

2006 Horsefly River Creel Survey

Abstract

A creel survey was conducted on the Horsefly River with the support of the Provincial River Guardian program. A creel survey crew was hired by BCCF to collect and record angler data over a four month period commencing on July 3, 2006 and concluding on October 5, 2005. Survey days were randomly selected to include one weekday and one weekend day per week. Methods used to access anglers on the Horsefly River comprised of driving the classified portion of the river and interviewing all easily accessible anglers. After driving the classified portion of the river, a decision was made as to which section contained the highest density of boat anglers. Then that section was drifted and anglers were interviewed as they were encountered.

The creel survey crew interviewed 76 anglers over the course of the season. The majority (34%, n=26) of anglers interviewed were angling in zone four. Zone four extends upstream from the Woodjam Creek Bridge to the Bosk Bridge, and provides easy access for both shore and boat anglers. Residents of British Columbia represented 74% of the anglers interviewed during the 2006 survey. Non-resident aliens represented 22% of the survey, all but one (Sweden) were from the US. Canadian residents represented 4% of the survey. Five percent of the interviewed were guided and 95% were unguided. All guided anglers surveyed were non-resident alien anglers. The mean number of angler's interviewed on weekend days was 3.57 and the mean number of anglers interviewed on weekdays was 1.73. Overall angler effort from July to the beginning of October is estimated to be 304 angler days. Five species of fish were reportedly captured during the 2006 survey. Anglers reported capturing rainbow trout, mountain whitefish, sockeye salmon, northern pike minnow and bull trout. The reported hourly catch rate is as follows: rainbow trout 1.03, mountain whitefish 0.23, sockeye salmon 0.01, and northern pike minnow 0.09 and bull trout 0.02. Forty-seven percent of anglers interviewed were shore anglers and 53% accessed the river by boat. Most of the anglers interviewed (63%) traditionally make 1-5 trip's per year to the Horsefly River, 17% make 6-20 trips and 20% make over 21 trips per year. Angler experience on the Horsefly River ranged from first trip to over 38 years. Interviewed anglers averaged 8.6 years of experience on the Horsefly River. The majority (17%) of anglers felt that angling success was worse this year, while 21% felt it was better and 29% felt it was the same. 32% were fishing the Horsefly River for the first time and 1% said the fishing was good. Most anglers (92%) felt that the current level of angler effort on the Horsefly River was not a concern. The remaining 7% felt that the current level of angler effort was too high, and one angler didn't respond. Water temperatures were recorded manually by the creel survey crew at three locations: Squaw Flats (Female First Nations Flats), the town site and Bosk Bridge.