

Upper Ohau River 'Spring-Season' 2019 Creel Survey

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Background

Prior to the construction of the Ohau chain of power stations, associated structures and waterways in the 1970's and 1980's, the Ohau River sustained an internationally renowned trout fishery with a natural flow regime. Earnest attempts were made to restore the river fishery in the newly severed upper section between Lakes Ohau and Ruataniwha post power scheme construction. The power company of the time worked with fishery experts to identify the required flows for trout spawning and rearing and for providing trout fishing conditions. Seasonal residual flows of between 12m³/s & 8m³/s were restored in 1993. The restored flows were significantly reduced from natural flows yet were predicted to maintain optimal trout fishery habitat.

The fishery did not re-establish to the expectation of fishery managers and anglers. Monitoring of flow restoration and fishery dynamics has shown the fishery to be depressed. A reduction in high flow events and the presence of silt, periphyton and didymo does not provide a food source that sustains a trout population befitting the river.

The river is valued as a component of the greater upper Waitaki fishery but significantly underperforms as a summer angling destination, holding only low numbers of adult fish and nuisance levels of didymo. The upper river's recent value is associated with its spawning run fishing opportunities and potential support roles its trout spawning habitat makes to recruitment for interconnected fisheries of Lake Ruataniwha and the Ohau B Canal.

Spawning surveys undertaken by CSI over the 2016 and 2017 spawning seasons established that many of the prime spawning areas are used repeatedly by trout throughout the May to October period and that many of those fish are trophy-sized trout originating from Ohau B Canal. Brown trout mainly spawn from May to August and rainbows from June to October. These surveys provided evidence that the size of the spawning run is greater than the spawning habitat available. In other words, the river is spawning habitat limited.

By September most spawning gravels have been utilised and any subsequent spawning risks destroying established redds and killing the developing eggs and alevins from earlier spawning. In effect, spawning that occurs from September onwards is unlikely to add significant value to the overall annual spawning production. By October, most trout have finished spawning and returned to Lake Ruataniwha or the Ohau B Canal, leaving only the occasional resident fish and a diminishing number of late-spawners through to November.

To increase the productivity of spawning in the river Central South Island Fish & Game (CSI) partnered with Meridian Energy Limited (Meridian) to enhance spawning habitat. The first stage of the project completed in May 2019 was creation of an enhanced spawning braid. During the winter of 2019, a rare flood washed most the enhanced gravels out of the braid. The gravels were deposited in a shallow run a short distance downstream where they provided about 500m² of suitable spawning habitat. The introduction of gravels was a qualified success and increased the redds counted in the area from an average of 6 in previous years to 49 in 2019.

Prior to 2018, the upper Ohau River fishing season opened as a 'High-Country' waterway on the first Saturday of November and closed at the end of the regular summer season on April 30. This season

gave anglers underwhelming opportunity to target low populations of resident adult trout and the occasional early-run brown trout in late April and post-spawning rainbow trout in early November. Additional to these opportunities, anglers targeted winter fishing at the river mouth for trout congregating in Lake Ruataniwha prior to running into the upper Ohau River to spawn.

CSI introduced a new fishing season initiative in 2018 on the upper Ohau River. The new 'spring-season' was designed to provide the opportunity for fly and spin anglers to regain the river fishing opportunities lost by the construction of the hydro scheme and utilise the Ohau River fishery while good numbers of rainbow trout were present. It was intended the season would re-establish a valued fishery in the river by allowing large canal-origin trout to be caught in a semi-natural river environment after all brown trout spawning and two-thirds of rainbow trout spawning had occurred. Introduction of the spring fishing season was dependent on demonstrable spawning enhancement success compensating for negative impacts on juvenile trout recruitment from allowing anglers to harvest or temporarily interrupt spawning rainbow in the new spring-season.

The timing of the review of angling regulations and the standard Fish & Game year being October to September required the river to open on the 1st of October 2018 followed by a 1st of September opening in 2019. The regulations applied were a 2 trout daily bag limit and methods restricted to fly and spin only.

