

August 28, 1973

102-70-58

## RECREATIONAL SURVEY OF THORNE RIVER

### Accessibility to the Area

Thorne Bay can be reached by boat from areas outside Prince of Wales, approximately 45 miles northwest of Ketchikan, with docking facilities available at the town of Thorne Bay.

Presently the Staney Creek road is closed to the public. This road passes within proximity or adjacent to Thorne River from the mouth to about 6 miles upstream. When open to the public, Thorne River may be reached from both Klawock and Thorne Bay communities via Big Salt and Staney Creek roads.

Charter flights may be made from Ketchikan to Thorne River.

### Fishability of the Area

This river can be readily fished from the banks from the mouth to the confluence of Goose Creek. Much of this part of the river has deep water in proximity of gravel bars or rock points, which makes either fly fishing or spin casting easy. Throughout this sector of the stream, the bank foliage is not restricting of ones ability to fish. The understory here is light. An exceptionally good pool exists at the entrance of Falls Creek to Thorne River. In this portion of the stream few, if any, good crossing spots exist. At low water periods, fording may be possible at the confluence of Gravelly Creek.

Above the confluence of Goose Creek shallow areas for wading increase but are still very limited. In the 2 1/2 mile section surveyed above Goose Creek the fishing potential from the banks decreases. The river here contains areas of lily pads,

and weed growth was abundant along the banks.

Game trails and a light undergrowth make for excellent walking from the mouth to the confluence of Falls Creek. Above Falls Creek the road parallels the stream, often with foot trails leading to the pools.

#### Present Use

Sport fishing on the Thorne River is primarily limited to weekend use by the Thorne Bay logging community. Their access by private vehicle to the river is prohibited above the Staney Creek road bridge. With the advent of Staney Creek road opening to the public, fishing pressure will increase.

Presently the only facilities in the area is a Forest Service picnic area campground, approximately 4 mile Staney Creek road. This facility has been vandalized with little indication of upkeep by the evidence of litter.

#### Sport Fishery

Sport fish present in Thorne River: red, silver, pink, dog salmon, cutthroat, rainbow trout, steelhead, and Dolly Varden. At the time of our survey pink salmon were witnessed in creeks entering Thorne River. August 16-18. Through personnel talk with U.S.F.S. Fred Zeigler, we were told that the silver salmon start their run about the 15th of August. Silver salmon were observed in pools approximately two miles above the entrance of Goose Creek. (August 18)

Potential of Area

All of the section of Thorne River surveyed appears navigable by canoe. The current is not restricting or formidable even to the novice. Above Goose Creek shallow waters occasionally will have to be waded depending on present water levels.