

The Fish Story -- Updated

October 1997-

Joe Trapp, Environmental Services Division of Oakland's Public Works Agency and Pete Alexander, East Bay Regional Park District found:

- 15 rainbow trout spotted in Palo Seco creek
- Estimated hatched last February

Source: FOSC Newsletter 12/1997

1998-

Survey of Oakland's creeks found:

- 1, 9.5" rainbow trout in Shepherd Creek (June 23, 1998) , below the culvert under Scout Road
 - ❖ Visual inspection revealed that it was a hatchery fish. They believed someone put it in the stream.
- 4, 6-8" rainbow trout (wild, DNA tested) in Palo Seco Creek (June 25) near Palos Colorados trailhead.
- 1 rainbow trout (wild, DNA tested), 7.5" long, found in Palo Seco below Hwy 13.
- No evidence of successful reproduction from winter 1997-1998 because no young trout found
- There are no other populations upstream or downstream that can disperse into the area and replenish the population
- "Numerous grade control structures, many of them built by the WPA in the 1940's are found in the streams, particularly in the reach of Sausal Creek in Dimond Park... Because of the way they are constructed, even these 1 foot high obstacles can form complete barriers for even the strongest swimming fish. Fish may move downstream during high flow events, during episodes of water quality deterioration, or at different points in their life history. If populations are eliminated from an area the habitat can not be easily recolonized." p.4
- No fish found in electrofishing in Sausal Creek done upstream of Highway 13 along Scout Road and between Canon Avenue and the Montclair Golf Course. June 25 and June 26. Biased on habitat features absence of fish was unexpected.
- Risk factors: habitat fragmentation, episodic water quality deterioration, severely altered hydrograph.

Source: Technical memorandum: Aquatic Resource Inventory of Oakland Streams, Martha's thesis

Winter 1998-1999-

- Large amount of woody debris removed from Palo Seco creek where the trout had been found.

Source: Martha's thesis

November 1999-

- 1 dead rainbow trout, 4 inches in Sausal Creek near Leimert Bridge.
- Several Puncture wounds
- Saved for DNA testing
- EBRPD fisheries biologist, Pete Alexander, felt that this meant the fish had reproduced since the 1998 survey.

Source: Martha's thesis, FOSC Dec/Jan 2000 newsletter

February 2000-

- Trout habitat in Palo Seco blown out.

Source: e-mail from Sam Cohen on 5/29/00

May 27, 2000-

Ralph Kanz spotted:

- 1, 5" fish in large pool at the first dam above El Centro

Source: 5/27/00 e-mail

June 10, 2000-

Bird Monitoring Team

- 1, 4-5" fish spotted in Palo Seco.

Source: Point Count Data Form for 6/10

Sometime before August 1-

- 1 fish, 12" long spotted in pool below El Centro

September 5, 2000

- Anne made presentation at Bay Area Chapter of Trout Unlimited regarding the fish in Sausal Creek.

September 7, 2000

- Letter sent to Mr. Treanor of the Fish and Game Commission concerning the fish.

September 18, 2000

- Carlo Bongio, Trout Unlimited reported at the FOOSC monthly meeting:
- Another sighting of fish in canyon above El Centro. Appeared to be a wild trout.

October 5, 2000

- Letter written from Robert R. Treanor acknowledges letter. Says it will be retained and brought to the Commission's attention at the Aug. 4, 2001 meeting.

October 11, 2000

- Letter sent to Sergeant Tarnow of the Alameda County Fish and Game Commission about protecting the fish.

November 5, 2000

- Hiker told Anne he saw fish in Sausal Creek underneath Leimert Bridge.

Spring of 2001

- Continued sightings of 2 big fish below El Centro and others in big pools of creek.

Summer of 2001

- Continued sighting of 2 big fish and numerous fingerlings below El Centro. Fingerlings also reported in numerous places along creek.

End of July or Beginning of August 2001

- All fish found within restoration site are moved well upstream and the creek water is routed around restoration site.

