

Minutes of the Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program (STEP) Advisory Committee (STAC)



Date: January 7, 2011
Time: 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Location: Coos Bay Public Library
 525 Anderson Avenue
 Coos Bay, Oregon 97420

Type of Meeting:	Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program Advisory Committee
STAC Members in Attendance:	Mike Brochu, Leslie Wade, Gary Enoch, Richard Heap, Pat Gefre, Norm Ritchie, Doug Ray, Lin Howell, Tom Petersen, Armand Peña, Sean Hastie, Dave Dunahay
Not in Attendance:	Sammie Mosley
ODFW Staff:	Mike Gray, Tom Rumreich, Gary Vonderohe, Tim Walters, Christopher Claire, Josie Thompson, Kevin Herkamp, Debbi Farrell
Public:	Valerie Peña, Steve Craig, Pat DeMeurichy, Larry DeMeurichy, Reese Bender, Bob Taylor, Mike Gibson, BJ Rice, Joanne Rice

Agenda

Initial Agenda Items:

Friday, January 7, 2011

- Call to Order and Introductions
- Agenda Approval, Approval of October 2010 Meeting Minutes
- Administrative Updates
- Area STEP Reports
- 2011 STEP Conference Update & Award Nominations
- Propagation Flow Chart & Process Overview
- Overview of Upcoming Coos Basin STEP Propagation Proposal Renewals & Initial Monitoring and Evaluation Findings
- Review Renewals for Eel Lake and Cunningham Creek (Coquille High School) STEP Propagation Proposals
- Volunteer Recognitions
- STAC Mini-Grant Application Review
- Regulation Revision Process Update
- General Business
- STAC Recommendations to the Department
- Assignments & Agenda and Field Trip Ideas for Next Meeting
- Public Comment

Saturday, January 8, 2011

- Tour of Blossom Gulch Elementary – Boardwalk & Rearing Site, Isthmus Slough, Mouth of Daniels Creek

Call to Order, Introductions, and Agenda Approval

Mike Brochu, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m. and introductions were made.

Chair Brochu presented today's agenda for review. Agenda approved with addition of an update by N. Ritchie on the upcoming legislative session.

Approval of October 2010 Meeting Minutes

The October 15-16, 2010 meeting minutes were reviewed.

Motion: R. Heap motioned to approve the October 15-16, 2010 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 12-0.

Administrative Updates

Kevin Herkamp, ODFW STEP Coordinator provided the following information:

- Status of Mini-Grant Program funds; tabled projects
- Informed the board that Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Board may have additional funds available following this cycle. Inquired if STAC was interested in asking for a modification for the Mini-Grant Program as it is nearly out of funds – It was agreed that STAC request up to an additional \$5,000 to use as needed prior to June 30, 2011.
- K. Herkamp will submit to the R&E Program a request for STAC Mini-Grant funds for the upcoming biennium. The request will be for \$50,000, that same as last biennium.
- STAC members need to submit the Conditions of Volunteer Service forms to D. Farrell
- STEP Chiller Grant will be slightly reworded this next biennium to include purchase of aquarium and/or chillers to provide the flexibility needed by the Districts.
- STEP Fish Food account will more than likely have some excess funds at the close of the biennium due to some programs being under production (high mortality and low broodstock) and other cost savings put in place over the .
- One option that has come to light to fund STEP Fish Food is the possibility of selling excess “brights” that currently return to STEP facilities. These fish could also be donated to the state food bank and one provider will transport, vacuum seal, and flash freeze fillets at no cost. This would have to be coordinated through the districts but could provide an option for excess fish that are currently going to waste. The Board was asked if they supported pursuing either of these options.

The question was asked who would purchase the fish. K. Herkamp replied that a request for bids would be advertised or the fish could be donated through a similar process.

There was concern raised regarding the perception along with the possible ramifications. It was agreed it would be evaluated closely before any options were pursued. It was asked what options there are of selling eggs. K. Herkamp replied that it was more than likely not worth the effort and the best option is to sell them in the carcass. K. Herkamp will research and report back at next meeting of the feasibility.

