



In October 1999, District staff conducted a survey of juvenile steelhead below Los Padres Dam. In general, the juvenile steelhead population has increased over the past 10 years. However, overall population density in 1999 was lower than levels recorded over the last four years, averaging 70 fish per 100 feet of stream.

Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility Operational

The Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility was fully operational in 1999 and approximately 12,000 fish were held at the facility. It has a capacity of 64,000 juvenile steelhead. Fish rescued from drying reaches of the river can be held at the rearing facility until stream-flow conditions improve and they can be released back into the river.

Merganser Ducks Attack Fish

In August 1999, merganser ducks swam underneath wire that covered portions of the rearing channel and were discovered feeding on the steelhead. Staff estimates that approximately 1,500 fish survived the merganser predation. Following this incident a temporary net was placed over the entire channel. Permanent bird net framing will be installed over the channel in early 2000.

In November 1999 when Carmel River flows increased, staff began removing fish from the rearing channel and releasing them back into the river. Eventually, 1,600 fish were released from the facility. A large number of them were measured and weighed prior to release; all were in good to excellent condition.

Clearing debris from a fish screen in the rearing channel at the Sleepy Hollow Steelhead Rearing Facility.

New Cooling Tower to Be Built

Plans have been developed to construct a cooling tower that will reduce water temperatures at the rearing facility during the summer months. Construction of the tower should commence in April 2000, prior to the summer rearing season.

Smolt Survival Experiment Completed

In late February 1999, staff conducted a study to determine whether modifications made to the spillway at Los Padres Dam in 1994 and 1995 did increase the number of fish that passed safely over the dam. The results of this experiment should be available in December 2000.

Spawning Gravel Placed in River

In June 1999, the District renewed its permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the placement of gravel in the Carmel River to create spawning habitat for steelhead. Over the past 11 years, the District has improved and increased steelhead spawning habitat through the placement of 1,827 cubic yards of spawning-sized gravel into the river channel.

PROTECTING THE CALIFORNIA RED-LEGGED FROG

Developing Joint Habitat Conservation Plan

In January 1999, the District contacted well owners that pump more than 20 acre-feet of water from the Carmel River basin each year and asked them to co-fund and participate in development of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The goal is to identify how water production practices are