THE RESOURCES AGENCY OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

STREAM SURVEY

Date: May 24, 1974

NAME: HENSLEY CREEK **COUNTY:** Mendocino

STREAM SECTION: Partial **FROM:** Highway 101 bridge **TO:** about 2 miles upstream **LENGTH:** 3.8 miles (including 1.8 miles of unnamed tributary)

TRIBUTARY TO: Russian River Hensley Creek: **TWP:** 15 N **R:** 12 W **SEC:** 5
Unnamed tributary: T 15 N, R 12 W, Sec. 6

OTHER NAMES: Unknown **RIVER SYSTEM:** Russian River

SOURCES OF DATA: Personal observation of Jerry Bruns, Seasonal Aid

EXTENT OF OBSERVATION - The stream was surveyed on foot on May 24, 1974.

LOCATION – Hensley Creek enters the Russian River about 1/2 mile downstream below the confluence of the East Fork Russian River with the main stem.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION - Watershed and Immediate Drainage Basin – Hensley Creek drains an area of about 8.9 square miles on the west side of the upper Russian River basin. The stream courses through a narrow V-shaped canyon northwest of Ukiah before entering and meandering across the broad valley. In the upper drainage the vegetative cover is predominately oak with some fir. Vegetative cover in the lower canyon areas above the valley floor is predominately that of an oak-grassland association. Riparian vegetation adjacent to the stream throughout the lower valley area is composed of willow and Cottonwood. Altitude: Near the confluence with the Russian River—about 605 feet. In the drainage headwater, bench mark on the Mann Ranch—2,376 feet. Gradient: 3 1/2 feet/100 feet of stream in the upper area surveyed. 2 feet/100 feet of stream on the unnamed tributary above the proposed dam site. The gradient of the streambed in the valley area was generally less than 1 foot/100 feet of stream.

Width and Depth – In general, riffles were 3 to 40 feet wide. Pools averaged about 2 to 4 feet deep. Downstream of the confluence of the unnamed tributary in Section 6, the stream was somewhat wider—5 to 70 feet.

Flow – Hensley Creek above the confluence with the unnamed tributary in Section 6— intermittent. The unnamed tributary—intermittent, where flowing 0.15 cfs. Hensley Creek between the unnamed tributary and Highway 101 bridge—0.40 cfs continuous.

Bottom – Generally 70% gravel, 20% sand and 10% boulders. Above the unnamed tributary in Section 6—80% gravel and 20% sand. Downstream below the unnamed tributary to the Highway 101 bridge—60% mud, 20% gravel and 20% sand. Lower area of the unnamed tributary —50% gravel, 25% sand and 25% mud.

Spawning Areas – Generally good in the upper portion of the drainage; this includes the unnamed tributary. Spawning conditions below this point are poor—damaged by large quantities of mud.

Shelter – The mid and lower sections of the stream were generally open. Overhanging vegetation in these areas provided the primary source of shelter. In the headwater, in addition to overhanging vegetation, undercut banks also provided shelter for fish.

Barriers – None observed. However, a revetment structure below the old Highway 1 Bridge, constructed to prevent erosion near the bridge, should be checked periodically. In addition, a dam has been proposed for the unnamed tributary. This structure would be a barrier to fish passage (see sketch map for location).[sic]

Diversions – None observed.

Temperatures – None taken.

Aquatic Plants – Some filamentous green algae observed throughout.

Winter Conditions – High water marks indicate the stream fluctuates greatly.

Pollution – Extensive deposits of mud in the section of river between the Highway 101 Bridge and the unnamed tributary in Section 6 indicate a siltation problem. No source, however, was evident.
Springs – None observed.
FISHES PRESENT AND SUCCESS – Steelhead, roach, squawfish and suckers: Juvenile steelhead were observed throughout a total of 3 3/4 miles of the drainage above the U.S. Highway 101 bridge. Juvenile steelhead in numbers of 25 to 30/100 feet of stream were present in two miles of the unnamed stream. In addition, one adult steelhead (a spawner) as well as a 6-inch juvenile were observed above the proposed dam site on this unnamed tributary. Only ten juvenile steelhead were observed in a one-mile length of stream above the unnamed tributary. However, other reports have verified the presence of steelhead in the upper portion of the main stem of Hensley Creek. Below the confluence of the unnamed tributary juvenile steelhead populations are about 30/100 feet of stream for a distance of approximately 1,500 feet. Below this, numbers decrease.
OTHER VERTEBRATES – None observed.
FISHING INTENSITY – Unknown.
OTHER RECREATIONAL USES – Unknown.
ACCESSIBILITY – U. S. Highway 101, both the new and old highways, and foot access from the Yokanyo Ranch road.
OWNERSHIP – Private.
POSTED OR OPEN –
IMPROVEMENTS – None observed. However, a dam and reservoir has been proposed for the unnamed tributary. The structure, if built, would block migrant steelhead. It is believed a fishway would not adequately mitigate losses because of the extent of stream inundation, entrapment of juveniles, and the problem of designing a ladder for a fluctuating reservoir. It is suggested that flow releases would best mitigate and preserve the historic fishery values.
PAST STOCKING – Unknown.
GENERAL ESTIMATE – Hensley Creek drains a relatively small drainage and maintains a small steelhead run. Assets include good spawning gravels—however, this is more than offset by low summer streamflows.
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT – It is recommended the stream be managed as limited habitat for steelhead spawning and rearing. Developments proposing water diversion should be reviewed critically. However, projects that would add spring and summer streamflow should be encouraged.
SKETCH MAP – See attachment.[sic]
REFERENCES AND MAPS – U.S.G.S. Quad Map Ukiah, 7½ minute series, 1958, and Boonville 15 minute series, 1959.

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