

# MEMORANDUM

# State of Alaska

TO: Art Schmidt  
Sport Fish  
Sitka  
Dept. of Fish and Game

DATE: June 13, 1975

FILE NO:

TELEPHONE NO:

FROM: Donald L. Siedelman *LS*  
Sport Fish *21<sup>th</sup> Dept*  
Ketchikan  
Dept. of Fish and Game

SUBJECT: Wilson River Foot Survey, April 25, 1975

What can one say about a trip that was a little discouraging from the sport anglers view point. Hook and line sampling with eggs produced no fish. No adult fish were observed but salmonid fry were seen about half way down from starting point.

Steelhead may have been in the lower river, but I didn't get down stream to them if they were there. Did sample some good pool and riffle areas.

Rumors have it that steelhead spawn in the Wilson River but no positive results to this date.

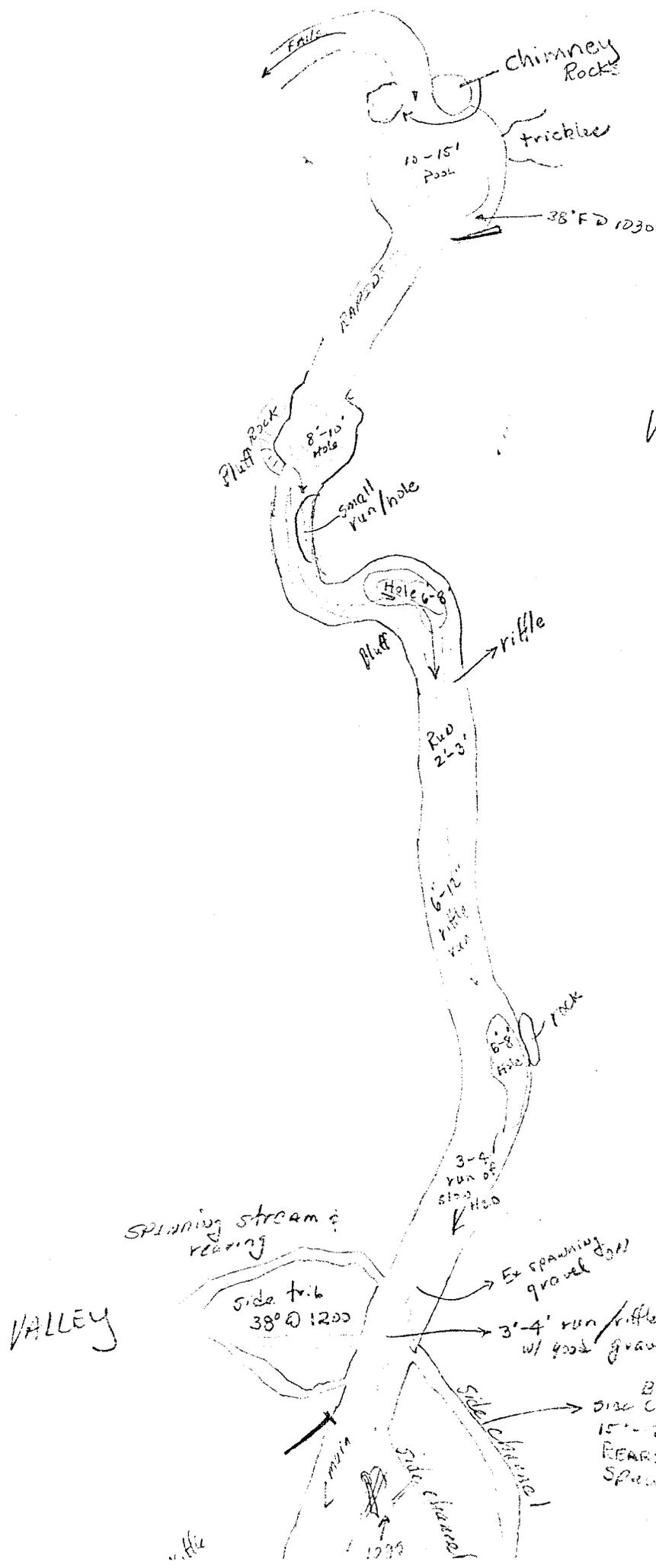
Commercial Fish (Paul Novak) were surveying this stream and the Blossom River. They did observe one 18" cutthroat trout in the area above the falls on the Wilson. It was a male that would have spawned this spring.

Several seals were working the lower river over between the Blossom and into tide water.

