

## NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION 2000 OREGON PLAN IMPLEMENTATION REPORT

### Introduction

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is located within the U.S. Department of Commerce and comprises five agencies: (1) the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), (2) the National Ocean Service (NOS), (3) the Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), (4) the National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS), and (5) the National Weather Service. The first four agencies, whose functions are described in more detail below, carry out programs that directly or indirectly support salmon and steelhead conservation.

1. The **National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)** is responsible for the conservation, protection, and management of the nation's living marine resources. The strategic goals of NMFS are (1) sustainable fisheries, (2) recovery of protected species, and (3) healthy living marine resource habitat. NMFS's legal mandates include the Endangered Species Act, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and the Mitchell Act.

The NMFS Northwest Regional Office contains four management programs and five research programs. The management programs are Protected Resources, Habitat Conservation, Sustainable Fisheries, and Hydropower Operations. The research programs are Conservation Biology, Fish Ecology, Environmental Conservation, Resource Enhancement and Utilization Technology, and Fishery Resource Analysis and Monitoring.

2. NOAA's **National Ocean Service (NOS)** contains ten programs and staff offices, including the Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management (OCRM), the Office of Response and Restoration (ORR), the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS), and the Coastal Services Center (CSC).

OCRM implements the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) of 1972. The CZMA program works in partnership with states to preserve, protect, develop wisely, restore, and enhance coastal resources. Elements of the program include comprehensive land use planning to protect coastal resources and achieve high quality coastal waters. Under the 1990 reauthorization of the CZMA (section 6217), participating states are required to develop and implement coastal non\_point pollution control programs and submit them to NOAA and the Environmental Protection Agency for approval or face reductions in federal funding under the CZMA and the Clean Water Act. OCRM also oversees the National Estuarine Research Reserve System, including the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve in Coos Bay, Oregon.

ORR is the focal point within NOAA for responding to oil and hazardous materials releases and the primary scientific support provider to the lead cleanup entity (known as the "Unified Command") for spills occurring in U.S. coastal and navigable waters.

The NCCOS conducts and supports monitoring, research, assessment, and technical assistance for the range of NOAA's coastal mission. NCCOS programs include the Coastal Ocean Program, the Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment, the Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research, and the Center for Coastal Fisheries and Habitat Research.

The CSC provides states with services and information to assist in utilizing new or underutilized technology, including geographic information systems (GIS), the World Wide Web, and satellite imagery.

3. The **Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR)** includes two programs relevant to salmon and steelhead conservation. The National Sea Grant College Program includes a partnership between NOAA and the Oregon State University to encourage good stewardship of marine resources through research, education, outreach and technology transfer. The Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory (PMEL), in Seattle, carries out interdisciplinary scientific investigations in oceanography and marine meteorology. Current PMEL programs focus on coastal and open ocean observations in support of prediction of the ocean environment on time scales from days to decades.
4. The **National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS)** includes the Office of Research and Applications, the National Climatic Data Center, and the National Oceanographic Data Center. NESDIS objectives are to determine how geophysical parameters affect coastal ecosystems and provide near real-time, high-resolution environmental satellite products to federal, state, and local decisionmakers and researchers to support better coastal resource decisionmaking.

#### **NOAA-NMFS1 - Hire-the-Fisher Habitat Restoration Program and Fishery Data Program**

- Tasks completedHire-the-Fisher Program was concluded.
- Fishery Data Program was concluded.

#### **NOAA-NMFS2 - Watershed Council Support**

##### Tasks underway

- Provided \$25,000 to For the Sake of the Salmon (FSOS) to implement the FSOS watershed support program, establish a Pacific Salmon Watershed Fund, hold periodic regional forums, and carry out public information and outreach activities.
- Provided \$18,000 to support the Willamette River Navigator position.
- Provide staff support to the Willamette Restoration Initiative.
- Provide technical assistance to watershed councils as staff resources permit.

