

1 STUDY PURPOSE/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Under an agreement with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) maintains a year round trout fishery in Piru Creek between Pyramid Dam and Frenchman's Flat, located in the Angeles National Forest. To implement this agreement the California Department of Fish and Game releases a total of 3,000 pounds of hatchery raised fish into Piru Creek at Frenchman's Flat between November and May. Trout reproduce naturally upstream of Frenchman's Flat and portions of the stream in this location are considered a catch and release area.

The purpose of this study is to conduct four mid-week and four weekend creel census surveys on randomly selected dates at middle Piru Creek and Frenchman's Flat from October 2003 through April 2004. Creel census surveys were undertaken to determine angler usage of the area and quantify the number and species of fish caught at each location. Surveys were conducted in the middle section of Piru Creek and Frenchman's Flat which are located approximately two miles downstream of Pyramid Dam.

2 SURVEY DATES AND CENSUS PERSONNEL

Creel census surveys were scheduled on the following dates during November 2003. Four mid-week surveys were scheduled on November 3rd, 14th, 20th, 28th and four weekend dates were scheduled on November 1st, 2nd, 15th, and 30th. As a result of the forest fires and subsequent closure of the Angeles National Forest, one (1) mid-week survey (November 3rd) and two (2) weekend surveys (November 1st and 2nd) dates were omitted from the schedule. Three replacement days will be re-scheduled during the remaining survey period as directed by DWR. Aspen biologists conducted creel census training with the CDFG prior to deploying to the field. Field data were recorded for each fisherman present during the survey dates and included information such as type and number of fish caught, length and mass of the fish if not released, angler satisfaction, and age demographics. Creel census surveys in Piru Creek were conducted during the month of November 2003 by Lynn Stafford of Aspen Environmental Group, a DWR contractor.

3 SUMMARY

During the course of the census surveys the environmental monitor noted that with the exception of four female children under the age of 16, who were accompanied by their fathers, only male fisherman were present and actively fishing during the survey periods. Of the fisherman interviewed, approximately 90% indicated they were satisfied with their fishing experience, 50% were satisfied with the size of the fish caught and 49% indicated they were satisfied with the number of fish captured. In addition, most of the fishermen utilizing both Frenchman's Flat and Piru Creek upstream of Frenchman's Flat were fly fisherman and released fish caught in both areas. Activity varied during the survey period with larger numbers of anglers utilizing the site during the weekends, however on one occasion during the Thanksgiving Holiday 17 anglers visited the area during the weekday. During the November survey period many anglers expressed great concern over the growing piles of garbage and debris littering the area near Frenchman's Flat.

Rainbow trout were the primary species sought by all the anglers surveyed and with the exception of five bluegills captured and released below Frenchman's Flat, the only fish species caught during the November survey period. Of the 130 fish captured, measurements were obtained for only 20 fish. No hatchery marks were identified by the monitor. In addition, most fish were caught and released by the anglers prior to inspection by the monitor. A brief summary of the creel census survey results for each

site is located below. Table 1 and Table 2 summarize the creel census data, including statistics on measured fish, for the month of November 2003.

Table 1 Creel Census Data at Piru Creek and Frenchman's Flat November 2003.

Creel Census Location	Number of Anglers Per Site	Sex/Age Distribution of Anglers		Hours Fished Per Location	Number of Fish Caught	Number of Fish Released	Percent of Anglers Satisfied with Experience		
							Fishing Experience	Size of Fish	Number of Fish
Frenchman's Flat Mid-week	7	<16	1 (m)	32	13	0	71%	57%	43%
		16-30	2 (m)						
		31-45	3 (m)						
		46-55							
		56-65	1 (m)						
>65									
Frenchman's Flat Weekend	25*	<16	4 (f)	83	43	36	100%	40%	36%
		16-30	7 (m)						
		31-45	10 (m)						
		46-55	4 (m)						
		56-65							
>65									
Piru Creek Mid-week	11*	<16		47.5	22	22	100%	55%	64%
		16-30	5 (m)						
		31-45	5 (m)						
		46-55							
		56-65							
>65	1 (m)								
Piru Creek Weekend	26	<16		96	52	52	88%	46%	54%
		16-30	15 (m)						
		31-45	8 (m)						
		46-55	13 (m)						
		56-65							
>65									
Totals	52	<16	4 (m)	258.5	130	110	90%**	50%**	49%**
		16-30	22 (m)						
		31-45	21 (m)						
		46-55	5 (m)						
		56-65	1 (m)						
>65									

*Some fisherman fished at two locations.

