



Salmon & Trout Enhancement Program Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: 5/17/2023

Location: Virtual and Best Western Ponderosa Lodge, Sisters, Oregon

Current Salmon & Trout Enhancement Program Advisory Committee Members (STAC)

Committee Members

Vacant – North Coast	Morgan Parks – North Willamette
Roger Lindquist – South Coast	Rachel Ellison – South Willamette
Jessica Eubank – Southern Mid Coast/Lower Umpqua	Curtis Bennett – Tenmile, Coos & Coquille
David Grosjacques – Umpqua	Steven Janego – Central Eastern
Carl Cole – Upper Rogue	

ODFW Staff

Marty Olson – R&E/STEP Program Coordinator	Ron Rehn – STEP Biologist
Steve Emerson – R&E/STEP Program Assistant	John Weber – STEP/Assistant District Biologist
Mike Gauvin – Recreational Fisheries Manager	Jen Luke – STEP Biologist
Gary Vonderohe – STEP/Assistant District Biologist	Tim Porter – Assistant District Fish Biologist
Shaun Clements – Assistant Administrator for Inland Fisheries	

Public

Name – President Central Oregon Fly Fishermen(?)

Fred Cholick-

Call to Order & Agenda Approval

Chair S. Janego called the May 17, 2023, Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program Advisory Committee (STAC) meeting to order at 8:00 AM.

Motion: Dave motioned to approve the previous meeting agenda as amended, Roger seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The Committee reviewed the October 20, 2022, STAC meeting minutes.

Motion: C. Bennett motioned to approve the May 20, 2022, meeting minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

Group discussion on the mini-grant rating guide sheet. Board doesn't recall seeing it in the past, but like things about it. Roger asked if the rating sheet was handed out because we have more grant requests than there are funds left. Curt asked if we would be scoring as a group or individually. Janego said he would like to use the form if we get into a grid lock and need it as a tool to move forward. Steve Janego proposed that we wait to use the form until the end of the review if there is a decision that needs to be made as to what not to approve. Morgan said she appreciates the rating sheet because she feels they make things equitable by making sure we look at each application with the same things in mind. Dave said he doesn't think we need to put numbers down but looking at it as a guide could be very helpful. Roger said he would like to see the scoring sheet put into the packet on the website for grant applicants because it would help applicants write better requests. The group agreed with Roger and several voiced support for that.

Group discussed the merits of using the rating sheet today. Janego suggested we use the existing process without the scoring sheet today and discuss its use in the future later today during Marty's presentation.

Motion: Steve motioned, Dave seconded, carried unanimously.

Team Update on STEP rules

Mike Gauvin gave an update on some changes to the proposed STEP rules after meeting with a few different tribes. Goal now is to shoot for September to go to the commission. Roger said that it feels like we've been working on these rules for what seems like three years and we shouldn't let perfect be the enemy of good. Mike explained that it has to get Commission approval so we have to try to make it perfect so it can't be scrutinized and sent back to us to change more. The group discussed how many times they met and how many people worked on this and wondered if a deadline for public comment can be set. Mike and Emerson explained how the Commission meeting goes and how accepting all of this public comment will show the Commission that we were exhaustive in our inclusion of the public.

Gary Vonderohe gave a presentation on the updates to the STEP Oregon Administrative Rules. Gauvin explained some history around the inclusion of the work "enhancement." Roger asked for the definition of a native fish. Further changes were explained by Gary, Mike, and Marty.

Dave asked Gary how to explain to people that this isn't a plan to get rid of STEP hatcheries. Gary said he gets accused of that with everything he does. He said we're trying to make the program better and stronger and have it fit the new department policies developed since these rules were last touched.

Mike said that letters of support for the STEP rules from local groups would be helpful. An updated letter from STAC would also be good.

Invasive Species Overview Presentation

Jen Luke gave a presentation on invasive species in Oregon high lakes.

Send PDF of presentation to board members after meeting consider posting to website as well.

Dave asked where the money from ODFW is to help with invasive species removal. Janego added that with climate change, these issues are likely to get worse. Mike said there is no money now for this and the districts have been flat funded for a while. Mike talked about the Policy Option Package he put together for 12 biologists for this issue that was didn't get adopted. Dave said he feels it would be appropriate for ODFW to fund things like this. Janego said it might be a good idea for STAC to draft a letter and plan to send to the governor since the STAC board is appointed by the Governor. Janego feels like this kind of thing is the board's role. Mike added that these fish aren't a problem in all areas they exist. Roger asked if the R&E money that is being spent on this is considered ODFW money or not. Dave said it's from a \$4 surcharge on every license so it's from the anglers.

