

Midcoast Watersheds Council Meeting
May 1, 2008
6:30-8:30 pm Central Lincoln PUD

Meeting called to order: Introductions. 13 people in attendance

Recorders Report: 3rd, support tech team Bummer Creek Ok's, support technical assistance approved for South Beach, strategic investment

Treasurer's Report : 1 million plus in activity, handouts provided \$37,000 in the bank

Information Program:

Recent Trends in Ponds size and abundance for Beavers:

Wayne Hoffman presented information that had resulted from a MCWC project that involved Steve Trask's work and fishermen/trollers hired through the 2006 Hire the Fishery program. Beavers here rarely build lodges, some live in natural lakes, some live in large mainstreams, some smaller tribs and some build dams and create ponds. May be a meter high water level difference.

Why do we care about beavers? They enhance many watershed functions: Coho rearing habitat, primary productivity, nutrient retention/cycling, floodplain connectivity, flow moderation

Coho Life Cycle:

Coho on the central Oregon coast spawn in late fall-winter. Fry emerge in the spring, young fish (parr) summer in fresh water; stay in fresh water during the winter. The fish migrate the 2nd spring as pre-smolts.

Beaver ponds:

Coho Habitat: when coho use ponds as summer habitat they have higher growth rates and ponds provided a higher carrying capacity than other stream areas. In winter coho need cover and refuge from high currents; they use off channel or ponded habitat

Primary productivity: higher, microscopic attached algae

Nutrients: in midcoast streams, nutrients are organic, detritus based, distribution in stream network affects health and function, beaver ponds can retrain detrital sources, shift distribution higher in the watershed

Trends in number and size: There appears to be a major decline over the past 2-3 decades, evidence for loss of large winter persistent ponds. The MCWC is re working to quantify trends; their study just looks at number of dams and ponds

Upper Five Rivers (uppermost 10,000 acres of basin), looked at 100k of streams

71 dams in 92-97

3 dams in 2007 when survey was redone (young alder is not preferred)

Tillamook, surveys were done in 2006, 2007; 320 miles of stream, 5 river basins: Miami, Kilchis, Wilson, Trask, Tillamook

136 dams in 2006

113 dams in 2007

Majority of dams had no evidence of recent beaver activity, but dams were well built and lasted awhile.

Upper Yaquina (21,000 acres, about 47.2 miles of streams (calculated))

128 ponds in 1992-97

20 ponds in 2007 (LFA AQI)

Instead of growing up to alder, etc. places are colonized by reed canary grass

Yaquina Basin 2007 (2007 OWEB salmon troller relief program, wading surveys, mapped, measured beaver dams, surveys in the fall)

93 dams 2007 Big Elk

109 dams Lower Yaquina; some very large ponds

27 dams Upper Yaquina, below Buttermilk Ck; Most ponds small with low dams,

61% showed signs of recent activity

Wayne shared a number of graphics of pool width, dam heights, pool length, pond area; ponds are small and ephemeral, only 5 of 40 streams have healthy beaver reaches

Possible causes of decline: Natural population fluctuation, forest succession, disease (Tularemia? No real evidence of this here), trapping -little data available from ODFW- only from sport trappers and only by county level, increased Cougar depredations, reduced food supply, reduced supply in building materials

Changes in age structure: maybe older beavers are needed to create larger ponds, small ponds might be made by younger animals

Strategies to address?: limit recreational trapping, ameliorating land use conflicts, compensation? Locals shouldn't have to bear the cost alone-restoring food supplies, reed-canary grass control, planting food plants.

Beaver dams are more important than we had previously thought.

Do nutria compete with beavers? We think nutria are an animal that lives lower down in the stream system.

Reporting how many beavers are caught might help.

Break

Bylaws Changes: bylaws sent out to members previous to meeting as required showing existing and proposed language. Copies were also available to members at the meeting.

One section of the bylaws is still not complete and is being worked on by the Administrative group: Partnerships and contracts.

Rennie moved to accept the changes Article V. Mark seconded the motion, discussion-none. Bylaw change accepted

Article VI: basin planning teams: Rennie made the motion to accept, Kip seconded the motion, discussion-vote made, motion accepted-one abstention

Technical Team Report: Camp Westwind application submitted, reviewed and provided ideas for improvement, John Sanchez helped them write it, and took comments, improvements to road in to camp, replace culverts on 3 streams, failed drain culverts, rocking of the road to reduce sediment

Lint Slough: Before and after study of conditions being conducted by Greenpoint Consulting (Laura Brophy) of Corvallis with USFS funding

Bonneville Environmental Foundation contacted us, Wayne gave a report to them. Wayne suggested the Siletz. 10 years of effectiveness monitoring if funded. No actions this month are needed.

