

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
STREAM SURVEY

FILE FORM No

NAME.....VIRGIN CREEK.....COUNTY.....Mendocino
 STREAM SECTION.....Partial...FROM.....To....headwater....LENGTH...2MI
 TRIBUTARY TO.....Pacific Ocean.....TWP..19N...R17W..SEC. 31...
 OTHER NAMES.....None known.....RIVER SYSTEM...Virgin Creek
 SOURCES OF DATA.....Personal observations and local residents.....

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 Area
Pools
Shelter
Barriers
Diversions
Temperature
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 stream was walked out on foot from the junction of small tributaries the NW1/4 of the SW1/4 of Sec. 32, T19N, R17W to the Pacific Ocean distance of approx. 2 miles by Weldon E. Jones on August 31 & Sept. 1, 1961.

LOCATION - Virgin Creek arises approx. 2 miles north by northwest of the town of Ft. Bragg. On the west side of Bald Hill, proceeds in a meandering manner in a westerly direction to enter the Pacific Ocean approx. 1 mile north of Ft. Bragg.

RELATION TO OTHER WATERS - Virgin Creek is an entirely separate drainage. It sustains a poor steelhead and/or rainbow trout nursery area.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION - Watershed & Immediate Drainage Basin - Virgin Creek ends in the lower mountainous area on the west side of the Mendocino coastal Douglas fir transition area. The entire drainage has been logged off heavily in the past years and now only sparse small growths of mixed redwood and Douglas fir stand along the stream. The heavy growth of willows, huckleberries, nettles, salmon berries, alder, fern as well as blackberries cover most of the immediate stream above the lagoon. Homes as well as small ranches are located along the entire surveyed stream. The extreme headwater lies in a fairly steep to moderately steep walled canyons with the lower 2 miles opening out into a wide heavily populated valley or coastal plain.

Altitude - Sea level to 500 ft

Gradient - Shallow in the 2 mile section surveyed being approx. 2 ft. to 3 ft. per 100 ft. of stream.

Width - Range 1/2 ft. to 30 ft.; overall average 5 ft.

Depth - Range 1/2 in. to 3 ft.; overall average 1 ft. above the lagoon. The lagoon was estimated from 1 ft. to 6 ft. deep.

Flow - Measured at 6 gpm at Kyendon Ridge located approx. 2 miles upstream and .1 cfs at the Highway 1 bridge.

Velocity - Rapid to sluggish throughout. Most pools and lagoon were

considered sluggish.

VIRGIN CREEK

Mendocino County P-2

Bottom - Predominantly bedrock with sand with bedrock falls located approx. 1-3/4 mi. upstream to the headwater.

A small tributary located just below the bedrock falls on the west side contained considerable amount of rubble.

Spawning Areas - Practically non-existent in the entire stream. Spawning gravels were found only in isolated pockets occupying an estimated less than 5% of the entire stream bed. A small tributary located just west and below the bedrock falls had approx. 700 ft. of good spawning gravel estimated at approx. 30% to 40%.

Pools - Generally long and narrow occurring in bedrock. Approx. 30 ft. to 100 ft. long, 5 ft. wide and 2 ft. deep. In general, the pools were progressively smaller above the Menlo mill.

Shelter - Considered excellent throughout primarily of overhanging vegetation, undercut banks and bedrock pools.

Barriers - One bedrock falls approx. 1-1/2 mi. to 1-3/4 miles upstream. This falls is approx. 6 ft. high but has a very small and shallow pool at the base.

Diversions - Two diversions were noted - one behind Menlo mill consisting of three pipes; one 3 in. in diameter, another 1-1/2 in. in diameter and another 1 in. in diameter. All three pipes were tied in one bundle supplying water to Menlo mill. The second diversion was located just below the Highway 1 bridge. It consists of a 2-inch pipe.

Temperatures - Air of 68° F. and water 65° F. was recorded at 1600 hrs. on 8/31/61 approx. 2 miles above the Pacific Ocean. The temperature of water was 60° F. and air was 70° F. at 1230 on 9/1/61 just above the Highway 1 crossing.

Food - Considered poor at this time composed primarily of small dipteris insects.

Aquatic Plants - Algae, tules and watercress were noted throughout the lower portion of the stream.

Winter Conditions - Assumed to be mild. Conditions at the bank indicate this stream rises only 1 to 2 ft.

Pollution - None observed on this survey. Possibly sources of pollution from lumber mill and domestic sources.

Springs - Development considered fair to poor by this time of year.

FISHES PRESENT AND SUCCESS - A very small number of steelhead and/or rainbow trout were noted in this stream. Sticklebacks were common in the lagoon;- in lower 1/4 no silver salmon were seen. Approx. 2 to 3 fish were seen per 100 ft. of stream below the rock fails. No fish were seen above. Approx. 2 to 3 fish were seen per 15 ft. of stream in the small tributary located to the west just below the rock falls. Their success was fair and condition good. A lack of spawning area is apparently the largest limiting factor in this stream.

OTHER VERTEBRATES - Cattle, sheep and deer were common in this section of stream. Turtles were noted in the lagoon and lower 1/4.

FISHING INTENSITY - Unknown.

OTHER RECREATIONAL USES - None known.

ACCESSIBILITY - Highway 1 north out of Ft. Bragg crosses Virgin Creek just above the lagoon. A small county road crosses the upper fingers or tributaries near the Bald Hill area. A small county road joins Highway 1 approx. 1/2 mile south of the lagoon and proceeds east to intersect Virgin Creek approx. 1-1/2 mi. up. Foot access on this stream is practically impossible due to the thick undergrowth.

POSTED OR OPEN - Only the lower lagoon was observed posted against trespass although other areas were fenced.

IMPROVEMENTS - None observed.

PAST STOCKING - None known.

GENERAL ESTIMATE - This stream appears to be a poor spawning and nursery stream throughout its entire length. However the large bedrock pools and overhanging vegetation offer ample protection for young fish. The limiting factor appears to be the limited spawning area and low flow.

RECOMMENDED MANAGEMENT - This small stream should continue to be managed as primarily a steelhead and/or rainbow trout spawning area. Any log jam removal project contemplated for this stream would have to consider the dense brush, limited access and poor spawning area available.

REFERENCES & MAPS - Union Lumber Co. timber and land 1945.

Weldon Jones/cd