NOAA)	C: Commissioner Doherty M: Sue Knapp H: Umatilla Basin Watershed Council
Oregon Water Resources Congress	Hood River	December 2, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: Anita Winkler
Public Meeting	The Dalles	December 2, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW) Rosemary Furfey (NOAA)	C: Mel Omeg (Wasco SWCD) ^b M: Sue Knapp
Public Meeting	Portland	December 11, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW) Rosemary Furfey (NOAA)	C: Kaitlin Lovell, City of Portland M: Sue Knapp
Blue Mountain Flycasters	Pendleton	December 16, 2008	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: Bob Wolfe-President
Eastern Regional Mgt Team (Oregon Plan)	La Grande	January 14, 2009	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: Sue Knapp
NR Agency Directors	Salem	January 28, 2009	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Sue Knapp
Deschutes Co. Board of Commissioners	Bend	January 28, 2009	Sue Knapp (GNRO)	C: Commissioner Luke
Central Regional Mgt Team (Oregon Plan)	Bend	April 21, 2009	Rich Carmichael (ODFW)	C: Eric Metz (DSL)

^a C: Convenor; M: Moderator; H: Host

^b Wasco SWCD covered cost of room rental

Meeting Information

Meeting: Presentation to House Interim Committee on Energy and the Environment

Meeting Location: Salem

Meeting Date: July 29, 2008

In attendance: Members of the committee (Chair-Rep Dingfelder), agency staff and members of the public

Questions and Comments:

- When were these fish first listed?
 - Are these the first recovery plans?
 - Is there a target number for abundance?
 - Will ODFW be identifying in-stream flow needs?
 - Are these regulatory documents?
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Meeting: Federal Caucus Meeting

Meeting Location: Portland, NOAA Offices

Meeting Date: October 7, 2008

In attendance: NOAA Fisheries, BPA, Corps, BOR, EPA, NRCS, USFWS

Questions and Comments: (not complete)

- Corps: authorization for hydropower changes, will focus on the mainstem
 - USFS: Recovery plan actions are discretionary (vs non-discretionary with BiOp), therefore, actions depend on funding and priorities. Will work with BPA under the Council program.
 - MOAs should complement the plan
 - BOR: Tributary habitat program in John Day
 - EPA: TMDL implementation plan is consistent with recovery plan
 - NRCS: Will focus on private landowners with Farm Services Agency
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Meeting: Mid-Columbia Council of Governments

Meeting Location: The Dalles, City Hall

Meeting Date: October 28, 2008

In attendance: County commissioners from Wasco, Deschutes, Hood River, Wheeler, Gilliam, Sherman; mayors for Rufus, The Dalles, Cascade Locks

Questions and Comments:

- Why is the North Fork John Day population in such good condition?
 - What is being done about tribal taking of ESA fish?
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Meeting: Public Meeting

Meeting Location: John Day, USFS Offices

Meeting Date: November 6, 2008

In attendance: Commissioner Boyd Britton, 30 attendees representing landowners, environmentalists, federal, state, and local government staff, and SWCDs from Portland, John Day, Dayville, Pendleton, Canyon City, Paulina, Fox, Prairie City, Ontario, Izee, Long Creek

Questions and Comments:

- How do you define “historical” populations and calculate the proposed population size?
 - How can we have the John Day major population group delisted before the rest of the DPS?
 - How can we control predators and address mainstem fishery harvest issues?
 - What are the incentives to do more restoration work in the John Day watershed?
 - How can we fix the Columbia River hydro system and get more aggressive action?
 - How can we address the grazing issues on the Malheur National Forest?
 - Can hatchery fish help the John Day populations recover?
 - What is the interaction between bull trout and steelhead?
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Meeting: Central Oregon Board of Control (Irrigation Districts)

Meeting Location: Terrebonne, Grange Hall

Meeting Date: November 12, 2008

In attendance: Irrigation district managers from Central Oregon

Questions and Comments:

- Why are stray hatchery fish such a problem?
 - What is the difference between this ESA plan and Oregon’s conservation plan?
 - When is a status assessment required?
 - What about tribal harvest? Who regulates that?
 - How much of a threat is predation?
 - How is the delisting decision made?
 - Tell me more about the Crooked River population and what the goals are
 - Will there be opportunity for input on implementation?
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Meeting: Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Redmond, Juniper Golf Club View Restaurant

Meeting Date: November 12, 2008

In attendance: Commissioner Tammy Baney, and 20 attendees representing federal, state, and local agency staff, consultants, sport groups, watershed professionals, Portland General Electric, public

Questions and Comments:

- What is the status of the Crooked River? Is it separate from the MPG?
- Why are stray hatchery fish such a problem? Where are they coming from?
- Concern with reintroduction and use of an experimental population.
- How and when will the delisting decision be made? When will reviews take place?
- Habitat issues are questions for society; need to stop the loss and improve, but how do this? What are the incentives?
- Will fish be able to get through Lake Billy Chinook?
- Is the money that has been allocated (\$515 million) used to fence riparian areas?

