

Smith River Summer Fish Count 2010 Report

*The Smith River Alliance
P.O. Box 2129
Crescent City, California*

This report provides a concise summary of the 2010 Summer Fish Count on the Smith River hosted by the Smith River Alliance in partnership with the USFS Smith River National Recreation Area and California Department of Fish and Game. For details on background for this annual survey and methods, please refer to previous reports available at www.smithriveralliance.org.

Survey Dates: All South Fork surveys and most Middle Fork surveys were completed on July 31, 2010. Additional Middle Fork surveys occurred intermittently between August 4 and September 8, 2010.

Survey Crews: A total of 54 volunteers, including 15 team leaders, participated in the survey. Less experienced surveyors were placed as duplicates on larger teams to maintain consistency of skill and effort.

Training and Quality Assurance: Standardized training was offered, as in years past, to all new volunteers, as well as those returning who required a refresher. This training took place at Rock Creek Ranch on July 30, 2010 and approximately 30 volunteers participated. Topics included size calibration, swiftwater safety, appropriate team counting techniques, and fish species identification. After interviews with team leaders, one reach was re-surveyed to provide more accurate data.

Survey Extent: A total of 22.6 miles of the South Fork were surveyed as eleven contiguous reaches from Buck Creek to the confluence with the Middle Fork. A total of 14.5 miles were surveyed on the Middle Fork as seven non-contiguous reaches from the anadromous barrier near Griffin Creek to Cooper Flat.

Fish by Reach: An average of 28 trout per mile were recorded in the South Fork, and 21 trout per mile were recorded in the Middle Fork. There was no clear trend of relative abundance in the upstream or downstream direction. Steelhead trout sightings were evenly distributed across all South Fork reaches, while the majority of steelhead in the Middle Fork were concentrated in the middle reaches. Resident Rainbow Trout were concentrated in the uppermost reaches of both the South and Middle Forks.

Visibility: Water clarity in the South Fork enabled identification of fish at distances of up to 30 feet. Several measurements of visibility – determined by ability to identify parr marks on a large lure – indicated that typical and functional visibility due to variable light conditions may more typically 15-20 feet.

Water Temperature: Temperature gauges placed at two locations on the South Fork and Middle Fork recorded temperatures consistent with averages found in previous years (64 degrees Fahrenheit on the South Fork and 59 degrees Fahrenheit on the Middle Fork). Larger numbers of fish were consistently seen in areas with heavy shade, rock overhangs, or underground “seeps” and thus lower water temperatures.

Total Fish Counted:

Fish Category	Species	Size	South Fork (22.6 mi)	Middle Fork, Lower (2.5 mi)	Middle Fork, Upper (12 mi)
Cutthroat, large	<i>O. clarki clarki</i>	12 – 20"	256	46	131
Cutthroat, medium	<i>O. clarki clarki</i>	10 – 12"	218	2	79
Cutthroat, small	<i>O. clarki clarki</i>	7 – 10"	170	1	65
Resident Rainbow	<i>O. mykiss</i>	10 – 12"	34	19	60
Steelhead	<i>O. mykiss</i>	16 – 28"	3	0	0
Half-pounder	<i>O. mykiss</i>	12 -- 16"	0	0	0
Chinook	<i>O. tshawytscha</i>	18 – 42"	0	0	0
Sucker	<i>C. rimiculus</i>	8 – 20"	2	0	2

Appendix Table A provides a reach summary of the 2010 surveys.

Appendix Table B provides a summary of fish count results from all survey years.

Acknowledgements:

The Smith River Alliance is grateful for the continuing volunteer support of these surveys. Special thanks goes to team leaders Joe'l Benegar, Tedd Ward, Karissa Willits, Sammy Hernandez, David Weskamp, Paul Coletta, Marisa Parish, Gary Reedy, River Carothers, Steve Gough, Pete Craig, Justin Garwood, Scott Bowman, and Mike McCain; as well as logistics coordinators Grant Werschull, Karen Rath, and Patty McCleary.

This report was prepared for the Smith River Alliance by:

Rachel McCain, Rachel_McCain@nps.gov

APPENDIX TABLE A:

Fish observed by segment in the South Fork and Middle Fork Smith River, Summer 2010.

CTT = Coastal cutthroat trout; RBT = Resident rainbow trout; SHT = Steelhead trout; SKR = Sucker, CHK = Chinook salmon.