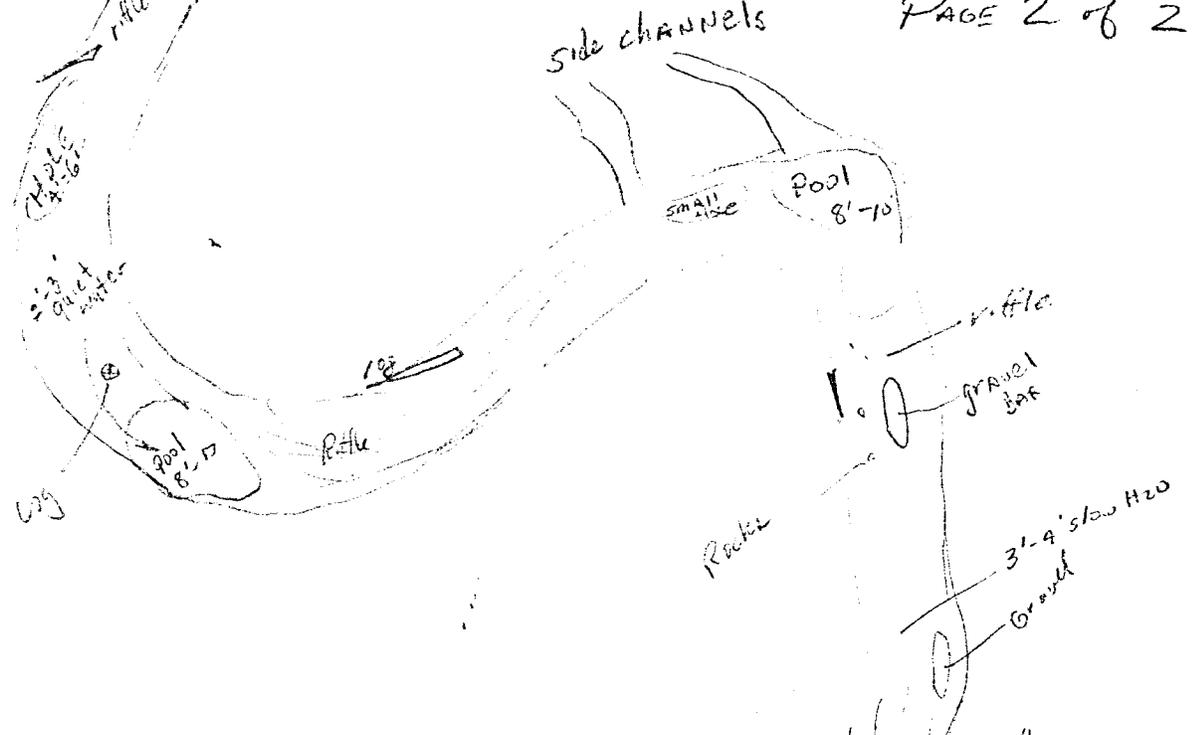
Stream conditions were not all that bad even though there was snow 3' - 4' deep on the banks.

Other trout and char were not in the stream during this time period. Reports have it that rainbow trout are in the stream.