- Provided \$9 million in Pacific Salmon Restoration Fund monies to the state of Oregon for salmon habitat restoration and other related activities including education and monitoring.
- Arranged with Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) to use OWEB funding to house a staff biologist in NMFS Portland office to work on section 7 consultations for watershed council projects and on joint strategies for streamlining the consultation process.

### **NOAA-NMFS3 - Habitat Conservation Plans**

#### Tasks underway

- The Western Oregon State Lands Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), a multispecies HCP proposed by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) that would cover some 640,000 acres of forest lands mostly in northwest Oregon with smaller holdings in the Cascades and southern coastal regions, has been in development for over five years. In 2000, NMFS met several times with ODF to discuss outstanding issues, including ODF's proposed approach to managing potentially unstable landforms and debris flow paths, the need to identify and prioritize for protection and restoration those watersheds that are particularly important to listed salmon populations, and how ODF District Implementation Plans that set individual timber harvests would relate to the HCP.

ODF did not respond to issues raised by NMFS in 2000; during the winter of 2000-2001, there was virtually no interagency activity on the HCP as ODF steered its Forest Management Plan (FMP) through the Board of Forestry. Now that the Board has approved the FMP, ODF has begun to re\_engage the Federal agencies in the HCP process. ODF's ability to modify the draft HCP to meet the needs of NMFS may, however, be limited by the parameters of the FMP. Another issue for ODF is how to avoid unauthorized take of Oregon Coast coho salmon during the time the HCP is being negotiated. Considering the slow pace of HCP development over the past five years in general and in 2000 in particular, and the fact that the FMP has already been completed, NMFS must assess whether to continue to commit staff to development of the HCP.

### **NOAA-NMFS4 - Habitat Matrix**

#### Task completed

- A matrix of freshwater habitat requirements of salmon, developed by NMFS, is now being used to assist watershed councils, agencies, and others evaluate impacts of proposed actions on listed species.

(See **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**)

#### Task underway

- Matrices are in development to provide guidelines for salmon habitat requirements in estuarine areas and in urbanized, mainstem river areas.

## **NOAA-NMFS5 - Northwest Forest Plan (NFP)**

### Tasks underway

- Participating in national support and oversight for the NFP through participation on the Regional Interagency Executive Committee, and participating in regional policy development and coordination through the Regional Interagency Executive Committee and its Intergovernmental Advisory Committee.
- Supporting Coastal, Southwest Oregon, and Willamette Basin NFP implementation, technical deliberations, and collaborative watershed restoration through participation on Provincial Interagency Executive Committees and Provincial Advisory Committees.
- Continuing to support the U.S. government appeal of a U.S. District Court decision that questioned implementation of the NFP Aquatic Conservation Strategy (ACS) and NMFS's section 7 consultations on consistency of actions with the ACS.
- Initiated new study with U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to evaluate stream restoration techniques commonly used in bedrock streams of southern Oregon.

### Tasks completed

- Completed cooperative study with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and U.S. Bureau of Land Management on the effectiveness of instream restoration projects in the North Coast Province. Results are being used to help guide restoration efforts (particularly placement of large wood) throughout Pacific Northwest.
- Completed report on the effectiveness of different restoration techniques and methods for prioritizing restoration in forested watersheds in Oregon and Washington. The report is currently being used by watershed councils and other entities to assist with prioritizing salmon habitat restoration projects.

