

Summers, Jodene; Kin Daily. *Willamette river bass diet study, spring 2000* . Portland, Or.: Fish Division, Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, 2001. (Reviewed by Charles Bosse)

Large and small mouth bass are non-native species introduced to the Willamette River, in 1888 and 1923 respectively. Recently, with the declaration of spring Chinook and winter steelhead as threatened, it has been suggested that bass may be threatening the salmon population by consuming fingerlings, and regulations on fishing limits for large and small mouth bass have come under consideration. Bass fishermen oppose the raise in fishing limits if it is unnecessary to protect a native species, as raising the limits will lower the number of bass in the stream, and in the long run deplete them as a game source. This study takes a look at the stomach contents of bass caught over a large portion of the Willamette (map included). The report provides a data from amounts of fish caught in various areas, to stomach contents by mass and by counted number per type of animal. Samples of the stomach contents provide a picture of the preferred diet of the bass, and also of what food is most available in the river. The information contained in this report denies the likelihood that these particular non-native species are threatening the native salmon population significantly.

Critique

This report is part of a larger collection of Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife reports published between 2001 and 2004. This one is particularly of interest because it addresses some very broad issues in a very focused way.

This report provides a good look at how particular biological subjects can be involved in political debates. The report is accessible to most readers, regardless of a background in biology, and it covers a lot of the standard issues involved in non-native and invasive species debates, and some of the complications that administrating offices face in collecting and providing good information about fish and game. It also has a good bibliography and contains fairly recent data. On the downside, the report is fairly short, a little over ten pages, and is not conclusive, since the number of tagged fish re-caught was insufficient to calculate a population sample from. The introductions and conclusions are clearly written and informative however, and as a resource to better understand the concerns that surround regulations in Fish and Game management, and how the government deals with these issues, this is a good, non-biased source of information.

Looking through this report would also be valid for anyone who wanted to understand how the Oregon Department of Fish and Game accumulates and stores data. The report is has a number of maps and charts displaying the data collected.

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