DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS,

We are pleased to report to you our financial operating results for fiscal year 2011.

Since our modest inception in 1995, your Native Fish Society has evolved and adapted, not unlike the steelhead and salmon we work ceaselessly to protect. We have become a potent and respected advocate with our primary conservation goal to restore self-sustaining wild fish populations to the rivers of the Pacific Northwest.

The respect we enjoy today was hard fought. We occasionally take unpopular positions. We are known to question mindless conformity and challenge collective misjudgment. We are respected because we relentlessly adhere to our mission to always be guided by the best available science.

We are all about science and adherence to laws designed to protect and restore native fish. This is the foundation upon which all of our policies and efforts emanate.

Some of our notable recent accomplishments include:

- Extending coverage of our River Steward Program. We now have more than 50 on-the-ground stewards watching over more than 60 ecologically significant watersheds throughout the Northwest. They are there to make sure that laws and rules protecting native, wild fish are implemented and enforced. Currently, we are expanding into southern Oregon and Washington.

- Advancing our Hatchery Accountability Project which seeks more fiscal as well as ecological accountability in the operation of Oregon’s hatchery system. This project compels an economic evaluation of the risk vs. benefit of each hatchery to determine the return on investment made by Oregon’s taxpayers. Recently, Bill Bakke and others presented this program before the Oregon Legislature’s Natural Resources and Environment Committee.

- Filing complaint against Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and National Marine Fisheries Service for violation of the Endangered Species Act and National Environmental Policy Act in the funding and operation of the Sandy River Hatchery.

The accomplishments of your Native Fish Society evidence that fish conservation will succeed if human-based priorities align with fish-based priorities. Be assured, we tackle the compelling issues head-on and work tirelessly to give wild fish a strong and science-based voice.

We would like to thank you for your ongoing support of our efforts. Truly, you are creating an enduring and priceless legacy.

Kaitlin Lovell
Board Co-President

Rob Elam
Board Co-President
2011 River Steward Program Highlights Include:

- Gained ground for wild fish on the Sandy River: Spencer Miles created the Save Sandy Salmon website, helped design and send Sandy Action Alert Petition generating over 300 responses to ODFW. Over 700 Save Sandy Salmon postcards were mailed in 2011 to ODFW Commissioners and Governor Kitzhaber.
- Established Washington’s first Wild Steelhead Genebank River; NFS delivered more than 300 Action Alert Petitions to WDFW in support of designating the Sol Duc River as WA’s first wild steelhead genebank river.
- Monitored North Oregon Coast strong hold for wild steelhead: NFS River Stewards Ian Fergusson, Joyce Sherman and Jena Lemke completed temperature monitoring, 2nd year macroinvertebrate study, winter steelhead spawning surveys, and a study of the effects of debris torrents on summer water temperatures.
- Collaborated on S. Coast Fall chinook Plan: Peter Tronquet completed his term working on the Rogue Species Management Unit (SMU) Conservation Plan for Fall chinook salmon. The plan includes the Rogue River Basin (5 populations), plus coastal populations from Hunter Creek, Pistol, Chetco and Winchuck Rivers.
- Petitioned ODFW to institute angling regulations that protect wild fish: Ed Miranda Jr. petitioned for catch and release only regulations on redband trout in the Williamson River. Pat Dunham petitioned ODFW for single barbless regulation in the lower John Day River.

- Stopped expansion of hatchery programs on the Klickitat River: Will Atlas, Spencer Miles, and Bill Bakke submitted a 200pg commentary on the Klickitat Hatchery Complex Program. Over 300 Action Alert Petitions were submitted from NFS supporters to Bonnivelle Power Administration.
- Monitored Deschutes water temperature effects on wild summer steelhead: With the encouragement of River Steward Rob Sims, PGE and USGS installed a real-time temperature gauge at Moody Rapids to monitor water temperatures at the Deschutes River mouth.
- Mark Schmidt and Tom Derry participated in temperature monitoring, spring chinook and winter steelhead spawning surveys, and river cleanups on the Molalla River. Schmidt and Derry are collaborating with the Molalla River Alliance to develop final plans for restoring wild, native spring Chinook.
- Oregon Mid-Coast River Steward, Paul Engelmeyer was assigned to the Local Stakeholder Advisory Committee (LSAC) for the creation of a new Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) process for the Mid-Coast with goal of improving water quality in the central coast streams that do not meet Clean Water Act standards. He also led tours of the Ten Mile Creek Sanctuary and landscape for hundreds of participants, participated with the Mid-Coast Watersheds Council educational and technical teams and played a leading role in the recently approved Hecta Perpetua Marine Reserve, MPA and Seabird Protected Area to protect marine biodiversity on the Oregon Coast.
- Siletz Basin River Stewards opposed the Valsetz Water Storage Concept that would dam the upper Siletz River.

