

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
GOVERNOR



November 10, 2005

Dear Interested Oregonian:

The enclosed document tells an important Oregon story. The story involves coho salmon on the Oregon coast and how local citizens, private landowners, tribes, and the state and federal government are collaborating to restore healthy wild salmon populations.

For more than a century, Oregonians benefited from abundant numbers of coho salmon as an important sport and commercial resource. In earlier times, generations of native coastal people depended on coho as their primary source of food. However, high levels of coho harvest in the late 1970s and 1980s, hatchery management practices, habitat degradation and a decline in ocean productivity resulted in severe declines in coho abundance during the 1990s.

The Oregon Legislature's adoption of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds in 1997 created a unique and innovative approach to recover salmon and restore watershed health. The Oregon Plan relies on regulations, local volunteer participation, and incentive-based investments to recover salmon. Today, Oregonians on the coast and across the state are working collaboratively to rebuild coastal coho and other declining salmon populations.

In 2003, I asked the state agencies involved with the Oregon Plan to assess the status of coastal coho and the state's progress in addressing their needs. The assessment is helping us to better understand our accomplishments and what remains to be done to restore coho salmon to sustainable numbers. The assessment also provides a detailed analysis that will inform the pending federal decision on whether to list coho as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. The enclosed document, *2003-2005 Biennial Report, Volume 2*, provides a succinct, map-based overview of the coho assessment findings.

I am proud of Oregon's long history as a leader in developing innovative ways to tackle tough problems. With the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, we are once again leading the way as we strive to recover salmon populations and restore watershed health.

Please take a moment to review this report. It reflects the important work we are doing to help Oregon remain a great place to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,

THEODORE R. KULONGOSKI
Governor

TRK:ls:tmt