

Changes to Part 4(F) DLCD Urban Growth Management

NOAA Fisheries' comments on DLCD's Urban Growth Management Program description say the chapter "needs to describe land use development on the coast and how each land use law is being implemented within the ESU." NOAA also says the chapter "should address this question: Do lands within the coastal cities' urban growth boundaries overlap with streams with high intrinsic potential for coho salmon? How have recent growth trends (last 30 years) on the coast within cities, incorporated communities and rural reserves affected areas of high intrinsic potential for coho salmon?"

The department did not have these questions to guide development of the urban growth management program description. Moreover, the focus on intrinsic potential has arisen and evolved only in the last couple of months. Only very general data on intrinsic potential was available when the growth management chapter was written. Using those data, we are able to address the incidence of urbanized streams with high intrinsic potential only in general terms. However, since we do not have readily information on land use patterns thirty years ago, we are not able to provide any analysis of the effect of the last thirty years' growth on such streams.

As noted in the report, the point of the description of the urban growth management program is that "if urbanization affects stream systems in ways that increase risk for salmonid populations, then policies that restrict the expansion of urban areas constitute an important 'conservation effort.'" In other words, Oregon's growth management program contributes an important conservation element to the coho landscape, even though its basic purpose is unrelated to aquatic habitat conservation. The merits of the program have been described, using the only available data, within the parameters of the Policy for Evaluating Conservation Efforts. It is simply not possible to try to rewrite the program description on the basis of NOAA's comments within the remaining time available to describe elements of the Oregon Plan.

NOAA's comments also note that the program description "should provide at least an overview of potential impacts of Measure 37 on Oregon's land use program on the coast." We have noted before that the effects of Measure 37 are virtually impossible to predict, and we still maintain that any overall conclusions about the effect of Measure 37 on the land use program on the coast would be either speculative or irresponsible or both. We can describe in general terms the claims that have been filed thus far, and we can attempt to identify the location of the subject properties. Since it will be some time before any claim actually manifests in some change on the ground, it remains virtually impossible to describe with any certainty the effect of Measure 37 on the coho landscape. Nevertheless, the description of the Growth Management Program has been revised to present information on Measure 37 claims filed against the statewide land use program through March 31, 2005.