

MINOR TRIBUTARIES FROM THE WEST
BETWEEN SCAPPOOSE BAY AND THE MCKENZIE RIVER

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INTRODUCTION

The minor tributaries discussed in this section of the report enter the Willamette River from the west and all are small. These streams are shown as adjacent tributaries on maps of the major river systems entering the Willamette River from the west which are included in reports of Scappoose and Rickreall Creeks, and the Tualatin, Yamhill, Luckiamute, Marys, and Long Tom Rivers. Silver salmon and cutthroat trout utilize some of the small tributaries to Multnomah Channel and warm water fish are found in most of them.

Location and General Characteristics

Minor tributaries within this section may be divided into two groups: (1) streams tributary to Multnomah Channel and (2) streams tributary to the Willamette River above Portland. A list of these streams and their lengths is provided in APPENDIX A.

The tributaries of Multnomah Channel are mostly small streams of slight to moderate gradient in the narrow region below U. S. Highway 30, and the areas of increasingly steep gradient above. Most of the Multnomah Channel tributaries are blocked by U. S. Highway 30 culverts a short distance above their mouths.

Tributaries between Multnomah Channel and the McKenzie River are generally lowland streams of slight gradient although there are a few significant tributaries of moderate gradient between Multnomah Channel and the Tualatin River.

Stream Surveys - Dates and Areas

Surveys were made in the period 1951-59, and were limited to two tributaries of Multnomah Channel, Harris and Rocky Point Creeks, and three tributaries of the Willamette main stem, Chehalem, Glenn, and Ash Creeks.

Most of the remaining Willamette tributaries are minor streams, probably of little or no importance to anadromous fish at present.

Survey Data

Harris Creek: This stream is about 1 mile in length, and enters Multnomah Channel 12.5 miles above its mouth. The stream has a steep gradient, except for the lower 0.2 mile between the mouth and Highway 30. The lower 0.2 mile of Harris Creek was inspected on December 7, 1951. There is excellent spawning gravel in the 0.1 mile section between the railroad trestle and Highway 30. Eight adult silver salmon were observed in this 0.1 mile section on the day it was surveyed in 1951. Mr. Harris, a landowner near this stream, stated that he had observed silver salmon since the fall of 1956, and has counted up to 45 adult silver salmon on his property at one time. The stream becomes nearly dry in the summer. The flow was estimated to be 7 c.f.s. and the water temperature was 41°F. on December 7, 1951.

Rocky Point Creek: This stream is 3 miles long and enters Multnomah Channel 15.5 miles above the mouth. The stream below Highway 30 for the first mile is mostly moderate in gradient and the upper section is quite steep. Several hundred feet of the stream, above and below Highway 30, were examined on August 14, 1952. On this date, the flow was estimated to be 1.5 c.f.s. and the water temperature was 62°F. The highway culvert under Route 30 may be an obstruction to upstream migrants. The culvert is about 110 feet long and has two compartments, each about 7.5 feet wide and 5 feet high. The gradient was estimated to be 4 per cent. No salmonids were observed at the time the survey was made. A local resident stated

steelhead and silvers have been known to enter the stream, but they were restricted to the lower section below the highway bridge. Spawning area available above the highway culvert was not determined.

Chehalem Creek: Chehalem Creek enters the Willamette River 50 miles above its mouth. The stream is 8 miles long and has a slight gradient throughout. The stream was spot checked 4 miles above the mouth at the Highway 240 bridge near Newberg on August 14, 1959. The bottom consisted primarily of bedrock, boulders, and silt, and the stream was dry except for isolated pools of standing water.

Glenn Creek: Glenn Creek enters the Willamette River at Salem 82 miles above the mouth. The stream is 6 miles long and flows through flat farmlands in the Willamette Valley. On August 28, 1959, the lower 0.5 mile of the stream was surveyed and an additional 2 miles above this point was spot checked. The stream has a slight gradient with a bottom composition consisting entirely of mud and clay. The streambed was completely dry at the time the survey was made. A 3-acre pond (Towery Pond) is located on a tributary to Glenn Creek 0.5 mile above its mouth. This pond was stocked with 4,600 silver salmon fry by the OFC in April 1957 in connection with the impoundment-rearing program. Glenn Creek, except for the pond, is apparently of no value to anadromous fish.

Ash Creek: Ash Creek enters the Willamette River at Independence 97 miles above its confluence with the Columbia River. Ash Creek is composed of three major forks and is 23 miles in length. The entire stream lies within flat farmland. Most of the stream has been surveyed in recent years. The bottom is composed entirely of mud and clay. In past years the stream has gone dry in the summer except for the discharge of the Monmouth Sewage Plant. This discharge has been rerouted and now flows directly into the Willamette River at Independence.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

U. S. Highway 30 culverts are located on several small streams entering Multnomah Channel and should be investigated to determine if salmon and trout are blocked. A few of the west-side tributaries, Tryon, Newland, Corral, and Hess Creeks, which enter the Willamette River below the Yamhill River may have some potential value to anadromous fish and should be inspected.