October 2001

- Restoration of creek channel is finished, volunteers start to revegetate the slopes around the creek.

Fall and winter of 2001

- Two fish found dead, one with a fish hook and line still attached. Both are bigger than 12 inches.

February 2002

- 13 inch trout is found dead with hook in its mouth in a pool along the creek.

Source: May 2002 Newsletter

March 23, 2002

- The trout found in February was buried under a tree during the Equinox Celebration honoring the creek.

Source: April 2002 Newsletter

April 2002:

- Heather Brashear, a fisheries biologist from the California Department of Fish and Game visits the creek to reassess fishing regulations along the creek.

Source: May 2002 Newsletter

June 2002:

- Sightings of fish three smaller fish below El Centro.

Source: Word of mouth from Charlotte Bell among others

Summer 2003:

- Fishing regulations along Sausal Creek will be reconsidered with Heather Brashear's recommendations from her April 2002 visit.

Source: May 2002 Newsletter

June 1, 2004

At the El Centro pool at least 8 six inch trout hung out in the deepest part of the pool, occasionally darting after each other.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

June 24, 2004

Water main break in Shepherd Canyon raises water level in creek and leaves silt deposits.

July 16, 2004

About 25 trout at El Centro pool

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

October 2004

El Centro pool very filthy, brown, smelly water, bags (possibly sandbags) in pool; garbage strewn across the area.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Kristen Hopper

February 13, 2005

1 dead trout found in creek

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

February 26, 2005

Saw a nine inch trout jump up over a waterfall into the upper pool in the restored meander area

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

April 23, 2005

During Earth Day water quality testing, many small fish – assumed to be trout – were spotted in the pool below the first check dam upstream from El Centro.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Karen Paulsell

October/November 2005

Anne Riley of the Regional Water Quality Control Board arranges meetings between creek activists and EBMUD to urge improvement in their BMPs for managing chloramine entering creeks during water main breaks and other work that could divert treated water into creeks.

January, 2006

A "New Year's Storm" brought heavy, pool-scouring rains, the first such rain in many years.

- Silt and gravel washed downstream in Palo Seco Creek was deposited just above the Joaquin Miller Court trailhead; creek and trail swapped places!

- A landslide near Cortez Court in Shepherd Canyon eroded deposited huge pile of soil onto the fireroad, erosion continues and lots to wash a lot of silt downstream from this site.

February 24, 2006

3 trout seen in El Centro Pool, largest 6"

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Sue Morgan

At least 3 trout spotted in creek near Canon.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Edward Goehring

August, 2006

Reports of fish in deep pool below the Wood Park culvert

Source: Email to Karen Paulsell from Faith Harris

One large trout in the deep pool under the Leimert Bridge – estimated size 9 inches

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

December 6, 2006

Saw a small trout in the upper watershed in Palo Seco creek, first one since the heavy rains of last winter.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

March 11, 2007

Barry Place: "I have not seen more trout in ten years than I did today. There were pairs looking like they were spawning in the shallows, then a couple more came up the creek to join them or escape us."

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

May 9, 2007

On Wed. I spotted a trout fingerling in a stretch of creek near the turn-around area on the El Centro trail, and 2 adults were in the El Centro pool and 3 adults under the Leimert Bridge. Earlier in the spring, 3 medium-sized were seen above Highway 13, and on in late winter, over 8 were seen in the lower watershed at Barry Place.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Mark Rauzon

February 7, 2008

11 dead trout found in El Centro Pool; the kill was evidently caused by a dumping of a painting solvent into the gutter on Oakmore Ave. that drains into Sausal Creek at the turnaround area.

Source: Emails to FOSC listserv from Kathren Murrell Stevenson and Mark Rauzon

July (?) 2009

Electrofishing training recovers 33 trout in Sausal Creek between El Centro and Leimert.

Source: Email to FOSC listserv from Jill Sunahara, 8/18/2009

November, 2009

Sheelah Weaver reports 2 trout seen at Barry Place