

Memorandum

To : Files: East Park Reservoir, Colusa Co.
Stony Gorge Reservoir, Glenn Co.

Date: August 14, 1980

From : Department of Fish and Game

Subject: Habitat Improvement at Subject Waters and Existing Fisheries

On August 12, 1980, I met with Mr. Paul Barney, Resource Manager, and Mr. Bill Bird, Resource Assistant, employed by WPRS and headquartered at Stony Gorge Reservoir. Discussions were held regarding possible habitat-improvement projects for the fisheries at both reservoirs.

Indications are that fishing has been good at East Park this year to date (despite indications of electrofishing surveys made in July). Numerous stringers of large (8") RSF, large (3-9 lb.) CCF, and large (1½-2 lb.) LMB were recorded and photographed by WPRS personnel. Large schools of TFS have also been sighted, as have schools of BG and GSF. Apparently, our chemical treatment of this water in 1978, was incomplete or ineffective. Other species recorded from East Park this year included SQF, HH, CRP, BBH, and WCR.

Of the two reservoirs, East Park appears the best off with respect to existing habitat in the fluctuation zone. Many of the cove areas contain good growth of willow trees as well as stands of sedges and perennial grasses. On the southeastern shore, a large floating mat of Polygonum sp. exists. The shoreline is lacking in prime rock or cobble habitat, and the distribution of existing willows could be better. My recommendations on this reservoir included:

1. Use of watteling for bank stabilization and fish cover. Local willow source okay.
2. Use of buttonwillow (Cephalanthus occidentalis) for selected "fish concentration" areas. Plant is resistant to cattle and deer browsing. Plants to be procured elsewhere.
3. Use of imported riprap or gravel as available to enhance shoreline and island areas. Good for Ictalurids and Centrarchids.
4. Use of annual grass prescription as necessary in barren shoreline areas for turbidity control, bank stabilization and fish habitat.
5. Discouraged use of tire reefs. Aesthetic eyesore as well as potentially chemically-hazardous. Also some maintenance problems.

The fishery at Stony Gorge Reservoir has, in the past year, been less spectacular than East Park, but has been producing good numbers of WCR (8-10"). An occasional trophy WCR (2+ lb.) is also seen. LMB fishing has been spotty, but stringers of BG are common. The failure to treat or dry-up this water during the drought has left the lake with an abundance of CRP and HH.

Much of the emphasis of WPRS habitat work will be concentrated in this basin, at least for the first year. There is much less cover in the fluctuation zone itself than at East Park. Further, access and facility location create the need to enhance certain areas as "attractant areas."

My recommendations for Stony Gorge Reservoir included all of those for East Park with the following modifications or additions:

1. High density test areas using all techniques should be developed in areas of desired high-angler use. Riprap piles with adjacent watted stretches and high density grass will provide fish and wildlife habitat, nursery areas for fish and shady areas for anglers.
2. High density, intensive tests of both annual and perennial grasses should be developed in selected area to test the effects of water fluctuation patterns on such plants in this system.
3. When service and access roads are built and extended into the fluctuation zone, it should be done in a manner so as to provide substrate for spawning fish. Use of proper sized gravel, of margin-burning and use of adjacent vegetation enhancement is recommended.
4. Test Polygonum from East Park in selected cove areas.

Mr. Barney indicated that the work force available to begin this work over the next six months will include 10-12 YACC people and an occasional park aid. Approximately 25-30 percent of their time could be devoted to conservation work. Some funds may be available for riprap purchase but this is uncertain.

Mr. Bird indicated his personnel would be able to conduct creel censuses for us as time allows. I will be forwarding the proper forms and instructions to them for this work. We have tentatively scheduled a meeting for mid-September to take a tour of both reservoirs and map out the areas of greatest need and potential. Much of the work outlined herein would likely begin in October of this year.

John I. Hiscox
Fishery Biologist

cc: U. S. Water & Power Resources Service, Willows
Beland
Pelzman
Ryan
Thornton

JIH:jb