

Memorandum

To : Streambed Alteration Notif. II-31-64

Date: August 20, 1964

From : Department of Fish and Game

Subject: Tahoe Paradise - Upper Truckee Gravel Removal

On August 17, 1964, Aquatic Biologist E. R. Gerstung met with George C. Baron, Vice President of the Tahoe Paradise Inc. and Mr. Jens Harms, gravel operator, on the Upper Truckee River to discuss measures to protect trout habitat in a proposed gravel excavation project.

Originally, Tahoe Paradise planned to sell to Harms Brother Contractors river gravel which the latter would excavate from the stream. Mr. Baron's intention was to lower the streambed level in hopes of lowering the water table in the surrounding meadow land for home construction. The Department of Fish and Game in a letter dated July 6, 1964, recommended that gravel removal be confined to period from August 15 to October 31 and that silt not be allowed to enter the river. The letter also requested the banks of the new channel be sloped to reduce erosion. Mr. Baron was not happy about the latter suggestion. He did not want to see the meadow banks along the stream disturbed or sloped, so he requested a meeting.

Messrs Baron, Harms, and Gerstung walked along one mile of stream where dredging was to occur.

I brought to Mr. Harms attention the fact that a great deal of trout habitat would be destroyed if the stream were channelized and that dredging would muddy the water. After surveying the excavation areas, we developed an alternate plan which would involve removing gravel from the dry gravel bars only. A six-foot protection strip or dyke would be retained to separate the river from the work area. The stream banks would not be disturbed and no gravel would be removed from submerged portions of the river.

Several stream fords may be necessary. I recommended these crossings be located on hard bottomed areas so that the river would not be muddied. In sections where the bottom is composed of sand or silt, a low causeway of clean cobbles and gravel would be put down to form the crossing.

We examined a number of large log jams which were deflecting flows into the eroding banks. Mr. Baron and I both agreed they should be breached. Mr. Harms stated he would drag the logs out with a cable.

At the lower end of the section in the recreation park, eroding banks will be protected with large boulders. At San Bernardino Avenue a pipeline crossing was being excavated. Muddy water was being pumped from the excavations directly into the river. This situation was quickly corrected by placing the pump outfall on the edge of a large meadow where the muddy water percolated into the dry ground.

I toured the hillside lot areas with Mr. Baron and he pointed out that all the drains and gullies have been paved with rock to control erosion.

In the future a portion of the stream channel near the recreation area will be deepened. The river has bypassed Scott Dam and is washing away valuable property. Mr. Baron plans to divert the river back into the old channel and repair Scott Dam. The dam will then again be a barrier to migrating trout.

Eric R. Gerstung
Aquatic Biologist I

ERG/lk

cc: Warden Leamon