To gain further information and assess the potential for any unsustainable catch or inappropriate angling practices to take place or develop, specific ranging and creel surveys were undertaken in October 2018, the transition to a spring-season, and in the following year - September and October 2019, the first full spring-season.

This report summarises the results of that survey and provides recommendations for the future management of the spring-season.

Method

In 2018, ranging on opening day of the October season resulted in encountering six anglers only. The anglers had mixed success, some found the terrain and fishing tough while one angler was very happy after catching an 8-pound rainbow. No further assessment of October 2018 fishing at the upper Ohau River was made.

In the following year intensive creel surveys of the upper Ohau fishery were completed during the first full September and October spring-season. Angling information was collected to assess angler usage, angler interactions, angler perceptions, trout catch and trout harvest.

In 2019, the survey dates were stratified to capture the anticipated angler use variation throughout September and October, and targeted Opening Day, weekends and weekdays. Due to survey design and staff resourcing constraints, not all survey dates were randomised. There was an inherent bias towards days with weather and water conditions considered good for fishing in this survey as staff wanted to ensure they captured catch and harvest data rather than travel to and from Temuka to gain no information of angling activity during un-fishable weather.

On up to 8 occasions on each survey day all access and river viewpoints were visited in a circuit to estimate a count of anglers on the river during daylight hours. Whenever an angler could be approached a field interview was completed, involving a licence and regulation compliance check and the collection of the anglers contact details. If an angler had completed their day's fishing, a full

interview was completed in the field. If an angler was still fishing at the time of the encounter, a follow-up phone interview was undertaken within 24 hours from the angler completing their fishing.

Angler information and feedback was collected including: time spent fishing, method, catch, whether catch was harvested or released, size of fish, angler encounters, satisfaction with the experience, general comments about their intent to return to fish and their thoughts on the opportunities provided by the upper Ohau fishery spring-season.

CSI staff were not present on the river during all daylight hours and there is a possibility that anglers who only fished for a short time around dusk and dawn were not encountered. Estimates on the number of anglers were made to account for the fact that on occasion vehicles were found but no anglers were observed, or occasionally angling parties that were interviewed reported they had observed other anglers that were not evidently encountered by staff.

When a party of multiple anglers was encountered a spokesperson was selected as the point of contact for the follow up interview. The catch and harvest data were accurately recorded for each individual angler. In a small number of cases, it is likely the information relating to the perceptions and commentary obtained only reflected the opinion of the party spokesperson rather than a consensus of party members.

Results

Five survey days were completed in September and four in October (Table 1). In total 69 field interviews were completed. Estimated daily angler numbers ranged from 3 to 24 anglers. The fishing conditions were considered “good” or “OK” on each survey day based on each staff member’s opinion of overall weather and water conditions. The results of the survey reflect only a ‘good fishing conditions’ index of angling throughout the spring-season. It is likely that during poor conditions there would be none or very few anglers. Most anglers were sight-fishing and would naturally be averse to fishing in high-wind and rain as it would make spotting trout and casting difficult.

On Wednesday 25th September, a spawning survey was undertaken on the river over a three-hour period. The conditions were considered generally poor for fishing with gusty winds. No anglers were encountered that day. This survey supports the view that these weather conditions sustained negligible fishing activity.

Table 1. Surveys schedule, surveyor effort and angler count observations from the spring-season 2019, upper Ohau River Creel Survey.

Date	Day	Anglers Observed	Anglers interviewed	Estimate of total anglers	Survey start and finish times	Rangers hours on river	General fishing condition
1/09/2019	Sunday	22	22	24	0900-1630	7.5	good
5/09/2019	Thursday	4	4	4	1000-1530	5.5	good
10/09/2019	Tuesday	5	5	7	0850-1645	8	good
21/09/2019	Saturday	10	8	10	0830-1700	7.5	good
27/09/2019	Friday	11	10	11	0900-1730	5.5	good
6/10/2019	Sunday	6	6	6	0930-1745	6.25	good
8/10/2019	Tuesday	5	5	5	0845-1700	2.75	good
19/10/2019	Saturday	9	8	9	0840-1700	4.8	good
31/10/2019	Thursday	1	1	3	0900-1600	3.5	OK

The 1st September 2019, opening on the upper Ohau River was not actively advertised within Fish & Game media in the lead-in to the opening but still attracted the highest use of any day within the survey period (Table 1). The relative high use of opening day indicated that it was a targeted event by those anglers who likely read about the new season initiative a year earlier. The initiative was featured in the CSI section of Fish & Game Magazine special issue 47 and covered in CSI's Weekly Fishing Report as a ranging report of the previous October opening in 2018.

