

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



Date: June 24, 2011
Time: 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Location: Florence Events Center
 715 Quince Street
 Florence, Oregon 97439

Type of Meeting:	Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program Advisory Committee
STAC Members in Attendance:	Leslie Wade, Armand Peña, Pat Gefre, Dave Dunahay, Mike Brochu, Tom Petersen, Norm Ritchie, Rich Heap, Sean Hastie, Lin Howell
Not in Attendance:	Gary Enoch, Doug Ray
ODFW Staff:	Kevin Herkamp, Rhine Messmer, John Spangler, Mike Gray, Gary Vonderohe, Brian Jenkins
Public:	Ron Caputo, Bob Occhi, Joshua Wetzel, Dennis Lindahl, John Franzen, Brian Hudson, Skip Rosenthal, Gary Lutman, Valerie Peña, Mike Frankhouser, Rick Samuelson

Agenda

Initial Agenda Items:

Friday, June 24, 2011

- Call to Order and Introductions
- Agenda Approval
- Approval of March 2011 Meeting Minutes
- Administrative Updates
- Area STEP Reports
- STAC Mini-Grant Application Review
- STEP Annual Report & Mini-Grant Report
- Volunteer Recognitions
- Depoe Bay Propagation Project Proposal (STEP Project)
- Letz Creek Propagation Project Proposal (STEP Project)
- Coos Basin Propagation Project Proposals (Millicoma Interpretive Center, Morgan Creek, Noble Creek) (STEP Projects)
- General Input & Recommendations to ODFW from STAC
- Assignments, Agenda Items & Field Trip Ideas for September 2011 Meeting
- Public Comment

Saturday, June 25, 2011

No Field Trip Scheduled

Call to Order and Introductions

Mike Brochu, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. and introductions were made.

Approval of Agenda & March 2011 Meeting Minutes

Chair Brochu presented today's agenda for review. Agenda approved with correction to reference to

approval of January 2011 meeting minutes, approval is for March 2011 meeting minutes.

The March 25, 2011 STAC meeting minutes were reviewed.

Motion: S. Hastie motioned to approve the March 25, 2011 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

Administrative Updates

Kevin Herkamp, ODFW STEP Coordinator provided the following information:

- **Egg-to-Fry Program**

The Egg-to-Fry Program isn't recognized as an ODFW program. Proposing a new logo to affix to program materials including aquariums. Eventually the idea is to supply the new logo to the STEP biologists as a sticker to attach to aquariums with a serial number. Currently there isn't a system in place to track and monitor aquariums in classrooms. After some discussion STAC recommends including the ODFW logo along with modifying the colors for the new logo.

Motion: D. Dunahay motioned to implement the proposed Egg-to-Fry logo but requested that the word Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife be modified to stand out more (i.e. changing the color, making bold). The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

The Clackamas Hatchery has been approached by K. Herkamp to put a bulk order together for the Egg-to-Fry displays – 300 to 400 units. The NW Steelheaders have volunteered to assemble some of the displays. The displays will be distributed to classrooms, STEP groups and made available to the trailers used through the ODFW Angler Education Program.

The R&E Grant proposal for STEP Chillers has been modified and will be presented to the R&E Board in August 2011.

- **R&E Grant for Fish Eggs to Fry Program Volunteer Guides** – The proposal has been submitted by the Association of Northwest Steelheaders (ANWS). The guides would be used by volunteers assisting with the Egg-to-Fry program. The grant request includes funds that would be used to inventory aquarium set-ups in the Portland- Metro area. There was discussion on the appropriateness of STAC's involvement with the grant proposal. After discussion the Committee recommends that the ANWS work with STAC's Education Committee on the revision and creation of materials.

S. Hastie stated a possible conflict of interest. If this grant was approved he would possibly be contracted to work on the revision and creation of materials.

Armand Peña shared that a company is being contracted to create a video on the salmon life-stages of hatchery fish. The project should be completed within a year and would be available for use by the various groups.

Motion: R. Heap motioned to support the R&E Grant Application "Fish Eggs to Fry Program Volunteer Guide" for the Steelheaders. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 9-0-1. (1 Abstain S. Hastie)

- **Education Committee** – Sean Hastie, Lin Howell and Mike Brochu volunteered to be a part of the Education Committee. K. Herkamp shared that he has been contacted by a retired teacher with experience in curriculum creation who is willing to volunteer to assist with material

development and incorporating the new educational standards.