## **NOAA-NMFS6 - Regional Ecosystem Office (REO)**

### Tasks underway

- Continuing to fund a full-time natural resource specialist at the REO to provide leadership in addressing aquatic issues related to regional salmon conservation.
- Continuing to help develop a plan to monitor the effectiveness of NFP in maintaining and restoring aquatic and riparian habitats essential to salmon. The draft monitoring plan has been distributed for peer review. (See <http://www.reo.gov/reo/>)

## **NOAA\_NMFS6s \_ Irrigation Screening and Fishways**

### Tasks completed

- NMFS engineers worked on design, operation, and maintenance of water diversion screens and fish ladders, and performed fish passage feasibility studies and analyses of fish barriers throughout Oregon, including projects in the Walla Walla, Umatilla, John Day, Deschutes, Willamette, Sandy, Clackamas, Santiam, Umpqua, Snake, Rogue, Tualatin, Hood River, Grande Ronde, and Coos river basins and the Columbia mainstem.
  - NMFS engineers and biologists have been involved with conceptual development of fish passage associated with the repair of Wallowa Lake Dam. This project is intended to restore historic habitat cut off by construction of the original dam.
  - NMFS engineers are involved in a collaborative process with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and other agencies to develop fish screening criteria common to all fisheries agencies in the Pacific Northwest.
  - NMFS has implemented a 4(d) rule “limit” for screening of water diversions. Liability for take of listed salmon and steelhead under the ESA will be significantly reduced for diverters who comply with the limit by installing screens that are certified by NMFS.
  - NMFS engineers worked on numerous culvert designs statewide.
- (See <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1hydrop/hydroweb/ferc.htm>)

## **NOAA-NMFS7 - Coastal Terminal Fisheries**

### Task terminated and funds reprogrammed

- This project was dropped and funds were used for the more pressing need of obtaining information on the effects of selective fishing on listed coho salmon (see NOAA-NMFS Measure 8, Selective Fisheries).

## **NOAA-NMFS7s - Exotic Fishes**

### Task completed

- Co-hosted a workshop with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to examine effects of exotic fish species on anadromous and resident salmonids. Proceedings of the workshop were published in April 1999.

### Task underway

- Information derived from this workshop is currently being used to guide the management of exotic fish in Oregon.

## **NOAA-NMFS8 - Selective fisheries**

### Tasks completed

- Worked collaboratively with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop a Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan (FMEP) for commercial and recreational spring chinook fisheries in the Willamette Basin. Under the FMEP, harvest-related impacts to listed salmon will be reduced by more than 75 percent because only hatchery salmon can be legally harvested. All wild salmon are to be released unharmed. The FMEP was approved by NMFS in February 2001, allowing the fisheries to proceed with approval under the ESA.
- Worked with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Pacific Fishery Management Council to implement selective fisheries for marked, hatchery coho salmon off the coast of Oregon. Monitoring and evaluation of this fishery indicated a high compliance rate and incidental by-catch of listed coho that was within established limits.
- NMFS Science Center predicted Oregon Coastal Natural (OCN) coho salmon abundance for 2000 and 2001 harvest management.
- NMFS Science Center serves on committee to review Amendment 13 to the Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Amendment 13 implements the harvest management regime for coho salmon recommended by the Oregon Plan. The committee recommended a revision to the harvest management regime that offered additional protection at low stock abundance.
- Provided \$400,000 to mark Oregon hatchery coho salmon in the Columbia River. This action allows ocean and inland fisheries to target hatchery-produced coho salmon while significantly reducing impacts to naturally-produced salmon..
- Provided \$140,000 to mark hatchery spring chinook at Clackamas Hatchery to provide for selective fisheries in the Willamette Basin.

## **NOAA-NMFS9 - Supplementation**

### Tasks completed

- Provided \$3.77 million to ODFW and \$689,000 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to operate Oregon fish hatcheries.
- Worked with ODFW to substantially reform lower Columbia River Basin hatchery steelhead programs and associated selective fisheries to minimize adverse effects to listed populations; local broodstocks are being reared to replace hatchery populations that may adversely affect wild stocks.
- Completed ESA Section 7 consultation on hatchery programs in the Willamette River Basin in July, 2000. The Corps of Engineers, Portland General Electric, City of Portland, NMFS, and ODFW fund and/or operate the hatcheries. Implementing some of the on-the-ground monitoring and evaluation tasks required by the consultation has not occurred because of delays in distributing funds by the action agency. Most of the tasks are related

to collecting basic biological information that could be useful for most resource managers working with salmon in the basin. Discussions need to also occur among the action agencies to develop a long-term strategy for hatchery management in areas above and below the Corps of Engineers dams in the Willamette Basin.

