

California Department Of Fish And Game
STREAM SURVEY

Date: May 18, 1962

NAME: Gray Creek COUNTY: Sonoma

STREAM SECTION: partial FROM: mouth TO: 6 miles upstream LENGTH: 7½ mi

TRIBUTARY TO: East Austin Creek TWP: 9N R: 11W SEC: 34

OTHER NAMES: Unknown RIVER SYSTEM: Russian

SOURCES OF DATA: Personal Observation

EXTENT OF OBSERVATION
Include: Name of Surveyor, Date, Etc.
LOCATION
RELATION TO OTHER WATERS
GENERAL DESCRIPTION
Watershed
Immediate Drainage Basin
Altitude (Range)
Gradient
Width
Depth
Flow (Range)
Velocity
Bottom
Spawning Areas
Pools
Shelter
Barriers
Diversions
Temperatures
Food
Aquatic Plants
Winter Conditions
Pollution
Springs
FISHES PRESENT AND SUCCESS
OTHER VERTEBRATES
FISHING INTENSITY
OTHER RECREATIONAL USE
ACCESSIBILITY
OWNERSHIP
POSTED OR OPEN
IMPROVEMENTS
PAST STOCKING
GENERAL ESTIMATE
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT
SKETCH MAP
REFERENCES AND MAPS

EXTENT OF OBSERVATION - This tributary was checked out from the mouth to a point 6 miles upstream by car and foot on May 18, 1962 by John S. Day. Frequent stops were made for closer inspection and flow measurements.

LOCATION - Heads in the steep eastern slopes of East Austin Creek drainage. It flows in a southeasterly direction, making a sharp swing to the right and flows in a westerly direction joining East Austin Creek approximately 7 miles upstream from the confluence of Main Austin Creek and East Austin Creek.

RELATION TO OTHER WATERS - This tributary sustains a good run of steelhead each winter along with a lesser but important run of silver salmon. This tributary is an important steelhead and silver salmon spawning and nursery area for the steelhead and silver salmon runs of the lower Russian River. This tributary is considered to be one of the most important if not the most important steelhead and silver salmon spawning area in the upper East Austin Creek drainage.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION - Watershed - Immediate Drainage Basin - Gray Creek heads in steep mountainous area in the upper East Austin Creek drainage of west Sonoma County. It flows from the headwaters to the mouth to a V shaped canyon heavily covered with redwoods, tan oaks and other hardwoods and chaparral from the headwaters to the mouth. The gradient is moderate from the headwaters to the mouth with no extremely steep gorge areas

encountered. A small number of summer cabins are located in the extreme headwater section along the stream. One cabin is located on the stream farther down stream towards the mouth.

Altitude - 325-1400 feet. 3 feet for each 100 ft. rise in elevation.

Width - Average 7' (4-12')

Depth - Average - 6" (2-8")

Flow - Estimated to be 4.0 cfs on May 18, 1962

Velocity - Rapid throughout.

Bottom - Predominately gravel, rubble and boulders with some sections of sand scattered throughout.

Spawning Areas - Considered to be good throughout the entire stream. The lower mid and upper mid sections appear to be best spawning areas, however, young juvenile steelhead fish of the year were observed in the extreme headwater sections.

Pools - Pool development is considered to be good throughout the entire section. Many pools are observed averaging 10x20 by 4 ft. in depth.

Shelter - Extremely satisfactory for small salmonids mainly in the form of overhanging vegetation, rocks and roots.

Barriers - One log jam barrier is located approximately ½ mile upstream from the mouth. The jam has the approximate proportions of 60'x8'x10'. Young steelhead fish of the year were observed on the upstream side of this jam, however, this jam appears to have been formed this past winter as no depositions of rock or silt have been weighed down on the upstream side of this dam as of yet. But it is feared that this dam has the potential of becoming a complete blockage. At the road crossing approximately 1 mile upstream from the mouth a bad situation exists that could become a permanent blockage to steelhead and silver salmon. Newly cut logs and large boulders have been pushed into the stream at this spot in order to provide a more stable road crossing. In its present condition this crossing presents a jump of approximately 8' to steelhead and silver salmon. Evidently this road crossing was no problem during the past winter as young steelhead were observed on the upstream side of this crossing. But in the future, it may become a problem.

Diversions - None observed

Temperatures - Air temperature 71° - Water temperature 56° at 1200 on May 18, 1962.

