



Board of Directors

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FRIENDS OF TRINITY RIVER NEWSLETTER
December, 2006

TRINITY RIVER ANNUAL STEELHEAD POPULATIONS

Following is a table of Steelhead counted at Willow Creek Weir since 2001:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Hatchery</u>	<u>Wild</u>
2001	550	318	232
2002	1,557	1,189	368
2003	752	621	131
2004	2,026	1,531	495
2005	2,132	1,543	589
2006	3,819	2,998	821

As many of you know, the weir operates from mid-August through November. Fish are counted and marked (tagged) only when the weir is operated. It is opened late each afternoon, and is open all weekend. These numbers, therefore, do not provide the total returning fish population each year. It is essentially a scientific sample. However, based upon these figures and using tags returned by anglers or collected at the hatchery, information is developed relating to total run size in **Trinity River** upstream of **Willow Creek**.

While these weir numbers are not population estimates, they do illustrate a general trend of increasing Steelhead populations. There also appears to be a correlation between the increase in flows in the river and numbers of steelhead. We hope these trends continue and scientific evaluation confirms this correlation. As additional restoration measures are

implemented it is expected that populations will increase further. We believe our efforts to restore the **Trinity River** are paying off and the dividends are more steelhead!

GRAVEL INTRODUCTION

Some 2,500 tons of gravel were introduced into **Trinity River** this year just below **Lewiston Hatchery**. It had been planned to introduce 6,000 tons of gravel into the river this year, but total costs made the reduction necessary. Only “in-basin” gravels are being used now to replenish gravel sources lost from tributaries above **Trinity Dam**. Gravels for introduction into the river will be reclaimed from proposed channel manipulation sites, that is, the **Indian Creek Project** and others in order to reduce total gravel costs.

The volume of gravel to be introduced each year generally will depend upon “water-type” year. For example, more gravel in “Extremely Wet” water years and less gravel in “Critically Dry” years. Volumes of projected introductions range from 31 to 67 thousand cubic yards in the wettest years to none in the driest years.

Size of introduced gravels is assembled carefully to maximize conditions for natural fisheries habitat. It is intended that flows will transport gravels downstream to create riffles, bars, islands and floodplains mimicking pre-dam conditions of a natural alluvial river.

INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT PLAN

The scientific basis for determining success of the restoration of wild fish populations in **Trinity River** is in the process of being developed by the **Trinity River Restoration Program’s Technical Modeling and Analysis Group - scientific staff (TMAG)** in concert with **Program** partners. It is being critiqued and input is being provided by the independent **Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)**. The product is called the **Integrated Assessment Plan (IAP)**.

The **IAP** will determine measures by which the **Program’s** management actions are effective in achieving **Program** goals and objectives. As an example, the **Program’s** basic hypothesis – create additional juvenile rearing habitat to increase wild fish populations – either proves effective in achieving **Program** objectives, or it does not. If implementing actions do not achieve desired results, then changes in management of **Program** activities can be initiated to assure the objective of restoring wild fish populations to 60 percent of pre-dam populations.

The **IAP** is determining assessments and prioritization strategies for both long-term progress toward the **Program’s** objectives, and short-term assessments to improve management actions by testing hypotheses and uncertainties as they occur.

Development of this means of determining success of **Program** activities is a massive undertaking. **TRRP** staff, **Program partners** and members of the **SAB** have devoted

and are devoting an enormous time to develop the end product. Currently, it is estimated that the **IAP** will be completed by March.

A successful **Trinity River Restoration Program** will become a national model for other decimated rivers and their ecosystems in the **United States**. **Program** actions/activities will break barriers in advancing scientific knowledge and understanding of river ecosystem restoration processes. Since the **Program** includes management adaptation to realities that are experienced based upon hypotheses, assessment of short-term actions are very important. Extremely well-defined assessments of actions are critical.

2006 CHANNEL MANIPULATION PROJECTS

The **Canyon Creek** group of channel projects largely has been completed. Construction was started this October. The project consisted of four habitat rehabilitation areas: **Connor Creek, Valdor Gulch, Elkhorn and Pear Tree**. The projects are in a six mile stretch of the river from **Canyon Creek** to about a half mile upstream from the **North Fork** of the **Trinity**.

The goal of these projects is to recreate geomorphic features similar to pre-dam channel configurations. In short, the projects reestablish gravel bars and floodplains that are intended to increase juvenile rearing habitat.

RENEWAL AND NEW MEMBERS, AND SPECIAL RECOGNITION

If you have renewed your membership, or joined FOTR since our last Newsletter and your name(s) has been omitted below, please let us know – we want to recognize your support. Also, in a couple of cases, contributions sent to us have not been received. People notified us and we resolved the issue of stray mail.

New members, or those renewing since our July Newsletter are:

Anonymous, Ron Angell, Emelia Berol, William Berry, Jr., Alan Brayton, Esq., Joel Cohen, Samuel D. Cohen, Gary Dickenson, The Hon. Stan Dixon, Maxine Durney, Sue Ghilotti, Anita and Timothy Gilbride, Whit Heaton, Kaye and Kenneth Humphrey, Arthur Hurley, Kevin Wolf & Associates, and

Laurie and Victor Laney, Jerome Lengyel, Anmarie and Brian Linsley, James H. Mc Kenna, Thomas Nicholson, Janice Parakilas and Roy Baker, Ted and Ed Purcell, Morton G. Rivo, D.D.S., Charles Schultz, Gary and Shirley Seput, Chris Schustrom, Shasta Trinity Fly Fishers, Inc., Robert Totah, Henry Von der Mehden, Charles Wallace, Douglas Whitmore, and Kevin Wolf and Linda McCloud.

Friends of Trinity River
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