- STAC Mini-Grant Application revision – the May 18, 2011 version approved.
- STEP Conference – Currently L. Howell, S. Hastie and L. Wade have volunteered. The next conference will be held early April or May 2013. Florence, Grants Pass and Canyonville have been suggested as possible locations. The Conference Committee will meet and provide a recommendation to STAC.
- Governor’s Volunteer Awards (the deadline has passed for 2011)
Motion: L. Howell motioned to submit nominations for the STEP Program, Sean Hastie and Norm Ritchie next year. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.
- STEP Fish Food – R&E approved the 2011-2013 request for STEP Fish Food at their last meeting. S. Hastie shared that the R&E Board was pleased to see a STAC member in attendance and recommends that a STAC member attends each time. The R&E Board was very supportive of STEP.
- STEP Annual Report – Draft version complete, looking for projects to highlight for the presentation to the Commission. Rhine Messmer suggested that the presentation provide an overview of STEP for the new commission members. It was suggested to highlight a couple ponds; volunteers put a tremendous amount of work in maintaining the ponds and hosting various youth activities.

Area STEP Reports

STAC members reported on activities in their area.

Leslie Wade – Upper Willamette
Handout provided.

Armand Peña – Coos, Coquille & Tenmile

Finished fin-clipping approximately 1.5 million fish. Free Fishing weekend at Tugman Park hosted over 300 kids this year. The Salmon Derby is scheduled for September 9th and 10th. The STEP barbeque is scheduled for August 20th.

Pat Gefre – North Coast

Free Fishing at Hebo Lake hosted 100 kids this year. Fin clipping party was on the 18th which included a barbeque and fund raising events. Rhoades Pond propagation renewal will be due soon. ODFW has requested various upgrades at the facility which totals around \$100,000. Quite a bit of community support for the project which so far includes \$20,000 towards the upgrades. Fishing has been good this year.

Dave Dunahay – Eastern

Kokanee Karnival had around 1,500 kids this year. Conducted a youth fishing clinic. Pelton Round Butte has had 3 fish return, the first since the bypass facility was constructed.

Mike Brochu – Umpqua

Handout provided. Released approximately 90,000 steelhead, scheduled 3 release days with grade school kids assisting. Coho program into Cow Creek – great returns but unable to pass dam. The Umpqua Fishermen Association (UFA) is working with the department on a solution. Fin-clipped 175,000 fall Chinook salmon with student help and then released into the main Umpqua River.

Tom Petersen – Mid Coast

Steelhead program completed. School programs went extremely well this year. Working with

Watershed District this coming week. A local wetland was restored, area residents very excited about the restoration. Coho salmon fishery should be promising – remarkable turn of events.

Norm Ritchie – Lower Willamette

Handout provided. Passport to Fishing at Bonneville Hatchery hosted its last year with record attendance including 135 volunteers and staff.

Rich Heap – Lower Rogue

Handout provided. Curry Anadromous Fishermen finished their fin-clipping. Took third graders fishing, whom were using boots that were purchased through a Mini-Grant. Twenty-first year running the screwtrap at Winchuk. Oregon South Coast Fishermen tagged some fish this year to assist with monitoring efforts. The Fall Chinook Rogue Plan has been drafted which took two-years. A lawsuit has been filed regarding ocean salmon, hasn't heard the outcome yet. Damage from the March 2011 tsunami was cleaned up fairly quickly in Brookings; they're in the process of replacing the docks. Area STEP volunteers were very valuable in the clean-up efforts at the harbor.

Sean (Bill) Hastie – Mid Willamette

Handout provided. "Hats off" to all the work the STEP biologists accomplish. Creeks and Kids has a few openings left, Western Oregon University is doing registration. Testified in support of ODFW's budget. Attended the Beaver Workgroup, very excited about it. Attendance at R&E meetings is a good idea.

Lin Howell – Lower Willamette

Presented to the R&E Board the Creeks and Kids grant application. Noticed the R&E and STEP relationship is great. Just finished travelling the United States and stopped by several state agencies that were envious of Oregon's STEP program. Arkansas legislature infused water education as a mandate. Met with a couple people from the Baker City area that might be interested in the Eastern Oregon STAC position.

STAC Mini-Grant Review & Approval

The Committee reviewed the following grant applications.

Mini-Grant 11-01 Eastwood Nature Days

This application was tabled last biennium. The applicant oversees this program along with another teacher, whom are known by a couple STAC members who say they're great educators.

Mini-Grant 11-02 Classroom Waders for Watershed Exploration

This program was started a few years ago. The teacher was no longer eligible to be in the Kokanee Karnival Program because fourth and fifth graders are in the program. He now teaches third grade. So the third-grade teachers created their own version of Kokanee Karnival with the assistance of Central Oregon Flyfishers and the STEP biologist. D. Dunahay shared that when these students attend Kokanee Karnival you're able to identify those who were introduced in the 3rd grade.