## **NOAA-NMFS10 - Hatchery and Population Research**

### Tasks completed

- A NOAA Technical Memorandum (NMFS\_NWFSC\_41) describing "Ecological and behavioral impacts of artificial production strategies on the abundance of wild salmon populations" was published in March 2000.
- Provided 344 adult spawners (broodstock) of listed Snake River spring/summer chinook salmon (raised in captivity in seawater at NMFS's Manchester Laboratory) to ODFW; these salmon produced over 210,000 eggs for use in recovery efforts in Oregon.

### Tasks underway

- Rearing chinook salmon from brood\_years 1995, 1996, 1997, and 1998 for future recovery efforts.
- Evaluating methods to improve egg production by Snake River chinook captive brood program by comparing reproductive physiology of wild and captive fish.
- Developing rearing methods to better match wild\_like phenotype of juvenile salmon in supplementation programs.
- Developing methods for improved disease control of captively reared salmon broodstock.

## **NOAA\_NMFS11 \_ Section 404/10 Actions**

### Tasks completed

- Completed over 340 ESA section 7 consultations with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on permits issued under section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) and section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403). (This number includes consultations with the U.S. Federal Highways Administration that also involved permits under section 404/10. It does not include consultations with the U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management for activities on Federal lands.)
- Completed a programmatic consultation with the Corps for 15 categories of minor activities permitted under section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. 1344) and section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403). The result was development and adoption of standard local operating procedures for endangered species

that allow for efficient handling of a large number of similar and relatively minor actions while ensuring protection for listed species in compliance with the ESA and reducing the time required to process permit actions.

- Completed a programmatic consultation with the Corps of Engineers for a regional general permit on stream enhancement for large wood and boulder placement. Completing this consultation streamlined the approval of 50 watershed council restoration projects.

#### Tasks underway

- Working with the Oregon Division of State Lands (DSL) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on a programmatic consultation for the issuance by the Corps to DSL of a State Programmatic General Permit. The objective of this programmatic consultation is to allow the agencies involved to focus more effectively on actions with major impacts and obviate the need to consult individually on every project.
- Working with the Corps on a four-year extension of a programmatic consultation for a regional general permit on large wood and boulder placement for stream enhancement. The one-year permit issued last year has been proposed for extension for an additional four years. In addition, there is a proposed change to allow more flexibility in reporting criteria, work windows, and wood size. The consultation will streamline the approval of certain watershed council restoration projects. Estimated completion date is June 2001.

#### **NOAA-NMFS12 - Highway Projects**

##### Task underway

- NMFS continues to support two IPAs from the Oregon Department of Transportation and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to work on ESA section 7 consultations for Oregon highway projects.

#### **NOAA\_NMFS13 \_ Hydropower Facilities**

##### Tasks underway

- Continuing to work on relicensing processes for facilities throughout Oregon, including: ***Sandy River–Bull Run*** (involves removing two dams and resolving such issues as handling trapped sediment behind dams and managing a mixed stock fishery if the existing sorting facility is removed); ***Pelton/Round Butte*** (relicensing negotiations center around a large project that blocks a huge amount of historic habitat; many factors, such as the existence of a wild steelhead run, habitat modifications, and questions regarding the technical feasibility of passing fish, complicate this project); ***North Umpqua*** (negotiations have recently been completed); ***Hells Canyon*** (with three dams, this system requires a cumulative analysis to evaluate the big picture and appropriate fixes);

***Clackamas River Project*** (involves six dams requiring upgrading of ladders, screens, instream flows, and hatchery mitigation); ***T. W. Sullivan*** (all juveniles in the Willamette Basin must pass through this system); ***Leaburg/Waltermville*** on the McKenzie River (settlement of license conditions and ESA consultation is nearly complete); numerous smaller projects; and ongoing involvement in Columbia mainstem projects.

