

STREAM INVENTORY REPORT

Helen Barnum Creek

INTRODUCTION

A stream inventory was conducted during the summer of 1996 on Helen Barnum Creek. The inventory was conducted in two parts: habitat inventory and biological inventory. The objective of the habitat inventory was to document the habitat available to anadromous salmonids in Helen Barnum Creek. The objective of the biological inventory was to document the presence and distribution of juvenile salmonid species. There is no known record of adult spawning surveys having been conducted on Helen Barnum Creek.

The objective of this report is to document the current habitat conditions, and recommend options for the potential enhancement of habitat for chinook salmon, coho salmon and steelhead trout. Recommendations for habitat improvement activities are based upon target habitat values suitable for salmonids in California's north coast streams.

WATERSHED OVERVIEW

Helen Barnum Creek is tributary to the Mattole River, located in Mendocino County, California. Helen Barnum Creek's legal description at the confluence with the Mattole River is T05S R02E S00 . Its location is 39°59'56" North latitude and 123°55'21" West longitude. Helen Barnum Creek is a first order stream and has approximately 1.6 miles of intermittent stream according to the USGS Bear Harbor and Briceland 7.5 minute quadrangles. Helen Barnum Creek drains a watershed of approximately 0.7 square miles. Summer base flow is approximately 0.5 cubic feet per second (cfs) at the mouth, but over 10 cfs is not unusual during winter storms. Elevations range from about 1,060 feet at the mouth of the creek to 1,400 feet in the headwater areas. Mixed conifer forest dominates the watershed. The watershed is primarily privately owned and is managed for timber production. Vehicle access exists via the Briceland/Shelter Cove Road from Redway west to Thorn Junction, from Thorn Junction south past Whitethorn. The mouth of Helen Barnum Creek is located just upstream from the first bridge crossing the Mattole River beyond Our Lady of the Redwoods Abbey.

METHODS

The habitat inventory conducted in Helen Barnum Creek follows the

Helen Barnum Creek

methodology presented in the *California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual* (Flosi and Reynolds, 1994). The Pacific Coast Fisheries, Wildlife and Wetlands Restoration Association (PCFWWRA) members that conducted the inventory were trained in standardized habitat inventory methods by the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG). Helen Barnum Creek personnel were trained in May, 1996, by Scott Downie and Ruth Goodfield. This inventory was conducted by a two-person team.

SAMPLING STRATEGY

The inventory uses a method that samples approximately 10% of the habitat units within the survey reach (Hopelain, 1994). All habitat units included in the survey are classified according to habitat type and their lengths are measured. All pool units are measured for maximum depth. Habitat unit types encountered for the first time are further measured for all the parameters and characteristics on the field form. Additionally, from the ten habitat units on each field form page, one is randomly selected for complete measurement.

HABITAT INVENTORY COMPONENTS

A standardized habitat inventory form has been developed for use in California stream surveys and can be found in the *California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual*. This form was used in Helen Barnum Creek to record measurements and observations. There are nine components to the inventory form.

1. Flow:

Flow is measured in cubic feet per second (cfs) at the bottom of the stream survey reach using standard flow measuring equipment, if available. In some cases flows are estimated.

2. Channel Type:

Channel typing is conducted according to the classification system developed and revised by David Rosgen (1985 rev. 1994). This methodology is described in the *California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual*. Channel typing is conducted simultaneously with habitat typing and follows a standard form to record measurements and observations. There are five measured parameters used to determine channel type: 1) water slope

Helen Barnum Creek

gradient, 2) entrenchment, 3) width/depth ratio, 4) substrate composition, and 5) sinuosity.

3. Temperatures:

Both water and air temperatures are measured and recorded at every tenth habitat unit. The time of the measurement is also recorded. Both temperatures are taken in degrees Fahrenheit at the middle of the habitat unit and within one foot of the water surface.

4. Habitat Type:

Habitat typing uses the 24 habitat classification types defined by McCain and others (1988). Habitat units are numbered sequentially and assigned a type identification number selected from a standard list of 24 habitat types. Dewatered units are labeled "dry". Helen Barnum Creek habitat typing used standard basin level measurement criteria. These parameters require that the minimum length of a described habitat unit must be equal to or greater than the stream's mean wetted width. Channel dimensions were measured using hip chains, range finders, tape measures, and stadia rods. All units were measured for mean length; additionally, the first occurrence of each unit type and a randomly selected 10% subset of all units were sampled for all features on the sampling form (Hopelain, 1995). Pool tail crest depth at each pool unit was measured in the thalweg. All measurements were in feet to the nearest tenth.

