Rogue SMU Fall Chinook Conservation Plan
Chetco Public Library
April 5th, 2010
6:00 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

**Advisory Committee Members Present:** Peter Tronquet, Richard Heap, Maynard Flohaug, Steve Beyerlin, Ron Schwartz, Val Early, Harvey Young, John Wilson, Ted Fitzgerald

**Advisory Committee Members Absent:** Mark Lottis

**ODFW Staff Present:** Tom Satterthwaite, Todd Confer, Steven Mazur, Dave Haight

**Public Attendance:** 0; No public

I. **Introductions:** Todd Confer, Rogue Watershed District Supervisory Fish and Wildlife Biologist.

II. **Review of March 1st, 2010 meeting notes.** Notes unanimously approved.

III. **Desired Status preferences for remaining criteria**

Confer talked about chinook salmon scale collection the past couple of years at Huntley Park and how it appears that length to age composition for 5 and 6 year old fish is different than historic average. Confer and Satterthwaite noted that more homework needed to be done on this issue, and suggested that even with this question about age composition that the committee should move forward with a coordinated statement. This would allow the planner to continue to move along with plan development and as information comes forward, the committee could make changes to the draft in the fall.

Discussion continued on what changes could be made to affect age structure. Satterthwaite noted that ocean fisheries are age selective and can drive the overall age of the population down. Confer suggested the committee look at the historic age structure at Huntley and not the last 2 years. We have seen harvest rates in the ocean above 40% and had a high percentage of 5 and 6 year old fish. This desired statement is based on brood year age strength. If we have a weak age 3 and 4 year old return and a strong 5 and 6 return the percentage would go up. In river fisheries are not age selective and thus have no effect on spawner age composition.

The committee questioned why not to have desired status of 15% age 5 and 6, the historical level. Confer noted that with the current level of uncertainty surrounding age structure of fall chinook that pass Huntley Park, 15% may not be achievable.
The committee talked a while on scale reading protocol. How scale reading was conducted in the past and present. If the growth rate changes in the ocean the length and age on a yearly basis may not relate. Satterthwaite noted that is why a 10 year running average is appropriate for a desired status element.

The committee had some questions on why is it important to maintain a certain percentage of the run as age 5 and 6 year old fish. How genetically different are they from age 3 and 4 fish?

Beyerlin noted that in the Klamath River fall chinook are smaller. Could the Rogue move toward smaller fish if we don’t maintain a 5 and 6 year old component?

i. Comparison of ODFW and Advisory Committee working drafts
   i. Desired Status - 5 and 6 year old age composition of naturally produced chinook – Rogue

   **Rogue Aggregate**
   **Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – Age 5 and age 6 fish should compose at least 12% of the naturally produced fall chinook salmon that annually pass Huntley Park. This goal represents a running average over a period of ten years.

   ii. Desired Status – % of naturally produced fall chinook salmon that should annually pass Huntley Park during October.

   **Lower Rogue**
   **Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – At least 8% of naturally produced fall chinook salmon should annually pass Huntley Park during October. This goal represents a running average over a period of 10 years.

   Limited discussion. Previous vote count included only 4 votes, mainly because some committee members wanted more information. Satterthwaite wanted to get another vote to confirm the committee’s decision.

   iii. Desired Status - % hatchery - Rogue, Chetco, Winchuck, Hunter and Pistol

   **Rogue Aggregate**
   **Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – On average, hatchery fish should compose no more than 5% of the fall chinook salmon.
that pass Huntley Park. This goal represents a running average over a period of ten years.

The committee and ODFW staff talked about hatchery fish in the Rogue River and what rivers/hatcheries they came from. The planner estimated that we see 1 to 2% Indian Creek Hatchery fish at Huntley Park, the rest are strays from the Klamath to make up the historical long term average of approximately 4%. Satterthwaite noted that the percentage of hatchery on Lower Rogue spawning grounds is approximately 3%; this is based on information from spawning ground surveys. Some of the committee members brought up the idea of subtracting the percentage of hatchery fish from the Lower Rogue spawning ground surveys from the percentage at Huntley Park. This would give us a number of 8% hatchery fish at Huntley Park.

