

Oregon Hatchery Stock Transfers A Native Fish Society report 2010*

All hatchery programs in Oregon operated by the ODFW are to be managed so they are consistent with the following objectives:

Objective 1: Foster and sustain opportunities for sport, commercial, and tribal fishers consistent with the conservation of naturally produced native fish.

Objective 2: Contribute toward the sustainability of naturally produced native fish populations through the responsible use of hatcheries and hatchery-produced fish.

Objective 3: Maintain genetic resources of native fish populations spawned or reared in captivity.

Objective 4: Restrict the introduction, amplification, or dissemination of disease agents in hatchery produced fish and in natural environments by controlling egg and fish movements and by prescribing a variety of preventative, therapeutic and disinfecting strategies to control the spread of disease agents in fish populations in the state.

Objective 5: Minimize adverse ecological impacts to watersheds caused by hatchery facilities and operations.

Objective 6: Communicate effectively with other fish producers, managers and the public.

Introduction:

The purpose of this project is to determine the number of stock transfers that **result** in a salmonid stock from one watershed or hatchery being released into another. By reviewing the 2010 Hatchery Operation Plans on the ODFW web page, I was able to compile a list of stock transfers; however, the information in these plans does not always provide the necessary narratives needed to determine the actual origin and release sites for hatchery products.

Transferring stocks of salmonid among watersheds has been evaluated in the scientific literature and the conclusion is that this practice constitutes a high risk to native, wild salmonids in the recipient streams and recommendations are made to eliminate such movement of fish. The effect of stock transfers includes ecological impacts (competition for food, rearing space, disease transfer, predation and predator attraction) and genetic impacts (interbreeding between non-native fish and locally adapted fish that reduce reproductive fitness and reproductive success in the local populations).

In the 1980s the ODFW had adopted a Fin Fish Transfer policy, but since then that rule has been dropped. **(Do we have a copy of the original transfer policy or an OAR that we can cite?)** At this time the ODFW has no policy on fish transfers in waters of the state other than those having to do with pathology inspection prior to moving fish from one location to another.

In all Hatchery Operation Plans there is a list of objectives common to all plans. Objective 2 states: *“Contribute toward the sustainability of naturally produced native fish populations through the responsible use of hatcheries and hatchery-produced fish.”* The transfer of fish from one watershed to another is inconsistent with this objective and the following table is a compilation of those hatchery programs that fail to conform to this policy.

Direction provided the agency and the commission in the Wildlife Policy (ORS 496.012) is to prevent the serious depletion of indigenous (native) species. On numerous occasions the agency has asked for a clarification of the Wildlife Policy by the Oregon Department of Justice. At two different times the DOJ said, *“The overriding obligation is to manage to prevent the serious depletion of indigenous (native)*

species...which thereby enables the Department and the Commission to provide optimum recreational and aesthetic benefits.” The obligation is for conservation over utilization. This direction has been adopted as administrative rules in the Native Fish Conservation Policy and the Fish Hatchery Management Policy.

<u>Hatchery</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>Stock #/Origin</u>	<u>Release Stream</u>	<u>Fails Obj. #2</u>	<u>Stock Grade</u>
N. Nehalem	STW	32	Necanicum R	x	3.14
	CHF	34 Trask R	Necanicum R	x	2.57
Big Creek	STW	013	Klaskanine R., Gnat Cr.	x	
So. Santiam	STS	024 Skamania	Santiam R	x	
	STS	024 “	Sandy R		
	STS	024 “	Clackamas R	x	
Trask	CHF	34	Necanicum R	x	2.57
	CHS	34	Wilson R	?	
	STW	47 Nestucca R	Wilson, Kilchis R.	x	3.71
Cedar Creek	STW	47 Nestucca	Wilson, Kilchis R.	x	3.71
Alsea	STW	043 Alsea	Big Elk Cr. Yaquina R	x	3.07
Bonneville	STS	024 Skamania	Clackamas R	x	
Oxbow	CO	011 Sandy R	Blind Slough Net Pen	x	
	CO	014 Tanner Cr.	Youngs Bay	x	
Gnat Creek	CHS	022 Mid Willamette	Youngs Bay, Blind Sl. Tongue Point net pens	x	
	STW	013, Big Cr. Klaskanine R.	Gnat Creek	x	
Irrigon	CHF	097 Lions Ferry	Grande Ronde R	x	
Klaskanine	CHF	039 Big Cr stock	Klaskanine R	x	
	CO	013 Big Cr stock	Klaskanine R	x	
	CO	019 Eagle Cr	Youngs Bay	x	
	STW	013 Big Cr	Klaskanine R	x	
Leaburg	STS	024 Skamania	McKenzie R	x	
Marion Forks	CHS	011 Sandy R	?	?	
		(Note: This stock is from the Sandy River but the operation plan does not say it is released into the Sandy.)			
	STS	024 Skamania	NF Santiam	x	
McKenzie	CHS	023 McKenzie	Mohawk, Youngs Bay	x	
Oak Springs	STS	024 Skamania	Willamette R	x	
Roaring River	STA	024 Skamania	Willamette, N Santiam	x	
Salmon River	CO	013 Big Cr	Klaskanine	x	

Comments:

In the Hatchery Operation Plans under objective 2 (Contribute toward the sustainability of naturally produced native fish populations through the responsible use of hatcheries and hatchery-produced fish) the release stream for the hatchery fish should be noted for each hatchery program. For example, Lookingglass Creek spring chinook (081 stock) is reared at Irrigon and transferred to Lookingglass Hatchery and one has to assume that these fish are released at the latter hatchery. The operation plan should identify where this stock is to be released.

The stock origin should be more specific. For example, summer steelhead (Imnaha stock 029) are released into Little and Big Sheep creeks, but it is not clear if stock 029 came from these creeks or if this broodstock is from the Imnaha River, or some other place. If the stated purpose of objective 2 is to be fully applied this kind of information is needed in the hatchery operation plan. The plans also refer to STS stock 024 as Santiam summer steelhead but the actual origin of this stock is Skamania Hatchery in Washington State. As long as the origin of a stock is not noted and where it is released is not provided, it is impossible to determine whether the hatchery operation plan is consistent with current administrative rule and state law.

The information needed to provide an adequate review should provide all the relevant information in each hatchery operation plan rather than reference other hatchery operation plans. For example, brood stock selection for Imnaha summer steelhead stock (029) takes place at the Wallowa Hatchery. One is directed to go to the Wallowa Hatchery Operation Plan for information. Consequently, it is impossible to determine whether the stock 029 is from the Grande Ronde River or from the Imnaha River by reading the document. The stock origin and its release location need to be specified in each hatchery operation plan.

References:

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* Information came from ODFW 2010 Hatchery Operation Plans and the Fish Hatchery Management Plan.