

DEVILS GULCH CREEK
FIELD NOTES

Marin County

July 4, 1953. Hiked upstream approximately one mile above the mouth. The stream meanders through a well shaded area. Average width 4 ft, depth 4", estimated flow 1/4 c.f.s. Rubble, gravel, bedrock bottom. Good spawning areas were noted. The stream is well shaded with bay and alder trees. A stable bottom exists "with no evidence of heavy runoff. Juvenile silver salmon 2 to 3 inches long abundant; for example, 25 to 30 were counted in single small pools. They were well distributed throughout the stream. The value of this stream is primarily as a spawning and nursery tributary for silver salmon and possibly SH. Fishing use is undoubtedly meager and probably limited to the first few weeks of each season. It is doubtful if a closure is even necessary. Station readings one mile upstream: air temp. 87° F., water temp. 66°F., 2 p.m., clear, warm. Aquatic foods good to excellent. Caddis larvae were most abundant with some Mayflies present. - Evans

Jan. 27, 1954. Visited Devil's Gulch Creek, Taylor State Park, with Daggett to observe silver salmon and to take pictures. Although Lagunitas Creek was high and extremely turbid due to construction activities at Big Carson Dam, subject creek was low and clear. About 30 SS were seen, two pairs of which were engaged in rather weak spawning activities. Eleven of the SS appeared to be 3-4 lb. precocious males. About a dozen carcasses were also seen. Overcast skies and shyness of the fish resulted in the photos being too poor for much use. A visit to this same creek only a few days later by Evans disclosed nothing but dead fish. - H.E.P./mm No young fish were seen.

Jan. 30, 1954. Examined lower 1/4 mile section of stream above the mouth. Estimated flow 1 1/2 - 2 c.f.s. Evidence of fairly heavy runoff during last storm. In 1/4 mile an estimated 40-50 carcasses of silver salmon observed. Most, if not all, had died during the past week. Only 3 live salmon were noted. - WAE:mm

April 24, 1954. A check was made of the lower half mile of this stream. Although young of the year are present in fair numbers they do not appear as abundant as last year. WAE/mm

June 2, 1955. Hiked up Devils Gulch Creek from mouth to headwaters this date. Data collected as follows: Zero to 1/2 mile: bedrock-gravel bottom, good spawning areas, well shaded, est. flow 1/2-1 c.f.s.; well covered slopes with bay, fern, fir and maple; watershed stable; small fingerling silver salmon abundant, 50 to 100 seen in one small pool; water: clear, cold; ideal pools and gravel area; silver salmon 2-3" long common; steelhead 1-2" long also present. Road parallels stream throughout State Park area. Stream well posted under fish enclosure. The entire stream consists of excellent gravel, rock, riffle areas interspersed with small pools. Average width 5 ft., depth 8-10". Food: good. In the upper portion of this section the stream winds down through 6-8 ft. banks, some are eroding quite badly. A few carryover fish seen. 1/2-1 mile: Gradient flatter, still good spawning areas, several spring seepages noted. Well posted. More bank erosion noted, improvement possibly can be made. Watercress bed seen along margin. Stickleback present.

1-2 miles: Approx. 1 mile upstream, a small tributary comes in from the south; it is too small and steep to be of fisheries value. Est. flow of tributary .1 c.f.s., Est. flow main stream: .5 c.f.s. One and one-half miles up from mouth, a second small tributary comes in from the south, est. flow .1 c.f.s. No fish present. Along main stream a few large carryover trout 5 to 6" in length are seen in the deeper pools. Cattle trails abundant along stream margin. At one and three-quarters miles above mouth, a small tributary comes in on the north side. Just above this point is a good site for a small one-acre lake. At approx. 2 miles the road crosses the stream from the north side over to the south side.

(Over)

June 2, 1955. (continued)

At 2 to 2-1/4 miles is a fence line which marks the State Park boundary. Just above this a small tributary comes in from the north. The stream is still of the same general character throughout but somewhat smaller. The south slope is well covered, with the north slope open, grassy areas. At approx. 2-3/4 miles is a major fork of the stream. Fish are still present at this junction point in fair numbers. The south' fork is flowing approx. .3-.4 c.f.s. The main fork, or North Branch, is flowing approx. the same. - No barriers noted to date.

South Forks: about 1/4 mile above forks is a debris jam; no fish noted above this point. Removal of jam would be simple with ax. About 1/2 mile upstream is second forking; did not go above this point as stream is small and of little value to fishlife. Since suitable area above jam is so small, removal not recommended.

North Fork; This is the main canyon, although the stream is quite small. The character is the same, with fish abundant. One-quarter mile above the forks, a small tributary comes in from the south; at one-half mile above forks is a small, natural falls barrier. The main barrier is approx. 6 feet high through a green type of rock. There are also two smaller barriers immediately below. No fish were seen above this point. The stream above the barrier is so small that it is not worth considering removal of these barriers; at least not for the present. It might open at the most an additional one-half mile of stream. It is questionable whether summer water flows are too stable in this area.

GENERAL:

There are about 3 miles of good stream available. Limiting factors are low water flows and a possible food shortage when fish are concentrated. There is an eighth to one-quarter mile section of stream bank which is badly eroded and might offer possibilities for improvement. Consider talking to the State Park people about installing this sign:

"DEVILS GULCH CREEK IS AN IMPORTANT SPAWNING AND NURSERY STREAM FOR SILVER SALMON AND STEELHEAD. ENJOY THEM BUT DO NOT DISTURB THEM. THEY WILL SOON MIGRATE TO THE OCEAN AND RETURN THREE TO FOUR YEARS LATER AS ADULT FISH WEIGHING FOUR TO SIX POUNDS."

-WAE:mm

Oct. 4, 1956: Division of Beaches & Parks personnel were contacted this date and informed of the small log Jam forming on subject creek approximately 100 ft. above culvert. They agreed to remove same before winter runoff. WAE:dk