

Coos River S.T.E.P. News

P.O Box 5907 Charleston, Oregon 97420

September 2011

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NEWSLETTER

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SPAWNING

Our spawning schedule will be about the same as last year. Expect to start on the last Tuesday of October, and every Tuesday for the next 5 weeks with a couple Saturdays also. We start at 9:00 AM and work until all the salmon are done.

HATCHERY NEWS

Harold has got the storage room completed, he has the door in place and we can lock it up. There is screened vents on both sides to help keep it from getting too hot. He has it all painted and sealed to keep the flies out, and everything has it's own place.

We are building a scaffolding along the building next to the creek so we can put on a rain gutter. This needs to be done to help stop the bank from eroding away, it's really narrow along this area.

We had water leaking out from under the new shower, and wasn't sure where it was leaking. Charlie came out and decided it probably was the drain that was causing this problem. He took the shower drain apart and re sealed it. He came back after a couple weeks and ran water down this drain to see if it would leak, we couldn't find any sign of this problem any more, so we think it's OK now.

Charlie and I checked the door on the restroom to see if it needed to be worked on. The rubber seal is adjusting to fit the door bottom better, so I put paraffin wax on it, it closes good.

OTHER NEWS

We will be trying to sell some of STEP's cement items along with some farm implements here at the hatchery on Sept. 23—24th. If you have anything that you could donate to the STEP program, we would like to include your donations in this sale. Greenacres is going to have a community wide garage sales event on this weekend, with several different sales going on in this area.

Tod Jones has brought the new hatchbox down to Paul's in Charleston. He had to reorder the screens as the first ones were not the right size to fit. We will now be able to build a stand for this new hatchbox, to get it online with the others that we have.



This is a picture of Ray's salmon on the back of his boat, a really nice fish in very good shape. After catching this salmon I'm sure he is hooked. He called from his boat this morning and he is fishing again this Wed. 7th. He had not caught a fish yet but he was still fishing and I haven't heard if he got lucky again today or not.

I measured the fish at 40" and weighed it at 28 pounds. Nice fish! As I was getting rigged up again I realized I had given away my spreader and sinker line. I couldn't even remember what the boat looked like. I was just happy to have my fish in my boat regardless of where the tangled tackle ended up. After I got rigged up again I made a few more passes but by 11:30 the tide had slacked and the wind was up from the northwest so you have to crab the boat into the wind or be blown ashore. With slack tide people troll both ways on the Channel. Three boats crabbed into the wind heading east and four boats crabbed into the wind heading west. Interesting! No one crashed that I saw but after one more pass through traffic I decided I'd had enough. Maybe next time I will fish the incoming tide and the bite will be better. I had a nice fish to fillet, vacuum seal and freeze and its barbecued salmon for dinner tonight. By Ray Lee

Salmon fishing season is definitely here. This past weekend both the California Street and Eastside boat ramps were packed with trailers, overflowing into the nearby streets. We now have two seasonal employees checking both boat and bank anglers to see what they have caught. With the information our samplers collect we will estimate the Chinook harvest in Coos Bay this fall.

So far our samplers have seen lots of Chinook with quite a few jacks showing up this past week. The samplers are also seeing lots of 30 to 38 inch females. It looks like we will have our work cut out for us again this year at the hatchery when the fish return.

The wild coho fisheries will start on Thursday, September 15th. There are eleven basins up and down the coast that will have a wild coho fishery, including Coquille, Coos Bay, Tenmile, and the Umpqua. These fisheries are all based on quotas. We have more information on these wild coho fisheries in the office.

I talked to Clyde last night and he said we already had a female Chinook swim up Noble Creek. Unfortunately there is not much water in the stream and it sounds like some predators found her. With fish moving up the rivers already we are getting ready to put in the Dellwood fish trap. It won't be long and we will be trapping fish, marking most of them for spawning estimates, and also hauling a few Chinook to the hatcheries.

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

Salmon, Seals and Marshfield Channel by Ray Lee

Jan and I love to eat Chinook salmon, that's why we have a boat. I had been out fishing a couple of times earlier this year, once at Rocky Point on the Coquille and once on Coos Bay trolling between the railroad and McCulloch Bridge on highway 101. The day after I'd fished between the bridges I ran into Reese Bender at Bi-Mart. They'd fished Marshfield Channel that morning and limited out the boat. Cut plug herring, flasher and fish the incoming tide was the key to their limits. OK, I could do that. I had a small flasher I bought last year and used a few times. That could come out of the tackle box. I bought a new package of herring because the one I had tried between the bridges the day before was left over from last year. The tide book said low tide last Friday was at 12:10 PM which meant the afternoon wind would be blowing. That makes the Channel a zoo with so many boats fighting the wind. Go early and take my chances fishing the outgoing was my decision. I called Harold to see if he wanted to go but he couldn't make it. Jan's been out of commission with her broken leg so it was me against the crowd at the Channel.

I backed the boat down the Eastside ramp at 8:45 AM. There was a boat on the west side of the dock and we stopped to talk. His buddy was up getting the truck. They had limited out, seven fish on and four in the boat. Nice! Their magic was cut plug herring, chartreuse flasher and troll with the tide as slow as their motor would go. I asked for his advice on how the herring should roll while trolling. He said the easiest way was to see how I cut the herring and rigged with the hooks. I cut a herring and put in the front hook just to the left of the back bone. He said that's exactly the way he did it. He also said they they left the rear treble hook dangling as it seemed to hook the fish better. The difference with the flasher though was that he had the flasher right up against the spreader with only a couple of big snap swivels between the flasher and the spreader. The leader out to the herring was about 4'. I thanked him and left the dock.

Apparently the bite was already on. I motored to the top of Marshfield Channel passing at least fifty other boats trolling in the channel. My method is to troll out with the tide, at the bottom of the channel pick up and run back to the top to do it again. On my third pass the clicker on my reel started singing, I shut down my trolling motor and lifted it out of the water. The fish was running hard about due north with boats right behind mine. I yelled to a boat that my fish was running under theirs. The guy in the bow got his line in but I didn't see the line of the rod in the rear of the boat. I tried to gain line on the fish with little success so I started the motor to go after it as it had taken about half of my line. Ahead of me is the boat that my fish ran under, they had motored to the north side of the Channel. As I moved toward them I could see that my line was still near the rear of their boat and I also saw a seal put its head up about 40' behind their boat. Trouble! As I motored I reeled in line not allowing any slack. My line had a spreader and flasher wrapped around the line that came up my line and against my rod tip as I reeled in line. I shook my rod to keep the tangle sliding on the line. The seal had raised its head again as I saw the salmon swimming sideways against my line's pull. I now was close enough to see that I needed my net. The handle hadn't been extended yet because I forgot that was usually Jan's job while I fought the fish. As I was reeling and fighting the net handle the guy in the rear of the boat yelled out "the seal's got your fish". What could I do, I just kept reeling. The salmon was sliding towards me. I couldn't see the seal as I put the net in the water and slid the fish into the net. I dropped the rod and lifted the net into the boat. I won! The seal was nowhere in sight. There were not even any bite marks on the fish. I whacked the fish then started dealing with the tangled spreaders, flashers and swivels. I undid snap swivels and handed a mess of tackle to the guy in the bow of the other boat which was still close enough for a hand-off.

continued

**POTLUCK 6:00 MEETING 7:00 TUE. September 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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Please make checks payable to: Coos River STEP P.O. BOX 5907 CHARLESTON, Oregon 97420

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clyde@noblecreekfish.net
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