

MidCoast Watershed Council Meeting 3 December 09

Meeting called to order 6:30 pm at Central Lincoln PUD

Introductions: 23 people in attendance, including guest speakers Jessica Miller, OSU COMES program, and Jack Chapmen, Tim Luna and Joe Jensen from the Natural Resource Crew program.

Recorder's Report: Reports were given for both October and November. The October report included 7 actions related to the Board voting to approve or delegate approval for 7 proposals to be submitted to OWEB or NOAA for funding. The November meeting authorized a draft letter be sent on behalf of the Council commenting on OWEB's Strategic plan.

Treasurer's Report: For the month of November, \$118,055 of income was received, \$49,822 expenses, leaving a balance of \$92,337.

Educational Program #1: OSU Professor Dr. Jessica Miller who works with the Coastal Ocean Marine Experimental Station in Newport provided a powerpoint presentation entitled "Reconstructing the use of freshwater and marine habitats by Chinook salmon: implications for conservation and management". Dr. Miller's work uses chemical analysis of otoliths for strontium and barium to calcium carbonate ratios as well as ratios of different isotopes of strontium to interpret where salmon adults and juveniles have come from in terms of (to river system) and for adults how – how long fish were in fresh water, estuarine and ocean environments. The chemical ratios are good indicators of fresh versus salt water habitats as well as the geology of the fresh water basin through which the stream flows. The fish lay down daily rings in the otoliths so the size of the otoliths indicate the age of the fish and different rings of the otolith can be sampled (resolution down to a few days of time) to determine what type of environment the fish were in (fresh, salty, in-between). This work builds on genetic analysis of salmon stocks done by Dr. M. Banks and others that can identify salmon to ecoregion. Dr. Miller showed the methodology of the work and the application of this approach to determining if a "bubble fishery" on fall chinook salmon using a geographic boundary (Cape Blanco) could help separate out Sixes River fish (which are weak and below desired escapement levels) from Elk River fish which have both a natural and hatchery component and which are above desired levels. (The technique showed that this management approach is not effective in protecting the weak stocks). She also showed how this technique can be used to reconstruct (from sampling of adult salmon which were successful in growing and returning) what their life history cycle was like as juvenile fish. Specifically she was interested in what size were they when they emigrated out of the streams, how long they stayed in the estuaries, and what was their size at ocean entrance to determine what the relative contribution of different size emigrants to the adult survival (i.e., is it better for migration if they migrate to the ocean as small fry, medium sized parr, or large sized smolts?) This work was applied to Central Valley Chinook chinook salmon which is a

species of concern. The management regime tends to manage for those fish that migrate as smolts, but her work indicates that consistently about 20% of the fish that return as adults emigrate to the ocean as small fry. There is a concern about management then that might decrease the genetic diversity of this component of salmon life history. This study was done also for summer/fall and spring Chinook Salmon in the upper Columbia River. The added piece here was that old midden sites (archaeological sites that contain bones and otoliths of salmon and other animals (refuse piles) above a now non-passable dam (Chief Joseph) allowed study of historic (250-500 year ago) life history patterns as compared to present day ones. The great majority of those ancient salmon summer run fish started migration as small fry (sub-yearlings) and moved downstream quickly, in the spring freshet. The study also showed that during this period there was at least 7 months of migration pulses—after the dominant one involving not only fry, but parr and smolts as well.

The current analysis shows that we have lost a lot of variation in migration patterns. For example in 1970 there were less than 2 million hatchery fish and 100% migrated as sub-yearlings. By 2000 there were 2-5 million hatchery fish and only 26-56% were sub-yearlings. The management tends to simplify things, wanting to promote the dominant tactic. The question is how can we better manage for life history diversity? This technique then has the potential to provide novel information on existing and extinct populations and provide quantitative data on mixing and migration, habitat use, and diversity of life history patterns.

Educational Program #2: Presentation by Jack Chapman, Joe Jensen and Tim Luna on the work of the Summer Natural Resource Crews and a preview of the presentation that the youth will be giving in Chicago for the Youth Workforce Development conference that they were invited to. Jack, a college student, is the crew leader and Joe and Tim are high school students that live in Toledo and Eddyville. The crews work for scientists, natural resource managers and watershed councils to accomplish projects with ecological merit that also have an educational focus. The various projects that the natural resource teams worked on last summer were described, with a focus on the mud shrimp sampling project (which samples adult native mud shrimp density and for the presence of an invasive isopod that disrupts mud shrimp reproduction. They also sample for the density of juvenile mud shrimp). Also pictured were projects that involved invasive weed control and invasive weed location identification (using a GPS), trash survey (kayak and GPS) and trash removal in the Siletz River, and a beach seining project that worked with a scientist to determine use of the surf zone by juvenile salmon. The students working on this later project will have their name on the scientific paper that was submitted.

