

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>

Northern Region

Trinity River Project

P.O. Box 1185, Weaverville, CA 96093

Fax 530 623-1965



September 1, 2009

Memorandum

To: Files

From: Andrew Hill, Fishery Biologist
California Department of Fish and Game – Northern Region

Subject: South Fork Trinity River Spring Chinook and
Summer Steelhead Snorkel Survey Totals

The annual South Fork Trinity River snorkel survey was completed this year thanks to help from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Yurok Tribal Fisheries, Americorps, California Department of Fish and Game, and volunteers from the Hayfork Watershed Research and Training Center. This year's survey was accomplished by two and three person crews snorkeling downstream and diving to look into deeper crevasses. A total of 109 adult Chinook, 9 Chinook grilse, 61 adult steelhead, and 33 steelhead half pounders were observed (Table 1).

The upper two sections on the South Fork Trinity River, **Raspberry Gulch to the confluence with East Fork** of the South Fork Trinity River and the **East Fork of the South Fork Trinity River to the confluence** with the main stem South Fork, were not surveyed due to a lack of water. The river was surveyed from this confluence pool with the East Fork of the South Fork down to Mule Bridge and from Low Bridge to Sandy Bar. **Hayfork Creek was not surveyed** this year due to lack of manpower, road construction on the Hyampom Road, and high turbidity in the creek. **Two sections from Mule Bridge to Low Bridge** were also not surveyed due to lack of personnel. These two sections generally have very low counts of both summer steelhead and spring Chinook.

The following tables show the numbers of fish observed in this year's survey, and the numbers of fish observed in surveys since 1996. Spring Chinook are divided into the following two categories; >22" is a Chinook and <22" is a Jack or Grisle Chinook. Summer Steelhead are also divided into two categories; >16" is an adult Steelhead and < 16" is a half pounder. Half pounder counts carry less weight in counts of Summer Steelhead because they are easily confused with large resident, non-anadromous steelhead. Therefore, their numbers are not included in annual counts of Summer Steelhead (Table2).

Table 1: South Fork Trinity River Snorkel Survey Total on August 18 and 19, 2009 and averages per section since 1996

Section	Chinook	Jacks	Steelhead	½ pounders
Confluence with East Fork to Red Mountain Creek	2 ave.=7.6	0 ave.=0.7	3 ave.=2.3	0 ave.=1.5
Red Mountain Creek to Silver Creek Ranch	8 ave.=16.7	3 ave.=0.8	16 ave.=4.0	4 ave.=5.1
Silver Creek Ranch to Scott Flat	6 ave.=26.0	0 ave.=1.8	0 ave.=7.2	2 ave.=13.5
Scott Flat to Forest Glen Campground	0 ave.=46.3	1 ave.=0.3	1 ave.=1.0	1 ave.=1.25
Forest Glen Campground to Hidden Valley Ranch	19 ave.=50.1	0 ave.=4.3	17 ave.=10.3	0 ave.=14.0
Hidden Valley Ranch to River Spirit	19 ave.=51.2	2 ave.=1.5	10 ave.=7.0	14 ave.=12.5
River Spirit to Hitchcock Creek	28 ave.=28.6	0 ave.=0.6	1 ave.=3.0	0 ave.=4.9
Hitchcock Creek to Lover's Leap	4 ave.=11.7	0 ave.=0.2	3 ave.=2.6	6 ave.=7.4
Lover's Leap to Big Slide Campground	17 ave.=12.1	3 ave.=0.7	5 ave.=1.4	1 ave.=3.0
Big Slide to Mule Bridge	4 ave.=11.0	0 ave.=2.5	5 ave.=3.1	5 ave.=3.1
Mule Bridge to Todd River Ranch	ns ave.=5.3	ns ave.=0.3	ns ave.=5.7	ns ave.=1.0
Todd River Ranch to Low Bridge	ns ave.=1.4	ns ave.=0.6	ns ave.=2.9	ns ave.=27.4
Low Bridge to Sandy Bar	2 ave.=1.8	0 ave.=0	0 ave.=3.0	0 ave.=0.1

Table 2: Previous years fish count totals

Year	Total Chinook (including jacks)	Total Adult Steelhead
1996*	1097	11
1997	655	95
1998*	172	37
1999*	175	38
2000*	256	76
2001	166	76
2002	386	35
2003	260	37
2004	59	34
2005	72	73
2006	146	105
2007*	212	130
2008	ns	ns
2009*	118	61

*years when not all sections were surveyed

I thank all of the participants in the dive and all of the landowners who have allowed us to access the river for this survey. Hopefully we can observe at least as many fish next year as we did this year.

Sincerely,

Andrew Hill
Marine/Fisheries Biologist