Food - Native insect and larvae common.

Aquatic Plants - None observed.

Winter Conditions - This stream appears to be subject to heavy winter runoff.

Pollution - None observed.

Springs - Spring development appeared to be very good throughout the entire section.

FISHES PRESENT AND SUCCESS - 10,000 rainbow trout-steelhead 1½ were observed at the points checked. Three rainbow trout-steelhead 4-6" in length were also observed. 16 silver salmon 3-3½" in length were observed. The success of these fishes appears to be good. The abundance of steelhead is considered good, but the numbers of silver salmon appear to be small in relation to the size of this stream and its potential for production of salmonid fishes.

OTHER VERTEBRATES - Small numbers of salamanders and frogs were observed throughout.

FISHING INTENSITY - Light

OTHER RECREATIONAL USE - None known.

ACCESSIBILITY - Good. The entire section of stream is paralleled by a dirt road that is reached by taking the Mill Creek Road from Healdsburg and driving to East Austin Creek. In some locations, the stream is not paralleled closely by the road, however, roads do run quite close to this stream throughout the entire section. The stream may also be reached by taking the private road north of Guerneville through the Armstrong State Park and heading north until East Austin Creek is reached. At this point, this road parallels East Austin Creek north until it meets the dirt road coming in from Mill Creek near the mouth of Gray Creek and East Austin Creek.

OWNERSHIP - As far as can be determined the entire stream runs through privately owned land.

POSTED OR OPEN - Some areas of this stream are open, however, the access routes to the stream are posted.

IMPROVEMENTS - The log jam barrier approximately ½ mile upstream from the mouth should be removed in the near future. The road crossing problem should also be investigated to assure that steelhead and silver salmon are able to negotiate this barrier during spawning migration.

PAST STOCKING - Unknown.

GENERAL ESTIMATE - This tributary is considered to be one of the best and most important steelhead spawning and nursery tributaries to East Austin Creek. It affords a good year round flow and exhibits good cover for salmonids. Pool development is excellent as well as the good spawning areas found throughout.

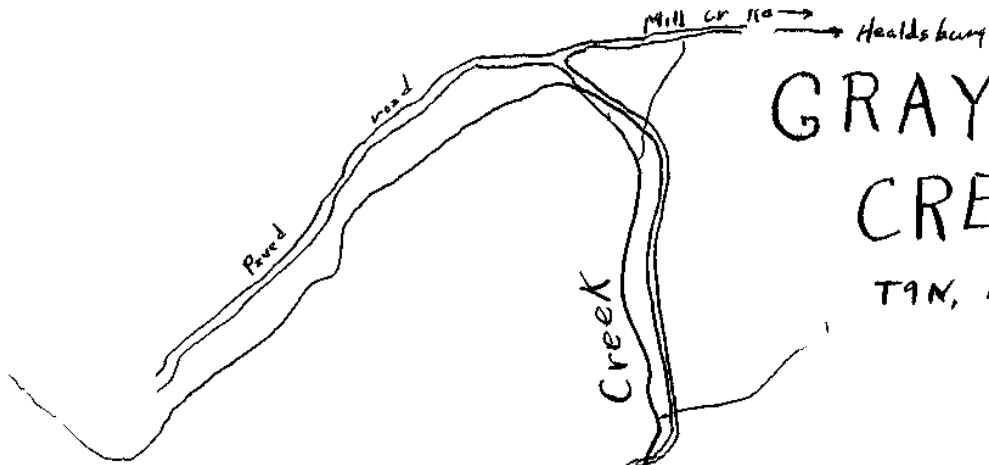
RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT - It is recommended this stream continue to be managed primarily as a steelhead spawning and nursery grounds and secondarily as a trout fishery.

SKETCH MAP - See attached.

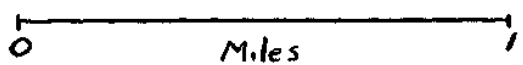
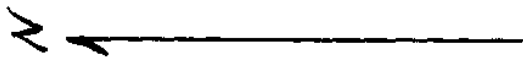
REFERENCES AND MAPS - Sonoma County CDF 1956. USGS Quad Cazadero 7½ minute series.

GRAY CREEK

T9N, R11W, Sec. 34



pear
bluff



Log jam partial barrier

Gray