5. Embeddedness:

The depth of embeddedness of the cobbles in pool tail-out reaches is measured by the percent of the cobble that is surrounded or buried by fine sediment. In Helen Barnum Creek, embeddedness was ocularly estimated. The values were recorded using the following ranges: 0 - 25% (value 1), 26 - 50% (value 2), 51 - 75% (value 3), 76 - 100% (value 4). Additionally, a rating of 5 or "not suitable" (NS) was assigned to tail-outs deemed unsuited for spawning due to inappropriate substrate particle size, having a bedrock tail-out, or other considerations.

6. Shelter Rating:

Instream shelter is composed of those elements within a stream channel that provide salmonids protection from predation, reduce water velocities so fish can rest and conserve energy, and allow

Helen Barnum Creek

separation of territorial units to reduce density related competition. The shelter rating is calculated for each fully-described habitat unit by multiplying shelter value and percent cover. Using an overhead view, a quantitative estimate of the percentage of the habitat unit covered is made. All cover is then classified according to a list of nine cover types. In Helen Barnum Creek, a standard qualitative shelter value of 0 (none), 1 (low), 2 (medium), or 3 (high) was assigned according to the complexity of the cover. Thus, shelter ratings can range from 0-300 and are expressed as mean values by habitat types within a stream.

7. Substrate Composition:

Substrate composition ranges from silt/clay sized particles to boulders and bedrock elements. In all fully-described habitat units, dominant and sub-dominant substrate elements were ocularly estimated using a list of seven size classes and recorded as a one and two respectively.

8. Canopy:

Stream canopy density was estimated using modified handheld spherical densimeters as described in the *California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual*, 1994. Canopy density relates to the amount of stream shaded from the sun. In Helen Barnum Creek, an estimate of the percentage of the habitat unit covered by canopy was made from the center of approximately every third unit in addition to every fully-described unit, giving an approximate 30% sub-sample. In addition, the area of canopy was estimated ocularly into percentages of coniferous or deciduous trees.

9. Bank Composition and Vegetation:

Bank composition elements range from bedrock to bare soil. However, the stream banks are usually covered with grass, brush, or trees. These factors influence the ability of stream banks to withstand winter flows. In Helen Barnum Creek, the dominant composition type (options 1-4) and the dominant vegetation type (options 5-9) of both the right and left banks for each fully-described unit were selected from the habitat inventory form. Additionally, the percent of each bank covered by vegetation was estimated and recorded.

Helen Barnum Creek

BIOLOGICAL INVENTORY

Biological sampling during stream inventory is used to determine fish species and their distribution in the stream. In Helen Barnum Creek fish presence was observed from the stream banks, and one site was electrofished using one Smith-Root Model 12 electrofisher. These sampling techniques are discussed in the *California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual*.

SUBSTRATE SAMPLING

Gravel sampling is conducted using a 9 inch diameter standard McNeil gravel sampler. Sample sites are identified numerically beginning at the most upstream site in the stream. Gravel samples are separated and measured to determine respective percent volume using five sieve sizes (25.4, 12.5, 4.7, 2.37, and 0.85 mm) (Valentine, 1995).

DATA ANALYSIS

Data from the habitat inventory form are entered into *Habitat*, a DBASE 4.2 data entry program developed by Tim Curtis, Inland Fisheries Division, California Department of Fish and Game. This program processes and summarizes the data, and produces the following six tables:

- Riffle, flatwater, and pool habitat types
- Habitat types and measured parameters
- Pool types
- Maximum pool depths by habitat types
- Dominant substrates by habitat types
- Mean percent shelter by habitat types

Graphics are produced from the tables using Lotus 1,2,3. Graphics developed for Helen Barnum Creek include:

- Riffle, flatwater, pool habitats by percent occurrence
- Riffle, flatwater, pool habitats by total length
- Total habitat types by percent occurrence
- Pool types by percent occurrence
- Total pools by maximum depths
- Embeddedness
- Pool cover by cover type
- Dominant substrate in low gradient riffles

Helen Barnum Creek

- Percent canopy
- Bank composition by composition type
- Bank vegetation by vegetation type

HABITAT INVENTORY RESULTS

* ALL TABLES AND GRAPHS ARE LOCATED AT THE END OF THE REPORT *

The habitat inventory of June 24 and 25, 1996, was conducted by Rick Abbey and Dave Allen (PCFWWRA). The total length of the stream surveyed was 5,012 feet with 0 feet of side channel.

Flow was measured at the bottom of the survey reach with a Marsh-McBirney Model 2000 flowmeter at 0.5 cfs on June 16, 1996.

Helen Barnum Creek is an E4 channel type for the entire 5,012 feet of stream reach surveyed. E4 channels are low gradient (<2%), meandering, riffle/pool streams with very little deposition and gravel-dominant substrates.

