

STEPPIN' OUT

The Florence Salmon & Trout Enhancement Program Newsletter

What's Up With Ocean Salmon?

Ocean salmon fishing off the Oregon coast will be explored at tonight's meeting of the Florence Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program. The group meets at 7 p.m. at the Elks' Lodge on 12th st. in Florence.

The public is invited to attend.

Eric Schindler, project leader for the ODFW Ocean Salmon Management program, will be the guest speaker. Schindler will summarize last year's ocean program, comparing it to other years' salmon production. He will also look ahead to this year and give some projections on what anglers might expect.

Salmon regulations for the upcoming season won't be finalized until the end of April by the Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Ocean chinook is still scheduled for a March 15 opening this year, subject to change.

Prior to Schindler's talk, the club will hold a short business meeting. Volunteers with the group were scheduled to put the weir in place on Whittaker Creek and open the steelhead trap. The group will be working with the steelhead on Tuesdays and Thursdays through the run.

Election Results Are In; Membership Renewals Available

Elections for the 2015 Salmon and Trout Enhancement Program were held at the December meeting. The seven elected board members are Bob Anderson, Ron Caputo, Tim Hanson, Bill Hennig, Jim Jordan, Brad Parks and Skip Rosenbalm.

They join Rick Samuelson, who is in the middle of his two year term as vice president, and Jack Armer, hatchery manager, to complete the nine member board.

At the December board meeting, Ron Caputo was re-elected to a two year term as president of the board.

Membership renewals will be available at this month's general meeting on Wednesday, January 7. Mike Frankhouser has the forms ready to pass out at the meeting. Membership fees remain \$25 per year.

Membership in 2014 peaked at 124 members on the roster. Those who are unable to attend the meeting will have their membership packets mailed out.

ODFW Fishing Guide Link

Get out your polar fleece, waders and hand warmers for inside your gloves as the 2015 winter steelhead season is underway! If you're not sure where to go, check the ODFW annual fishing guide on its website: http://www.dfw.state.or.us/RR/fishing_guide/index.asp

Calendar of Events January, 2015

Monday, January 5

Weir Installation Work Party
Whittaker Creek

Bring your waders and work gloves!
9 a.m. at STEP Shed to carpool
Lunch provided

Tuesday, January 6

Alsea Hatchery Field Trip to
learn ODFW Steelhead spawning
procedures. Anyone interested in the
Steelhead Broodstock Program
should plan to attend.

8 a.m. STEP Shed for carpool
No-host lunch stop on the way home.

Wednesday, January 7

January Membership Meeting
Ocean Salmon Management,
Eric Schindler, ODFW project leader
will share history, data, look ahead.

Business meeting precedes talk
7 p.m. Elks' Lodge, 12th st. Florence

Saturday, January 17

Ada Grange #570

Bingo!

5 p.m. kitchen opens
6 p.m. Bingo

Questions, call Nancy, 541-997-2380
10 miles out Canary rd.

Wednesday, January 21

Board meeting 4 p.m.
Port of Siuslaw Offices,
100 Harbor St. in Florence

Work Party Schedules

Tuesdays and Thursdays to
Whittaker Creek,
begins Thursday, January 8
Hatchery egg work upcoming.
Contact Ron Caputo to help
with the hatchery activities

President's Letter by Ron Caputo

Looking Back, Looking Ahead

January is the month the Romans associated with their two-headed God Janus: one head looking backward to the year just passed, and the other looking forward to the year ahead.

Now as members of STEP there is much you can be proud of achieving last year. We had another great year providing catchable Steelhead in the Siuslaw River. We helped lots of kids learn about fish and how to catch them. We immersed them into our traps and our many programs. We showed them that grown up men and women can have a lot of fun getting wet too. We fished together for Bottom fish, Surf Perch and Halibut in the ocean, Chinook, Blue Backs, and Steelhead in the river, Coho and Trout in lakes. Is it great to live in such a wonderful place like this?

We have provided thousands of hours of labor to help ODFW continue to preserve fishing in Oregon. Without our help there would be no catchable Steelhead or Coho in our area. Without our help, on Free Fishing Day and in the classrooms, many of our children would never experience the pleasure of catching their first fish. As fishing license revenues keep falling it is very important that we teach the next generation the lifecycle of fish and how to catch them. Besides, taking care of fish is helping to keep our environment a little safer for us.

STEP members are able to make changes that will shape the future of fishing in our area. This year ahead will bring many opportunities to step up and help on our many projects. We are entering our busiest part of the year as we start checking our steelhead traps and start our new spawning procedures and egg incubation program at our hatchery. The Florence STEP Club needs your help to run these programs so please respond when a call goes out for help.

We are all volunteers serving in a volunteer organization. None of us were compelled to join. We chose to join because we wanted to help save fishing in Oregon or we wanted to support each other in the pursuit of Fishing. What ever your reason for joining, I appreciate all you are doing to help STEP. I count each of you as a life long friend and thank you in advance for all your help in the future.

Steelhead Broodstock Season Begins!

With the advent of the new year comes the start of STEP's signature program, the Steelhead Broodstock program. This year, the club will be operating just the main trap at Whittaker Creek. Final preparations to welcome back the steelhead begin Monday, January 5 when work crews will install the weir on Whittaker Creek and open the trap for "fishing."

"The first day we'll work the trap is Thursday, January 8," noted Bill Hennig, crew chief for the trap operations. "We'll be up there every Tuesday and Thursday and we may need to add in the Saturday trips, depending on fish numbers and returns."

Volunteers meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the STEP Shed off Spruce Street, with carpools leaving promptly at 9 a.m. Dressed in waders and warm clothing, volunteers get into the trap and work the fish, counting the numbers and preparing for spawning.

Spawning procedures will be changed this year, with adult steelhead moved down to the Spruce Street trap site. Information about the changes will be reviewed at the monthly meeting.

Those interested in learning first hand about spawning techniques can participate in the field trip to the Alsea Hatchery on Tuesday, January 6. Carpools will leave the STEP Shed at 8 a.m. For information, contact Caputo at 541-997-4961 or roncaputo@charter.net



P.O. Box 1322
Florence Oregon 97439
Not for profit tax TIN
#93-1121056

President

Ron Caputo, roncaputo@charter.net
541-997-4961

Vice President

Rick Samuelson, cvsams@msn.com
541-902-1954

Secretary

Open Position

Treasurer

Craig Brandt, brandt8877@msn.com
208-336-8877

Newsletter Editor

Becky Goehring, bravabecky@yahoo.com
541-997-9046

At-Large Directors

Bob Anderson, Tim Hanson, Bill Hennig,
Jim Jordan, Brad Parks, Skip Rosenbalm

Hatchery Crew

541-997-3558 (on-site phone)

Jack Armer, manager
Ron Caputo, assists

STEP SHED

Craig Brandt

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