

MidCoast Watersheds Council
May 5, 2011—meeting notes

1. Introductions were made, 20 persons were present
2. Recorder's Report: The recorder was not present and the report for both April and May meetings will be presented at the June meeting.
3. Treasurer's report- Wayne Hoffman gave the treasurer's report for the month ending April 30, 2011. Year to date income of \$259,188, YTD expenses of 276,701; with a balance in the bank of 19, 191. Full report made available.
4. MCWC Activity Report – Coordinator Wayne Hoffman provided a written update of his activities in April and an oral summary. The Upper Yaquina fish passage project was recommended for funding by the Restoration and Enhancement Board of ODFW; this funding matches the OWEB grant and will allow work to begin this summer. The total project costs, including non cash match for the 1st phase is \$302,000. It involves multiple culvert replacements, replacing culverts with bridges, and improve habitat around the culverts as well as some large wood placement. Applications are being submitted for the 2nd phase of this project (which resulted from a limiting factor analysis). Wayne participated in a meeting, along with Aaron Duzic from the Siletz WC that ODFW held on proposed instream salmon harvest this fall.
5. Lead Contamination in Coastal Rivers—was the education presentation for the month. Ray Kinney who works with the Siuslaw SWCD and is a member of the Siuslaw Watershed Council gave the presentation. He's been concerned with the fate of lost lead sinkers; has looked at it for the last 25 years and has down 2 major field projects in the Siuslaw centered around lead. We're lucky here that our water quality is good in comparison to other waters such as the Puget Sound, Willamette, Columbia etc. There are 80,000 new chemicals now in use; only a couple of hundred have been studied to a large degree. Lead has had consequences from use over time. The Greeks and Romans added lead to wine to make it sweeter. Current bones have 500X more lead than prehistoric bones... i.e. we're all carrying a load of lead. There is a lot of science work now that shows the accumulative nature of lead and during times of stress, how lead is remobilized out of bones. Organisms are known to get "dumber" when exposed to lead—impacts on neurology, decision making. A lot of delinquency and social problems may be related to lead. We were wise enough to cut out leaded gasoline, but the next big problem for reducing lead exposure is fish sinkers, degrading bridges (the base coat is 85-95% red lead) which is going into streams, bird shot (used for a century in our estuaries). There are potential chronic low dose effects of lead, including for humans... it builds up. It follows calcium around in physiological systems—if calcium is depleted, lead replaces it.... Hormones and enzymes affected.

Fish exposed to lead might look fine, be fairly vigorous, but learning deficits. Takes 2-4 times more learning reinforcers to learn anything. Calcium is very low in the general environment of the midcoast. Calcium poor rocks and soil, less exchangeable CA for water. Lot less buffering capacity for any acidity. Since water is poorly buffered by CA, much faster dissolution of lead and much finer particles of lead; they stay suspended—colloidal lead particulate.

Fraction that does dissolve combines with organic particles in water, settles down in biofilm sediment, organisms feed on stuff, e.g. fresh water mussels, accumulate lead. Daily growth increments in shell; how river mussels can show where more water quality assessment should take

place. Lost drift boat anchors, bullet shells, sinders etc. 7 railroad bridges degrading since 1908; every 4 years new paint called for (as best management practice). They have NEVER been maintained. 16,000x level allowed for lead found in water dripping off bridges. State revolving loan fund could be used to fix up bridges. Storm water and sewage biosolids in the lower portion of watershed—contains lead, cadmium, mercury.

Calcium from ocean nutrients used to be much greater. Red alder prevalent now in coast range—more prevalent due to forest management practices. But as % of red alder increases, adds extra nitrates and hydrogen ions; pH drops, dissolves metals faster. Galvanized culvers versus aluminum culverts (dissolved AL issues now too). Localized acidification. Assessment needed. Calcium inhibitor metal—already low calcium and it exacerbates this problem.

Lead sticks to biofilm which sticks to gill mucous, gut, highly acidic environments; real problem; absorbed by sensitive tissue. Freshwater mussel shells already dissolving; perforated shells.

Has done research since 1994; shows lead does pass through the skin; loses affinity for red blood cells (where lead is measured) pot holes heavily fished in winter—sinkers everywhere.

It appears to him that this is potentially another limiting factor for salmon recovery; human impacts.

Maine and Minnesota regulates certain sized of lead sinkers. Hunting- banned as shot gun shot for waterfowl hunting. Rifle ammunition still legal. 100% of condors treated for lead poisoning.