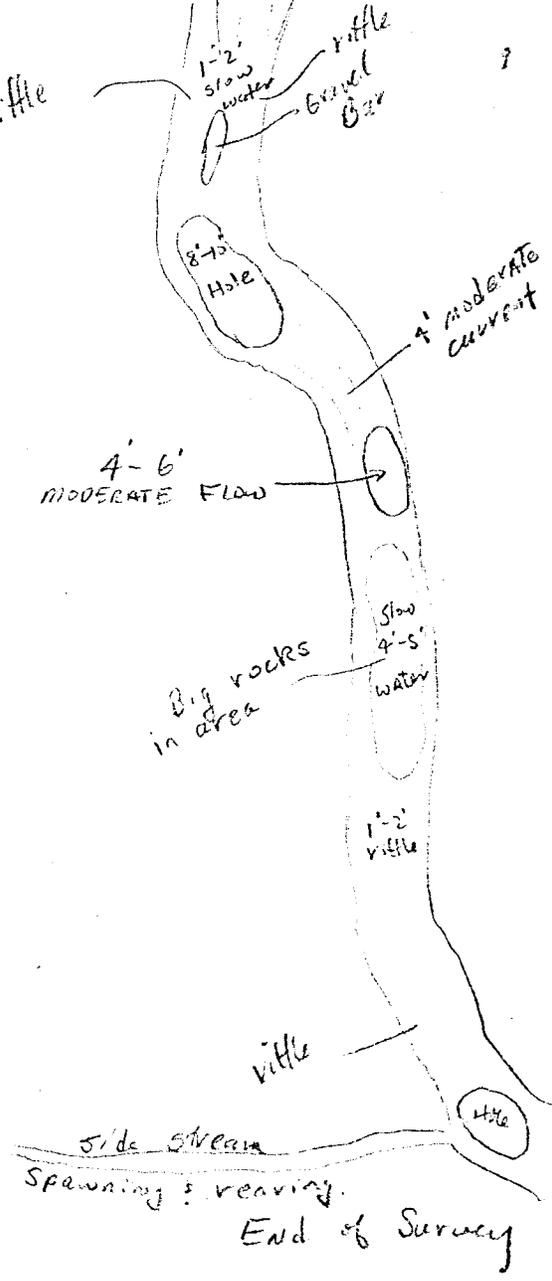
CC: Jones  
Armstrong  
Novak



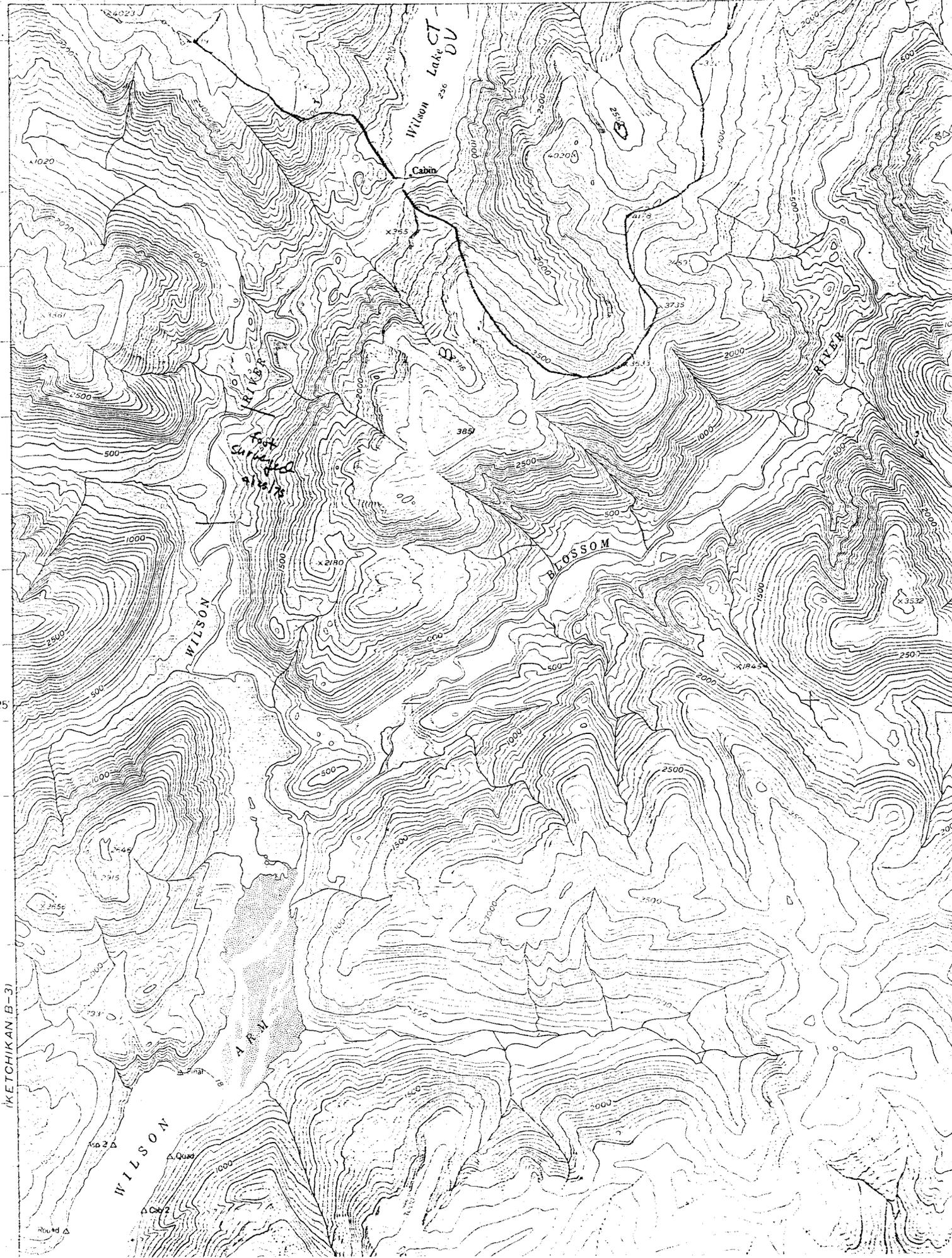
WILSON RIVER  
 for Survey  
 4-25-75  
 By D.C. Siedelman



WILSON RIVER  
 FOOT SURVEY  
 4-25-75  
 By D.L. STEOELMAN



*Wilson Lake CT  
DU  
Fok*



ATCHIKAN, BEHM CANAL, SMEATON BAY, WILSON ARM, head, main fork (West)

MAJOR SPECIES Pink

OTHER SPECIES Chum, coho, king, trout

ESCAPEMENT TIMING Early. July-Aug.-Sep.

