Occupancy and distribution of larval Pacific lamprey: application of survey methods across multiple habitats and spatial scales

Jeffrey C. Jolley, Julianne Harris, Gregory S. Silver, and Timothy A. Whitesel

Columbia River Fisheries Program Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Overview

• Conservation concern

• Need for standard methods

• Sampling framework

• Application of technique
  – Different objectives
  – Different spatial scales
Pacific lamprey conservation concern

- Population declining
- Extirpated from many areas
- Unique life-history
- Increased, on-the-ground work occurring
# Standard Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temporal/trend analyses</td>
<td>Efficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spatial analyses</td>
<td>Quantitative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rapid range description</td>
<td>Statistically robust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maximize utility of data gathered from disparate sources/purpose</td>
<td>Flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Different spatial scales</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Occupancy: locations where a species is present

Why?

• Estimating changes in abundance or density is logistically impossible

• Species is cryptic, rare, and/or patchily distributed – requires less effort – efficient

• Surrogate for abundance

Capture probability

• key for making robust inference about abundance, survival, and other parameters

• Ignoring produces unreliable inferences
The problem of **Detection Probability**

**Important concept!**
- Present is present; but what is truly absent and how much confidence do you have?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present</td>
<td>Occupied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absent</td>
<td>Error ‘Non-detection’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample framework for an occupancy-based approach

1. What is the question?

2. What is your “universe”?
   • lake? river? HUC4? county?

3. Where will you look?
   • entire lake? entire stream? 1 m² quad? 50-m reach of stream?

4. How do you select your sampling units?

5. How hard do you look? Or when do you stop?

6. What is your confidence in the result?
GRTS Procedure (Generalized Random Tesselated Stratified)

- EPA/EMAP approach (Stevens and Olsen 2004)
- Can be multiple dimensions
- For random samples of size $n$, the $n$ samples will be spatially balanced (“spread out”)
  - the procedure uses reverse hierarchical ordering to achieve the spatial balance
- Additional samples can be added – doesn’t compromise the spatial balance
  - landowner denial, dry sites, ship anchored at the site
How many sites to sample?

- **Purpose:** to make a probabilistic statement about occupancy relative to non-detection

- **Steps:**
  - Select an appropriate detection probability (can be difficult)
  - Plug estimate into Peterson and Dunham (2001) model to identify how many random sites you need to sample
  - Sample those sites until you detect that it is occupied
  - If no detection, make the final probabilistic statement, given your assumptions: “Given that detection probability is 0.7, we are 90% certain that the area of interest is unoccupied”

- **Value:** make a probabilistic statement about occupancy, relative to false absence, if you do not detect presence
Example

Two detection probabilities

- 0.8
- 0.152

80% probability that the area is unoccupied (20% probability it is occupied)

90% probability that the area is unoccupied (10% probability that it is occupied)
Example 1: White Salmon River Basin

**Question**: Distribution within basin prior to, and after, removal of Condit Dam

- Fine-scale - 3rd order watershed
- Effort – 21 reaches; later reduced to 6 based on estimated detection probability in Trout Lake Creek

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How many sites in the White Salmon?

- Conservative detection probability of 0.065
- 80% confidence of non-occupancy, if presence not detected
- Peterson and Dunham (2001) model suggests 21 sites
# Results

- Lampreys captured in 1 of 6 watershed units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Watershed Unit</th>
<th>Total # Reaches Surveyed</th>
<th># Reaches Lamprey Detected</th>
<th># Reaches Lamprey Not Detected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trout Lake Creek</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buck Creek</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rattlesnake Creek</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Buck Creek</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mill Creek</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morrison Creek</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Greatly reduced sampling effort based on the GRTS sampling method
White Salmon River - Conclusions

An unprecedented opportunity to study Pacific lamprey recolonization of a river basin.

- Do Pacific lamprey return to the White Salmon River?
- How long until they return?
- How many return?
- Where do they go in the basin and why?

- WBL occupied above dam indicating habitat suitability above

- Occupancy approach allows site comparison through time; follow-up surveys underway
Example 2: Balm Grove Dam/Gales Creek

**Question**: Occupancy above and below questioned passage barrier

- Fine-scale; 3\textsuperscript{rd} order basin
- Effort – 6 reaches above and below Balm Grove Dam
Results

Below Dam
• All reaches occupied with both species of lamprey
• Signs of Pacific lamprey redds

Above Dam
• Only western brook lamprey
• Despite abundant habitat, no signs of Pacific lamprey redds
• Mounting evidence that Balm Grove Dam is a barrier to adult Pacific lamprey
Example 3: Mainstem Columbia River with dam influence

**Question:** Occupancy of pools and shallow, tributary “delta” areas (might be influenced by water level fluctuations

- Scale 30m$^2$ quadrats within pools and river mouths
- Effort – 34 quads doubled from 17 from Willy work
Results

• All areas occupied
• Baseline information established
• Realistic DP – refine the model – more efficient sampling
• Venue for comparison/inference
• Occupancy related to abundance → areas of habitat importance emerging?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Reach</th>
<th>$d$</th>
<th>Pacific lamprey</th>
<th>Western brook lamprey</th>
<th>Unid</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Klickitat mouth</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White Salmon mouth</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wind River mouth</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower Klickitat</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lower White Salmon</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Lower Wind</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
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<td>The Dalles Pool</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Deschutes mouth</td>
<td>0.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Little White Salmon mouth</td>
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<td>The Dalles pool</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Units

• Example – occupancy sampling in one subbasin → informs occupancy within the basin → informs occupancy within the HUC4 → informs occupancy within the RMU → informs occupancy within the range
Summary

• Technique greatly increases sampling efficiency

• Occupancy framework can be applied to ANY scale

• Choice of unit needs to be anchored by your goals and objectives

• Results will be scale specific….but can be nested within larger scale/units informing a regional-scale bottom-up approach
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