

Coos River S.T.E.P. News

P.O Box 5907 Charleston, Oregon 97420

May 2014

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NEWSLETTER

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NEW MEMBER 2014

Craig Praus

DONATIONS

Don & Shirley Perkins

Special **THANKS** to these members for their **DONATIONS** to Coos River STEP.

All members and their guests are welcome to attend our monthly potluck and meeting. (second Tue. Each month)

The meeting is held here at the Noble Creek Hatchery.

HATCHERY NEWS

This year the Chinook babies that we are feeding are growing really well. The large group weighed 360 on 4/8, then on 4/22 they were 196 and the last time on 4/30 they weighed nearly 150 per pound. The smaller fish weighed on 4/22, 256 per pound and on 4/30 they weighed nearly 215 per pound.

The fin marking unit is being delayed from it's first schedule, which will cause us some problems. We release our fish at 75 per pound, with this delay of the fin marking unit we may need to adjust the feed for these fish, or the fin marking of them.

There has been a challenge feeding the fish this year. Before we moved them into the Creek pond, the belt feeders worked good. But when they were put into the creek pond we use the broadcast feeders. The #2 crumb seems to be a damp food that won't work in these feeders, plugged them up, quit feeding. They had to be fed by hand. The next size 1.2 works fine in our broadcast feeders.

COHO PROJECT & MORE

Our COHO project is going along really good so far. We do have most of the financing in place for this six year project. Most of the cost will be the recovery of the otolith bone from the returning salmon after they have spawned their eggs. We need to do this to be sure that these returning fish were the result of the eggs that we injected in these streams. The otolith bone is marked while these fish were still just eggs. We did save a few COHO fry that we hatched here in the hatchery so we could check to look at this mark, so we could match it to the marks of the fish we take after spawning. This way we will know if any salmon that do come back to these streams are naturals or if they are from the hatchery. We plan to inject eyed eggs for 3 years, and survey 3 more years for any returning adults.



At the April meeting it was agreed that we needed to clean out the raceway, install all the dam boards and move fish out of Nora's Pond. New member Don Graves came to help on April 9th.



All of our automatic feeders and brackets need to be reinstalled. Here Harold has a lot of helpers. The work in the raceway needs to be done before the lower dam boards go in or the raceway will be full of water.



The fish we moved from the tanks inside of the hatchery building have now grown quite a bit larger. This new screen we're installing has larger holes so it won't plug up with moss and algae as quickly. We're trying to make less work for Clyde on a daily basis.



Gary has been weighing our fry on at least a weekly basis. Our ultimate goal for release is for the fry to weigh seventy five fish per pound. The growth pattern lets us decide whether we need to feed more to achieve the weight goal by the end of May when we will release the fish.

Well I have good news and bad news about the Auto Fish Marking Trailer coming to Noble Creek Hatchery. The good news is the trailer is still coming to the hatchery. The bad news is that because of delays at one of the Columbia Basin fish hatcheries the trailer will not show up at Noble Creek Hatchery until Memorial Weekend. This means the trailer will not be up and running at Noble Creek until May 28th and will continue to operate until June 6th. The Auto Fish Marking Trailer is scheduled to be at Morgan Creek Hatchery from May 12 through May 23. Like I mentioned last month if you have not seen one of these trailers in operation this would be a great time to come check it out. I stopped by Noble Creek Hatchery last week to take a look at the Chinook and find out how much they had grown over the past couple of weeks. The group of 500,000 Chinook have been moved down into the main pond/raceway and are growing extremely well. Last week the fish were around 150 fish per pound and looking very good. The smaller group of about 100,000 Chinook are now in Nora's Pond. These fish were about 215 fish per pound and also looking very good. We are keeping these two groups of fish separate this year to help things go smoothly and efficiently with the Auto Fish Marking trailer. With the Auto Trailer the closer all your fish are to one size the quicker the trailer can run.

Last week I went to the Coos Basin upper tidewater sections of the bay to begin the estuary seining for the year. We sampled three sites in the Millicoma and three sites in the South Fork Coos. I was very impressed with the number of Chinook and coho juveniles we captured and observed in the Millicoma tidewater. There were a few places where the fish were feeding on the surface in the Millicoma that it looked like a trout feeding in a stream in Montana. We did capture Chinook juveniles in the South Fork Coos but there were quite as many. If I remember correctly from a conversation I had several years with Reese Bender (who did the estuary seining for many years), he said the Chinook juveniles always seem to migrate down into tidewater in the South Fork Coos about 2-3 weeks behind those migrating down to the Millicoma tidewater. I plan to sample the same 6 sites during the middle of the month so it will be interesting to see how things change.

Since the end of December we have been sampling fish every two weeks in the Coquille Valley at the ODFW properties of Winterlake and Beaver Slough. To collect fish we set several hoop traps in the canals that run around and through the properties. We leave the hoop traps in the water overnight and the next day we come back to pull the traps and work up the fish. Our main focus is to capture coho and any other salmonids but we also keep track of all the fish species we capture in the traps. On the Winterlake property 80% of the fish captured have been brown bullheads (catfish) with coho juveniles making up only 2% and cutthroat less than 1% of the fish captured. On Beaver Slough cutthroat trout make up almost 30% of the fish captured and coho make up 6.5%. Also on Beaver Slough we have only captured a few non-native fish species. While 95% of the fish captured in Winterlake are non-native fish species.

Gary Vonderohe
Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

**POTLUCK 6:00 PM MEETING 7:00 TUE. MAY 13th
NOBLE CREEK HATCHERY**



Coos River S.T.E.P. Association
Coos River S.T.E.P. needs your help to insure that there will be rivers to fish and salmon and steelhead to fish for into the future. Sign up today as a SUPPORTER & volunteer! Oregon's fish need your help!

MEMBERSHIP: \$15.00 Family

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