

PROGRESS REPORT - November 1987

Fish Management Plan - Lookout Point Reservoir

- Management plan adopted by the Commission 1981

- The management objective is not being met. Kokanee were stocked but did not generate a good fishery. Embayment rearing of spring chinook fingerling is not being pursued until further information is known about the status of the Oregon chub Hybopsis crameri.

L2-20/j

adopted 1981

FISH MANAGEMENT PLAN

LOOKOUT POINT RESERVOIR

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

Fish Division

November 1981

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LOOKOUT POINT RESERVOIR

INTRODUCTION

Lookout Point Reservoir is located at RM 21.3 on the Middle Fork Willamette River (Fig. 1), and is one of 13 Corps of Engineers multi-purpose water projects in the Willamette Valley. The reservoir was filled with water and stocked with trout in 1954.

Due to large populations of suckers and squawfish, the Department has not had a management program at Lookout Point Reservoir since the early 1960's.

In July 1981, the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission accepted the Department's recommendation to experimentally stock kokanee fingerlings for up to a 4-year cycle; to evaluate their growth, contribution to the fishery, and reproduction. The Commission did not authorize an experimental stocking of the white bass X striped bass hybrid as recommended by the Department staff. Instead, the Commission directed staff to obtain more information on the possible consequences of using the hybrid bass in Lookout Point Reservoir.

HABITAT

Surface area of the reservoir fluctuates from 4,255 acres at full pool to 2,090 acres at minimum pool (101 foot drawdown). Maximum water depth is 246 feet. The reservoir is drawn down by December 1 for flood control and is refilled by the following mid-May.

Lookout Point is frequently turbid from shoreline wave action and sloughing as well as from clay particles coming downstream from Hills Creek Reservoir. The annual drawdown severely curtails fish food and fish production. Aquatic vegetation is sparse.

