

Coos River S.T.E.P. News

P.O Box 5907 Charleston, Oregon 97420

June 2010

Directors

PRESIDENT

Clyde Haga 267-3563

VICE PRESIDENT

Al Harker 888-0536

SECRETARY

Ray Lee 267-4176

TREASURER

Mickey McCready 888-5906

S.T.E.P. BIOLOGIST

Gary Vonderohe 888-5515

BOARD MEMBERS

JOHN O'NEILL 267-7874



DONATION

IN MEMORY OF

BOB LAIRD
NEW MEMBERS

Glynn & Roxann McCready

DONATIONS

Del	Atkins
Glynn & Roxann	McCready
Cheryl	Bonham
Dave	Gonzales

HATCHERY NEWS

Here at the Hatchery the 660,000 Chinook pre-smolts are almost all moved down Noble Creek on their journey of life. We still need the water to be a little lower here at the hatchery so we can clean out the holding ponds and race-way. There will be no fish here until the fall return, late this October and most of Nov. We are expecting at least 3000 adults this spawning season., which provides the eggs to support Coos River STEP's part of the numbers of fish we have planned for release into the Coos River

GARAGE SALE JUNE 18th & 19th

This year we will again hold our annual STEP Garage Sale at Loretta & Shorty's, 90797 Travis Ln. off Empire Charleston highway. We are still asking for donated items that can be sold at our sale, you can drop off things for the sale after June 6th at this address on Travis Ln., or the hatchery any time before the sale at 93638 Greenacres Ln.

We already have several nice items for this sale, a gas Onan generator that has a 240 and two 120 outlets, 18' inboard boat and trailer. Handyman jack, cement frogs (50lbs), cement

Hatchery News

By Al Harker

On Saturday, May 22 we released approximately 300,000 Chinook pre-smolts into Noble Creek. On hand observing the festivities were 30 to 40 visitors including a couple of people running for political office in this year's election. Our week-end releases and spawnings have given working members and visitors a firsthand opportunity to observe our volunteers and ODF&W at work. Hopefully, this will encourage new members and others to get involved.

We will release the remaining pre-smolts when our biologist Gary Vanderohé completes the adipose fin clipping. 200,000 are targeted for the 2009 spawning, plus an additional 30,000 adipose clipped and wire coded to follow.

We are in need of volunteers to assist us in preparing the hatchery for our next spawning in November, 2010. This may seem a bit premature; however, there is always something to do. In recent years, we have brought Noble Creek Hatchery out of the dark ages and turned it into a modern and well equipped facility. Our volunteers are to be congratulated for their devotion and hard work. A special thanks to all of our volunteers and donors who throughout the years have given us the equipment, funds and assistance when needed. We at Noble Creek have used every means at our disposal to make our hatchery more worker friendly. Electric and manual hoists now facilitate all heavy lifting. All heavy grates are now stored on a dolly which can be moved to every location in the hatchery for placement with the hoists. All unneeded and unwanted materials and outdated equipment have been disposed of. Our hatchery now has a place for everything that is needed to operate in a safe and efficient way. Our exceptional production of pre-smolts this year (2009 spawning) proves that we have accomplished our goal to make our hatchery more productive and state-of-the-art.

Our next release of pre-smolts will be approximately June 10 with the remaining 300,000 plus the 30,000 wire coded. This will end our 2009 production which started in mid-October and ends June 10 to 15, 2010, a long year indeed.

Our next project is the annual fund raising with our Noble Creek STEP yard sale. This event is always a success and everybody involved has a lot of fun. Special thanks to Shorty and Loretta for their generosity and use of their garage through the years for this event. If you wish to donate articles to the yard sale, call Clyde Haga, Shorty Burcher or me. Our phone numbers are listed on the front of the newsletter. We will pick up any articles that cannot be delivered. Let s make this year s event one of our best!

We have lost two more active members, Dave and Sandy Gonzales who have moved back to Klamath. We will sorely miss them. They could always be counted on whenever we needed anything. Luck to you both. We hope you come back to visit.

Again, our thanks to all the volunteers, members and donors who, with their support, have made this year (2009) a most memorable year. Special thanks to the Coast Guard whose members, through their youth and exuberance, bring a spark of life and youth to our facility.