#### **NOAA\_NMFS14 \_ Non\_Hydropower Facilities**

##### Task completed

- Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the Cougar Dam water temperature control project. (See <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1habcon/habweb/biops.htm>)

##### Tasks underway

- Section 7 joint consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Corps on the operation of the thirteen Willamette Basin flood control projects. Currently, NMFS staff is working with the Corps, Bonneville Power Administration, Bureau of Reclamation, and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to implement flow requirements for listed species in the Willamette Basin. A co-manager draft of the Biological Opinion for this consultation should be completed by the end of the year.
- Section 7 consultation with the Bureau of Reclamation regarding the operations of the Umatilla River Basin Project.
- Continuing to discuss Savage Rapids Dam removal with Grants Pass Irrigation District. The district is actively seeking Congressional funding for dam removal. NMFS staff is continuing to monitor fish passage operations in the interim.

#### **NOAA-NMFS16 - Fish Passage Research**

##### Tasks underway

- Study to evaluate the performance and effects of diversion screens and other fish guidance equipment on dams on the Snake and Columbia Rivers.
- Study of survival of salmon through spillways and spill patterns at dams to help select appropriate project operations to enhance survival and passage of juvenile migrants

#### **NOAA-NOS19- Coastal Management and Nonpoint Source Programs**

##### Tasks underway

- Provided \$1.34 million to Oregon for implementation of the coastal zone management program, many elements of which benefit salmon conservation.

- Provided \$206,000 for enhancements to coastal program. Oregon uses this funding for projects related to coastal hazards, ocean resources, and water quality protection.
- Provided \$54,000 to the section 6217 coastal nonpoint pollution control program.

### **NOAA-NOS20 - South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve**

#### Tasks underway

- NOS provides funding and oversight to the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. Recent SSNERR projects have included restoration of Anderson and Wasson Creek marshes in South Slough, research on the importance of estuaries to juvenile salmon, and acquisition and restoration of tidal influence to 500 acres on the Siuslaw estuary.

### **NOAA-NOS21 - GIS Analysis of Coos Bay Estuary**

#### Tasks completed

- NOAA's Coastal Services Center funded two successive two-year fellowships to build the *Dynamic Estuary Management Information System* (DEMIS), which created GIS and raster data sets for the Coos, Coquille, Nehalem, Siletz, and Siuslaw estuaries. This project comprises an inventory of potential restoration areas and related information for each estuary (see <http://www.lcd.state.or.us/coast/demis/core.htm>).

### **NOAA-OAR22 - Sea Grant Program**

#### Tasks completed/underway

- Provided \$386,000 to Oregon State University for research, extension, communication and administration of the Sea Grant Program.

### **NOAA-NOS23 - Pacific Northwest Coastal Ecosystem Research Study(PNCERS)**

#### Tasks underway

- PNCERS is funded by the NOAA NOS Coastal Ocean Program. Primary partners in overseeing the multi-year region-scale ecosystem research program are the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Washington Sea Grant Program, and NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center. Scientific research is being conducted by a team of scientists from the University of Washington, Oregon State University, and Oregon Institute of Marine Biology.

#### Tasks completed

- Conducted 2000 field season of integrated studies of estuarine and nearshore ocean environments in the four target areas of the Pacific Northwest.
- Administered extensive surveys of coastal residents four estuarine areas to assess value relationships between environmental-ecosystem quality and quality of life.
- Developed integrated assessment of physical and ecological linkages between ocean-estuarine in PNW to identify indicators of nearshore and ecosystem health.
- Completed survey assessment and held workshop on region-wide similarities and differences in estuary management framework in Pacific Northwest.
- Completed survey and description of historical trends, patterns, and consequences of development in estuaries throughout the Pacific Northwest.

