



THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

January 9, 2007

Mr. Virgil Moore, Director
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Mr. Tom Byler, Director
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board

Mr. Marvin Brown, State Forester
Oregon Department of Forestry

Ms. Katy Coba, Director
Oregon Department of Agriculture

Ms. Louise Solliday, Director
Oregon Department of State Lands

Mr. Phil Ward, Director
Oregon Water Resources Department

Ms. Vicki McConnell, State Geologist
Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral
Industries

Ms. Stephanie Hallock, Director
Oregon Department of Environmental
Quality

Mr. Tim Wood, Director
Oregon Department of Parks and Recreation

Mr. Lane Shetterly, Director
Oregon Department of Land Conservation
and Development

Mr. Matthew Garrett, Director
Oregon Department of Transportation

Natural Resource Agency Directors:

The State of Oregon is nearing completion of a two-year conservation planning effort for coastal coho. The Conservation Plan for the Oregon Coast Coho Evolutionarily Significant Unit has been reviewed by the public and will soon be presented to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission for approval, as part of ODFW's Native Fish Conservation Policy requirements. Because NOAA Fisheries has decided not to list coastal coho as a threatened species, Oregon maintains management jurisdiction of this species and assumes responsibility for ensuring that coastal coho populations are fully recovered. I know this is an objective we all share.

The coastal coho planning effort included considerable agency input and public involvement. Successful implementation of the plan will depend on the commitments made by state natural resource agencies to fulfill statutory authorities and responsibilities for protecting coho habitat and conserving fish. I am confident that state agencies will continue to support the cooperative spirit of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds in fulfilling their commitments to the Coast Coho Conservation Plan.

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State natural resource agencies and their boards and commissions can provide visible leadership and support and I ask that you familiarize your respective board or commission with the plan and the commitments and obligations made by your agency and work with the chair and members to obtain their full endorsement.

I also want to point out that the governance structure for the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds has been revised to better implement the Coast Coho Conservation Plan and other future conservation plans. The revised governance structure will strengthen the linkages between my natural resources staff and the various technical and regional teams, will expand roles and responsibilities and will ensure stronger accountability by tasking the core team with overall leadership. Agency participation on these teams will be critical to effective implementation to restore habitat and conserve coastal coho for the benefit of Oregon and Oregonians. I ask you to ensure strong, effective representation in the governance teams.

I am personally counting on your strong leadership as Oregon, in concert with NOAA Fisheries, develops and implements recovery plans for listed salmon and steelhead across the state. Oregon will need to facilitate the collaborative development and implementation of these recovery plans so that Oregonians will willingly assist us in recovering listed populations. Although we face serious challenges in fulfilling our responsibility to recover these economically and culturally important species, I am confident that you and your staff are up to the task.

I appreciate the hard work your agencies do every day to help protect and conserve our valued fish resources and their habitats.

Respectfully

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

TRK:sk:ab

c: Ms. Marla Rae, Chair, Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission
Mr. Daniel Heagerty, Co-Chair, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Ms. Jane O'keefe, Co-Chair, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board,
Mr. Steve Hobbs, Chair, Board of Forestry
Mr. Bernie Faber, Chair, Board of Agriculture
Mr. Dan Thorndike, Chair, Oregon Water Resources Commission
Mr. Donald Haagensen, Chair, Dept. of Geology and Mineral Industries
Ms. Lynn Hampton, Chair, Environmental Quality Commission
Mr. Bill Gregory, Chair, Oregon Parks and Recreation Commission
Mr. John VanLandingham, Chair, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development Commission
Mr. Stewart Foster, Chair, Oregon Department of Transportation Commission