

01/25/93

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Klamath Field Office
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Subject: Fisheries Technician, Title 90-4.3: Annual Report for 1992

Goal : To perform maintenance of fish screens at surface water diversions on the Klamath River watershed.

Duties Performed : During the first quarter of 1992, the Fisheries Tech. completed removal of all fish screens scheduled for maintenance. Three screens were converted to our nylon brush wiper system, replacing old steel-blade type wipers. In addition, one drive arm assembly was reconstructed for one of the screen structures.

Two existing older screen sites were completely remodeled this quarter. The old walls and foundation were removed and replaced with new cement foundations, floors and walls.

Stream surveys were conducted to identify areas of spawning activity and to locate and remove beaver dams and/or other obstructions inhibiting fish passage.

During the second quarter, the Fisheries Tech. refurbished and arranged fish rescue traps and portable fish screens for the juvenile steelhead trapping season. Approximately 300 McBain traps and 25 portable fish screens were sorted through and repaired as needed. Refurbishing generally consisted of replacing or repairing bent or broken assemblies and sandblasting and painting many of the traps.

During this quarter, the Fisheries Tech. assisted in the installation of fish screens prior to the start of the normal irrigation season. Initially, daily inspections of the screens were necessary because the accumulation of debris over the winter months tends to break loose and collects at the screen structures. The accumulation of this debris can lead to hampered screen operation and even mechanical breakdown if left unattended for too long.

A survey for potential fish rescue trapping sites was made in a number of Klamath, Shasta and Scott river tributaries. Traps were installed and operated from April through June at a number of trapping locations and rescued juvenile salmonids, primarily steelhead, were relocated to streams with adequate summer flows.

Our Fisheries Tech. was sent to Crescent City, California to train California Department of Fish and Game personnel in how to choose appropriate trapping locations as well as how to set and maintain juvenile outmigrant traps. Anadromous smolts were being lost in lower Klamath River tributaries when low stream flows left them trapped in isolated pools where they succumbed to poor water quality or predation. Trapping efforts in tributaries near the town of Klamath were successful as large numbers of smolts were rescued and safely relocated to the Klamath River. The number of juvenile salmonids rescued in the upper Klamath River basin streams (Scott River to Iron Gate Dam) was again down this year due to both low adult returns and the lack of spawning in tributaries because of insufficient migration flows to get them there.

During the third quarter, installation of fish screens was completed on Shasta and Scott valley water diversions. There was a problem with filamentous algae buildup on the screen panels. Low stream flows led to higher temperatures and higher nutrient levels in the streams. This in turn caused exorbitant growth of aquatic vegetation. The heavier than normal accumulation of aquatic vegetation on a number of screens necessitated more frequent inspections and cleaning; sometimes as often as twice a day.

Surveys of streams were made in efforts to locate stranded salmonids. Seines, dipnets and an electroshocker was used to rescue and relocate stranded fish to a permanent water course.

The Fisheries Tech. assisted a U.S. Forest Service fish habitat crew working on Yreka Creek. He assisted in hauling and placing root-wad structures and log weirs for steelhead habitat enhancement.

The Fisheries Tech worked much on his own this quarter as DFG personnel were involved with projects outside of Siskiyou County.

Much of the work during the fourth quarter involved the continued maintenance of fish screens and fish ladders still in operation. Screens taken out of service were removed. The Fisheries Tech. has been involved with organizing screens and sites for refurbishing.

Surveying streams for removal of diversion dams and beaver dams has become a high priority task at this time. Fish passage for upstream migrating adult spawners must be provided for particularly with the status of the current runs near all time lows.

Currently high rainfall and snowfall amounts have brought about large accumulations of debris that has built up over the last couple of years. Much time is being spent removing excessive amounts of gravel and wood debris from fish ladders. This must be done to ensure the ladders function properly and fish migration

is not impeded.

Goals : To construct and operate three new fish screens within the Scott River watershed. These screens are to be constructed in 1993.



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