Break - excellent refreshments were made and provided by Jan Christensen

Tech Team Report: Wayne gave the report. A letter of support was submitted to DOGAMI by the tech team (similar to last year's) regarding work to finish flying the coast with LIDAR, he reported on information gained at the Network of Oregon Watershed Council meeting, he discussed with the tech team a project concept regarding hydrological monitoring of areas pre and post large wood placement. DEQ is also

interested in this project, tech team also discussed amendment 13 that deal with coho harvest regimes and changes that are needed to better reflect habitat viability in mixed stock fisheries. Revisiting and updating the Action plan will be on the tech team agenda for next year. Placement of large wood in estuaries for habitat benefit will also be discussed, as the estuaries are low in wood compared to historical levels. However appropriate methods to protect wood from moving or being cut out by boaters or scavenged will need to be determined.

Basin Planning Team Reports: Siletz-Greg Harlow gave out copies of report. Key items included receipt of a \$500 grant from the Siletz Tribe for a geographical survey of the Mill Park site and a commitment to further work with the judge on revising language for an ordinance re gas boat motors in city parks. Yaquina Outreach Coordinator, Lisa Mulcahy, introduced herself again and highlighted information in her written report. She is developing an outreach presentation for other groups highlighting watershed council activities and topics of interest and has scheduled a field trip on Sunday Dec 6th with the eco-justice group of the First Presbyterian Church to look at restoration projects and spawning salmon. About 6 more spaces are available for anyone interested in joining them. 541-265-5438 is Lisa's message phone

Salmon-Drift Watershed Council report was provided as a handout. Highlights include they are moving to an office in the Old Taft elementary school on Saturday and help is needed for the move. They are also looking for donations of some items. These include flatscreen monitor, duplexing laser printer, room dividers, chairs and tables for meeting space. A presentation on the N. Lincoln County elk herd by ODFW personnel will be on Dec 8th at 6:30 at the new office.

Alsea Watershed Council - a written report was handed out. Highlights include notes on their November presentation by DSL of the proposed removal fill laws. The technical assistance grant for A. Kittel property was resubmitted to Ecotrust with Jeff Jones as project manager. This project will hopefully be done in conjunction with USFS work on Canal Creek. Next meeting Nov 19th at Fall Creek last meeting of year. At fish hatchery at 7 pm. No Dec meeting, Jan 21 mtg at Fall Creek hatchery will be a presentation on the history of the old mill site up Five Rivers.

Admin Committee - Jan Christensen gave the admin report. The group met with members of the Alsea Watershed Council and there was a mutually beneficial exchange of information. OWEB will have listening sessions in January around the state regarding Council support grants. No dates yet known. The financial report for Nov 2009 was approved. The audit report was reviewed. MCWC had a good report and there were no problems or corrections needed. One suggestion that the Council is working on is to formalize the agreement (in writing) that we have with the SWCD for staff support, office use etc. The MCWC line of credit was paid off. Annual report materials being gathered. Annual meeting will be held in February instead of January and an interesting presentation is planned that is expected to draw a lot of people (Cheryl Brown from the US EPA will discuss Yachats water quality sampling, dead zone etc.). The admin committee had held a special meeting to discuss education program grant application

procedures and came up with a policy regarding review of those grants before submittal. Based on that discussion it was also determined that a special committee needed to be formed to review non-technical grants. The duties and procedures of that committee were drafted. Action is needed by the Council to authorize formation of that review committee.

Education coordinator report: Virginia Tardaewether submitted a written report. Highlights include interviewing students 16-21 years of age for 4 year-round natural resource crews, receipt of grant funds from the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz to help with outdoor school (scheduled for May for 40 Toledo Middle School students that will camp at S. Beach State Park and do field studies at Ona-Beaver Creek Natural Area, and getting ready for the Chicago trip and presentation with natural resource crews for the National Association of Workforce Development conference. The MCWC was awarded 2 OYEI grants for the natural resource crews. She is also working on getting 3 final reports completed

Coordinator report: In the interest of time, Wayne highlighted just a few items: he was asked by the Port of Newport to join a steering committee for the international terminal project. This is the project that will remove the Paisley and the Hennibeque—the two deteriorating World War II vessels that serve as docks for cargo, and rebuild the dock with fewer pilings that take up less estuarine space. He also report that he and a number of others had submitted applications to serve on the marine reserve community teams (there are two positions and two alternates for watershed council reps for each of the proposed marine reserve study area by Cascade Head and by Cape Perpetual.