IMST Members

Neil W. Christensen
Michael Harte
Robert M. Hughes
Vic Kaczynski
Nancy Molina
Carl Schreck
Carlton Yee

Stan Gregory and Richard Shepard were Team members whose appointments concluded during the reporting period.

Information about these members can be obtained at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/members.html.

IMST Public Meetings

IMST meetings generally occur once per month, and are open to the public.

Agendas and minutes are posted at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/meetings.html, and audio recordings can be obtained by contacting the IMST at 541-737-6551 or OWEB at 503-986-0187.

More information on the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds can be found at www.oregon.gov/OPSW/

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Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team, Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds

January 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006
Accomplishment Highlights

www.fsl.orst.edu/imst

Accomplishments at a Glance

This brochure highlights recent accomplishments of the Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team (IMST), a seven-member team of scientists established to advise the State on science relevant to the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds (Oregon Plan).

The IMST was established by the Oregon Legislature in 1997 (ORS 541.409), and its members are jointly appointed by the Governor, Senate President, and Speaker of the House of Representatives. IMST members represent the disciplines of fisheries, stream ecology, forestry, range management, oceanography, watershed science, and agricultural land management.

The full Accomplishment Report documenting IMST's activities, accomplishments, and operation details for the period from January 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006 is available at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/reports.html.

As the Oregon Plan's primary science advisory team, during January 2005 through June 2006, the IMST:

- Provided scientific reviews and information for key State initiatives, including the assessment of native fish status (ODFW), evaluation of watershed restoration effectiveness (OWEB), consideration of revised turbidity criteria (ODEQ), and more . . .
- Developed scientific and technical information regarding the role of urban areas and eastern Oregon ecosystems in accomplishing the goals of the Oregon Plan (reports in progress).
- Established a searchable database of scientific information useful for salmonid recovery efforts.
- Began development of new avenues for outreach on scientific matters to State agencies, the Legislature, and the public

Additional information is provided in this brochure and at the IMST website at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst.

Nancy Molina and Carl Schreck
IMST Co-Chairs

January 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006 IMST Highlights

Accomplishment Highlights

During this reporting period the focus of IMST's work was on meeting State agency needs for scientific reviews of key programs, initiatives, and assessments. Progress was also made on two ongoing IMST reports, a new thrust toward improved outreach was begun, and significant clarification of Team operations was achieved. Highlights include:

Review of ODFW Draft Native Fish Status Report. The Team provided scientific review of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife's comprehensive report on the population status of important fish species in the State. IMST's review identified several opportunities for ODFW to improve the scientific credibility of the assessment through strengthening the evidence for major conclusions, disclosing uncertainties and their implications, and dealing with data gaps. A major recommendation was that inclusion of all native fish species, not just salmonids, in the State's probabilistic sampling program would improve population trend estimates. Read the review at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/reviews.html.

Joint IMST/OWEB Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring Workshop. IMST and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board held a joint technical workshop with the goal of bringing together a diverse group of experts (43 invited scientists, local watershed experts, and resource specialists) to exchange ideas about monitoring the effectiveness of restoration efforts in Oregon. See a synthesis of the workshop at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/workshops.html. See "Ongoing Projects" section for future work IMST will be doing on this topic.

Review of ODA Draft Agricultural Water Quality Program Monitoring Guidebook. The Team provided scientific comment on the Oregon Department of Agriculture's guidebook for monitoring streambank vegetation condition as part of managing water quality under Senate Bill 1010. The IMST summarized key monitoring principles for ODA, and made several suggestions for strengthening the science behind the monitoring effort. ODA is revising its monitoring document as a result of the IMST review. Find a copy of the review at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/reviews.html.

Review of DEQ Draft Technical Basis For Revising Turbidity Criteria. The Team reviewed the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's technical foundation for proposed changes to Oregon's water quality criteria. Partly on the basis of IMST's review, DEQ is taking another look at the proposal and the analysis behind it. Read the review at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/reviews.html.

Establishment of IMST Scientific Literature Database. IMST staff created an online database of scientific literature relevant to the recovery of salmonids and their habitats. The database serves technically-oriented individuals involved in management, research, and monitoring of salmonid recovery efforts. The database currently contains over 4,750 references, and is continually updated. Visit the database at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/database.html.

Ongoing projects

Review of Federal Guidance Document on Sediment Removal from Oregon Streams. Based on a 2002 IMST review of instream aggregate mining managed through Department of State Lands (see the report at www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/reports.html, the IMST is developing comments on this guidance document. The review will be completed in October 2006. The final report will be posted on the IMST's website.

Urban and Rural Residential Report. The IMST Urban Land Use project focuses on populated areas within the state. Its primary considerations relate to water quality, water quantity, aquatic and streambank habitat structure, and fish passage. The goal of this project is to define the scientific basis by which urban lands can be managed to help accomplish the goals of the Oregon Plan. IMST expects to finalize this report in June, 2007.

Eastern Oregon Resources. This project frames a conceptual model that integrates ecosystem components affecting aquatic habitat and watershed health in the region east of the Cascade crest. The report will discuss how land and water uses can alter landscape processes, habitat capacity, and site potential, and how these factors in turn affect efforts to rehabilitate and sustain high quality habitat for native fish species. This project is expected to be completed in June 2007.

Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring. A second product of the joint IMST/OWEB Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring Workshop is a report discussing the scientific and technical aspects of monitoring within a hierarchy of scales, use of high-level indicators, and the role of status and trend monitoring in evaluation of restoration effectiveness. This report is expected to be completed by June 2007.

ODF Dynamic Ecosystems project. IMST is providing science support to the Oregon Department of Forestry's Dynamic Ecosystems Project, which intends to ". . . promote the science, information acquisition, and analysis systems that are essential for developing sound natural resource policies..." (Oregon Board of Forestry, 2005).

The Future

Each year, the Team reviews the current program of work and discusses ideas for new reports that address emerging issues or topics relevant to implementation of the Oregon Plan. In 2002, the Team identified 43 technical areas for which information was needed. The top three were:

- Ecological interactions among co-occurring species in the ecosystem (salmonid/non-salmonid, native/non-native, fish/non-fish).
- Effectiveness of salmonid conservation and restoration activities.
- Historical framework for fish/vegetation distributions and densities, data quality, and technical limitations.

This list is currently being discussed by IMST to identify the most relevant, current information needs for the Oregon Plan, and how IMST can be most helpful to Oregon Plan partners and agencies in filling information gaps.