

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 the stream in this location is 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 October 2003. Four mid-week surveys were scheduled on October 10th, 13th, 20th, 31st and four weekend dates were scheduled on October 4th, 5th, 25th, 26th. As a result of the forest fires and subsequent closure of the Angeles National Forest, one (1) mid-week survey (October 31st) was omitted from the schedule. A replacement day will be re-scheduled during the November surveys. 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 were conducted during the month of October 2003 by Jenny Slaughter and Lynn Stafford of Aspen Environmental Group, a DWR contractor.

3 SUMMARY

During the course of the census surveys environmental monitors noted that only male fisherman were present and actively fishing during the survey periods. Of the fisherman interviewed, approximately 62% indicated they were satisfied with their fishing experience, 46% were satisfied with the size of the fish caught and 44% 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. Activity varied during the survey period with increased numbers of anglers noted on weekend days. Weekdays contained fewer anglers and on one occasion no anglers were present in the project area. In general, the project area is subject to regular usage by lunchtime picnickers, hikers and day users. Litter is common in Frenchman's Flat and the general area is frequented by teenagers.

With the exception of one small mouth bass all fish targeted and caught during the surveys period were rainbow trout. Other fishermen utilize the stream for cray-fishing but would not regularly respond to questions from the monitors. No measurements of fish were taken as all fish were caught and released by the anglers prior to inspection by the monitor. No fish were kept during the October period. A brief summary of the creel census survey results for each site is located below. Table 1 summarizes the creel census data for the month of October.

Table 1 Creel Census Data at Piru Creek and Frenchman's Flat October 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 | 2 | >16 | | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 50% | 50% | 0% |
| | | 16-30 | | | | | | | |
| | | 31-45 | 2 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 46-55 | | | | | | | |
| | | <65 | | | | | | | |
| Frenchman's Flat Weekend | 5* | >16 | 1 (m) | 7.5 | 0 | 0 | 40% | 0% | 0% |
| | | 16-30 | 2 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 31-45 | 3 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 46-55 | | | | | | | |
| | | <65 | | | | | | | |
| Piru Creek Mid-week | 9 | >16 | 1 (m) | 26.5 | 18 | 18 | 77% | 44% | 66% |
| | | 16-30 | 4 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 31-45 | 4 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 46-55 | | | | | | | |
| | | <65 | | | | | | | |
| Piru Creek Weekend | 36 | >16 | 2 (m) | 149 | 61 | 61 | 66% | 61% | 48% |
| | | 16-30 | 16 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 31-45 | 12 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 46-55 | 5 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | <65 | 1 (m) | | | | | | |
| Totals | 52 | >16 | 4 (m) | 184.5 | 80 | 80 | 62%** | 46%** | 44%** |
| | | 16-30 | 22 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 31-45 | 21 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | 46-55 | 5 (m) | | | | | | |
| | | <65 | 1 (m) | | | | | | |

*Some fisherman fished at two locations or did not respond to census takers request for information.

**Total number of Fisherman combined for both areas.

4. SURVEY RESULTS FRENCHMAN'S FLAT

Frenchman's Flat Mid-Week

- A total of two (2) anglers were identified fishing at Frenchman's Flat
- One (1) fish was caught and released during the midweek census period
- No size or mass information was obtained (catch and release)
- Of the two anglers, one (1) fisherman was satisfied with the experience and one (1) was not
- One (1) fisherman was satisfied with the number of fish caught one (1) was not
- Both fisherman were not satisfied with the size of the fish caught
- Fishermen were male between 31-45 years of age.

Frenchman's Flat Weekend

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

- A total of five (5) anglers were identified fishing at Frenchman's Flat
- Zero (0) fish were caught and released during the weekend census period
- No size or mass information was obtained
- Two (2) fisherman were satisfied with the experience and three (3) were not
- Five (5) fisherman were unsatisfied with the number of fish caught
- Five (5) fisherman were unsatisfied with the size of the fish caught
- All fisherman were male
- 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.

5. SURVEY RESULTS PIRU CREEK

Piru Creek Mid-Week

- A total of nine (9) anglers were identified fishing in Piru Creek
- Two (2) anglers also fished at Frenchman's Flat during the same day
- Eighteen (18) fish were caught and released during the midweek census period
- No size or mass information was obtained (catch and release area)
- Seven (7) fisherman were satisfied with the experience and two (2) were not
- Six (6) fisherman were satisfied with the number of fish caught and three (3) were not
- Four (4) fisherman were satisfied with the size of the fish caught and five (5) were not
- All fisherman were male
- One (1) fisherman was under sixteen years of age, four (4) were between 16-30, and four (4) fisherman were between 31-45 years of age.

Piru Creek Weekend

- A total of thirty-five (36) anglers were identified fishing in Piru Creek
- Three (3) would not speak to the surveyors
- Sixty-one (61) fish were caught and released during the weekend census period
- No size or mass information was obtained (catch and release area)
- Twenty-two (22) fisherman were satisfied with the experience and eleven (11) were not
- Sixteen (16) fisherman were satisfied with the number of fish caught and seventeen (17) were not
- Twenty (20) fisherman were satisfied with the size of the fish caught and thirteen (13) were not
- All fisherman were male
- Two (2) fisherman were under sixteen years of age, sixteen (16) were between 16-30, and twelve (12) fisherman were between 31-45, five (5) were between 46-55, and one (1) was between 56-65 years of age.