William Atlas, Puget Sound
Bill Bakke, Columbia
Scott Baumer, Hood, 15 Mile
Rob Bowler, N. Umpqua
John Bracke, Nestucca
Dick Bushnell, Salmon
Chris Daughters, McKenzie
H. Tom Davis, Upper Deschutes
Tom Derry, Molalla
Peter Donahower, Columbia Gorge
Pat Dunham, John Day
Paul Engelmeyer, Mid Oregon Coast
Ian Fergusson, Salmonberry
David Gee, Hood
William Govin, Johnson/Tryon creeks
Conrad Gowell, Siletz
Jeff Hickman, Clackamas
Chris Johnson, Nooksack
Ken Johnson, Skagit
John Larison, Siletz
Jena Lemke, Salmonberry
Steve Light, Lower Deschutes
Matthew Lund, Siletz
Michael Mathis, Snake River
Lower Hell’s Canyon
John McConnaughey, Washougal
Matt McCaun, Klickitat River
Ed Megill, Skagit
Spencer Miles, Nestucca,
Tillamook Bay Rivers
Ed Miranda Jr., Wood,
Williamson, 7 Mile
David Morye, Sandy
Jim Myron, Crooked
Scott Nelson, Calapooia
Chip O’Brien, Pudding
Stanley Petrowski, S. Umpqua
Hamish Rickett, Pathologies
Jake Robinson, Coos Bay
Brent Ross, McKenzie
Rob Russell, Nehalem
Mark Schmidt, Molalla
Marty Sheppard, Sandy
Mia Sheppard, John Day
Joyce Sherman, Salmonberry
Robert Sims, Lower Deschutes
Jason Small, S. Puget Sound
Rick Snyder, Grande Ronde
Keith Stonebraker, Clearwater
James Thibodeau, S. Coast,
Lower Umpqua
Peter Tronquet, Rogue,
Umpqua, Illinois
Walt Weber, Lower Columbia Tributaries
Cullen Whisenhunt, N. Santiam
THE OREGON HATCHERY ACCOUNTABILITY PROJECT

An ecologically and fiscally sound approach to managing Oregon’s hatcheries

The Native Fish Society’s Hatchery Accountability Project seeks to provide more fiscal and ecological accountability in the operation of Oregon’s hatchery system. It would have the State contract with an independent third party to do a risk/benefit review of each of its hatchery programs in order to determine the return on taxpayer’s investment and to analyze the risks of these programs to native fish. This risk/benefit analysis would help answer the following questions:

- What is the return on Oregon’s investment in terms of fish actually harvested in commercial and recreational fisheries?
- Are the angling opportunities provided commensurate with the investment and the risk?
- What are the environmental risks and costs associated with each hatchery program?

Recent independent scientific studies recommend reforms in the hatchery system in order to make it more compatible with efforts to recover federally listed populations of native salmon and steelhead. Consistent with the Hatchery Accountability Project, a recent recommendation by the Hatchery Scientific Review Group is to “Discontinue or modify (hatchery) programs if risks outweigh the benefits.”

The Native Fish Society believes that its Hatchery Accountability Project will provide ODFW, the Governor and the Oregon Legislature with valuable tools to use in assuring Oregonian’s that the hatchery program is operated in the public interest for the long-term benefit and health of our native fish. State statute requires that ODFW and the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission “…prevent the serious depletion of any indigenous species…” Given that many of our native fish populations are currently listed under the Endangered Species Acts, it’s clear that Oregon has failed to carry out this mandate. By implementing the Hatchery Accountability Project, Oregon can reverse and begin living up to its obligation to the state’s native fish and wildlife resources.

SAVE SANDY SALMON CAMPAIGN

Our work on the Sandy River in 2011 prompted ODFW to end collection of ESA listed wild salmon and steelhead for their hatchery broodstock program. NFS contends that ODFW was illegally killing, trapping, and otherwise harming fish protected under the ESA.

For the first time, ODFW acknowledged the huge problem they are having with hatchery spring Chinook spawning with wild spring Chinook, which greatly jeopardizes the future returns of the wild fish. As a result of our actions, ODFW installed weirs to prevent wild and hatchery salmon from spawning together (straying). Despite their efforts the stray rate in 2011 was nearly 80%, violating by nearly 8 fold ODFW’s own 10% threshold. We feel this evidences the agency’s primary concern is continuing their hatchery programs at the expense of wild fish.

We pledge to remain vigilant on the Sandy to ensure that Oregon taxpayer’s investment in dam removal and habitat restoration results in the recovery and delisting of wild salmon and steelhead. The Sandy River represents the best place to set a precedent by holding ODFW and NOAA accountable to their own laws. To do any less would be contrary to our mission.

OUR PRIORITY BILL

Following is a summary of the primary initiatives of interest to Native Fish Society during the 2011 legislative session.

SB 626 Quality Fresh Waters Angling Program

Recently signed by the Governor, this bill recently directs ODFW to make a proposal prior to the 2013 session of the Oregon Legislature for creation of a Quality Fresh Waters Program which will be used for promoting some of Oregon’s sustainable native freshwater fisheries. The bill has the potential to benefit many of Oregon’s unique native fisheries, but ODFW will need our continued oversight and input.

OTHER BILLS OF INTEREST

HB 2867/3623 Deschutes Groundwater Mitigation Program

There was so much opposition by the conservation / fishery community that the sponsor gave up on the original bill and reintroduced it in an amended version. HB 3623 was amended with input from NFS, WaterWatch, Friends of the Metolius and others and eventually generated enough support for passage. The bill extends the sunset of the groundwater mitigation program for another 15 years and requires the Water Resources Department to do further monitoring of the program’s effect on streamflows.

SB 736 “Safe for Salmon” Gillnet Removal Proposal

This bill was the newest version of NSIA’s attempt to get gillnetters out of the lower Columbia and into the off-channel hatchery fish areas. Even with some support from the Governor’s office, the proponents of the bill were unable to overcome the successful lobbying efforts of the gillnet industry. Throughout this long-running debate over who gets to catch salmon in the lower Columbia, NFS has consistently advocated for providing a conservation benefit to naturally spawning wild fish. Up to this point, the argument has been over the allocation of the resource to the various fisheries and not much about conservation.
• Total income from all sources was $296,822
• Total expenses were $285,543
• 82% of NFS revenues came from individuals and business donations
• 2011 revenue was down 15%, due principally to receipt of a one-time donation in 2010
• Key NFS programs expenses were down nearly 3%
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