Waters coming out of old mining areas in Japan—saw a shift in macroinvertebrates; EPA has done some rapid bioassessments in 2002 and 2004 for juvenile fish, lamprey and macroinvertebrates. Could use wilderness areas as reference areas—no bridges, no one fishes.

Siletz and Yachats might be worse off even than the Siuslaw since even lower Calcium and even lower buffering capacity.

Get outside input from academics, NOAA etc. Pick a reach—e.g. salmon river below hatchery. higher specific gravity; sinks down thru sediment into bedrock.

6. Break-refreshments
7. Technical Team Report: A written report was provided. A list of potential restoration projects for the Yaquina Estuary was developed for delivery to USFWS. Money may become available from lawsuit settlements. Discussion of lead sinkers impacts continued and a video from Ray Kinney viewed. Wayne updated the group on OWEB's special investment partnership program (now being used on the Willamette and Upper Deschutes); new SIP areas will be discussed by the OWEB board in June and discussions have been initiated regarding a SIP for the Siletz Basin. There was an update regarding the King Salvage cleanup and the dilemmas regarding getting funding for the clean-up.
9. Siletz watershed council report—Coordinator Aaron Duzic, 503-621-2433, provided a written report. The Siletz River Cleanup was a success, with 20 volunteers on foot and using boats between Moonshine and Morgan parks. Between 1400-1600 pounds of trash and debris were removed. Large debris was also marked for later removal. The group discussed the fall Chinook

regulations and hopes to influence ODFW to move the deadline for fishing further downstream to protect spawning habitat and to reduce the bag limit to ensure healthy salmon return. This month's speaker was Heather Vanmeter, of Oregon State Police, who spoke about responsibly harvesting fish. In May, the group will hear from Jon Sanfilippo, an OSU student studying how large woody debris restoration projects affect the morphology of a stream.

10. Yaquina watershed council report-- Coordinator Lisa Mulcahy , 541-264-0572, provided a written report. The Yaquina group had a table at the Olalla Lake Fishing Derby/Earth Day event displaying posters, annual reports and flyers for upcoming events. That event attracted 500 attendees. Watershed hikes were planned, but due to weather were cancelled. The Yaquina group also had a table at the Earth Day event at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. An Ivy pull is scheduled on June 18th at the Toledo Library .
11. The Alsea Watershed Council also provided a written report of their activities. April's speaker was Josh Lambert from the Lincoln SWCD, who informed the group of Alsea and Yachats basin activities around knotweed control and discussed other invasives such as yellow flag iris, policemen's helmet (prevalent in middle Five Rivers), clematis and false broom. The group discussed a draft MOU with the AWC, which was rejected. If the two groups do a joint project then a specific MOU can be drawn up for that project. A road/culvert project is being planned on Benner Creek and some projects with Rocky Mountain Elk are being planned, with landowner outreach being initiated. No meeting is scheduled for May. For information contact Linda Johnston, 541-528-3221.
12. Salmon- Drift Watershed Council. Anna Eyman provided an update on activities. For the Pixie Land site a probation crew worked 2 weeks clearing scotch broom; a Tillamook school project will provide some native plants. A number of bird houses will also be placed. They are doing a pilot project to control reed canary grass—a brush cutter came in and cut the grass and then they'll use fabric to cover the grass. Major work will begin the week of July 18th to remove trees along the dike along E side of Hwy 101 just N of Hwy 18. Educational outreach is planned to tell the community what is going on and why.
13. ADMIN Committee report. Approved financial report, a MOU between the MCWC and the Alsea WC will only be developed when there is a joint project. The MOU that is currently in effect with the Alsea will terminate at the end of June and the ADMIN committee provided guidance as to how Wayne should weigh attendance at Alsea meetings or not. A team is being set up to discuss management planning for the Big Creek area that was just acquired (S. of Yachats) by The Nature Conservancy. Paul Engelmeyer will be asked if he wants to participate on the team on behalf of the MCWC.
14. EDUCATION report: there will be 2-3 youth crews (natural resource crews) this summer, so people should contact Virginia Tardaewether with projects that have an educational component— 541-265-5438. Outdoor schools are getting set up; new policy will be to hire adults for closer nighttime supervision of the kids in their cabins. The MCWC received an OWEB grant for the natural resource crews. Federal funds for education programs are down statewide and more restricted.
15. Adjourn