- What are the sources of hatchery strays in the Deschutes?
 - Landowners need to see the benefits (e.g., restoration of natural hydrograph could help landowner with water rights).
 - What are the critical gaps in funding and actions? What is the funding grant cycle?
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Meeting: Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Walla Walla, Walla Walla Community College

Meeting Date: November 20, 2008

In attendance: State and federal agency staff, tribes, watershed councils

Questions and Comments: Not recorded

Meeting: Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Hermiston, Stafford Hansel Government Center

Meeting Date: November 24, 2008

In attendance: Members of Umatilla Basin Watershed Council, Umatilla SWCD, state agencies, ODFW commissioner, Umatilla County Planning Commission, West Extension and Hermiston Irrigation districts, members of the public

Questions and Comments:

- How does this plan fit with other plans? (e.g., subbasin plans, TMDLs)
 - Where are the extinct populations?
 - What is the guarantee that the plan will be revisited?
 - If populations continue to degrade, what do we do next? What is the decision process to respond to change?
 - From a watershed council perspective, what is the role of the recovery plan?
 - Need stronger position on predators; need a lethal stance, otherwise farmers are not inclined to help.
 - Aren't hydropower impacts the greatest? Why only so much out of hydro when it contributes to 45% mortality?
 - Any anticipated uproar from constituents?
 - Where are the extirpated populations? Not much discussion of these in the plan
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Meeting: Oregon Water Resources Congress

Meeting Location: Hood River, Hood River Inn

Meeting Date: December 2, 2008

In attendance: Members of irrigation districts in the Mid-Columbia.

Questions and Comments:

- Are hatchery fish considered natural?
- How is climate change taken into account?
- How many years of study will take place?
- Hydro impacts increase upstream
- Is this a federal and state plan?
- Question on mortality figures for hydro and harvest; relational?
- Have the tribes been involved in this plan, and provided comment?

- Is Ocean research being addressed?
 - Is the Governor's Headwaters to Ocean initiative in the plan?
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Meeting: Public Meeting

Meeting Location: The Dalles, Civic Center Auditorium, Fireside Room

Meeting Date: December 2, 2008

In attendance: Mel Omeg, Wasco SWCD (convenor), other Wasco SWCD members, Umatilla tribes, state and federal agency staff (ODA, OSP, ODFW, USFS), Reynolds High School, Mid-Columbia Marina

Questions and Comments:

- Why is extinct population in Whychus Creek part of Deschutes Westside MPG?
 - Why isn't the winter run in Little Mill Creek considered? It should be included in the plan.
 - How are we able to increase harvest on hatchery fish?
 - Must require selective fisheries for any commercial harvest on steelhead to protect few remaining wild stocks.
 - Strays are not a bad thing; too much emphasis on strays. What is the issue?
 - Lots of agricultural land in Yakima, etc., that incurs pesticide use; need to work with farmers and come up with solutions; farm community needs to be part of the solution and process.
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Meeting: Public Meeting

Meeting Location: Portland, Metro Offices

Meeting Date: December 11, 2008

In attendance: Representatives from Native Fish Society, Trout Unlimited, ODFW, City of Portland, City of Gresham, BLM, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, NOAA Fisheries, Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program, fishing guides (Deschutes), and members of the public.

Questions and Comments:

- Don't agree with harvest conclusion
 - Hatchery programs are the sources of strays
 - How were tributary abundance estimates determined? Based on carrying capacity?
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Meeting: Deschutes County Board of Commissioners meeting

Meeting Location: Bend, City Hall

Meeting Date: January 28, 2009

In attendance: Commissioners Baney, Luke, Unger, Administrator Kanner,

Questions and Comments:

- Is reintroduction into Crooked River part of the plan? Is this considered high risk?
- Who is in charge of recovery plan implementation?
- Are the tributaries above Pelton Round Butte and Bowman dams included?
- Who is doing the 10j? Is the Governor's office involved?
- What is the county doing to align with this plan? Are you working with Central Oregon Irrigation Districts?

