

### Current IMST Members

Michael Harte     Robert M. Hughes  
Vic Kaczynski     Nancy Molina  
Carl Schreck     Clinton Shock  
Alan Yeakley

Information about current and past members can be obtained at [www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/members.html](http://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](http://www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/meetings.html). Audio recordings can be obtained by contacting the IMST at 541-737-6105 or OWEB at 503-986-0058.

More information on the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds can be found at [www.oregon.gov/OPSW/](http://www.oregon.gov/OPSW/)

Brochure designed by K. Maas-Hebner

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Oregon Plan for  
Salmon and  
Watersheds

## Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team



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[www.fsl.orst.edu/imst](http://www.fsl.orst.edu/imst)

### Scientific Oversight for the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds

The Independent Multidisciplinary Science Team (IMST) is an impartial scientific review panel charged with advising the State of Oregon on matters of science related to fish recovery, water quality improvements, and enhancing watershed health (Oregon Revised Statute (ORS) 541.409) within Oregon. The Team provides independent, scientific analysis and evaluation of state actions and policies under the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds (Oregon Plan). The charge of the Team is to focus on science, maintain its independence, operate by consensus, and report its findings and conclusions in written reports and reviews.

#### Guiding Scientific Framework

The IMST uses a framework of scientific principles to conduct its analyses of land use practices and fish management under the Oregon Plan. Those principles include:

- Wild salmonids (salmon and trout species) are a natural part of, and have co-evolved with, the ecosystems of the Pacific Northwest.
- Historically, naturally occurring processes that operated across the landscape and over time created high quality habitat for wild salmonids. The environment that historically sustained salmonid populations was dynamic, not static, and habitat quality varied in time and space.
- These same processes still occur today, but their extent, intensity, frequency, and nature has been altered by human activities, with consequences to salmonids and other organisms.
- Restoring or rehabilitating ecological structures and processes to function within historical ranges in key areas for salmonids is a logical approach and is likely to increase high quality habitat. This approach is likely, to some degree, to buffer salmonids and other aquatic organisms from outside influences such as oscillations in ocean conditions.
- A multi-scale approach that integrates information from the habitat unit, stream reach, watershed, and landscape scales, as appropriate, is the best way to understand most of the factors that influence salmonid populations and overall ecosystem condition. Particular attention to landscape or watershed scale patterns and processes (biological and physical) is needed to forecast how salmonids are likely to fare in Oregon in the future.

## IMST Operations

By statute (ORS 192.610) the IMST is a governing body, however, it does not make or enforce rules or policies. The IMST is strictly a scientific advisory board. And unlike many Oregon boards, commissions, and task forces, the members of the IMST are not chosen to represent a particular region, agency, commodity, special interest group, or political point of view. Members of the IMST are scientists from universities, federal agencies, or the private sector. Members are jointly appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House, and Senate President. ORS 541.409 states that the IMST is to be “governed by generally accepted guidelines and



practices governing the activities of independent science boards such as the National Academy of Sciences [within the *National Academies*]\*. The Academies were designed to provide a public service to our nation by providing independent advice on matters of science, technology, and medicine. The Academies provide independent scientific advice and the external sponsors have no control over the conduct of a study (see [www.nationalacademies.org](http://www.nationalacademies.org)).

The IMST has adopted many, but not all, of the practices used by the National Academies. Like the Academies, the IMST does not release draft

documents until they have been finalized. This is to insure that: 1) the facts are current and accurately represented; 2) the IMST has reached agreement on the content including minority opinions; and 3) draft language is not misinterpreted. Unlike the Academies, the IMST discusses its reports and findings in public meetings, rather than deliberating in private sessions. The IMST does issue formal recommendations as per ORS 541.409.

The IMST has a formal Charter that can be viewed at [www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/charter.pdf](http://www.fsl.orst.edu/imst/charter.pdf). The Charter includes a provision for minority opinions by individual IMST members. All real and potential conflicts of interest regarding an IMST project must be declared by respective IMST members.

### The goals of IMST activities are to foster:

- Enhanced credibility of the Oregon Plan through recognition that actions taken under the Plan are based on best available science.
- Improved design, implementation, and monitoring of actions by Oregon Plan partners to achieve specific outcomes related to Plan goals.
- Increased exposure to and understanding of relevant science on the part of salmonid and watershed restoration communities.

### To meet these goals, the IMST:

- Provides expert comment on content of documents submitted for review. Reviews include discussion of relevancy, technical and scientific accuracy, completeness, consistency with best available science, clarity, errors and omissions, and suggested areas for improvement.
- Recommendations that state agencies and entities conduct additional research, monitoring and/or evaluations.
- Obtains, studies, and assembles background material to support IMST projects, reviews and workshops.
- Obtains outside technical review when desired to ensure technical and scientific accuracy of reports.
- Writes, edits and publishes scientific reviews and reports.
- Maintains a recent/relevant scientific publications database.
- Makes meeting agendas, minutes, and recordings

available to the public.

- Maintains a website and public access to IMST products.
- Coordinates and facilitates technical workshops.
- Briefs the Governor’s Office and state legislative committees on scientific topics related to the Oregon Plan.

### IMST products and selected examples



The IMST produces reviews and reports formally requested by Oregon Plan partners or initiated by IMST. The IMST also conducts technical workshops and prepares workshop syntheses and summaries. All reports and reviews may be viewed at [www.fsl.orst.edu/imst](http://www.fsl.orst.edu/imst).

### Selected reviews

- 2010 Review of OWRD’s draft *White Paper: Ecological Flows* (for implementing HB 3369)
- 2010 Review of ODFW’s Elliott State Forest draft habitat conservation plan and federal draft EIS
- 2010 Review of ODEQ’s Bedded Sediment Benchmarks
- 2009 Review of ODFW’s Lower Columbia River Recovery Domain draft Recovery Plan.
- 2006 Review of the USFS draft *Clackamas River Bull Trout Reintroduction Feasibility Assessment*.

### Selected reports

- Technical Report 2009-1. *Issues in the Aggregation of Data to Assess Environmental Conditions*.
- Technical Report 2004-1. *Oregon’s Water Temperature Standard and its Application: Causes, Consequences, and Controversies Associated with Stream Temperature*.
- Technical Report 2003-1. *IMST Review of the USFWS and NMFS 2001 Biological Opinions on Management of the Klamath Reclamation Project and Related Reports*

### Work in progress

- *Urban and Rural Residential Uses: their effects on watershed health and rehabilitation of Oregon’s salmonids*—expected completion Nov. 2010.

### Pending reviews in 2010 and 2011

- ODFW’s White Sturgeon Conservation Plan
- ODFW’s Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan
- ODFW’s Coastal Chinook Conservation Plan

### Requests for reviews

The Governor’s Office, state legislature and agencies regularly make requests for IMST review of draft documents and the technical/scientific basis for proposed policies. Other groups (e.g., watershed councils, natural resource organizations) may also request IMST reviews. The independence given to the IMST allows the Team to accept or decline requests. Requests are discussed and considered at IMST public meetings to determine their relevancy to the Oregon Plan and technical merit prior to being accepted, declined, or returned to the requestor for clarification.

### Public involvement

Members of the public are invited to attend all public meetings and workshops held by the IMST. The Team discusses draft material and review requests at its public meetings. Public oral comments may be made at the meetings during designated times or submitted in writing anytime to the IMST (see contact section).