- Greg Huchko developed a grant request to go to the R&E Board for a stream simulation table which could be used state-wide by the program. (K. Herkamp assisted Huchko with the request.) There were several concerns surrounding the set-up and take down of the tables along with the expense. Several members have transported the tables and commented that they don't last long with constant set-up and take-downs. K. Herkamp reassured the Committee that this particular one was offered at a price reduction and it was constructed to be transported.

K. Herkamp shared that there is interest in including similar but smaller tables in the Angler Education Trailers. It was asked who would provide the demonstrations. K. Herkamp replied

that hasn't been discussed yet, but it would likely be through the STEP Biologists. K. Herkamp shared that he's been asked several times if one of the tables is available for use. T. Rumreich shared that they are a tremendous educational tool. K. Herkamp will be looking into an R&E grant for these as the other education resources are developed.

Chair Brochu stated that Committee members need to work on submitting area reports.

Area STEP Reports

STAC members reported on activities in their area.

Gary Enoch – Upper Rogue

The gravel diversion at the former Gold Ray Dam gave way but has now stabilized. They've seen fish using the gravel. The Lost Creek Reservoir levels were lowered due to some structural problems. Crews have begun demolishing Butte Falls Hatchery. Now with Gold Rey Dam removed they haven't identified a way to monitor without the dam's fish counts.

Armand Peña – Coos, Coquille & Tenmile

Successful Chinook salmon spawning this year along with a good run. The Morgan Creek facility flooded last week with around one-foot of water. Good wild coho salmon return at Eel Lake – these were hatchery fish that spawned naturally.

Dave Dunahay – Eastern

Mann Lake received a second rotenone treatment. There was also some work at East Lake. Would like to see how the state plans on dealing with these invasive species – on a state wide basis so that the districts aren't on their own. The Department should have written protocols on the topic. Grass Carp has now become an issue at Devil's Lake – of which the Department stocked. It was suggested that opening it to bow hunting of carp might be a good idea.

Rich Heap – Lower Rogue

Chetco, Winchuk and Lower Rogue have had off-the-chart numbers. It could be due to several factors. It appeared to be slow going but picked up in mid-October. They were able to be selective with their egg take. The steelhead numbers appear to be pretty good also. The data from spawning surveys appears to put the stray rate at around 5% which would allow them to increase production efforts. California is experimenting with cameras to conduct inventories, along with using acoustic means. Haven't heard much about the Sacramento run which could impact ocean runs.

Sean Hastie – Mid Willamette

Has focused attention on the upcoming STEP Conference.

Mike Brochu – Umpqua

Good fall Chinook salmon run on the Umpqua. Raising 300,000. Coho salmon run was excellent, they handled over 600 Coho salmon – doesn't count the ones not touched in the pool. Gearing up for the Derby in February which supports the Umpqua Basin Enhancement Grant Fund. Steelhead run just started, looking good so far.

Doug Ray – North Coast

New member.

Lin Howell – Lower Willamette

Newer member.

Norm Ritchie – Lower Willamette

Handout provided. Passport to Fishing planning has started. The Oregon Wildlife Heritage Foundation has pulled out from the fundraising efforts. Attended the Inland Sport Fishing Advisory Committee meeting at ODFW Headquarters earlier this week.

Tom Petersen – Mid Coast

The fish coming in appear to be on the smaller size. Cox Island has been flooded; the estuary is being returned to its natural state. Coho salmon are going up to spawn; they appear to stay in the wetlands/lakes.

Pat Gefre – North Coast

Due to the curtailed fishery several areas were closed. The steelhead broodstock program began 8 years ago. The program was approved to raise 125,000. Started to see broodstock return in December rather than January/February. The Nestucca has mostly wild fish so far. Hebo Lake was closed last summer due to it being deepened along with vegetation removal. Hebo lake is planned to open back up in April which is a very popular family spot. The area has had quite a bit of high-cold water which is impacting opportunities. The dam on the Nestucca has impacted the water quality along with the fishery.

