

**Fishery Division staff recommendations**

**River management plans developed**

Three other rivers or parts of rivers have been proposed for consideration under the Commission's new wild fish policy. They are the Klamath River from Keno Dam to the California border and its

**Caution urged when cutting firewood**

For persons cutting their own firewood in National Forests this fall and winter, the word is caution, according to U.S. Forest Service Regional Forester R.E. (Dick) Worthington.

"The Forest Service encourages people to use firewood, the dead and downed material, as a means of cutting fuel costs," Worthington said, "but people need to use care, too."

Two special concerns that have surfaced are that wood cutters should avoid using power saws near other persons, and people should not cut on the high, stacked piles. A number of instances of people endangering themselves and others have been reported by Forest Service employees, prompting Worthington's word of caution.

The Regional Forester also reminded wood cutters that firewood is free for the taking on National Forests of the Pacific Northwest, but a permit, also free, is required. "Wood cutters must have the permit in their possession at all times while in the woods and while transporting the wood," Worthington said.

Wood cutters also need to be sure their power saws are equipped with approved spark arrestors, he added.

To obtain the free permits, for further information, and to learn what cutting areas are nearest you, visit or call the nearest Forest Service Ranger District office of the National Forest you plan to visit.

tributary Spencer Creek; the Williamson River; and Threemile Creek and Reservoir, a small system on the west slope of the Steens.

Management plan abstracts for all three systems were submitted recently to the Commission.

The Klamath River is an extremely productive stream but has been closed to angling from mid-June through September each year since 1962. Trout take on a bad flavor during these months. Three management objectives are spelled out in the plan including managing for wild fish only, improving the wild trout populations, and increasing the angling opportunity.

Discontinuation of hatchery trout stocking will fill the first

objective and a habitat improvement program in Spencer Creek will help meet the second objective. Water quality in Spencer Creek is good. Gravel and streamflow are also adequate. But siltation and a shortage of protective cover are limiting factors.

The plan suggests a possible catch and release fishery during the summer, possibly starting in 1980, as a method of increasing angling opportunity.

Threemile Creek in Harney County is only 1.9 miles long and empties into a private irrigation reservoir. But it provides an important source of pure redband trout eggs needed by the Department for enhancing this strain of trout in other southeastern Oregon

waters.

Management objectives are again to manage for wild trout only (already being done), improve the wild fish population (through agreements with the reservoir owner to assure adequate water levels and concerning operation of the water diversion system, and by closing the system to angling). The third objective is already being met as the Department now takes eggs annually from adult fish in the reservoir.

Regulations proposed for next year would close the stream to angling.

The lower Williamson is famous for its large trout. The exceptional growth is undoubtedly made in Klamath Lake into which the Williamson drains. There is not a great

deal of public access and this, coupled with restrictive angling regulations, has given the trout protection.

The report listed other reductions in hatchery stocking that could be made but cautioned more restrictive angling regulations would be necessary because of the heavy angler use now seen in the stocked areas.

The other two management alternatives discussed in the report are managing the river as it is currently being done with no changes in stocking levels, or managing the entire lower 100 miles for wild trout only. Which choice the Commission makes may result in changes in angling regulations for 1979.

The report also considered

management options for steelhead and salmon. The steelhead run has averaged about 25,000 fish annually since 1970. Wild steelhead production is supplemented with annual releases of about 160,000 hatchery-produced fish in compensation for spawning habitat lost when Pelton Dam was built.

The wild steelhead run is thought to have averaged about 15,000 fish each year since 1970 and a spawning escapement of about 8,000 fish is believed necessary to maintain that production. The plan suggests regulations to ensure adequate wild steelhead escapement, yet permit maximum use of returning hatchery fish be considered.

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