Mini-Grant 11-03 Outdoor School and Classroom Equipment

The Committee asked for clarification on this person's role with STEP. K. Herkamp replied that this person isn't involved with STEP but in previous roles within ODFW she was very involved in the various outdoor programs. The Committee asked if ODFW supported these efforts. K. Herkamp replied yes, she is on paid status while putting on these outdoor school programs.

Mini-Grant 11-04 Native Fishes of the Rogue River Poster Production

The Committee discussed if this was the first time this poster was printed. The Committee also asked why this sort of project wasn't funded by the ODFW's Information & Education program.

Mini-Grant 11-05 Underwater Digital Camera, Educational Documentaries & Exhibitions

The current camera is an analog version which needs repairs. The images have been an invaluable tool. A new camera would be used quite a bit and would also be available to the other STEP groups in the area.

Mini-Grant Approvals

MG 11-01

Motion: S. Hastie motioned to approve MG 11-01 in the amount of \$2,000 with the understanding that the STEP logo will be added to the publication as a sponsor. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

MG 11-02

Motion: S. Hastie motioned to approve MG 11-02 in the amount of \$2,000. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

MG 11-03

Motion: S. Hastie motioned to approve MG 11-03 in the amount of \$607. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0. (The \$50 for miscellaneous expenses was denied)

MG 11-04

Motion: S. Hastie motioned to approve MG 11-04 in the amount of \$1, 598. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

MG 11-05

Motion: S. Hastie motioned to approve MG 11-05 in the amount of \$1,700. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

Volunteer Recognitions

Tom Petersen introduced the following volunteers and recognized the dedication they share to the STEP program.

Mike Frankhouser for his efforts at work parties and education.

Bob Occhi for all his fabrication skills and his presence at all work parties.

Skip Rosenbalm for his ability to keep in contact with the community and arrange great programs.

Rick Samuelson for his constant participation in our work projects.

STEP Propagation Project Proposals

Depoe Bay Salmon Enhancement Commission Coho Supplementation Program

John Spangler, ODFW Assistant District Fish Biologist from the North Coast Watershed District provided an overview of the Depoe Bay Salmon Enhancement Commission's Coho Supplementation Program. The program is a benefit to the many local charter boats and businesses.

Questions / Comments from Committee:

- Are the fish released through the overflow pipe? Yes

- Are the domesticated stocks less likely to survive in the ocean? Possibility
- What are the stray rates? Unaware of any straying from this program
- Are there any issues with seal predation? Not aware of any problems

Public Comment: No public comment for the Depoe Bay Salmon Enhancement Commission Coho Supplementation Program

Motion: D. Dunahay motioned to recommend the Depoe Bay Salmon Enhancement Commission's Coho Supplementation Program STEP fish propagation project renewal to the Commission. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

Letz Creek Fish Rearing Facility

John Spangler, ODFW Assistant District Fish Biologist from the North Coast Watershed District provided an overview of the Letz Creek Fish Rearing Facility. The program began in the late 1980s and is currently managed by the Northwest Steelheaders Emerald Empire Chapter. Past concerns raised have either been addressed or are in the process of being corrected. Currently egg take to pond is at a 50% loss. The group has been arranging visits by local youth along with youth assisting with various hatchery tasks. Also, data collection efforts have been improved with monthly reporting to the North Coast Watershed District office. Gary Lutman, Northwest Steelheaders Emerald Empire Chapter was available to respond to STAC member questions and concerns.

Questions/Comments from Committee:

- Is there an advantage to approving the program for five-years? Reviewing the application more than that would equate to more work and currently the ODFW may rescind its approval of a project if needed. Having the facility report more often would assist with overview and eliminate the need for reapplying for approval.
- Is the property leased? The group has a signed lease agreement with the owners
- What work has been done with adding an educational component to the program? The group has placed aquariums in a few classrooms and has local schools come out to visit the facility.
- Are there enough volunteers to assist with the educational component? Yes
- Why is the mortality rate 50%? Not sure, lacking 24-hour staffing and they're currently experiencing quite a bit of predation. The hatchery also is battling water quality issues which contribute to the egg losses. The 50% loss rate has been an average for many years.

Public Comment:

Gary Lutman shared with the Committee the level of commitment the group has in making the program a success. The hatchery has a lot of community support. The group is working on making many improvements and vows to continue improving the record keeping aspect of the program. The concerns raised in the past regarding the program weren't deliberate, procedures have been put in place to correct these misgivings in the future.

