

Klamath Steelhead

Existing Populations

This SMU historically consisted of two populations in the Klamath basin upstream of the Oregon/California border. The Klamath Mountains Province ESU, of which the Klamath Steelhead SMU is a part, was determined to be “not warranted” for listing under the Endangered Species Act in 2001. Construction of a series of three dams without passage between 1918 and 1962 effectively extirpated the Klamath Lake tributary population. A second population may exist in Upper Cottonwood Creek, a tributary to the Klamath below Iron Gate Dam. No data are available to assess the current status of this population. Electrofishing surveys in Cottonwood Creek, Cow Creek, and Long John Creek yielded *O. mykiss*, but no adult size trout suggesting these may have been juvenile steelhead (pers. comm., Dennis Maria, CDFG - Yreka, 6/15/04). Additionally, a potential steelhead redd was observed in Cottonwood Creek by ODFW in 2003. The SMU fails the distribution criterion because access to a substantial portion of the historical habitat was eliminated by the Copco dams and Iron Gate Dam. The near-term sustainability of the SMU is at risk because of the loss of one of the two populations, loss of substantial habitat for the other population, and indications from anecdotal information that the population is depressed.

Table 136. Population list and existence status for Klamath Steelhead SMU.

Exist	Population	Description
No	Klamath Lake	Klamath Lake tributaries.
Yes	Upper Klamath	Upper Klamath River tributaries within Oregon, primarily Cottonwood Creek.

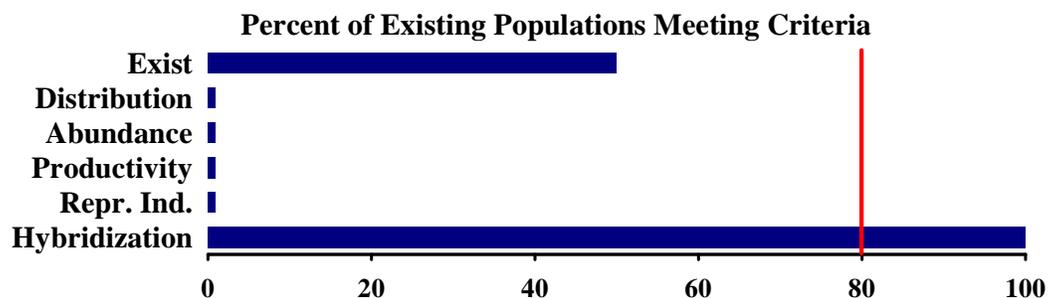
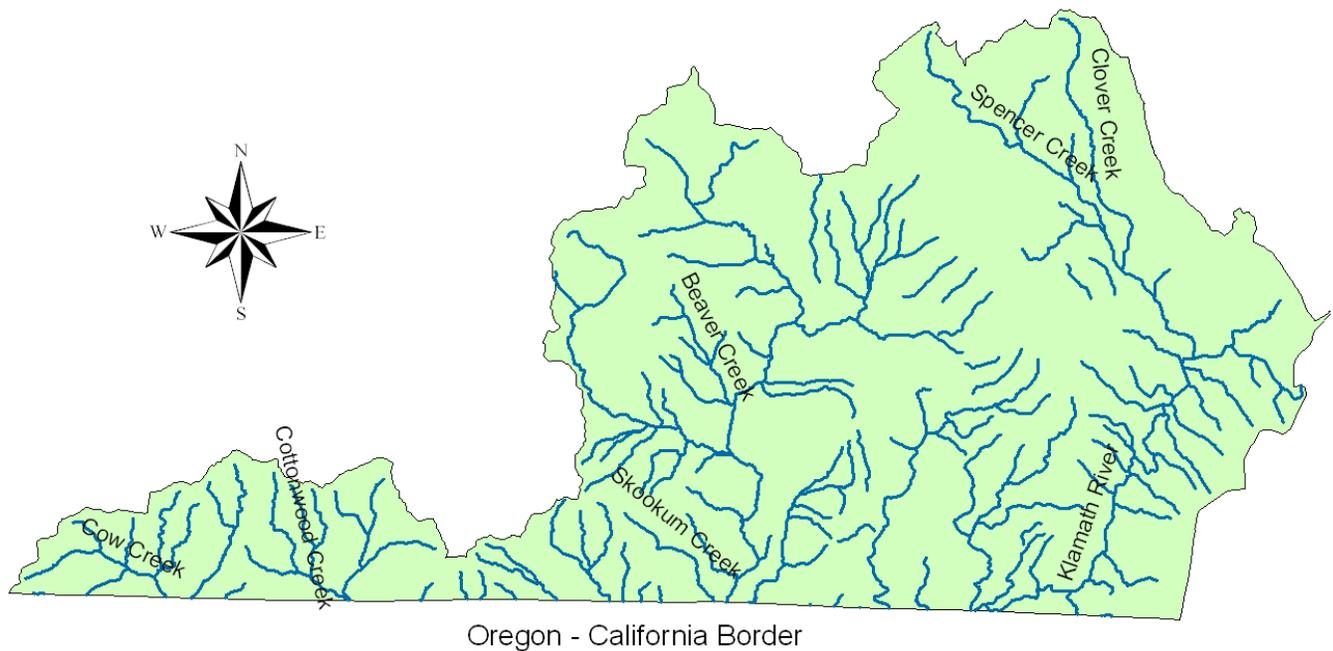


Figure 31. Assessment outcome for each of the six interim criteria with respect to the 80% threshold identified by the NFCP.