•Published 2000 progress report in PNCERS World Wide Web home page in April 2001, (see <http://www.pncers.org>).

## **NOAA-NMFS24 - Genetics**

### Tasks underway

- Studying the consequences of inbreeding within hatchery populations and outbreeding among hatchery populations of salmon. In 2000, continued to evaluate effects of inbreeding in 1997 and 1998 broodyear chinook salmon. For the outbreeding study, first\_generation adults of nine groups of marked purebred and crossbred coho salmon were recovered and spawned to create second\_generation purebred and crossbred progeny, which are currently under culture.

## **NOAA\_NMFS25 \_ Population Status**

### Task completed

- Re-assessment of Klamath Mountain Province Steelhead; found “not warranted” for listing

### Tasks underway

- Status review of Lower Columbia River coho salmon; results of status review and proposed determination expected to be published in summer 2001.
- NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center in Seattle is developing a model of physical factors affecting marine and freshwater survival of hatchery and wild coho salmon in Oregon. The model will be used to explore the relative importance of freshwater and marine phases of the coho life cycle, possible effects of changing habitat conditions, and possible effects of climate change on the viability of Oregon Coast natural coho. This

project is in collaboration with Robert Francis, Nate Mantua, Libby Logerwell, and Vera Agostini of the University of Washington.

- NMFS Science Center also participates with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in use of the habitat-based life-cycle model for Oregon Coast natural coho to analyze aspects of population dynamics, habitat carrying capacity, and population viability.

### **NOAA-NMFS26 - Estuarine and Ocean Ecology Research**

#### Tasks underway

- Studies on salmon life cycle and factors controlling productivity.
- Studies on estuary habitat and juvenile salmon (including estimates of juvenile salmonid survival through the Columbia River estuary using acoustic tags and identification of use and benefit of estuarine habitats)
- Studies on the abundance and availability of prey.
- Studies on environmental changes in the Columbia River plume, in relation to the growth and health of juvenile salmon.
- Study to determine if predation by large marine fishes has contributed to the recent decline in ocean salmon survival.
- Study of health of juvenile salmon in relation to human impacts to estuary water quality, habitat quality and natural environmental conditions.

### **NOAA-NOS27 - Global Ocean Ecosystems Dynamics (GLOBEC)**

#### Tasks underway

- Studies on coastal and ocean ecosystems of the Northwest.
- The multiagency Global Ocean Ecosystems Dynamics (GLOBEC) research program focuses in the Pacific Northwest on the effects of climate shifts and changes in the California current system, including El Nino, on salmon survival.  
([http://www\\_powelllab.biol.berkeley.edu/nep/index.html](http://www_powelllab.biol.berkeley.edu/nep/index.html))