Carl asked why we are talking about invasives in lakes but not our rivers like pikeminnow in the Rogue. Mike said we are, and the problem is widespread. The rivers and lakes get talked about differently because they have different management issues, but assured the group we are also looking at river issues.

Action Item – Dave said he and Janego will get together to write something up to push for this. Reach out to other groups and get groups together.

Central Oregon Hot Topics

Jen Luke and Tim Porter gave a presentation on hot topics from Central Oregon.

Mini-grant reviews

Roger let the group know that the hoist project is on hold now. Marty also let the group know of another project that will be placed on hold for now. Marty updated the group to let them know how much money is available and how much money is being requested by all of the current mini-grants. Requests total ~\$1,800 more than we have. Curt asked if we have denied a project due to lack of funds and Steve said we have not. Steve said we could approve a project and have the funding come in the next biennium. Marty clarified that money approved at this meeting has to be spent out by end of June.

Dave commented that two meetings ago on a zoom meeting when there were 5-8 mini-grants. There was a motion to approve all at once and Dave wasn't a fan of that because the board wasn't able to provide comments on each one. Dave asked when we would talk about mini-grant amounts and answer was later today during Marty's presentation.

An overview of each project was given followed by discussion by the board. The board then worked through each project allowing for public comment before voting on each mini-grant.

Mid Coast Volunteer Waders and Rain Jackets MG 21-23

Jessica gave an overview of the project application. Curt talked about how gear needs to be replaced when in bad condition especially now that kids are back from covid.

Motion: Curt motioned to approve for \$2000, Dave seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Cunningham Creek Hatchery Generator MG 21-24

Curt gave an overview of the project application. Gary provided some info about how this new generator is automatic and kicks on when the power goes out. Old system was manual and outdated. Dave pointed out that Norm was one of the first teachers to get a set up like the school has where the trap is only 100 feet from the door.

Roger asked about this one because it is a reimbursement. Could this one be deferred to next biennium? Marty said we couldn't.

Motion: Roger motioned to approve for \$1353.50, Carl seconded motion carried unanimously.

Rhoades Pond Pump Replacement MG 21-25

Ron Rehn gave an overview of the project application.

Motion: Curt motioned to approve for full amount, Dave seconded motion carried unanimously.

Greens Creek Acclimation Water Delivery Pipe MG 21-26

Carl gave an overview of the project application. Carl explained that this piping project will help reduce the amount of debris that end up at the screens. Dave added he has worked with Carl on this and last time he was there there were at least 30 volunteers there and people are very enthusiastic about it. Carl said this acclimation project has been going for 5 years now and great fish are coming back. Even guides are targeting the fish now. Group was very happy to hear about the success.

Roger asked if there was a vault above this piping and answer was yes.

Motion: Dave motioned to approve for \$1978.66, Curt seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Stream Restoration Table MG 21-27

Carl gave an overview of the project application. Carl explained that the teacher is looking for a table with water flowing across it to show kids habitat and the various affects of rocks, sand, trees, etc. Dave added that in 2008 a stream table was purchased, and it is now stored in Dave's garage. Dave explained that not only kids love the stream table, but everyone is drawn to it.

Roger asked what the difference was between standard and deluxe, answer was overall size.

Motion: Dave motioned to approve for full amount, Roger seconded, motion carried unanimously.

New Projection Equipment MG 21-28

Rachel gave an overview of the project application. Curt asked if we can put a STAC logo on the screen or projector. Group wanted to know what projector and why so expensive. Martyne explained that the projector is needed for outdoor presentations where it's bright.

Motion: Dave motioned to approve for full amount, Rachel seconded, motion carried unanimously.

McKenzie River Disc. Center Fishing Pond Bridge MG 21-29

Rachel gave an overview of the project application. Lots of volunteer hours have been logged at the facility, lots of local public support. Already secured volunteer labor and angler education instructor courses are occurring there. Steve asked if angler education events will continue there, Rachel said yes, so this can be considered partially an education grant.