Upper Klamath – Klamath Steelhead

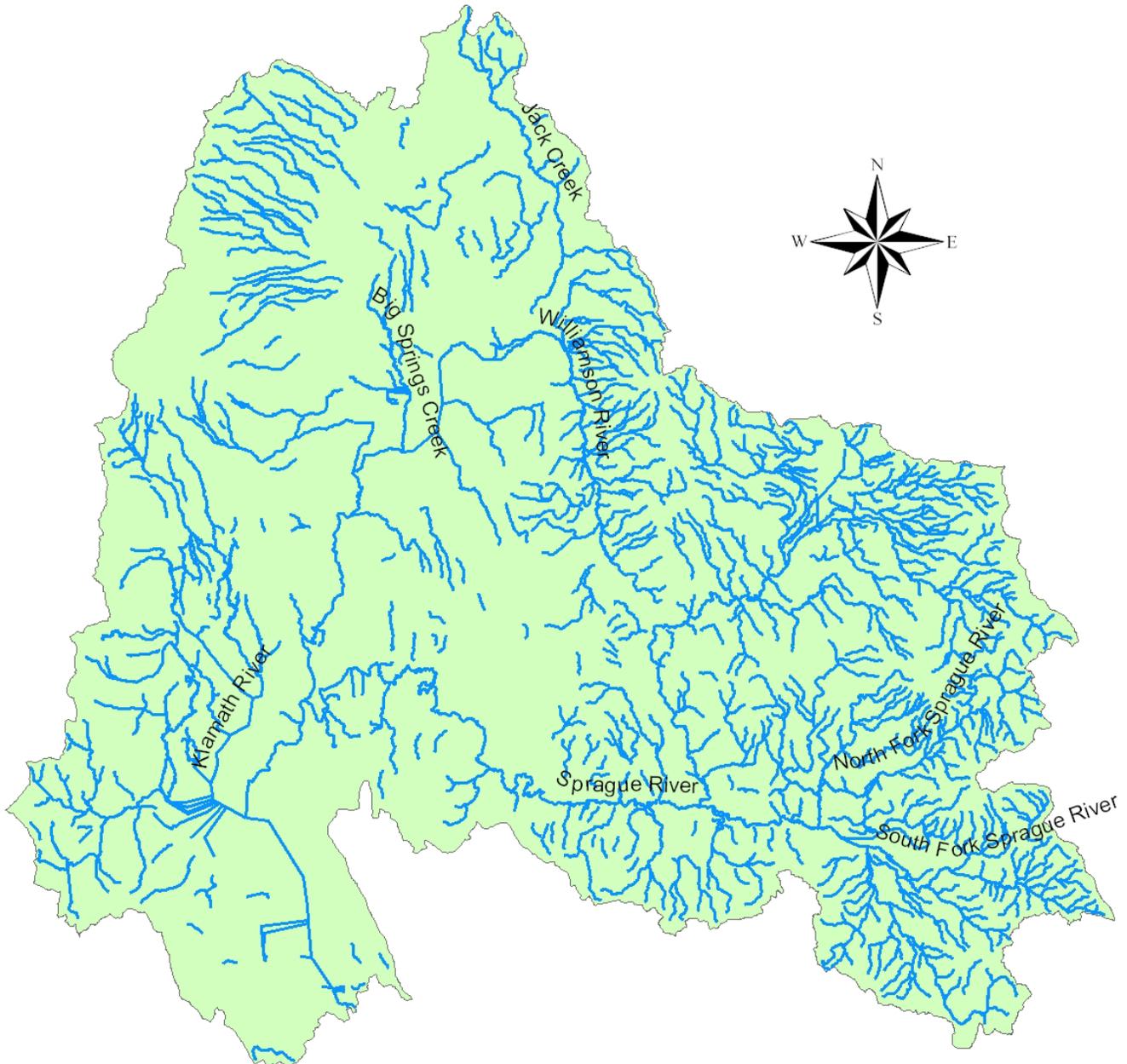


No data were available to assess the status of the Upper Klamath steelhead population. Access to much of the basin was eliminated in 1918 with the installation of Copco 1 Dam. In 1925, Copco 2 Dam was built just a quarter-mile downstream of the original dam. Iron Gate Dam, built in 1962, eliminated another seven miles of habitat downstream of the previous two dams. This series of dams has effectively extirpated steelhead upstream of Iron Gate Dam, 20 miles upstream of Yreka, California. Some habitat in the Klamath within Oregon remains in Cow and Cottonwood creeks, tributaries to the Klamath River downstream of Iron Gate Dam. Juvenile steelhead have been observed in lower Cottonwood Creek during coho surveys by the California Department of Fish in Game, but little else is known. The SMU fails the distribution criterion because access to a substantial portion of the historical habitat was eliminated by the Copco dams and Iron Gate Dam. Abundance productivity, and independence were presumed failed based on precautionary application of the interim criteria which treats inconclusive data as a failure in assessment of risks to the SMU.

Assessment Outcome

Existence	Distribution	Abundance	Productivity	Independence	Hybridization
<i>Pass</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Fail</i>	<i>Pass</i>

Klamath Lake – Klamath Steelhead



The Klamath Lake steelhead population is extinct. Access to the basin was eliminated in 1918 with the installation of Copco 1 Dam. In 1925, Copco 2 Dam was built just a quarter-mile downstream of the original dam. Iron Gate Dam, built in 1962, eliminated another seven miles of habitat downstream of the previous two dams. This series of dams has effectively extirpated steelhead upstream of Iron Gate Dam, 20 miles upstream of Yreka, California. Historical distribution within the basin is relatively unknown.

Assessment Outcome

Existence	Distribution	Abundance	Productivity	Independence	Hybridization
<i>Fail</i>	--	--	--	--	--