Water temperatures taken during the survey period ranged from 52 to 56 degrees Fahrenheit. Air temperatures ranged from 56 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

Table 1 summarizes the Level II riffle, flatwater, and pool habitat types. Based on frequency of **occurrence** there were 43% flatwater units, 31% pool units, and 26% riffle units (Graph 1).

Based on total **length** of Level II habitat types there were 80% flatwater units, 11% pool units, and 8% riffle units (Graph 2).

Ten Level IV habitat types were identified (Table 2). The most frequent habitat types by percent **occurrence** were runs, 30%; low gradient riffles, 26%; and mid-channel pools, 11% (Graph 3). Based on percent total **length**, runs made up 73%, low gradient riffles 8%, and glides 7%.

A total of twenty-two pools were identified (Table 3). Main channel pools were most frequently encountered at 50% and comprised 59% of the total length of all pools (Graph 4).

Table 4 is a summary of maximum pool depths by pool habitat types. Pool quality for salmonids increases with depth. Thirteen of the 22 pools (59%) had a depth of two feet or greater (Graph 5).

The depth of cobble embeddedness was estimated at pool tail-outs.

Helen Barnum Creek

Of the 20 pool tail-outs measured, 3 had a value of 1 (15%); 13 had a value of 2 (65%); 2 had a value of 3 (10%); none had a value of 4; and 2 had a value of 5 (10%) (Graph 6). On this scale, a value of 1 indicates the highest quality of spawning substrate.

A shelter rating was calculated for each habitat unit and expressed as a mean value for each habitat type within the survey using a scale of 0-300. Pool habitat types had a mean shelter rating of 60, and flatwater habitats had a mean shelter rating of 28 (Table 1). Of the pool types, the backwater pools had the highest mean shelter rating at 80. Scour pools had a mean shelter rating of 65 (Table 3).

Table 5 summarizes mean percent cover by habitat type. Undercut banks are the dominant cover type in Helen Barnum Creek. Large and small woody debris are found in nearly all habitat types. Graph 7 describes the pool cover in Helen Barnum Creek.

Table 6 summarizes the dominant substrate by habitat type. Gravel was the dominant substrate observed in two of the three low gradient riffles measured (67%). Small cobble was the next most frequently observed dominant substrate type and occurred in 33% of the low gradient riffles (Graph 8). The mean percent canopy density for the stream reach surveyed was 78%. The mean percentages of deciduous and coniferous trees were 78% and 23%, respectively. Graph 9 describes the canopy in Helen Barnum Creek.

For the stream reach surveyed, the mean percent right bank vegetated was 72%. The mean percent left bank vegetated was 75%. The dominant elements composing the structure of the stream banks consisted of 100% sand/silt/clay (Graph 10). Brush was the dominant vegetation type observed in 67% of the units surveyed. Additionally, 13.3% of the units surveyed had deciduous trees as the dominant vegetation type, and 10% had coniferous trees as the dominant vegetation, including down trees, logs, and root wads (Graph 11).

BIOLOGICAL INVENTORY RESULTS

One site was electrofished on June 16, 1996, in Helen Barnum Creek. The site was sampled by Scott Downie and Ruth Goodfield (DFG).

Helen Barnum Creek

The site sampled included habitat units 006-008, a riffle/run/pool sequence approximately 120 feet from the confluence with the Mattole River. This site had an area of 420 sq ft and a volume of 336 cu ft. The site yielded five young-of-the-year (YOY) steelhead and one 1+ steelhead.

GRAVEL SAMPLING RESULTS

No gravel samples were taken on Helen Barnum Creek.

DISCUSSION

Helen Barnum Creek is an E4 channel type for the entire 5,012 feet of stream surveyed. The suitability of E4 channel types for fish habitat improvement structures is good for bank-placed boulders; fair for opposing wing-deflectors; and poor for medium-stage weirs and boulder clusters.

The water temperatures recorded on the survey days June 24 and 25, 1996, ranged from 52 to 56 degrees Fahrenheit. Air temperatures ranged from 56 to 60 degrees Fahrenheit. This is a good water temperature range for salmonids. However, to make any further conclusions, temperatures would need to be monitored throughout the warm summer months, and more extensive biological sampling would need to be conducted.

Flatwater habitat types comprised 80% of the total **length** of this survey, riffles 8%, and pools 11%. The pools are relatively deep, with 13 of the 22 (59%) pools having a maximum depth greater than 2 feet. In general, pool enhancement projects are considered when primary pools comprise less than 40% of the length of total stream habitat. In first and second order streams, a primary pool is defined to have a maximum depth of at least two feet, occupy at least half the width of the low flow channel, and be as long as the low flow channel width.

