

Oregon Coast Coho Project Stakeholder Team

March 2004 - September 2006

Location: Oregon

Background

Populations of salmon and other ocean-going fish have declined dramatically in the Pacific Northwest. In an effort to conserve and rebuild the coastal coho population, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the State of Oregon formed the Oregon Coast Coho Project in 2003. In early 2004, NMFS and the state asked the U.S. Institute and the Oregon Consensus Program for help. The Institute already had a funding agreement with NMFS to provide neutral assistance on salmon recovery efforts in the Pacific Northwest. In this case, the goal was to bring a diverse stakeholder team together to provide input on the management of Oregon coastal coho.

The Stakeholder team included representatives of affected interest groups. These included tribal and local governments, watershed councils, conservation groups, resource users, and fishing interests. Team participants provided their views on the current and desired condition of coastal coho populations. Then they suggested ways to have a positive impact on coho recovery.



Highlights/ Innovations

- The Institute played an important role in the Stakeholder team's work. Institute staff helped bring stakeholders together and assisted them in selecting a qualified and impartial facilitator. The Institute also provided consultation and oversight for the collaborative process.
- The Institute built stakeholder trust by contracting with facilitators recommended by the stakeholders themselves. This helped assure participants that they were receiving impartial and expert facilitation.
- The partnering effort with the Oregon Consensus Program gave the Institute a chance to share its successful neutral selection process with a new state-based alternative dispute resolution program. The partnership was able to convene stakeholders who were truly committed to working together.

Results and Accomplishments

- The Stakeholder Team process concluded in September 2006. Their consensual recommendations are being incorporated into Oregon's Coastal Coho Conservation Plan. This plan will guide conservation and recovery actions into the future.
- As a result of continued collaborative efforts, Oregon coastal coho are not expected to be listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

Credits

Partners from National Roster of ECR Practitioners
Donna Silverberg and Robin Harkless, DS Consulting Facilitation Team

U.S. Institute Project Lead Contact

Michael Eng, Senior Program Manager
Protected Areas and Resources
Phone: (520) 901-8542; FAX: (520) 670-5530
E-mail: eng@ecr.gov; Web site: www.ecr.gov