ESCAPEMENT MAGNITUDE >100,000

SPAWNING FACILITIES Excellent and extensive. This is one of the most productive salmon streams in Southwestern Alaska. Past records indicate that escapements greater than one-half million occur during good years. The spawning areas extend from the half tide point to a barrier falls 5.5 miles up the W. fork and over 10 miles to the E. fork (K 34-1).

STREAM TEMPERATURES Normal range. Observed ranges: 52.5°F., 9/24/47; 48°F.-56°F., 1949; 50°-56°F., 1950; 50°-57°F., 1951; 48°-58°F., 1952; 50°-57°F., 1953.

VALLEY DESCRIPTION Stream cut glacial. Broad lower valley floor, well timbered. Cross-bedded area beginning 1.5 miles upstream and above forms two falls. Wilson Lake, 8 miles upstream, is 5 miles long, 1,100 acres at 150 foot elevation. The glacial valley extends beyond the lake an additional 5-6 miles with steep rock sides. A number of cirques and hanging valleys throughout.

WATER RESOURCES 110-150 square miles. Lake fed with snowfields and several small glaciers in the upper drainage. A number of tributaries drain small snowfields and lakes throughout the system. Several small beaver pond areas are in the lower valley. The water is clear except during flood levels.

STREAM MOUTH IDENTIFICATION 2 miles of delta with extensive grass flats at the head of Wilson Arm. River enters Wilson Arm along W. shore.

ANCHORAGE Daylight anchorage just off W. shore at drop-off. This is inside point 2 miles from the timber at the head of the grass flats. Overnight anchorage off opposite shore near bedrock beach.

TRAILS AND SURVEY ROUTES Best surveyed by river skiff which may be taken to area below first falls (about 4.5 miles). High tides reach to the forks and other types of skiffs may be taken that far with ease. Foot survey is practical only in the lower stream since crossing the river is usually difficult on foot except on low water levels.

GENERAL SURVEY NOTES Excellent visibility on most water levels and light conditions. The broad valley allows good maneuverability for most planes. Pass to Rudyerd Bay, S. Arm, over Big Goat Lake, at about 1,000' above W. side of Wilson Lake.

INTERTIDAL ZONE

LENGTH 2 miles

AVERAGE WIDTH/DEPTH 100-150'/2-4'

SLOPE AND VELOCITIES Less than 1° at 2-3' per second

FLOOR Silt, sand, gravel in the upper area.

SPAWNING LOCATION Just inside anchorage point, some snags visible.

SCHOOLING LOCATION At the confluence of the E. fork with the main stream. Extreme tides go beyond, backing water up both streams for some distance.

SCHOOLING AREAS Two large, deep holes with the major one being the lower hole opposite the logged area on the E. bank. The hole just below high tide is too deep for visibility, but contains large numbers during the season of migration upstream.

SPAWNING AREAS A limited spawning area lies below the hole opposite the logged area on the riffles of the main stream and the top of the small branch. Heavy spawning occurs on the riffles at the forks.

GENERAL NOTES Though the two primary spawning areas may contain substantial numbers of spawning salmon, they are not considered as important in comparison with the upstream spawning. In recent years of reduced abundance, most of the spawning occurs upstream.

UPSTREAM

LENGTH ACCESSIBLE 5 miles

AVERAGE WIDTH/DEPTH 70-100'/2-4'

SLOPE AND VELOCITIES 1° at 1-3' per second

FLOOR Gravel 1-4" in diameter, some sand.

SPAWNING DISTANCE 2 miles.

SPAWNING IDENTIFICATION Bend Creek (K 34-2) entering river from W. valley at sharp bend eastward (120°). Impossible falls 5 miles upstream. A second falls 2 miles further upstream is also impassable (32°).

SPAWNING AREAS E. Fork of the Wilson River (K 34-1) at its confluence at the high tide mark. Bend Creek (K 34-2) offers good spawning facilities in the lower stream. Fourmile Creek (K 34-3) entering from the north offers good spawning facilities in the lower stream.

SCHOOLING AREAS 1. Sev. hundred yards above high tide in a long pool. 2. 1 mile upstream in deep holes on the hill. 3. 1.3 miles upstream in a long pool opposite an area of numerous dead trees. 4. The long pool 1.5 miles long just below Bend Creek (K34-2) at the marker.

SPAWNING AREAS Heavy spawning in between all schooling areas. Greatest density observed around high tide mark. Good spawning facilities as far as log jam and above the riffles below schooling area 4. Heaviest spawning observed above marker on riffles at Fourmile Creek.

GENERAL NOTES A trail, beginning at the forks, was once used to reach Wilson Lake.