



## Observations of spawning fall chinook in the former impoundment at Savage Rapids Dam 2012

For the third consecutive year, ODFW surveyed chinook salmon redds in the former impoundment at Savage Rapids Dam. In 2012, as in 2011, the count was conducted by two biologists surveying downstream in a drift boat. One biologist operated the boat while the other served as the primary observer. In 2010 the first two surveys were conducted downstream with a drift boat and the third survey was conducted upstream with a jet boat. The objective is to identify an approximate peak count during the spawning season. Because of the difficulty in surveying the entire river, counts should be considered a minimum count.

Reach one at Savage Rapids surveys the length of the summer pool, when the reservoir was set up for the irrigation season. This reach extends from just below Evans Creek to just below Savage Creek (Start = 485304E 4697854N, End= 481844E 4696381N). Reach two is the winter pool at Savage Rapids, the area where water was impounded all year. This reach extends from just below Savage Creek downstream to the old dam site.

Three surveys were conducted between late October and mid-November 2012. The peak count was 195 redds observed on November 7<sup>th</sup>. The peak count in 2011 was 104 redds on November 4<sup>th</sup>. The peak count in 2010 was 91 redds observed on both October 29<sup>th</sup> and November 5<sup>th</sup>.

In 2012, surveyors found many more redds on the north bank of the Rogue within the summer pool reach compared to past years. The river has eroded large sections of a gravel bar providing more spawning habitat for fall Chinook. Within the winter pool reach, the down-cutting of the river observed in 2011 was even more apparent in 2012. Cobbles are the predominant substrate in this section and minimal spawning was observed from Savage Creek to the old dam site. Redd counts have decreased from a high of 25 redds in 2010, to low of 7 redds observed in 2012.

Aerial photograph of chinook redds (visible as oval patches of clean gravel) approx. three miles above dam site