Leslie Wade – Upper Willamette

Erik Moberly is transferring to the Prineville office as Assistant DB. The ODFW plans on filling his STEP position as soon as possible. The Letz Creek group has a small dedicated group, which could use some help in various areas.

K. Herkamp shared that the Letz Creek group has been asked to improve their record keeping along with addressing some other concerns.

2011 STEP Conference Update

The 2011 STEP Conference is scheduled for March 26 & 27th at Twin Rocks Friends Camp in Rockaway.

The handling of conference funds will need to be re-evaluated. It's being looked into for the ANWS group to maintain the funds along with providing registration on their website. K. Herkamp will be focusing on getting the registration up and going this next week.

It was agreed that STAC members will have lodging provided for the March 25th STAC meeting in Tillamook. However STAC members will be required to register for the conference along with additional lodging needs above that for the quarterly meeting.

K. Herkamp will be requesting assistance with the Conference – due to lack of response to earlier requests we are getting behind and with my other duties it is hard to get it all done without some help. N. Ritchie shared that a spreadsheet has been created, which will be distributed to STAC members once it been updated. S. Hastie shared that he has a rough draft of the schedule.

Propagation Flow Chart & Process Overview

K. Herkamp requests feedback today regarding the direction the Committee would like him to go and if the current version is on track with meeting the needs of their request. The Committee shared that just being provided with the information today made it difficult to provide useful feedback. It was agreed that comments will be emailed to K. Herkamp as soon as possible.

It was asked if the STEP Biologists were provided this information for feedback. The answer was no; the STEP Biologists will review the proposals after STAC has the opportunity.

R. Heap shared that the original intent of requesting the flow chart was to create a document that would show the requirements and could be distributed to the various groups. The hatchbox/egg incubation program has different requirements due to the varying scenarios. Per the Department of Justice the requirements are the same for facilities and hatchboxes.

It was asked if there was a requirement for those receiving eggs to be affiliated with a facility. K. Herkamp replied no.

K. Herkamp will create an overview of the approval process. The STAC meeting is the “official” comment period for the STEP Propagation Project proposals.

It was asked what the carrying capacity is for the basin? D. Dunahay would like the information compiled so they know what the numbers are. It was suggested that the Coos area projects should be reviewed together.

Presentation: Coos Basin Fall Chinook Monitoring & Evaluation Program

Gary Vonderohe, Assistant District Biologist provided the presentation.

Currently there is a 30% clip rate currently at the STEP facilities; which takes a couple months to complete here in the basin. A fin clipping trailer would assist the district greatly and would allow better monitoring of the programs.

K. Herkamp shared that he’s working on finding funding possibilities to purchase a fin-clipping trailer which would include tagging capabilities.

There was discussion on the validity of surveys when staff can’t be everywhere at once. It was shared that in addition to angler interviews, the number of boats are included in the final calculations.

STEP Propagation Project Renewals for Eel Lake & Cunningham Creek

Tom Rumreich, Coos, Coquille & Tenmile STEP Biologist provided the presentation.

At the Cunningham Creek facility the fisheries classes are elective courses. The program has inspired many biologists and work in other natural resource fields. It’s a great community project, which has received national recognition.

Eel Lake provides an easy angling opportunity, which includes fishing clinics. The fishing clinic has many partners which provide various activities which include water safety presentations, Coast Guard demonstrations along with donations of fishing rods which are handed out for participants to take home.

Public Comment: Pat DeMeurichy shared that this last year at Eel Lake was their biggest yet at around 350-400 participants. The STEP group considers the free fishing day as their “Fun Day” the activities last all day. This year they were able to provide food to all the participants.

STAC Recommendation

D. Dunahay recommends that the water quality at Cunningham Creek needs to be look at.

Motion: D. Dunahay motioned to approve the Eel Lake and Cunningham Creek STEP propagation project renewals. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 12-0.