### **NOAA\_NMFS30 \_ Columbia Basin Recovery Plan**

*Task redefined and redirected; no longer a plan promulgated solely by NMFS.*

#### Selected tasks underway in the Snake and Columbia River Basins

- NMFS created and provides staff support to the Regional Forum, an intergovernmental body that provides for regional discussion and decisions on the operation and system configuration of the Federal Columbia River Power System. The Forum includes a Federal Executive, which includes meetings with States and Tribes; an Implementation Team, which is a senior policy group that provides for coordination, decision, and appropriate and timely implementation of NMFS' Biological Opinions on the Federal Columbia River Power System; a Technical Management Team, which is responsible for making real time recommendations on dam and reservoir operations; a System Configuration Team, which reviews project needs, progress on planning/engineering studies, and/or collection of research data; a Water Quality Team, which is concerned with river temperature, dissolved gas level, and other water quality concerns; and an Integrated Scientific Review Team. (See <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1hydrop/hydroweb/rif.htm>)
- Participation in the Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Authority, which each year prioritizes and manages direct fish and wildlife program proposals funded by the Bonneville Power Administration.
- Participation with Oregon and other state, federal, and tribal entities in the Columbia River Basin Forum, developed to coordinate authorities and responsibilities so as to strengthen and improve fish and wildlife and related habitat management in the basin.
- Participation in the Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program of the Northwest Power Planning Council.
- Section 7 consultations on the implementation of the 2000-2010 FCRPS Biological Opinion with the Bonneville Power Administration, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the operation of water storage facilities and diversion works and the Federal Columbia River Power System; which also has included 19 BOR projects, a section 10 transportation permit for the Corps; and a section 10 permit for certain research, monitoring, and evaluation actions essential to the implementation of the Biological Opinion.
- Participation with nine other federal agencies on the Federal Caucus, which examined opportunities in the region within habitat, harvest, hatcheries, and hydromodification for recovering listed salmon, steelhead, and resident fish. The Caucus is working to develop a conceptual recovery plan that can guide future federal actions.  
(See <http://www.salmonrecovery.gov>)

## **NOAA\_NOS \_ Office of Response and Restoration**

### Tasks underway/completed

- Responded to and conducted preliminary resource evaluations at several oil and chemical spills throughout the state (e.g., bunker oil spill into Yaquina River, herbicide spill into Fifteenmile Creek).
- Assisted in developing remediation strategies, injury determination studies, restoration planning, and monitoring for potential impacts to winter steelhead and Pacific lamprey from oxyfluorfen spill in Fifteenmile Creek.
- Coordinated with other natural resource trustees in development of a Memorandum of Understanding between the trustees, EPA, Oregon Dept. of Environmental Quality to provide a framework for coordination and cooperation to optimize federal, state, and tribal expertise in management of the Portland Harbor Superfund site.
- Formed a Resource Agency Coordination group consisting of NOAA, Dept. of Interior, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde Community of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and the Nez Perce Tribe to coordinate an assessment of natural resource injuries, potential restoration, and any prospective settlement of claims associated with the Portland Harbor Superfund site.
- Coordinated with EPA in the development of a Scope of Work and Administrative Order on Consent for the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study at the Portland Harbor site.
- Coordinated with Potentially Responsible Parties at the Portland Harbor site in the development of a preliminary study to assess the timing and distribution of juvenile anadromous fishes in the lower Willamette River.
- Continuing injury determination and restoration planning associated with gasoline spill into Beaver Creek on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

#### **NOAA-NMFS40- MOU with NRCS and Oregon on ESA and Agriculture Issues**

##### Tasks completed

- Signed an MOU with Oregon, Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Environmental Protection Agency, agreeing to work to assure compliance of NRCS programs with ESA requirements and to ensure that NRCS programs contribute to the conservation of species of concern and their habitats, and to streamline and improve the process for users.
- Formed a Management Committee and Technical Team.
- Established priorities for implementation of the MOU.
- Initiated review of the NRCS Field Operations Technical Guides to identify enhancements needed to address conservation of species

### Tasks underway

- Management Committee and Technical Team meet as needed to discuss future direction of MOU implementation and oversight of ongoing consultations.
- In January 2000, NMFS initiated discussions with three Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in the mid-Columbia region of Oregon to address ESA conservation needs. NRCS eventually requested formal consultation with NMFS on agricultural practices in the mid-Columbia region for dry land cropping, rangeland management, and irrigated agriculture. NRCS is working in collaboration with the three SWCDs to prepare a Biological Assessment for this consultation. NMFS is assisting with field review and analysis of practices. The Biological Assessment is expected to be completed in September 2001.
- As a prelude to formal consultation, NMFS is in the informal stage of consultation with NRCS for the Tillamook/North Coast region of Oregon on farm practices related to dairy operations.

