

Yager Catchment Spawner Survey Summary

Introduction

The California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) conducts salmonid spawner surveys every winter in selected streams in the Van Duzen and elsewhere in the Eel River system. These surveys are used to help estimate the annual variance in Chinook and/or coho spawning activity. The surveys are not designed to develop population abundance estimates. Surveys are conducted on predetermined stream sections called “index reaches” that are walked by crews every 1-2 weeks, or as stream conditions permit. These index reaches are typically located on the most productive spawning section of the selected stream based on known, historical observations.

With the cooperation of the Humboldt Redwood Company (HRC) the CDFG regularly surveys four reaches within the Lawrence Creek drainage. Lawrence Creek is part of the Yager catchment which is part of the Van Duzen River catchment.

Results

The lower Lawrence Creek reach was surveyed five times between November 3rd 2010 and February 9th 2011. During those five surveys 129 live Chinook and 70 redds were observed. No coho were confirmed during the course of the surveys.

The upper Lawrence Creek reach was surveyed five times during the same time period. During those five surveys 188 live Chinook and 67 redds were observed. No coho were confirmed during the course of the surveys.

The Shaw Creek reach was surveyed five times between November 30th 2010 and February 9th 2011. During those five surveys 128 live Chinook and 52 redds were observed. No live coho were observed but 3 coho carcasses were found.

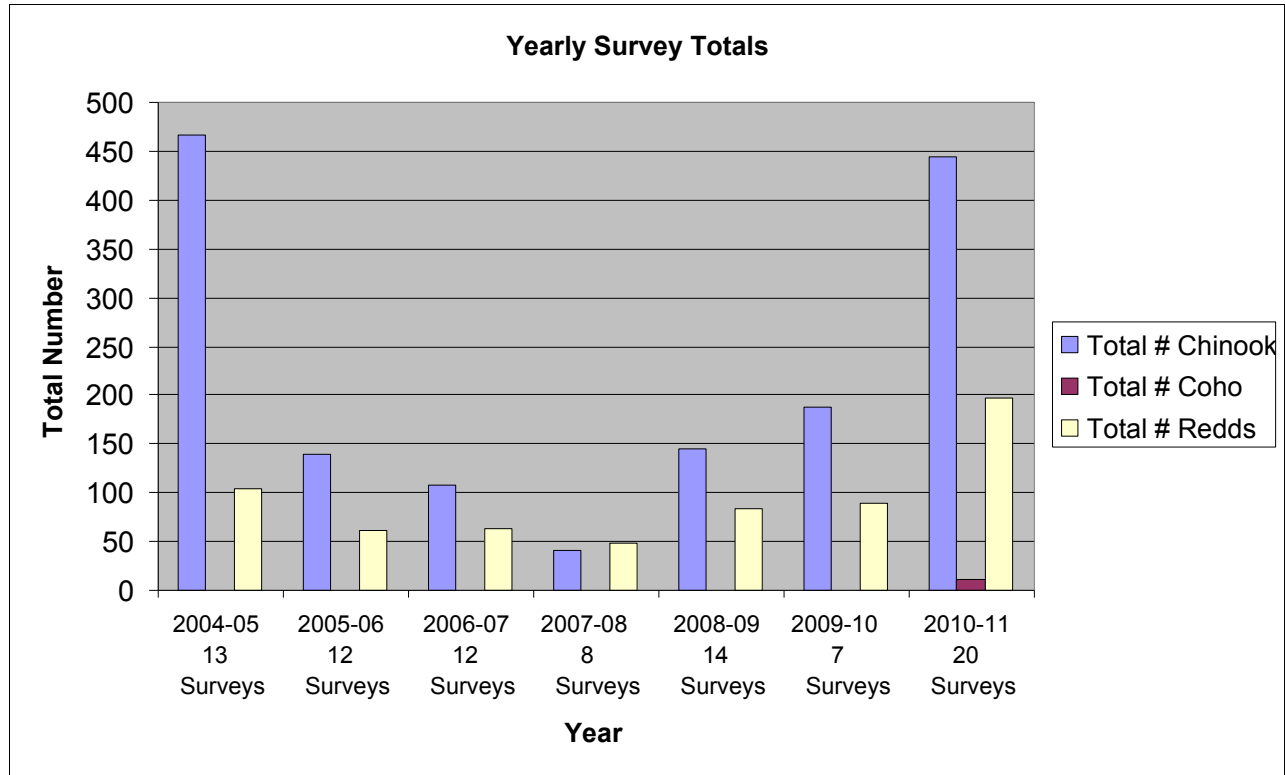
The Fish Creek reach was surveyed five times between November 17th 2010 and February 22nd 2011. During those five surveys eight live coho were observed and eight redds were observed. No Chinook were confirmed during the course of the surveys.

2010-2011 Spawner Survey Results

Reach	Length (miles)	Live Chinook	Coho	Redds
Lower Lawrence	2.5	129	0	70
Upper Lawrence	2.3	188	0	67
Shaw	0.8	128	3	52
Fish	0.6	0	8	8

Discussion

The figure below shows the total number of fish and redds found in the four reaches during the last 7 years.



The CDFG conducts spawner surveys in the Lawrence Creek watershed every 7-11 days or as weather conditions allow. The surveys are not designed to estimate population abundance, but rather annual variance of salmonids spawning in the Lawrence system.

Other than the relative large number of Chinook observed in Lawrence Creek in the winter of 20010-11 and 2004-2005, it appears that Chinook spawner counts vary little from year to year.

The collected data also suggests that Coho have a low population in the Lawrence drainage. More surveys need to be conducted over multiple years in order to determine the population trends of Coho salmon in the Lawrence Creek drainage.

Steelhead are relatively common, but occur after our sampling season concludes, so are not represented here.



A female coho carcass, her beat up tail indicates she successfully spawned.