Confer noted that ODFW is firm with 5% hatchery fish at Huntley Park and if strays from the Klamath become an issue we would need to revisit the status element.

The committee had some discussion on whether this element was even needed. Satterthwaite explained that monitoring at Huntley Park is very cost-effective. Actual spawning ground surveys would not be efficient since there are very few to no hatchery fall chinook spawning in four of the five Rogue population areas.

**Lower Rogue River**

The committee had limited discussion about having a lower percentage of hatchery fall chinook, based more on current stray rates. The committee discussed the economic importance of hatchery fish in the lower river and did not want to limit possible changes is Indian Creek Hatchery management.

**Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – On average, hatchery fish should compose no more than 10% of the fall chinook salmon that spawn annually in the Lower Rogue population area. This goal represents a running average over a period of ten years.

**Chetco River**

The committee had a lengthy discussion about hatchery chinook salmon in the Chetco River. Where are they spawning? Explanation of scale collection techniques. Satterthwaite explained that unlike the Rogue, the Chetco can be monitored fairly well with spawning ground surveys. He noted that there was no difference in hatchery
and wild spawn timing. He talked about past and present release sites at Jack Creek and Social Security Bar and that the program was reduced in 1996 from 350K to 150K. Some committee members thought you need to look at where the hatchery fish spawned (mainstem) and their survival rates. It was also noted that fall chinook broodstock are collected from the mainstem at Social Security Bar and are almost all wild fish. The radio tracking study conducted in 1995 and 1996 detected no difference in hatchery and wild salmon migration timing and distribution. Some committee members thought that having a hatchery program helped to relieve pressure on wild fish, while other thought that having a hatchery program would only increase the fishing pressure on the Chetco and greater impacts to wild chinook salmon.

**Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – On average, hatchery fish should compose no more than 18% of the fall chinook salmon that spawn annually in the Chetco population area. This goal represents a running average over a period of ten years.

**Winchuck River**

**Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – On average, hatchery fish should compose no more than 10% of the fall chinook salmon that spawn annually in the Winchuck population area. This goal represents a running average over a period of ten years.

**Hunter and Pistol Populations**

**Committee Decision (9 votes) and ODFW** – On average, hatchery fish should compose no more than 5% of the fall chinook that spawn annually in the Hunter and Pistol population areas. This goal represents a running average over a period of ten years.

**IV. Limiting Factor Assessment – coastal populations**

i. Committee discussion and decisions

With limited time Satterthwaite gave a quick summary of limiting factors effecting coastal populations. The main take home points included: 1) there is good evidence that fry production generally exceeds the ability of the systems to produce smolts large enough to have a good chance for ocean survival, 2) freshwater harvest rates have increased through time in the Chetco River, and 3) there is evidence that total (ocean+freshwater) harvest rates of Chetco and Winchuck exceed harvest rates appropriate for maximum sustained yield.

**V. Time permitting. Conservation Status preferences**

i. Begin comparison of ODFW and Advisory Committee working drafts

ii. Committee discussion and decisions

i. No discussion on this topic. Not enough time.
VI. New business
   i. Location of next committee meeting (May 3)
      i. Brookings
   ii. PFMC update
      i. April 12, 2010 meeting to receive comments on proposed ocean salmon seasons.
   iii. ODFW update
      i. April 27th, 2010 ODFW will be holding a budget meeting in Brookings.
      iv. Beyerlin gave a summary on avian predation and a possible RAC grant to study and haze cormorants in the Lower Rogue River. Mainly we need to collect biological data on the number of cormorants and their diet.

VII. Public comment (10 minutes)
   i. No public was at the meeting.

VIII. Adjorn
   i. The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.