Reach	CTT <10	CTT 10-12	CTT >12	SHT	RBT	SKR	CHK	Location	Mileage	TPM Avg.
SF 1	15	22	10	1	1			Craigs Beach-MF	1.2	
SF 2	13	11	8			1		Surprise-Craigs	1	
SF 3	36	24	18			1		Carter Falls-Surprise	3.9	
SF 4	9	10	16	1			2	Sand Camp-Carter Falls	2.1	
SF 5	17	7	6					Rock Creek-Sand Camp	1.4	
SF 6	18	16	29					Rattlesnake-Rock Creek	3.9	
SF 7	12	23	13					Stevens Bridge-Rattlesnake	1.2	
SF 8	26	22	17	1	1			GO Road-Stevens Bridge	1.3	
SF 9	49	24	21			6		Indian Bar-GO Road	2	
SF 10	42	41	15			22		McClendon-Indian Bar	2	
SF 11	19	18	17			2		Buck Creek-McClendon	2.6	
SF Totals	256	218	170	3	34	2	0	22.6 Miles (contiguous)	22.6	28
MF 1	46	2	1			19		Mary Adams-Cooper Flat	2.5	
MF 2	X	X	X	X	X			NF-Mary Adams		
MF 3	13	23	27	3	6			Panther Flat-NF	2.5	
MF 4	60	27	17			4	2	Grassy Flat-Panther Flat	3	
MF 5	X	X	X	X	X			Patrick Creek-Grassy Flat		
MF 6	34	21	16	1	16			Siskiyou Fork-Patrick Creek	3	
MF 7	14	2	3					Idlewild-Siskiyou Fork	1.5	
MF 8	X	X	X	X	X			Griffin Creek-Idlewild		
MF 9	10	6	2			34		MF Falls-Griffin Creek	2	
MF Totals	177	81	66	4	79	2	0	14.5 Miles (non-contiguous)	14.5	21

APPENDIX Table B:

Summary of previous summer adult fish surveys in the main forks of the Smith River with total counts in the South Fork.

Year	SF Date	Start	End	Miles	Chinook	CTT>12"	SHT	RBT	Other Forks	Surveyors
1982	7/26-8/27	Eightmile	Middle Fork	25	11	91	5	NA	MF, NF	William T. Mitchell
1989	8/28	GO Road	Craigs Cr	13.2	2	125	5	NA		USFS?
1990	9/11	GO Road	Craigs Cr	13.2	0	138	7	NA		USFS?
1991	9/9-12	GO Road	Craigs Cr	13.2	1	51	8	NA	MF	Wood/Rogers (CDFG)
1992	9/3-5	Rattlesnake	Scaling Stat.	11	1	120	8	NA	MF, NF	USFS/Reedy
1993	9/7-9	Hurdygurdy	Middle Fork	15.2	17	111	4	NA	MF, NF	USFS/Reedy
1994	8/10 - 9/5	Harrington	Scaling Stat.	27	8	190	7	13	MF, NF	USFS/Reedy
1995	8/2-3	Hurdygurdy	Middle Fork	15.2	21	161	4	19	MF, NF	USFS/Reedy
2000	8/19	Hurdygurdy	Lower Concrete Br	8	1	101	2	2		SRA/Reedy
2001	8/18	Hurdygurdy	Scaling Stat.	13.2	2	235	1	6		SRA/Reedy
2002	8/24	Indian Bar	Gorge	15	14	283	4	17		SRA/Reedy
2003	8/6-14	Eightmile	Middle Fork	25	17	290	2	29	MF	SRA/Reedy
2004	8/15	Hurdygurdy	Scaling Stat.	13.2	12	126	8	39	MF	SRA/Reedy
2005	7/23-8/16	Buck Cr	Middle Fork	23	2	216	13	46	MF	SRA/Reedy
2006	7/29-8/3	Eightmile Creek	Middle Fork	25	11	336	11	43	MF, NF	SRA/Reedy
2007	7/28	Indian Bar	Middle Fork	15	3	156	9	17	MF	SRA/Reedy
2008	7/26	Indian Bar	Middle Fork	15	2	214	1	12	MF	SRA/Reedy
2009	7/25	Buck Creek	Middle Fork	22.6	0	171	10	58		SRA/Reedy
2010	07/30	Buck Creek	Middle Fork	22.6	0	170	3	34	MF	SRA/McCain

Note: The above table lists all known surveys. The Middle Fork and North Fork were not surveyed in any year when the South Fork was not surveyed. Data prior to 1992 was not provided with complete descriptions of data collection methods or personnel.

Smith River Adult Fish Counts, Summer 2010