Group talked about how they would like to have a meeting or tour stop there. Mike asked what kind of bridge this is and if engineering has looked at it. Mike mentioned that R&E funded some things at the site and Marty clarified that the trail and bridge wasn't part of the R&E grant. Steve asked if Bryce could look at it. Mike said it sounds simple, but we don't have plans in the application. Jessica pointed out that we don't know if this bridge is going to be ADA compliant. Roger asked if this project would go through even if STAC doesn't approve the mini-grant. Martyne said the bridge would be ADA compliant. Steve said that with the concerns around this one, does the board

Motion: curt motioned to table until October meeting, dave seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Mill Creek Revitalization Project MG 21-30

Rachel gave an overview of the project application. Invasive species (plants) removal out on Mill Creek (Turner area). Already secured volunteer labor for this. Community is also getting involved. Dave added that when he grew up in Salem area and Mill Creek was under 18 years old only for angling. Curt asked about the snacks included and compared it to providing gas for buses. Steve said when we go back through to approve, there can be a motion to approve without the money for snacks.

Roger said he doesn't think we pay for food. Steve said we like to see line items and prices, a little more detail. Morgan asked if we tell applicants what is needed and what can't be funded. Emerson pointed out that our STAC mini-grant

page has all that info. Gauvin added that we could improve our onboarding for STEP Bios and STAC Members.

Motion: Roger motioned to approve \$1900 striking food, Dave seconded, motion carried unanimously. Roger comment before vote: on labor cost wants to make sure the nursery gets kudos for donating the time and work to help with this.

North Coast Access Sites Maintenance MG 21-31

Curt gave an overview of the project application. Curt talked about having the students back being great. Coming out and putting hands on fish is making it clear than new equipment is needed. Waders, gloves, raincoats. Steve asked if ODFW gets price deals on waders. Answer was yes.

Motion: Dave motioned to approve for full amount, 2k, Roger seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Gary's mini grant MG 21-32

Dave said he was a science teacher, it took money and a substitute teacher for his field trips to be possible. Dave shared that often times the kids who are the biggest pain in the neck in the classroom are natural leaders outside on field trips. That being said, Dave said he can't vote to fund this because we would quickly run out of money trying to fund field trips for 400 schools. Schools need to stop cutting field trips, he continued. Dave encouraged the board to push school districts to stop cutting field trips. Steve pointed out that funding transportation has been off the table in the past, and the group talked about how that has been practice because the board doesn't have enough funding to provide transportation. Morgan asked if we have ever approved this mini-grant because it seems like it has come through multiple times. Has anyone let them know why this project isn't getting funded? Morgan said she remembers funding them in some way before. Marty shared that we did fund them for curriculum development. Roger asked if we can look at the curriculum project at some point today.

Motion: Roger motioned to deny because it's not in scope, Carl seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Action Item: Reach out to applicants explaining why declined.

MFWWC MG 21-33

Rachel gave an overview of the project application. Steve asked if these have a shelf life, Rachel said they could be reused and shared between projects. Invertebrate guides.

Motion: Jessica motioned to approve for 1k, Curt seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Appreciation

Jen Luke presented Fred Cholick with an appreciation award.

Action Item: send STAC contact lists to board members.

Break for Lunch

Janego STAC Strategic Planning

Steve Janego gave a presentation on STAC Strategic Planning. Steve talked about how we don't have a strategic plan or five year plan or something similar. If we could identify a few critical things and come together to have a STAC deliverable that would be really great. Steve shared a document he and Jen Luke developed back in 2017. He talked about how you have to have some resources to make this happen. Lots of work for the amount of resources we have. Encouraged the group to identify one or two objectives. Janego showed a plan to Commissioner Labhart and he thought it would be really cool and appreciated. Steve shared an example annual plan to kick-off the discussion.

Dave said he really likes the idea of a goal of increasing public interest, and volunteer involvement in STEP projects by a certain percentage. Jessica pointed out that STEP bios would need to be on board with these goals because they are the ones spearheading the projects and planning the events. The STEP bios often get the volunteers.

Roger agrees that providing position papers to the ODFW Commission on critical fisheries decisions that impact the

Oregon recreational anglers. Dave said the Commission doesn't give STAC time to even give a presentation to them so why would they care about position papers? Roger said STAC hasn't done much when we could, so maybe need to demonstrate value and provide input. Roger urged the group to be more active. Dave pointed out that Labhart was on STAC and R&E and now is a commissioner. Steve said that he and Herkamp had many discussions around this topic, just want to have a seat at the table. Other way to look at this is "provide something of value and you will be invited to the table and earn our seats." Steve suggested STAC go hunting for hot topics to bring to the Commission with opinion papers. Dave doesn't remember STAC developing a strategic plan.