- Does ESA assurances affect governments, too? (not just landowners)
- What is the Governor's role? Just outreach? Will things change with a change in administration?
- Where are the lines drawn for extinct populations?
- Are hatchery fish placed above the dams considered ESA fish? Native fish?
- We are held hostage regarding delisting; we are all in this together.
- What happens if cannot achieve viable status?
- Are kokanee steelhead? Are kokanee released below the dams?
- Is there food for steelhead above the dams? Have the changes that have taken place to habitat affected food supply?
- Do steelhead return?
- The problem is with out-of-basin strays that others will need to be responsible for.
- What competes with salmon? For what?
- Hard times bring people together to look for solutions.

Formal Comments Received:

Response Format

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|--|----------------------|
| ➤ Jeremy Anderson | Email |
| ➤ Native Fish Society (Bill Bakke) | Letter (2) |
| ➤ Stephen Borg | Comment Sheet/Email |
| ➤ Carlisle Harrison | Email (2) |
| ➤ Gary Propheter | Email |
| ➤ Ken Thompson | Email |
| ➤ Grant County Conservationists (Linda Driskill) | Letter |
| ➤ Craig Lacy | Email |
| ➤ Dan Driscoll | Letter |
| ➤ National Park Service (Neal Bedlan) | Letter |
| ➤ Grant County SWCD (Jason Kehrberg) | Email |
| ➤ Trout Unlimited (Kate Miller) | Email |
| ➤ Jan O'Rorke | Letter |
| ➤ Robert and Mary Ellen Brooks Ranch | Email |
| ➤ Ken and Cecelia Brooks | Email |
| ➤ Interior Columbia Technical Recovery Team
(Thomas Cooney) | Letter |
| ➤ Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
(Gary James) | Commission testimony |
| ➤ Jack Johns | Email |
| ➤ Ken and Pat Holliday | Email |
| ➤ Assoc. of NW Steelheaders (Thomas Smoot) | Email |
| ➤ Grant County Court (Judge Mark Webb) | Email |
| ➤ Russell Rico | Email |
| ➤ Roger O. Ediger | Email |

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Contact: Richard Carmichael (541) 962-3777
Suzanne Knapp, Governor's Office, (503) 986-6527
Internet: www.dfw.state.or.us Fax: (541) 673-6009

For Immediate Release

Wednesday, Oct. 29, 2008

ODFW hosts public meetings on steelhead recovery plan

SALEM, Ore. – The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is hosting a series of five public meetings on the recently released plan for the conservation and recovery of Oregon's native steelhead populations in the mid-Columbia river.

The Oregon Mid-Columbia River Steelhead Conservation and Recovery Plan serves as a roadmap for the recovery of steelhead populations in the Fifteenmile, Deschutes, John Day, Umatilla and Walla Walla subbasins. Mid-Columbia River steelhead are listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. The meetings are designed to present the plan to interested citizens and organizations prior to the close of the federal public comment period on Dec. 23, 2008.

All meetings will begin at 6:30 pm. The meeting locations and dates are:

- November 6 (Thursday) - John Day, US Forest Service Conference Room, 431 Patterson Bridge Rd.
- November 12 (Wednesday) - Redmond, Juniper Golf Club Banquet Room, 1938 SE Elkhorn Ave.
- November 20 (Thursday) - Walla Walla, WA, Walla Walla Community College, 500 Tausick Way
- November 24 (Monday) - Hermiston, Stafford Hansell Government Center, 915 SE Columbia Dr.
- December 2 (Tuesday) - The Dalles, Civic Auditorium, Fireside Room, 323 E 4th St.

The Oregon conservation and recovery plan was released at the same time as, and is part of, NOAA Fisheries Service's bi-state plan for recovery of mid-Columbia River steelhead populations in both Oregon and Washington. Each meeting will begin with a presentation of the state's plan, followed by a summary of the NOAA bi-state plan. There also will be an opportunity for questions and comments from the public.

Both ODFW and NOAA fisheries are currently accepting written comments on the recovery plans.

The proposed Oregon Mid-Columbia River Steelhead Conservation and Recovery Plan is available at <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/esa/mid-columbia/>. The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission will be considering the Plan at its Nov. 14, 2008 meeting in Salem. Public comment will be taken at the Commission meeting. Written comments may be submitted to odfw.commission@state.or.us prior to the Commission meeting. Written comments received by ODFW prior to or at the Commission meeting will be shared with NOAA if relevant to the bi-state recovery plan. The bi-state recovery plan can be viewed at www.nwr.noaa.gov, which also details how to submit comments to NOAA during its public comment period which ends Dec. 23, 2008.