

## **Fish Distribution Survey Response**

*--By Jennifer Lloyd*

Since March 2001, the Natural Resources Information Management Program (NRIMP) has been surveying Internet users who download spatial fish distribution data from the **Fish Distribution/Habitat Information** page, <http://osu.orst.edu/dept/nrimp/information/fishdistdata.htm> (formerly **GIS@ODFW**). Fish distribution data are currently available for spring and fall chinook, summer and winter steelhead, chum, coho, and some coastal cutthroat, at both the 1:100,000 and 1:24,000 scales. The optional survey was initiated to identify how the distribution data are being used and to solicit feedback on what ODFW could improve to meet user's needs. Additionally, the survey enabled us to create a list of users who wish to be notified via email when updates are made to the fish distribution data.

Approximately 26 surveys have been completed, though this number reflects only a small portion of the overall user base. Our FTP site download logs indicate approximately 40-60 users download the distribution data within any three-month period. The survey shows a variety of user groups including students, conservation groups, consultants, and federal natural resource agencies. Six students have used the data in conjunction with classroom projects. Five resource professionals indicated that they use the data for conservation planning, species surveys, and site selection/prioritization. Four respondents use the data for Endangered Species Act related purposes, and the other respondents reported that they use fish distribution data for watershed/environmental analyses (3), Goal 5 and Title 3 purposes (3), display and spatial analysis (2), to determine non-commercial harvest locations (2), and biological assessment (1).

Survey respondents have provided many valuable suggestions for making improvements to the fish distribution data, such as incorporating species origin (hatchery vs. native) information and also providing specific update dates for individual distribution records. Additionally, interest has been expressed for information that indicates the timing of spawning, emergence, migration, and other life-stage activities. Where possible, we have modified some of our data structures and content in response to user's needs. We have incorporated a "date last updated" field to better track changes to the data and are in the process of incorporating species origin information.

Timing data are being developed as part of the 1:24K Fish Habitat Distribution Development Project (<http://osu.orst.edu/dept/nrimp/24k/index.htm>) and will ultimately be linked with distribution.

Several users have commended NRIMP on its development of Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) standardized metadata, which thoroughly explains all of the steps used to generate the electronic fish distribution data. The metadata also include extensive descriptions of data fields, dates, contact information, and guidelines on limitations of the data.

Visit the NRIMP home page (<http://osu.orst.edu/dept/nrimp/index.htm>) to find out more about the Natural Resources Information Management Program.

Figure: Sample of 1:100,000 scale fish distribution data displayed by the USETYPE attribute SPAWNING & REARING. The data are available on-line as GIS coverages (<http://osu.orst.edu/dept/nrimp/information/fishdistdata.htm>), but may also be obtained in spreadsheet format from Jennifer Lloyd, 541-757-4186 ext. 236.