### **NOAA-NMFS41 - Integration of ESA with Water Quality Management Planning**

#### Tasks completed or underway

- Section 7 consultation on the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) approval of the state of Oregon's water quality standards for dissolved oxygen, water temperature and pH. To address issues raised in the consultation, EPA, together with other federal agencies, state and tribal partners, and an outside scientific peer review group, has initiated a project to develop regional temperature criteria guidance that better meet the biological requirements of listed salmonid species, and that can be reasonably implemented (see <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/1habcon/habweb/biops.htm>). Draft criteria guidance for regional temperature standards are expected to be available in the fall of 2001.
- Provided recommendations to the Oregon Board of Agriculture on addressing salmon habitat requirements in SB1010 Agricultural Water Quality Management Plans.
- Established stronger coordination with the EPA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in the section 7 consultations on proposed revisions to state water quality standards that affect listed fish
- Continuing to work with the EPA and USFWS to identify and resolve policy, regulatory, and technical barriers to integration of the Clean Water Act and the ESA, in order to streamline the regulatory process and offer "one-stop shopping" to agencies and the public seeking to comply with both statutes
- Conducting section 7 consultation with EPA on Tualatin Basin TMDL.
- Continuing to support pilot Clean Water Act/ESA integration project in the Applegate River Watershed.

### **Additional NMFS Measures that Advance the Goals of the Oregon Plan**

## **Columbia River Channel Deepening**

- Section 7 consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Lower Columbia River Federal Navigation Channel Deepening. The “no jeopardy” opinion on this project was based on extensive commitments by the Corps to estuary restoration, monitoring, and research. NMFS has received a 60-day notice from environmental groups of intent to sue, challenging this opinion.

## **ESA 4(d) Rules for Pacific Salmon**

- Protective regulations under ESA section 4(d) were proposed, finalized, and became effective for 14 ESUs of Pacific salmon and steelhead, including Oregon Coast coho, Lower Columbia River steelhead, Lower Columbia River chinook, Columbia River chum, Upper Willamette River steelhead, Upper Willamette River chinook, Snake River steelhead, and Middle Columbia River steelhead. These rules put the ESA section 9 “take” prohibition in place and created the opportunity for “limits” on that prohibition when NMFS approved state or local programs that were adequately protective of the listed species.
- Oregon state programs that have received approval under 4(d) limits include the Oregon Department of Transportation routine road maintenance policies, the harvest management plan for Willamette River spring chinook, and research activities conducted under the Oregon Plan.
- To facilitate implementation of the limit for research, NMFS funded a full-time position at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

## **ESA Recovery Planning**

- Convened a Technical Recovery Team for the Willamette/Lower Columbia River to develop ESA delisting criteria for listed ESUs in that geographic domain. The TRT includes 11 members with a wide variety of technical expertise from state, federal, and tribal agencies, universities, and the private sector. The TRT will be addressing five ESUs: Lower Columbia chinook, Lower Columbia steelhead, Columbia River chum, Upper Willamette chinook, and Upper Willamette steelhead. Initial products from the TRT will include identification of historic populations, population viability goals, and population scenarios for recovered ESUs.
- Convened discussions regarding initiating a Recovery Planning Team for the Willamette/Lower Columbia River to carry out the policy and planning tasks needed to finalize a Recovery Plan for that domain.
- Solicited nominations for a Technical Recovery Team for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast coho ESU. Expect team to be appointed in summer of 2001.
- Worked with the Northwest Power Planning Council to coordinate the council’s sub-basin assessment and planning process with the ESA recovery planning process.

## **Habitat Research**

- Conducting research on the relationship between steelhead escapement and large-scale habitat features in the Willamette basin as well as other Columbia River sub-basins.

- Conducting research on the effects of salmon carcasses on chinook and steelhead fitness in the John Day River basin
- Carrying out research to support recovery planning efforts in the Willamette and Lower Columbia River basins.
- Cooperative effort underway with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board to develop research and validation monitoring program for restoration projects funded by Pacific Salmon Recovery Funds