

Coos River S.T.E.P. News

P.O Box 5907 Charleston, Oregon 97420

August 2012

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STEP DONATIONS

Marla O'Neill won the 50-50 drawing and donated her winnings back. (THANKS)

NEW MEMBER

Dan Frazier

Welcome, and thanks for helping with the new roof.

HATCHERY NEWS

Our President Harold Brown has been coming out to the Hatchery to do many different jobs these last few weeks. Some times he has volunteers to help if he has a two or three man job, otherwise he usually works alone. When he is running the power washer you don't want to get too close to his work.

He has the outside wall by the logging road repaired where we used to have our incubators, and power washed ready for the new paint job. Also the outside wall of the meeting room is ready to paint. He even has the paint bought and on site ready whenever the paint sprayer shows up. We will need to build some walks along the upper end of the hatchery to paint the end wall, and also the lower end of this spawning building.

This year we will have plenty of heating wood stacked, plus we have lots of kindling, ready for the cold and wet days that are sure to come, THANKS to everyone who helped to make this possible.

PORT OF COOS BAY

Coos River STEP would like to THANK the PORT OF COOS BAY FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION, 2012.

NORTH WEST NATURAL GAS

In recognition of valuable contributions to Coos River STEP Association

YOUR FINANCIAL DONATION, as well as PRINTING THE STEP NEWSLETTER each month is much appreciated.

Coos River STEP Association needs your support in any way that you can. This support is what keeps the Noble Creek Hatchery producing Chinook salmon smolts for release into Coos Bay. This year looks to be another record salmon return. GOOD LUCK FISHING.



What do you do when you can see daylight through the roof of the hatchery and raceway? The decision of the STEP members was to replace the roof. Clyde and Greg start the job on July 11th. More than 15 volunteers came to help with the tear off.



The raceway roof shakes have all been torn off and now the hatchery building roof has to go. Matt and Perk are ripping up shakes and moving them to a trailer to haul away. Bright sun and SPF 45 sun block are the order of the day.



The new metal roof has been installed on the hatchery and raceway buildings. Matt is inspecting the screws on the roof. The roof was screwed down with just enough to hold it in place. It will be finished by another work party in the next few weeks.



This work party on July 24th is finishing the cap on each roof. A final inspection is also adding screws as needed to make sure the metal is secure and we've done a good job. We are now set for the next rainy season and more salmon to spawn!

I have had a busy summer so far with lots of field work. Every two weeks I spend a morning on the Coos Bay and Coquille estuaries pulling a large beach seine with help from a group of college interns looking for juvenile Chinook salmon. We are catching lots of smolts this summer and they are heading to the ocean in good condition. During the month of July in Coos Bay we also caught quite a few juvenile lingcod which is probably a good sign for the future lingcod fishery.

Another project I've been working on is to look for salmon and/or steelhead juveniles above two possible barriers in the Coquille Basin. The first location we sampled was on the East Fork Coquille above Brewster Gorge near Sitkum. In the past, a fish ladder was built within the gorge to help pass anadromous fish and looking for juveniles above the falls is a good way to indicate if the ladder is still working. We shocked fish using a backpack electrofishing unit which temporarily stuns the fish so we can sample them, well at least it's suppose to temporarily stun the fish. It seems like there are always fish that dart right past the probe and never get shocked. The good news is we found a few steelhead juveniles in the East Fork Coquille and also in the West Fork Brummit Creek. We later moved over to Twelvemile Creek, tributary of the Middle Fork Coquille. There has been a lot of discussion if salmon and/or steelhead are able to pass above the falls on the Middle Fork Coquille just downstream of the mouth of Twelvemile Creek. We shocked about 3 miles of Twelvemile Creek and one of its tributaries and found juvenile steelhead everywhere along with coastal cutthroat trout and even a couple pacific lamprey.

I have also spent some time this summer snorkeling in the South Fork Coquille River looking for smallmouth bass. Yes someone illegally introduced smallmouth bass into the Coquille Basin. We have been trying to figure out the distribution of the bass in the river and are now put together a plan to try and remove as many smallmouth bass as possible from the river. Currently it looks like the smallmouth bass population is relatively small and resides in the main stem and South Fork Coquille River but has not moved into the other tributaries yet. We are not sure if our efforts to remove the smallmouth bass will have any effect on the population but we need to try something while the population is small.

Currently I am working on getting this year's Coos Bay angler creel survey started in a couple of weeks. The Chinook fishing on the Coos Bay bar has been fairly decent the past few weeks and I've heard reports of anglers catching a few Chinook salmon all the way up to SOMAR (the mouth of Catching Slough) already. It looks like this fall could be another great salmon season.

I hope to see everyone at this years South Coast STEP picnic which will be held at Tugman State Park (just north of Lakeside) on August 18.

As always stop by our office in Charleston or give us a call at (541)-888-5515 if you have any questions.

Gary Vonderohe
Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

ANNUAL SOUTH COAST S.T.E.P. PICNIC

This annual event is open to all STEP volunteers, and all who are interested in fishing and sharing information. There will be representatives from the ODFW to visit with about what is being accomplished to bring back the salmon runs in Oregon's rivers. We always have people from several STEP groups to share information with. It's a nice place to greet old friends, and enjoy a very good potluck lunch.