Basin Planning Teams Reports: Siletz-summary activities, April 5th river cleanup 46 participants-3800 trash pounds, 7th April city of Siletz attended the state marine board, rule to eliminated gas motors, it was not accepted-no action taken. Last presentation ODF management practices. 60,000 steelhead acclimated Palmer Creek. Recycling stations placed along the river. Siletz Valley School activity scheduled. Siletz Bay Marsh presentation in May 20, 7 pm.

Yaquina: May 21st will have a presentation of the Limiting Factor Analysis Report done on the Upper Yaquina. Presenters will be Steve Trask and Mary Holbert.

Salmon-Drift Watershed Council Report: Earth Day was celebrated, ivy pull-20 volunteers \$4000 raised. Watershed council new members. New coordinator workshop, south slough water assessment training. Native gardens in wetland areas-above the casino, Hansen's garden wants a native corner, PADDLE \$3000 bioswail project needs design. Didn't submit culvert grant to OWEB this round due to lack of match. Large wood placement grant was submitted. Next 2nd Tuesday 13th of May 6:30 hospital in LC of the month, Nickerson is speaker-climate change and birds. Working with NRC this summer, invasive species survey by intern.

Administrative Committee Report: Two admin meetings, telephone conference call re by laws; the other dealt with financial report (passed), admin rough budget outline looked at for next year, voted to authorize additional money for Siletz Basin Planning Team for this fiscal year; Council work plan will be discussed in May

Education Committee Report: A handout was provided with information and a copy of the April 16, 2008 article about the Siletz River Clean-up. Among other things it reports

that there were a number of events around Earth Day including the above clean-up, the planting of 165 trees at Yaquina View school, and 45 people planting at Olalla Creek.

There was a field trip of 60 middle school students from Crestview Heights to the Oregon Hatchery Research Center. The Longview Hills fishing club held a fishing and stream exploration at Devil's Lake and Schooner Creek for children enrolled in the Newport Middle School after school program. Students learned about riparian environmental stewardship and how to help the stream; they saw an active steelhead redd.

Kimberly Miller's class of 35 5th grade students did their spring stream watch field trip on April 17th. Thanks to Kimberly and the wonderful parent volunteers, 5th grade students, Parker, Billie Jo Smith and Casey from ODFW it was a great day! The newspaper came out to cover the event. Kimberly's data is available through the DEQ website or at the GLOBE website.

A planning meeting was held with some of the partners for the Salmon River Plan to plan the Natural Resource Crew summer work for this summer (Salmon Drift, CSC, Career Tech, OSU, MCWC.) USFS will have an intern working there this summer too.

Camp Westwind was visited by part of the Outdoor School contingency on April 13th to scope out the area for an outdoor school site. All agreed that this is an outstanding site for us. Salmon Creek was visited for the spring stewardship day May 1st.

Funding is being sought, in collaboration with Lincoln County Extension for Seed to Soil, Stream Watch and Natural Resource Crew programs.

Coordinator's Report: much already covered in the tech team report, OR Hatchery Research Center meeting attended, the OHRC will repeat a good study of steelhead in Hood River—success rates wild versus hatchery fish—will repeat some of this work with Siletz stock work on genetics with hatchery/wild fish. We might be able to find out why wild and hatchery fish perform differently in the wild. New watershed coordinators training held this next month by OR Network of Watersheds Councils.

Announcements: Natural Resource Crew work forms on the MidCoast Watersheds Council website. Small grant team has \$100,000, for grants that are \$10,000 or less for on the ground projects; there is a new small grant form, on the OWEB website. Applicants have to be SWCDs, watershed councils, or tribes. We don't have an ocean salmon season, restricted fall Chinook season in river, perhaps additional closed areas. Some progress being made for obtaining fisheries disaster relief funds. MCWC interested in continuing programs we have had with fishers, and hopes additional dollars for work for fishermen for watershed health—monitoring, surveying, on the ground could be secured. Work that fishermen could do with their vessels would be especially helpful.

Meeting room for next months still needs to be secured since PUD remodeling. Perhaps Englund Marine or HMSC. Or ?

Adjourn