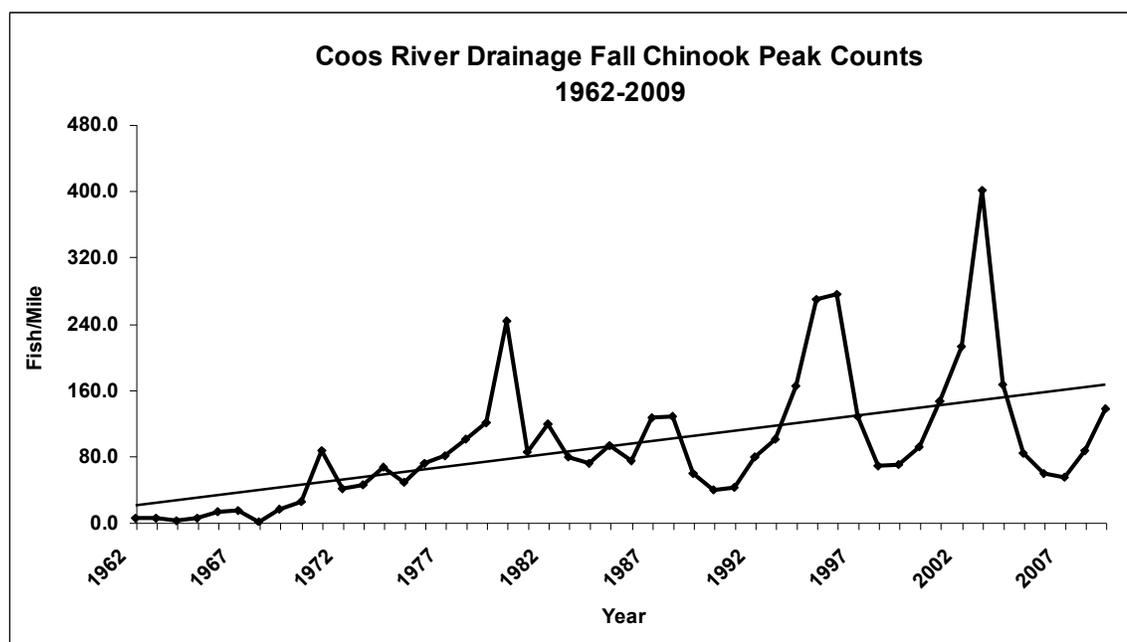


President Clyde Haga hard at work programming one of our new scatter feeders.

It's the end of another year, well at least in terms of raising Chinook salmon. We just finished up the fin clipping for the year and pulled all the screens at Noble Creek Hatchery so the pre-smolt Chinook can start their journey to the ocean. This year we fin clipping about 146,000 Chinook pre-smolts with an Adipose fin clip and an additional 31,000 Chinook with an Adipose clip plus a coded wire tag inserted in their snout.

All the Chinook are free to leave the hatchery except for a group of about 500 Chinook that are being held in a net pen that were tagged with a coded wire tag a few weeks ago. I will go through these fish in about a week to see what percentage of the 500 fish have retained the coded wire tag. This percentage is then expanded to the rest of the 31,000 coded wire tagged fish that were released this year from Noble Creek Hatchery. This retention check process is conducted for each release location that we release fish with coded wire tags.

One day after fin clipping we had a discussion with Clyde about the wild Chinook numbers in the Coos Basin. Clyde had mentioned that he has been asked by several people what the Coos Basin wild Chinook numbers are and how does that compare to the past. At that point I realized Clyde and I generally talk about hatchery numbers and have never got into a discussion about the wild fish numbers. So I decided this month to include some information about the wild Chinook numbers in the Coos Basin. Here is a graph showing the peak counts of unmarked Chinook observed during spawning surveys at standard sites numbers in the Coos Basin from 1962-2009.



What this graph shows is that the number of Chinook returning to the Coos Basin fluctuates each year. These numbers are probably nowhere near the number of Chinook that once returned to the Coos Basin in the 1800's but the graph shows our Chinook numbers are a lot better off now compared to those in the 1960's. As habitat conditions continue to improve in the South Fork Coos and Millicoma rivers along with the bay/estuary we should see a continuing increasing trend in our Chinook salmon returns. Unfortunately habitat conditions don't just improve over night so this will take time to see big increases in Chinook numbers in the Coos Basin.

Later this summer I should have the results from the creel survey (angler survey) conducted this past fall. Once I have those numbers I will provide a summary of how many Chinook salmon were caught in Coos Bay in 2009.

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

Gary Vonderohe

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife