

Biologist explains STEP program to group

by MICHAEL P. JONES
Post Correspondent

A representative of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife spoke to the Rhododendron Neighborhood Group on May 15 concerning a cooperative venture to improve the fisheries habitats in streams that flow through Rhododendron.

Rick Klumph, a biologist out of the department's Tillamook office who manages the Salmon and Trout Enhancement Project (STEP), informed the organization's members what they could do to help maintain the salmonoid resources of the area by both protecting and enhancing the fisheries habitats of Henry and Meadow Creeks.

Small streams such as these, said Klumph, are important for spawning and rearing salmon, steelhead and trout, and contribute to maintaining

the ecosystems of larger rivers and watersheds.

STEP is a recently-created program designed to improve small streams that, over the past century, have been degraded by such activities as logging, road building, pulp mills, mining, power dams and port developments, as well as industrial and agricultural activities.

In addition, the invention of the contemporary sewage disposal system, which treats wastes through chlorination and then discharging the "treated" water into rivers, has also had a negative impact.

Biologists testify that fish will not swim through even small doses of chlorinated water, which is toxic to them. Larger doses will kill them.

All these factors are placing demands on streams and every day the need for both quality and quantity habitats for fish

increase, and they are essential in maintaining the state's fishery resources.

Klumph, whose STEP district territory includes the Nestucca River on the Oregon coast to Astoria, to as far east as the Cascade Mountain range, said that before working with a group the proposed projects are evaluated according to their potential impact on all species of fish in the stream, the environment, and the contribution it would make toward maintaining the resource.

Klumph said that cooperation in the program is essential for both the organization and the department as it is important they exchange information and work together.

He said that such factors as stream surveys—to determine what "limiting factors" may exist—and fish counts would be beneficial to insuring the success of the project.

A stream survey would identify logjams and other barriers that would have to be either removed or left intact. Removal would have to be evaluated as to whether that particular change would increase fish production.

The survey would also allow an analysis of the stream banks' conditions, which play an important role in the production of fish.

The shade created by maintaining stream-side vegetation, or through reseeded or even by fencing off areas to keep the banks from being disturbed, could be help control erosion and maintain water temperature, as well as create necessary hiding cover and supply insects for food.

Klumph said this fall, depending upon supply limitations, "egg boxes" may be placed in streams in the area.

These boxes, which will

be constructed by the RNG and could each contain as many as 25,000 coho salmon eggs per box, would be placed in streams such as Meadow and Little Henry Creeks, with as many steelhead eggs put in Big Henry Creek.

Klumph said that the department is placing emphasis on coho and steelhead eggs because "these runs generate the most revenue."

The winter-run steelhead is important as both a sport and a game fish because of its availability during the winter months.

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Klumph said the coho eggs would come from the department's hatchery on the Sandy River near Marmot Dam, and the winter steelhead from their Eagle Creek hatchery.

In next month the organization will be removing logjams and working with the department to improve fish passage through an improperly-placed

culvert underneath Henry Creek Road.

Although the prospects for improving fish runs in the area creeks appear to be good, Klumph said it will probably take a few years before the results are

apparent.

Head Start program taking applications

The Clackamas County Head Start program is taking applications for the 1982 session, according to Tom Klein, director.

Head Start is a federally-funded preschool program for children from low income families. Handicapped children may also enroll. The program is administered through the Clackamas County Children's Commission Inc.

The purpose of the program is to provide experiences for preschool

Persons or organizations wishing to assist in the neighborhood group's fish enhancement program should contact Beth or Jack Baker at 622-4678.

children that will help them grow "socially, emotionally, physically and mentally."

The program includes mental and dental services for the child enrolled.

Children in the Sandy area must be at least 4 years old by Nov. 15.

Persons interested in enrolling their child or volunteering services should contact Davie Anne Barlett, Kate Winn or Sharon Hollenbeck, family services coordinators, at 657-4147.

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