

## **Yuba Habitat Committee Meeting**

Tuesday, June 17, 2003, 10 a.m., Room 2000, Salt Lake DWR Office.

Next meeting: Thursday, August 7, 2003, 1:00 p.m., Yuba State Park, meet at office at front gate at main entrance. (Originally set for July 29, later changed to July 30 and then changed again)

In attendance:

Jeff Rassmussen, Yuba State Park; Clyde Bunker, Sevier Bridge Reservoir; Will Jefferies, Rocky Mountain Anglers; Ray Schelble, Rocky Mountain Anglers; John Tomich, B.A.S.S.; Don Archer, DWR Salt Lake office; Mike Slater, DWR Central Region; Don Wiley, DWR Central Region.

Mike: Deer Creek structures installed April 29. Have been monitored 5 times since then. Saw perch egg ribbons on trees May 13. Has dived on them with scuba gear and a video camera. All are tipped on their sides and with current that exists at that level they will not stand up. Only saw fish until last week.

Will: Where trees are located is on the exact spot where he has done well on bass and walleye in the past.

Mike: For setting nets, from that location south was the best location to catch walleyes.

Don: Location of trees is determined by gps coordinates through an agreement with the BOR.

Don: Whether fish were already there or not is irrelevant. The important thing is that fish are on them.

Mike: Will continue to monitor them at least every other week. Has tipped them up but each time they were tipped on their sides because of current. Convinced that they are effective for purposes of habitat for what we want to accomplish. Very encouraged by results.

Don: At last meeting we talked about purchasing perch. At their meeting May 22, 2003, the Blue Ribbon Fisheries Advisory Council approved \$40,000 for the purchase of 100,000 perch to be delivered to the reservoir after it begins filling in October.

Discussion on whether to install artificial trees while water is down or wait until it comes up. Could plant them in other areas to prevent sand drifting and other problems. Could be problems with property ownership. Clyde brought map of landowners on lake shore. Said the dam is even on property they don't own.

Talked about what will be done with material that will be dredged near the dam. Three sites were discussed. Many unknowns concerning how much muck will have to be moved.

Clyde: IPP will retain the remaining share of their water in the reservoir next year, but water levels are difficult to predict. Will not be drained again next year. Paiute Reservoir upstream can store water that belongs to Yuba

Don: Perch will spawn in April. Could install artificial trees in late March or early April, 2004.

Clyde: Has been considering other types of habitat. Big military buoys could be fastened to durable netting. Trees could be fastened to the netting and they could be easily moved

as the water levels changed. Discussion that we could do something like that in walleye Bay and close it off to all boaters.

Installing structure that will keep reservoir levels from ever having to go below 30 feet to work on the dam.

Talked about catching perch from Jordanelle to plant in Yuba. Concerns about survivability of deeper-caught fish. Hook-and-line fishing for perch at IPP ponds this spring didn't succeed because of problems with perch adjusting to depth. Jordanelle could present similar problems in October/November.

Tracy Myers is gearing up to pour concrete bases for the artificial trees.

Don: Looking into stocking rainbow trout in Yuba from areas of the state that may not use all their allotment because of drought and low water levels.

Clyde: Another structure suggestion: One of the problems farmers have is old baling twine. There is a big supply of it around that could be had for the hauling. Could consider baskets made of chain link to contain twine if necessary. May have environmental concerns that would have to be addressed.

Jeff: Could be liability problems with floating structures.

Clyde: Any type of floating structure should be placed along a steep shoreline. A permanent structure in steep areas near the dam would be acceptable. On the south side water velocity will not be a factor.

There is some money for Yuba left in the Habitat Fund. Should consider constructing bottom features while the reservoir is drained. Discussed construction of earth or rock berms or humps several feet high in certain places. These berms would not provide shallow spawning habitat but rather would be located deeper to provide fish-holding structure at low water levels when the reservoir is drawn down late in the summer. Because they would be deep they would not be a hazard for boaters. Certain humps and ridges in the reservoir now consistently hold fish and these berms would attempt to provide similar fish-holding structure. Although they would not add to the spawning habitat they could be justified as structures to assist anglers in keeping the walleye population in check. Need to find out places that anglers would like to see structures. Will meet later to discuss where these could go to provide most benefit and least damage to existing habitat.

Clyde: Water users have no concerns about habitat as long as it cannot float to the dam.

Yuba regulations for 2004: Discussion on whether to close Yuba for perch and walleye or just perch. Will be few walleyes in the lake anyway and need to give perch a good start. Fishing pressure needs to be maintained on walleyes anyway. Decided to close to the taking of perch only next year.

Discussion on putting minutes online. Nobody sees any problems with this but Don Archer and Don Wiley would like to review past minutes.

Misc. info: Yuba contains 236,000 acre feet at full pool.