

F I E L D N O T E

Name Mitchell Creek

County Mendocino

Stream Identification - Mouth: T 18N, R 18W, Sec. 25; Mitchell Creek flows into the Pacific Ocean 3.25 miles south of Fort Bragg on Highway #1 which crosses Mitchell Creek by a 10 ft. concrete culvert. Immediately northeast of this crossing Pearl Drive joins with Highway #1 and immediately southeast of this crossing Pine Beach Inn is located.

General Description of First 1.5 miles from Mouth -

1. Stream flow

Summer at mouth 2.5 c.f.s.; velocity rapid; winter level 2' - 3' above summer's; gradient of flow for first 1.5 miles 133 ft./mile.

2. Diversions

C. Davina has permit to withdraw 1000 gal./day at mouth.

3. Streambed

Fine rubble 20%, coarse gravel 25%, fine gravel 15%, sand 10%, mud 30%; 10 ft. wide channel; spawning gravel 3' wide, 15% of winter bed (3,564 sq. ft.).

4. Drainage Basin

Steep 60° sloped V-shaped canyon; extremely thick streamside vegetation (red alder, blackberry, poison oak, bracken fern, nettle common). Barely passable for survey and would require path cutting for crew; no current logging. Logged 7 or 3 yrs. ago.

5. Water Quality

Temperature at mouth: 1,015, 3/31/66: air-57°, water-54°; weather-heavy fog, wind 7 m.p.h.

Some indication of pollution: detergent favor and murkiness of water.

6. Food

Confined to relatively scarce riffle areas. Type: caddis fly larvae (Ochrotrichia and Limnephilus), stone fly nymph, and may fly nymph. All abundant in riffle areas.

7. Barriers

25 log jams which include the following large jams:
 #13 (30'L, 24' W, 10' H),
 #16 (42'L, 36' W, 8' H),
 #19 (12'L, 12' W, 8' H),
 #20 (42'L, 15' W, 8' H).

Because of the narrow canyon and culvert at the mouth, these jams could not be removed by floating. On the other hand, because of the confinement of the stream channel between narrow canyon walls, 100' high, 60° slopes, the debris could not be removed above high water mark.

8. Ownership

Previously owned largely by Mitchell, but now divided into small lots (50 owners).

9. Fish Population

a. Silver Salmon and Steelhead

The following parr were netted, identified, and examined before release in representative samples:

	<u>Actual count</u>	<u>Size</u>		<u>Conditions</u>
		<u>Range</u>	<u>Average</u>	
Salmon	10	2"-2 $\frac{1}{2}$ "	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ "	Good growth variable
Steelhead	9	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "-4"	2"	in growth
Total	19			

b. Other Fish Netted and Identified - None

The stream is currently producing an estimated 100 silver salmon and 90 Steelhead. There are reports of "trout" being caught below Mitchell Drive.

10. Access

To Mouth: By Pine Beach Inn road, immediately south of Highway #1 crossing of Mitchell Creek.

To stream: Above Highway #1: By Pearl Drive, which joins Highway #1 immediately north of Highway #1 crossing of Mitchell Creek.

General Estimates - Mitchell Creek has negligible spawning and nursery value for silver salmon and steelhead. Removal of barriers not warranted.

Reasons for No Restorative Value

1. Current silver salmon and steelhead populations are negligible.
2. Narrow, insignificant influence into ocean would handicap attempts to increase population.
3. Relatively, unimportant amounts of spawning gravel.
4. Stream size relatively small and insignificant.
5. Extremely high cost of clearance of barriers is not justified by the value of the stream.
6. Adjacent land is being developed into a summer home - residential area, which will increase problems of pollution, poaching, and water demands.

Sources of Information

1. Observation of stream and area.
2. Manager of Pine Beach Inn.
3. North Coast Real Estate, 120 S. Main, Fort Bragg.

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