Skip Rosenthal shared he originally didn't support the continuation of the program, but has changed his view and is in favor of supporting the program now. It's good to hear the issues are being discussed and addressed.

The Committee shared that it is glad to hear issues are being addressed. These sorts of programs are a great draw. Good job to all the volunteers at the Letz Creek facility. The Committee stated that they would like a status report submitted by the District. J. Spangler will report back to the Committee next year.

Motion: R. Heap motioned to recommend the Letz Creek Fish Rearing Facility STEP fish propagation project renewal to the Commission. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

(Coos Basin Projects) Noble Creek Fall Chinook, Morgan Creek Fall Chinook and Millicoma Fall Chinook Fish Propagation Project Proposals

Mike Gray, District Fish Biologist Charleston Field Office provided an overview of the renewal applications for the Noble Creek Fall Chinook, Morgan Creek Fall Chinook & Millicoma Fall Chinook Fish Propagation Project Proposals. Currently the programs adipose fin-clip, went away from ventricle clips due to various reasons. The program changed to pre-smolt releases. Evaluation efforts are underway, hoping to complete five years worth of data collection. Gary Vonderohe, Assistant District Fish Biologist / STEP Biologist was available to answer any questions.

Rhine Messmer asked if they've determined if the percent of jacks returning and the age class structure are normal. The answer was yes. The percentage of jacks returning doesn't appear to have any indication of future return rates for Chinook salmon. R. Messmer asked if they've determined if the age composition of returns is related to the life stage at release. The response was it hasn't been looked at yet, but with the data collection being conducted now it might provide some insight.

Questions / Comments from Committee:

- Are you collecting scales and carcasses? Department & Oregon Hatchery Research Center staff collected a couple hundred scale samples – The Committee shared this is generally a good project for volunteers.
- Why not consider increasing release numbers? G. Vonderohe replied that increasing the numbers now could impact the validity of the data being collected, and there has been some comments that the program is quite large as it is now, being the largest on the coast. The group is currently struggling with the numbers it's releasing now. Mike Gray shared that some strategies need to be found to increase catch rates of the fish being released now before the release numbers would be increased. As it is now, only approximately 65% of the fish are being caught.
- What response has the 2-rod angling license receive? R. Messmer shared that several thousand individuals have taken advantage of the new license. The license might be evaluated for expansion at the next statewide angling review process.

Public Comment:

Val Peña shared that the stock used in the Coos Basin are all local stocks. Recently the Coos Bay City Council invested over \$100,000 promoting the fishing opportunities in the area. Fishing opportunities and access have been improved in several areas. Several businesses have contacted the STEP program looking to combine forces for supporting the various programs. The local Chamber of Commerce estimates that each person coming to the area to fish spends \$200 for each trip. The draw to the area is great, lowering the numbers the groups release would negatively impact the economies of the coastal communities tremendously. They see approximately 5,000 youth impacted by their program each year. Recently Southwest Oregon Community College students have assisted with fin-clipping since there aren't opportunities for them closer to their area. The group is conducting fishing clinics to assist with increasing catch rates.

John Franzen shared that the program fin-clipped over 70% of their fish this year which will assist in data collection. The program would like to at least maintain the current release numbers. The program means a lot to the community and impacts thousands of people each year.

Rhine Messmer commented that volunteers and staff have done a tremendous job on the evaluation of the programs and once they've collected some more data they will have a better idea on how the program is working.

The Committee shared that the Coos Basin projects are the “Poster Child for STEP Propagation.”

Motion: R. Heap motioned to recommend renewal of the Noble Creek Fall Chinook, Morgan Creek Fall Chinook & Millicoma Fall Chinook Fish Propagation Project Proposals to the Commission. The motion was seconded and approved by the Committee 10-0.

General Input & Recommendations to ODFW from STAC

- M. Brochu commented that it might assist in the recruitment of volunteers if the groups start working on Saturdays. G. Vonderohe shared that he tried it when he first came to the program and found that the numbers decreased instead of increased. If it were to be implemented it would need to be on a District by District decision.
- T. Petersen asked what decides the number of boats allowed on a river. R. Messmer shared that it’s usually a parking issue or comfort level of the boaters– the department doesn’t regulate the number.

Next Meeting

The September meeting will be held in Medford. Possible agenda topics include:

- Conference Awards
- OWEB v. STAC
- Volunteer Tracking Database
- Tour – Bear Creek

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Honeyman Park Barbecue

The Committee will be having a “good bye” barbeque for Tom Petersen, Armand Peña and Norm Ritchie. All three members have come to the end of their second terms as STAC members.