Installing structures that will increase or deepen pool habitat is recommended for locations where their installation will not be threatened by high stream energy, or where their installation will not conflict with the modification of the numerous log debris accumulations (LDA's) in the stream. The LDA's in the system are retaining needed gravel. Any necessary modifications to them should be done with the intent of metering the gravel out to downstream reaches that will trap the gravel for future spawning use. Therefore, gravel retention features may need to

Helen Barnum Creek

be developed prior to any LDA modification.

Two of the 20 pool tail-outs measured had embeddedness ratings of 3 or 4. Three had a 1 rating. Cobble embeddedness measured to be 25% or less, a rating of 1, is considered to indicate good quality spawning substrate for salmon and steelhead.

The mean shelter rating for pools was low with a rating of 60. The shelter rating in the flatwater habitats was slightly lower at 28. A pool shelter rating of approximately 100 is desirable.

The relatively small amount of cover that now exists is being provided primarily by undercut banks in all habitat types. Log and root wad cover structures in the pool and flatwater habitats are needed to improve both summer and winter salmonid habitat. Log cover structure provides rearing fry with protection from predation, rest from water velocity, and also divides territorial units to reduce density related competition.

All of the low gradient riffles measured had gravel or small cobble as the dominant substrate. This is generally considered good for spawning salmonids.

The mean percent canopy density for the stream was 78%. This is a relatively high percentage of canopy. In general, re-vegetation projects are considered when canopy density is less than 80%.

The percentage of right and left bank covered with vegetation was moderate at 72% and 75%, respectively. In areas of stream bank erosion or where bank vegetation is not at acceptable levels, planting endemic species of coniferous and deciduous trees, in conjunction with bank stabilization, is recommended.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) Helen Barnum Creek should be managed as an anadromous, natural production stream.
- 2) The limited water temperature data available suggest that maximum temperatures are within the acceptable range for juvenile salmonids. To establish more complete and meaningful temperature regime information, 24-hour monitoring during the July and August extreme temperature period should be performed for 3 to 5 years.
- 3) Where feasible, design and engineer pool enhancement structures to increase the number of pools. This must be

Helen Barnum Creek

done where the banks are stable or in conjunction with stream bank armor to prevent erosion.

PROBLEM SITES AND LANDMARKS

The following landmarks and possible problem sites were noted. All distances are approximate and taken from the beginning of the survey reach.

- 0' Begin survey at confluence with the Mattole River. Channel type is E4 for entire length of stream surveyed.
- 120' Bioinventory site on 6-16-96.
- 1464' 1+ steelhead observed by surveyors.
- 2225' Small side channel enters from left bank (LB). No fish observed.
- 4994' Salmonids observed by surveyors.
- 5012' Stream gradient steepens. No fish seen above cascades. End of survey.

References

- Flosi, G., and F. Reynolds. 1994. California salmonid stream habitat restoration manual, 2nd edition. California Department of Fish and Game, Sacramento, California.
- Hopelain, J. 1995. Sampling levels for fish habitat inventory, unpublished manuscript. California Department of Fish and Game, Inland Fisheries Division, Sacramento, California.

Helen Barnum Creek

Valentine, B. 1995. Stream substrate quality for salmonids:
guidelines for sampling, processing, and analysis,
unpublished manuscript. California Department of Forestry
and Fire Protection, Santa Rosa, California.

LEVEL III and LEVEL IV HABITAT TYPE KEY

HABITAT TYPE	LETTER	NUMBER
RIFFLE		
Low Gradient Riffle	[LGR]	1.1
High Gradient Riffle	[HGR]	1.2
CASCADE		
Cascade	[CAS]	2.1
Bedrock Sheet	[BRS]	2.2
FLATWATER		
Pocket Water	[POW]	3.1
Glide	[GLD]	3.2
Run	[RUN]	3.3
Step Run	[SRN]	3.4
Edgewater	[EDW]	3.5
MAIN CHANNEL POOLS		
Trench Pool	[TRP]	4.1
Mid-Channel Pool	[MCP]	4.2
Channel Confluence Pool	[CCP]	4.3
Step Pool	[STP]	4.4
SCOUR POOLS		
Corner Pool	[CRP]	5.1
Lateral Scour Pool - Log Enhanced	[LSL]	5.2
Lateral Scour Pool - Root Wad Enhanced	[LSR]	5.3
Lateral Scour Pool - Bedrock Formed	[LSBk]	5.4
Lateral Scour Pool - Boulder Formed	[LSBo]	5.5
Plunge Pool	[PLP]	5.6
BACKWATER POOLS		
Secondary Channel Pool	[SCP]	6.1
Backwater Pool - Boulder Formed	[BPB]	6.2
Backwater Pool - Root Wad Formed	[BPR]	6.3
Backwater Pool - Log Formed	[BPL]	6.4
Dammed Pool	[DPL]	6.5