Fred C added if you have 1-3 goals you have an 80% chance of success. 10 goals, 10% chance of success. Second point, if you want to have impact, engage John Q Public with the Commission. Authorities tend to listen to the public more than quasi-governmental people like STAC members.

Steve asked the group, if we could do one thing in 2024, what would it be? The group discussed the 4 example goals and everyone agreed they are all important and related. Consensus was Provide position papers to Commission.

Group talked about having work sessions by having longer in person meetings, replacing the tour, and having additional virtual meetings.

Action Item: Steve Janego and Marty will communicate about this and polish the goal wording more.

East Side Reintroduction Strategy, Progress, and Challenges

Tim gave a presentation to the group. Dave asked why PGE is helping with this, Tim said it's part of their Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) license. Jessica asked about low flows and dissolved oxygen (DO) levels. Roger asked if there is any data from springers that were trucked down from Cole Reavers to Gold Beach. Mike said not sure yet, we can check into it and report back.

Action Item: Find answer to Roger's question.

STAC Regional Updates

Insert from emails.

Carl Cole gave an update from Upper Rogue STEP District. Cole Rivers Hatchery having trouble getting electrical hookup done. Waiting on engineering approval. Winter steelhead run 1178 made it to the hatchery. Below 10 year average. Springer run though was 665 to hatchery where 229 is the 10 year average. People are catching a lot of big hatchery fish. The hatchery fish are starting slow down and now more wild are being caught. June 1 people can keep wilds. Large fish = 30 pounders. Next month starting broodstock collection at the hatchery. They set a trap in a side channel. Quota is 1150 Females and 550 males. In the side channel, over 500 were collected last year. March and April acclimation was done. Back in march the middle rogue Steelheaders had their second annual steelhead derby. All money raised goes to support CNR projects. Weather wasn't great, but those who showed up had a great time. This derby was a catch and release and Carl thinks it will continue to grow. Dave commented that Carl did an amazing amount of work getting this derby going and its raising a lot of money. Carl said it will be the last one he helps set up because it's so much work. There's a boat ramp at white horse park and it's not very safe. It's on a curve, as soon as you launch there's trees overhanging. Week ago middle rogue Steelheaders put 5 yards of 2" rock to fix a drop-off along the ramp. Repair should last longer than last fix that used smaller rock.

Dave's Update: Winter steelhead on Umpqua not great. Coho way down in south Umpqua, surveyors saw zero live coho. No broodstock for coho for next year. Spring chinook this year was good. Fall chinook broodstock was collected by Reedsport Gardiner STEP. Broodstock collection by the public was more than half done by a single guide. Without Rock Creek hatchery fish are having to be hauled around, lots of miles. Dave reiterated that coho was bad.

Seven Feathers is putting on a fishing event. ODFW is doing high lakes stocking with horse groups and Roseburg fly fishers. Roseburg fishing derby fundraiser on the Umpqua. At an event 12 guide boats got 1 single fish. One big issue that Dave has talked about is Rock Creek burning down and fish needing to be moved around. We need Rock Creek Hatchery back. There was supposed to be public input this spring but hasn't happened yet. Umpqua fishermen group wanting to work on fish projects but there aren't enough projects to work on. They have volunteers but need the projects.

STAC Mini-Grant Program Review

Marty gave a presentation about the program.

STAC Funding request for additional \$50,000 request was denied by the R&E Board. The R&E Board agreed that the STAC mini-grant program does good things. But the board wanted more information as to what the grants were going to and what type such as restoration, enhancement, education, equipment purchase, etc. The timing was unfortunate because there were millions of dollars of asks on the table for the most recent cycle. The board ended up recommending 4.1 million of 4.4 million, so they were really looking at where they needed to spend money. They also wanted to know if STAC was currently allocating all of their funds. Roger asked what typical leftover money for R&E is, Dave answered that asks came in early so that projects would have the whole biennium to complete their projects. Dave pointed out that over a million was allocated to Willamette Falls one cycle. Dave said that typically only half the money would be allocated in cycle 1. One of the sentiments of R&E was that if you give more money to STAC, R&E needs more money. Dave expressed that he disagreed with that. Dave said that he feels that \$2,000 cap on mini-grants is enough and that \$50,000 overall is adequate. Steve talked about how the presentation went. He talked about presenting the cost-benefit analysis of mini-grants and how the money snowballs. He presented how many volunteer hours a single STEP bio generates. Roger asked if we report on how much money is leveraged by our mini-grant funds. Match dollars is what he's talking about and volunteer hours. Roger would like to see the total over the last biennium or two. Steve pointed out that STAC isn't soliciting for more projects than there is money for so we don't have a bunch of projects there isn't funding available for.