Volunteer Recognitions

The Coos, Coquille and Tenmile STEP District recognized the following volunteers for their dedication for STEP “things wouldn’t happen without them”.

Bob Taylor – Coquille River STEP
Steve Craig – South Coast Anglers STEP
Ray Lee – Coos River STEP
Pat DeMeurichy – Eel Tenmile STEP
Jim Edd – Gardiner Reedsport Winchester Bay STEP

STAC Mini-Grant Application Review

The Committee reviewed the following grant applications. The Committee agreed to review all the applications submitted prior to determining approval.

Mini-Grant 09-46 Fishhawk Lake Fish Ladder Sign Board
(previously tabled)

Mini-Grant 09-53 Heavy Sand Removal from Fish Pond Area

The Committee discussed the background of the situation. This last release was the facility’s best due to the help STAC provided with water quality improvement.

Mini-Grant 09-54 Fish Ecology Workshop for Teachers & Educators

K. Herkamp shared that he spoke with the applicant and she has a total of 4 applications before the Committee today.

The Committee shared concern with the lack of documentation supporting the need. With the limited funds this doesn’t fit into the Committee’s priorities.

Motion: G. Enoch motioned to deny MG 09-53. The motion was seconded and the application was denied by the Committee 12-0.

Mini-Grant 09-55 Eastwood Elementary Water Pump Replacement – Deductible Refund

The Committee discussed where the original funds were obtained from; and if there’s truly a need to “refund” the money.

Mini-Grant 09-56 Stream Simulator Table Educational Display
(withdrawn prior to review)

Mini-Grant 09-57 Eggs to Fry Classroom Project

D. Dunahay stated he hadn’t seen this application prior to its distribution in the meeting packets.

Motion: D. Dunahay motioned to deny MG 09-57. The motion was seconded and the application was denied by the Committee 12-0.

Mini-Grant 09-58 Fin and Feather Field Day (FFFD)
(withdrawn prior to meeting)

Mini-Grant 09-59 Talk About Fish and Fish!

The Committee discussed that this application was not reviewed with the STEP Biologist as needed.

Motion: R. Heap motioned to deny MG 09-59. The motion was seconded and the application was denied by the Committee 12-0.

The Committee discussed the lack of a volunteer aspect in the projects just discussed. The Committee does recognize the need for transportation to the activities provided through STEP however the program's goal is to promote volunteers.

Mini-Grant 09-60 Key to Identification of Anadromous Juvenile Salmonids in the Pacific Northwest

The Committee discussed the user group of the pamphlet; it's focused more towards the scientific aspect of identification. It's great for conducting surveys.

Mini-Grant 09-61 Claggett Creek Riparian Enhancement Partnership
Starter program. Creek runs along the school grounds. Good application.

The Committee discussed the need to identify where OWEB falls into the funding picture. K. Herkamp will follow up.

Mini-Grant 09-62 Reel Fish Days and Riparian Restoration for Youth

The applicant is very motivated; she possesses waders that she takes great care of. There are several donations not included on the application as match.

Motion: R. Heap motioned to approve:

- MG 09-46 in the amount of \$750;
- MG 09-53 in the amount of \$593;
- MG 09-55 in the amount of \$1,000;
- MG 09-60 in the amount of \$395;
- MG 09-61 in the amount of \$750; and
- MG 09-62 in the amount of \$1,630.

The motion was seconded and the above listed applications were approved by the Committee 12-0.

Conference Award Nominations

The Committee voted unanimously to recognize everyone nominated today at the upcoming STEP Conference in Rockaway. The following individuals and organizations have been invaluable in their contributions and support of STEP.

Kim Carson
Jim Grano
City of Florence
Ian Fergusson

Jim Edd
Jack Armer
Tom Sutton
Ron Byrd
Ray Hammer
Dave Morrison
Dave Booth
Khya Adams
Ray's Food Place – Brookings
City of Brookings
Umpqua Fishery Enhancement Derby Committee C/O Douglas Timber Operators
Menasha Forest Products Corporation – The Campbell Group LLC
Note: Douglas Timber Operators requested to Award be presented to Umpqua Fishery E.D.C.