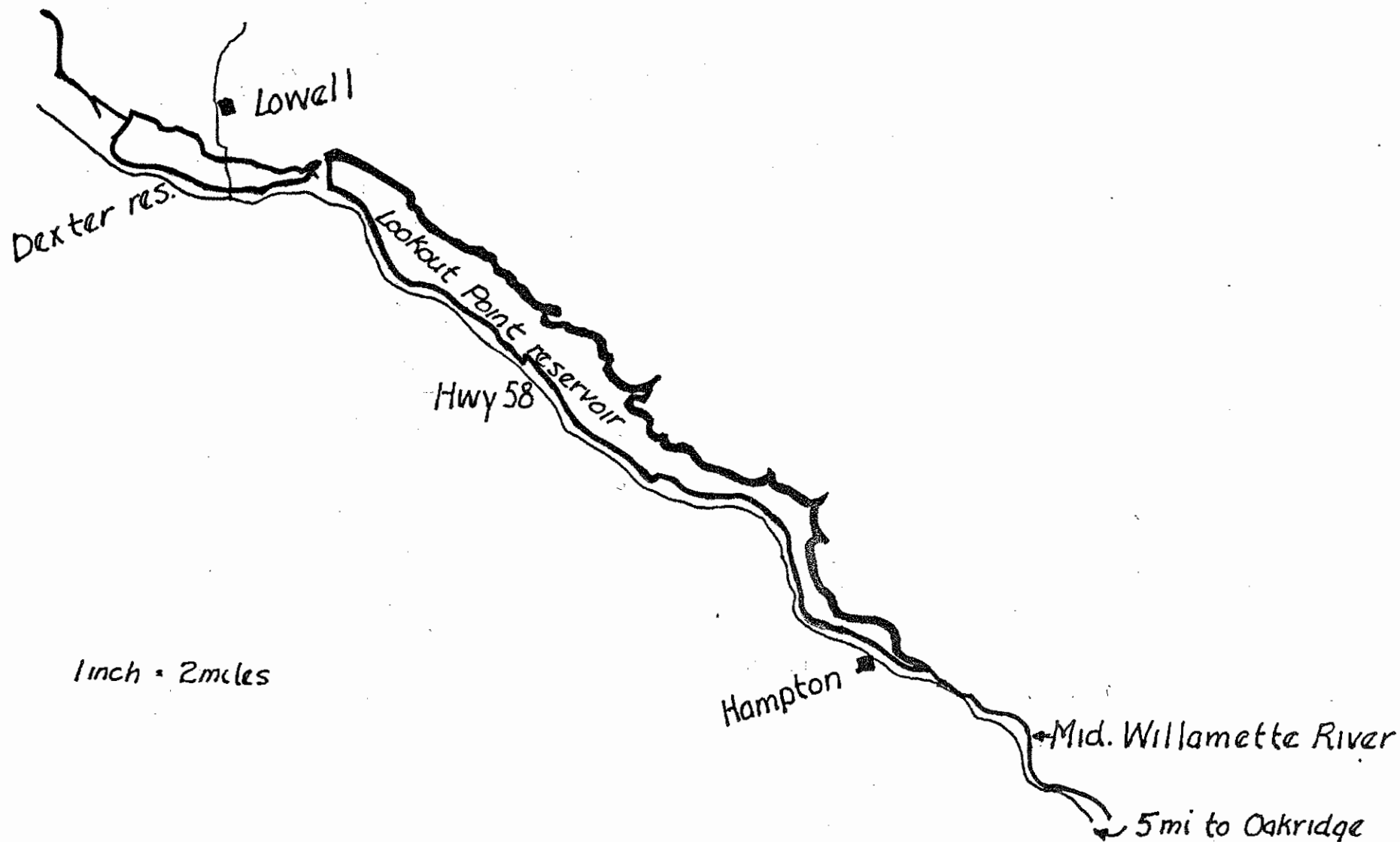
FISH POPULATIONS

The reservoir was initially stocked in 1954, with legal and fingerling rainbow trout. By 1955, inventory nets were taking large numbers of suckers and squawfish. Brown bullheads were first found in 1960. Trout stocking was discontinued in 1960 because of poor survival. Since that time, various numbers and species of game fish have been stocked but not as a part of any management program.

At present, the reservoir contains a few trout and chinook salmon, and large numbers of suckers, squawfish, shiners, and brown bullheads. Further, it is likely that crappies will eventually move downstream out of Hills Creek Reservoir, located above Lookout Point.



Fig. 1. Area map
Lookout Point Reservoir



FISHERY

After completion in 1954, the reservoir provided good trout angling for 3 years. Thereafter, catches began to drop and relatively few anglers have fished the reservoir since 1961. We estimate current use at less than 2,000 angler days per year.

The reservoir is open to angling year-round, and statewide regulations apply.

DISCUSSION

Lookout Point is a large reservoir located near a heavily populated portion of the state. Its lack of a fishery constitutes a serious loss to the angling public. Further, there has not been any replacement for stream fishing values lost due to impoundment of this reach of the Middle Willamette River.

There are two major fish management problems at Lookout Point Reservoir:

(1) high numbers of roughfish, and (2) curtailed food production due to drawdown.

- (1) Rough fish outcompete and feed on game fish, resulting in poor game fish survival. The area above Lookout Point Dam was chemically treated before impounding, but the benefits were short-lived. It is not economically feasible to chemically treat the reservoir as frequently as needed to maintain good fishing since it is unlikely that rough fish could be completely eradicated. Therefore, benefits from chemical treatment would be short term at high expense.

To date, we have not used kokanee in Lookout Point Reservoir. Kokanee are plankton feeders and this food source is moderately abundant in the reservoir. Also, kokanee inhabit midwater areas of lakes and reservoirs and might be able to avoid predation by squawfish.

A second possibility to improve fishing in standing waters that are too large for effective chemical control of rough fish is to stock predators that will feed on the undesirable species. Since the Willamette downstream of Lookout Point Reservoir is an important producer of salmon and steelhead, we would not want to use predators that might move downstream and reproduce in the river. This would pose too great a hazard to juvenile salmonids. The introductions of walleye, striped bass, and other large predators that can reproduce would not be appropriate for use in Lookout Point Reservoir. However, fish workers in other states have recently developed sterile hybrid predator fish which utilize rough fish as forage and provide good angling. These include the white bass x striped bass hybrid and the tiger muskellunge (muskellunge x northern pike hybrid). The bass hybrid is considered a pelagic feeder and appears to have better potential for use in a large deep reservoir than the tiger musky which frequents shallow weedy areas.

- (2) Annual drawdown curtails fish food production and restricts angler access to the reservoir. Curtailing of access is not a major item, but would be if a viable sport fishery were developed.

The drawdown problem cannot be corrected because the primary authorization of the reservoir was for flood control, navigation, irrigation, and power generation. If a sport fishery is developed, efforts must be made to improve angler access during drawdown and at low reservoir levels.

OBJECTIVE

1. Develop a fishery by stocking game fish species which can survive in spite of the presence of rough fish.
 - (a) Experimentally stock kokanee fingerlings for up to a 4-year cycle; evaluate growth, contribution, and reproduction.