How does STAC want to move forward? Steve suggests we make another run at it. Curt said we have taken 2 swings since he's been here. Curt talked about how funding hasn't gone up in 10 years and the cost of fuel and everything else has gone up. He pointed out that \$2,000 doesn't go far, doesn't think it's enough. Dave said he thinks the mini-grants are supposed to be small things, not 5-10k amounts and huge projects. Roger added that there have been very few projects denied due to lack of funding. Steve talked about how he's not sure why R&E and STAC are different boards. If the money was on one table and the boards worked together to allocate it, what would be the issue with that, where's the balance. Steve reiterated that giving STAC more money doesn't mean that R&E loses.

Marty continued with an overview of the program. Funding comes from R&E, 50k per biennium, projects need to meet the intent of R&E program. 4 grant cycles, \$25,000 each year, about 12.5k a cycle, 2k cap on each grant. Eligible projects include: education, habitat enhancement, fish propagation, angler access, inventory and monitoring, step facility maintenance.

21-23 biennium mini-grant funding breakdown, majority was education at ~43%, STEP Facility Maintenance ~26%, fish propagation 11%, angler access 7%, Inventory and monitoring 7%, and habitat enhancement 3%. If the projects were to be split into different buckets of Restoration and Enhancement it would roughly be 19.5k (35%) restoration and 32.3k (65%) enhancement.

Analysis of spending by district doesn't seem to show any districts getting a disproportionate amount of funding. The average request over time has gone from ~\$1400 to ~\$1800 from 2013 to now.

Are there any desired changes? Brainstorming: Dave talked about how the scoring sheet can be a checklist for applicants and STAC members. The group discussed how and where information for applicants should be made available. Steve said he wants to be sure that we don't create a bunch of unnecessary bureaucracy. Roger pointed out that STAC and STEP bio are responsible for making sure applications are complete and good. Morgan said that she has never been sent an application. Carl and Dave and Roger said they get them.

Mike added that STEP bios have budgets of their own. Sometimes they come in with mini-grants when they have money of their own. Maybe we ask the question, can the STEP bio afford the thing they are asking STAC for? Their budgets go back to the feds if it isn't spent and if we are trying to stretch money furthest, might want to look at this.

Motion: Steve Janego motioned to create a STAC subcommittee to accomplish what Marty talked about, Curt seconded, motion carries unanimously.

Volunteer Trends and Strategies on R3

Antonio presented about ODFW's recruitment, retention, and reactivation plan. Hunters, anglers, wildlife watchers, boaters. People started looking at hunter education data and noticed we are seeing a decrease in hunters. Focus turned to trying to recruit kids into the sports of fishing and hunting. Created a lot of programs for teach kids about hunting and fishing. Looking at the number of people hunting and fishing every year revealed that while the number of hunters and anglers wasn't changing drastically, different people were present. Meaning people might hunt or fish for a year then not the next but a new group of people equal in number joined.

Recruitment is somebody new to the activity from another activity. Bring people to do the activity, then increase their participation. Retention is getting them to keep buying the license and tags year after year. Avid individuals will continue no matter what, but aside from those people we have to work for their participation. Reactivation is bringing people back who have left but were previously customers. Talked about an experiment where people could shoot any 3 ducks or go by the new rules. Hunters stopped hunting because they couldn't identify ducks, so when this new option came out, 8,000 hunters were reactivated. The majority of kids are fishing events are from fishing families, not all, but majority.

Start recruitment with the people who are already recreating outdoors. Campers, hikers, bikers, etc. Instructors need a good blend of interpersonal skills, education skills, and fishing skills. For volunteers, you need to start with recently retired and enthusiastic, optimistic. They have time and knowledge and the enthusiasm.

Future Meetings, recruitment updates, board topics

Next meeting at OHRC October 19-20.

February '24 Salem 8th and 9th tentative.

Waiting on gov office for north coast position. Morgan agreed to do second term. Curt is going to start looking for his replacement.

Business cards – Marty will follow up after meeting with email

Trivia

Meeting adjourned at 5:30PM