General Business

Per the previous request of the Board, K. Herkamp looked into the possibilities of obtaining an OWEB grant so that STAC could distribute the additional funds for STEP related projects. The initial findings indicate that this is not likely a possibility unless a specific project is developed. Any such grant would add significantly to staff workload. It was determined that having a representative from OWEB to help explain OWEB's process in order clarify why STAC may be seeing some of the restoration projects that seem to be a better fit for OWEB would be prudent. K. Herkamp will look into having OWEB provide a presentation to the Committee at an upcoming meeting. Before a decision could be made it would need to be discussed further.

The question was raised why additional funds are being sought when there has been enough so far. Why do we need the additional funds?

K. Herkamp looking for direction in R&E grant development. K. Herkamp will be requesting renewals of the STEP Fish Food grant (will be asking for the full anticipated need), STEP Chiller grant and the STAC Mini-Grant. In addition over the next year or so he'll be looking at the possibility of developing additional grants through R&E for educational materials including aquatic education totes for the new Angler Education Trailers and doing a bulk purchase of materials to build egg-to-fry displays (rack of the 6 stages in development).

K. Herkamp mentioned that there is the possibly of a grant being developed to purchase a fin-marking trailer by the Fish Propagation Program. It sounds like that trailer would be available for use by south coast STEP programs. He will be coordinating with them and supporting if needed.

As requested by a couple of STAC members, K. Herkamp provided information on where to find the "how to" handouts for landowners and others that were previously developed as part of the Oregon Plan.

R. Heap presented the STAC Duties & Responsibilities handout. Discussion on the wording for meeting attendance – how firm does the group want to be? Remember – each Committee member is representing the Department. The question was raised that the members are appointed by the Governor not the Department – how would the Department remove them? K. Herkamp shared the comments that Rhine Messmer had provided regarding the document.

K. Herkamp requested an update to where things were left off in regards to STAC Goals – he hasn't had the time to revisit it and would like to know the direction the Committee would like to see him head. There was discussion centered on the purpose and what was actually the preferred outcome. K. Herkamp doesn't want to put the time and effort into it if the Committee isn't interested any longer. The

Committee believed the existing work met the intent of the initial exercise and documented what they wanted to focus on in the next few years. K. Herkamp will find the latest draft and send it out to the Committee for a final decision to approve, rework or kill the effort.

The Committee requested that if staff is seeking feedback on an issue – don't provide the information during the meeting and expect useful feedback.

The STAC Top Questions & Answers – K. Herkamp will be working with I&E to get the information from that and the previous STEP flyer developed into a brochure but hasn't been able to coordinate with them yet.

N. Ritchie provided an update to the upcoming legislative session. It's going to be a tough year for natural resources – with the past when years were poor the natural resource programs were reduced. The Committee discussed the difficulty of budgeting in the future – as the state does.

The question was asked if there was any information on floating easement and navigability. N. Ritchie replied that the law states that if you block navigability (example: with fences) you must provide access around the restriction.

Public Comment

No public comment at this time.

STAC Recommendations to Department

K. Herkamp asked if there was any recommendations that the Committee would like forwarded to the Department. The Committee asked if there was anything in particular he was looking for. The reply was no.

It was mentioned by the Committee that it's very difficult to function when staff are constantly changing positions. They realize job rotations can be good but didn't think it should come at the expense of the program.

Assignments, Agenda & Field Trip Ideas for Next Meeting

Tour – the group will leave the Edgewater Inn at 8:00 a.m. Everyone meet in the lobby prior to 8:00.

K. Herkamp asked if there were any items that the group would like to see on the March 25th meeting agenda. K. Herkamp if there was interest in a presentation from the biometrician on the creation of creel data.

Motion: R. Heap motioned for K. Herkamp to pursue an additional \$5,000 from the R&E Board to be used for STAC Mini-Grant requests as needed for the remainder of the biennium. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 12-0.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.