# Coos River S.T.E.P. News

P.O Box 5907 Charleston, Oregon 97420 April 2012

## Directors



## MARCH DONATION'S

ANN WAXHAM
LEE HOCKEMA
CAROL GOUDE
**(THANKS)**

These donations are what keeps the hatchery going.

## DOUBLE-CRESTED CORMORANT

Increasing public and scientific concerns about the effect of double-crested cormorant populations on the recovery of 14 Endangered species of salmon and steelhead of Oregon's rivers prompted Rep. Wayne Krieger to call a meeting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife, ODFW, and members of the Cormorant working group. Oregon's 62 acre East Sand Island is the site of the largest known nesting colony of double-crested Cormorants in the world. Nesting was first recorded in 1989 with 90 active nests, and by 2010 had increased to 13,600 breeding pairs. Preliminary research by the ODFW concluded that 66 percent of all COHO smolts are lost to double-crested cormorants, second only to juvenile fall Chinook, by these birds. Oregon management officials are concerned about the expansion of these birds, and have met with federal agencies for over a decade, with little effective control. It appears the State's efforts have gone for naught, said Krieger.

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## HATCHERY NEWS

We have all the Chinook in Nora's pond that goes there for now. They are feeding good, but will need to be moved as soon as the Creek water goes down to a manageable level into the large rearing pond there. We also have Chinook in all 4 inside tanks that we will feed there until Nora's pond is emptied and cleaned for this group. There looks like we will have two different size of fish this year that we will need to keep separate, as they will need feed of different size.

Harold called a work party on Tuesday 3rd to clean Nora's pond and the four tanks inside. He had Greg, Don, Ray, and himself plus Clyde all helping to get everything cleaned up. Greg also hosed the mud that the high water left on our sidewalks, it sure was a mess.

Don replaced a water pipe that one of our hose valves screws on to that has been leaking for a long time. It looked like the pipe was split, probably froze during one of those freezing spells that we have had. We did find a new pipe, 3/4 by 2 inch long nipple in our pipe parts rack to fix it with.


Greg Brown installs pump on a float getting ready to vacuum mud and waste off of the bottom of Nora's Pond.


Greg with the pump running and vacuum in operation. The trick is to keep the pick up on the bottom so he doesn't vacuum up live fry.

The outflow from the pump is going out onto a future garden spot. The waste is put to good use instead of pumping it back into the creek.


Harold, Perk and Clyde are using a suction hose to vacuum mud and waste off the bottom of one of the four tanks of fry.

# STEP HATCHERY'S PLAY CRUCIAL ROLE FOR OREGON'S FISHERIES

Salmon and steelhead hatcheries and acclimation sites run by STEP volunteers continue to play a crucial role in supporting the ODFW hatchery program, providing Oregon anglers with additional harvest opportunities. The annual budget for STEP hatcheries is about $1.3 million, with volunteer labor accounting for about $1.1 million of that cost while producing nearly 3 million pounds of salmon and steelhead, which are released as smolts or pre-smolts. That is nearly 2.2 million fish including about two million fall Chinook, 125,000 spring Chinook, 34,000 coho salmon, 16,200 winter steelhead and 1,000 rainbow trout.

The benefits to anglers from these STEP hatchery facilities, mostly located along the coast, are substantial. For example, in the Coos basin, where most STEP hatchery fish are produced, recreational anglers spent 4,253 days fishing for hatchery and wild fall Chinook salmon based on data from a 2009-10 creel survey, garnering $2.1 million to the local and state economy.

There are commercial fishery benefits as well. Coded wire tag recoveries from 1984-2004 indicate that about 19 percent of the fall Chinook salmon from Coos basin STEP hatcheries were caught by commercial fishermen.

One of the major, and critical, expenses for STEP hatchery operations is fish food, which runs about $85,000 per year. While private donations pay for about 60 percent of costs to raise and release the fish, the R&E program provides funding to make up the difference, most recently providing a $170,000 grant to help the STEP program purchase fish food through the 2011-2013 biennium. In addition to fish production, STEP hatcheries provide education and community awareness opportunities, hosting more than 15,000 participants annually, including 1,900 adult and 5,600 youth volunteers who help with various hatchery tasks such as fin clipping, making these facilities a focal point of many communities.

If you want to help out at a hatchery there are plenty of opportunities. Salmon and steelhead hatcheries and acclimation sites run by STEP volunteers continue to play a crucial role in supporting the ODFW hatchery program, providing Oregon anglers with additional harvest opportunities The annual budget for STEP hatcheries is about $1.3 million, with volunteer labor accounting for about $1.1 million of that cost while producing nearly 3 million pounds of salmon and steelhead, which are released as smolts or pre-smolts. That is nearly 2.2 million fish including about two million fall Chinook, 125,000 spring Chinook, 34,000 coho salmon, 16,200 winter steelhead and 1,000 rainbow trout.

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Contact your local STEP biologist 888-5515