



Oregon Plan *Teamwork*

Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds

October 1998

This monthly publication is written and distributed by Mikell O'Mealy, Oregon Sea Grant Fellow in the Governor's Natural Resources Office. It presents her observation of the evolving roles and activities of supporting teams and oversight bodies of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds.

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Vote from Legislative Committee Reaffirms Funding Commitment

On October 2nd, the listing of coastal coho as threatened under the Endangered Species Act will take effect from Cape Blanco to the Columbia River. Among the many, less-certain effects this listing will have on Oregon Plan recovery efforts, stands a certain loss of revenue coming from the timber tax established by House Bill 3700. Section 16 of the Bill requires the tax be terminated on the first day of the month following a listing of coastal coho.

The November 1st revenue loss will result in a funding shortfall of approximately \$6,500,000 to the Watershed Improvement Grant Fund, the main funding mechanism for on-the-ground restoration projects. Approximately \$2,700,000 of this shortfall has already been committed to support various interagency agreements and watershed restoration grants.

Presented with a possible loss of momentum gained in restoration work and interagency coordination, the Joint Legislative Committee on Salmon and Stream Enhancement voted unanimously to support the continued funding of the State's Oregon Plan commitments. The Committee recommended that the Emergency Board appropriate a \$2,650,000 reservation to cover standing commitments and establish a \$3,900,000 reservation to cover watershed restoration needs through the remainder of the biennium. The Emergency Board has since made this appropriation and reservation to ensure the continuation of restoration and agency work.

Legislative Committee Examines Permitting Issues

A hypothetical scenario was posed to a panel of five agency representatives in September to probe the complex process of obtaining permits. The exercise comes as a result of heightened concerns that the often lengthy and costly permitting process dissuades many landowners from performing work or maintenance that could improve watershed health. The Joint Legislative Committee on Salmon and Stream Enhancement called to the table Directors of the Department of Environmental Quality,

Department of Fish and Wildlife and Division of State Lands, as well as representatives of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to address permitting difficulties.

The case study involved a landowner wanting to perform maintenance work on a 75-year old drainage system bordered by pastureland and upstream behind a tide box. Discussion focused on a set of key questions addressing required permits and permit conditions, consultation responsibility and concurrence authority among agencies, timeframes of the permit process, and ability of the applicant to appeal the final decision.

The exercise concluded with a discussion of statutory and administrative rule changes that might make permit processes more efficient and user friendly. Suggestions ranged from developing new interagency agreements and General Authorizations, to integrating SB1010 Water Quality Management Plans with permit processes, to increasing outreach and technical assistance to landowners and watershed councils.

Oregon Plan Progress Summarized Online

As an assessment tool for those working to implement the Plan or an educational tool for those wanting to learn more, the Oregon Plan Progress Report provides a valuable perspective. Created with guidance from the Implementation Team, the report provides a vehicle to display summarized data and communicate progress of recovery efforts to a broad audience.

Now linked to the Oregon Plan web site, the report features charts, graphs and brief summaries depicting the status of fish populations, instream habitat and public attitudes in Oregon. Specifically, the report contains progress indicators for about 20 of the 36 high-level outcome measures for the Coho Portion of the Oregon Plan. The latest additions to the report include monthly vehicle license plate sales (listed as a measure of public attitude status) and a summary of ODOT culvert work which has now improved fish passage at 40 of the 62 high priority coastal culverts. The report can be viewed directly at <http://www.oregon-plan.org/progress>.

Agencies are asked to provide summary information and charts where needed for each of the outcome areas addressed in the report. Agencies can also identify detailed web site links that will be listed along with each summary chart. The present contact for the report is Scott Bassett at the Oregon Progress Board (503-986-3691), however one action item for the Implementation Team is to identify an agency to coordinate the progress reports in 1999.

Watershed Restoration Inventory Provides a Tool for Evaluation

A strong, statewide voluntary effort and a high level of interagency cooperation are clearly demonstrated in the August 1998 Watershed Restoration Inventory. The inventory summarizes instream, riparian and road improvement projects implemented during 1996 and 1997 designed mainly to address various symptoms of poor watershed health throughout Oregon.

Information collected on restoration activities will be made available to watershed councils and local groups to support watershed assessments and future restoration planning and prioritization. The inventory will also prove a valuable tool to the Monitoring Team in their work to evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of agency measures. To receive a copy of the report, contact Leilani Birkholz at the Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board at (503)-378-3589 ext. 827.

Oregon Plan Display Available for Use

This year at the Oregon State Fair, kids and adults alike were drawn into the Oregon Plan booth by a colorful, eye-catching backdrop developed by the Outreach Team. The backdrop stands 8 feet high and approximately 20 feet long, and features a 10-foot long hand-painted mural of a watershed. The mural is bordered on each side by two 6-foot long side panels highlighting recovery accomplishments and actions needed to restore watershed health.

The backdrop is available to watershed councils, Soil and Water Conservation Districts and state or federal agencies for use at events or to display in office areas. Contact Teresa Trump at the Governor's Natural Resources Office at (503)-378-3589 ext. 821 to schedule use of the display and a short training session on set-up. Due to limited resources, borrowers must be able to cover any unexpected damages to the display during use.

October Meeting Schedule

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| Oct. 13 | Joint Legislative Committee on Salmon and Stream Enhancement
Hearing Room B, State Capitol, Salem.
Time: 9:00am to 4:00pm |
| Oct. 14, 15 | Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team
Agricultural Production Room, LaSells Stewart Center, Oregon State Univ., Corvallis.
Time: 8:30am to 5:00pm each day |
| Oct. 22 | Implementation Team
Mill Creek Room, Division of State Lands, 775 Summer St. NE, Salem.
Time: 9:00am to 1:00pm |
| Oct. 22 | Monitoring Team
Mill Creek Room, Division of State Lands, 775 Summer St. NE, Salem.
Time: 1:00pm to 4:00pm |
| mid-Oct. | Coastal Salmon Restoration and Production Task Force
Contact Georgia York, Oregon Coastal Zone Management Assoc., (541)-265-8918 |
| Not meeting | Healthy Streams Partnership |
| Not meeting | Outreach Team |