**Total number of Fisherman combined for both areas.

Table 2 Summary of Fish Size and Length by Area for Frenchman's Flat and Upper Piru Creek.

Creel Census Location	Number of Fish Caught	Number of Fish Measured	Average Length mm	Standard Deviation	Range mm	Average Mass grams	Standard Deviation	Range grams	Hatchery Marks
Frenchman's Flat Mid-week	13	13	202	19	(170,230)	209	40	(180,285)	Not observed
Frenchman's Flat Weekend	43	7	206	46	(150-285)	192	50	(130,210)	Not observed
Piru Creek Mid-week	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Not observed
Piru Creek Weekend	52	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Not observed

4. SURVEY RESULTS FRENCHMAN'S FLAT

Frenchman's Flat Mid-Week

- A total of seven (7) anglers were identified fishing at Frenchman's Flat
- Thirteen (13) fish were caught and kept by fisherman during the midweek census period
- Average size of trout was 202 mm with a mass of 209 g
- Of the seven (7) anglers, all were satisfied with their fishing experience
- Four (4) of seven (7) fisherman were satisfied with the number of fish caught
- Three (3) of seven (7) fisherman were satisfied with the size of the fish caught
- One (1) fisherman was under sixteen years of age, two (2) were between 16-30, and three (3) fisherman were between 31-45 years of age, and one (1) was between 56-65 years of age.

Frenchman's Flat Weekend

A brief summary of creel census survey results is located below:

- A total of twenty-five (25) anglers were identified fishing at Frenchman's Flat
- Forty-three (43) fish were caught and seven (7) fish were kept during the weekend census period
- Average size of trout was 206 mm with a mass of 193 g
- All fisherman polled were satisfied with their fishing experience
- Ten (10) of twenty-five (25) fisherman were satisfied with the number of fish caught
- Nine (9) of twenty-five (25) fisherman were satisfied with the size of the fish caught
- With the exception of four (4) women under the age of 16 all other fisherman were male
- Four (4) fishermen were under sixteen years of age, seven (7) were between 16-30, ten (10) fisherman were between 31-45 years of age, and four (4) fishermen were between 46-55 years of age.

5. SURVEY RESULTS PIRU CREEK

Piru Creek Mid-Week

- A total of eleven (11) anglers were identified fishing in Piru Creek
- Twenty-two (22) fish were caught and released during the midweek census period
- No size or mass information was obtained (catch and release area)
- All the fisherman polled were satisfied with their experience
- Six (6) of eleven (11) fisherman were satisfied with the number of fish caught
- Seven (7) of eleven (11) fisherman were satisfied with the size of the fish caught
- All fisherman were male
- Five (5) fishermen were between 16-30 years of age, five (5) were between 31-45 years of age, and one (1) was over 65 years of age.

Piru Creek Weekend

- A total of twenty-six (26) anglers were identified fishing in Piru Creek
- Fifty-two (52) fish were caught and released during the weekend census period
- No size or mass information was obtained (catch and release area)

- Twenty-three (23) of twenty-six (26) fisherman were satisfied with their experience
- Twelve (12) of twenty-six (26) fisherman were satisfied with the number of fish caught
- Fourteen (14) of twenty-six (26) fisherman were satisfied with the size of the fish caught
- All fisherman were male
- Four (4) fisherman were under sixteen years of age, twenty-two (22) were between 16-30, twenty-one (21) fisherman were between 31-45, five (5) were between 46-55, and one (1) was between 56-65 years of age.