Catch and harvest

Anglers provided 63 complete daily catch and effort records from 69 angler interviews spanning 9 survey days during the spring-season. It was estimated that a total additional 10 anglers fished the river during the survey days that were not interviewed making the total estimated daily angler use of 79 days. A full summary table of survey date and survey period angler use, catch and harvest estimates are found in Appendix 1.

Individual daily angler catches ranged from 0 to 9 trout. On opening day, 1 September, total estimated angler catch was 52.4 trout landed by 24 anglers. The remaining 8 survey days total estimated catch ranged from no fish caught to 23.8. Estimated total catch for all anglers on all nine survey days combined was 148.1 trout.

On 6 of 9 survey days no trout harvest (fish kept) was recorded. On the three survey dates harvest was recorded, it is estimated harvest for all anglers totalled 1, 4 and 8.7 trout, respectively. The highest harvest on one day occurred on opening day (8.7 trout).

Across survey dates, the proportion of the total daily catch harvested varied from none to 33%. The overall average daily proportion of the catch that was harvested was 7.3%, or about 1 trout kept for every 13 released. Alternatively, on average 92.7% of trout were released back to the water. Estimated total harvest for all anglers on all 9 survey days combined was 13.7 trout.

Size and assemblage of the catch

Of the 69 anglers interviewed over the survey, 39 provided full records of the estimated size of all fish caught in pounds. The complete size-of-catch records were summarised to provide an unbiased record of the size and species assemblage of the catch (Table 2).

Rainbow trout dominated the spring-season catch (89.5%) and were notably bigger than brown trout (Table 2). Brown trout appeared to be of a size common to New Zealand fisheries with the largest being recorded at only 4.5 pound. Rainbow trout were much bigger and at sizes expected from canal-origin fish, averaging over 8 pounds with a maximum size of around 20 pounds and 40% being 10-pounds or larger (Table 2).

Table 2. The number, species compositions and summarised size statistics of trout caught by anglers who provided complete size-of-catch records during 2019 spring-season.

Species	Number caught	Species proportion	Average of size (lb)	Min of size (lb)	Max of size (lb)	Catch less than 2 lb	Catch between 2 and 9.9lb	Catch 10 lb or larger+
Brown	11	10.5%	1.5	0.5	4.5	73%	27%	0%
Rainbow	94	89.5%	8.5	0.5	20.5	10%	46%	45%
Total	105		7.8	0.5	20.5	16%	44%	40%

Angling methods

There was a nearly even split of methods with 45% of anglers spin fishing, 46% of anglers fly fishing and 9% fishing with both methods on the same day.

Angler encounters

To assess the potential angler conflict to arise due to over-crowding of anglers during the season, angling parties were asked how many anglers who were not in their party, did they encounter and how that impacted on their experience.

On opening day, 1st September, 10 angling parties reported encountering between 0 and 10 other anglers. Parties reported that their angler encounters had either a “positive” (4 parties) or “neutral” (6 parties) impact on their fishing experience.

For the remaining 6 survey days of the season, 14 angling parties reported encountering between 0 and 4 anglers on their day fishing. Parties reported that their angler encounters had either a “positive” (8 parties) or “neutral” (6 parties) impact on their fishing experience.

No parties reported encounters with other anglers causing a “negative” impact on their fishing experience.

To summarise the reasoning behind their classification of impact, “positive” impacts were reported where angling parties encountered no anglers or when encountering anglers, they enjoyed or benefitted from the brief interaction with them. Angling parties that reported “neutral” impact, generally either worked in with other anglers or managed to avoid them in order to find enough water for both parties to fish unaffected.

Rating the angling experience

All interviewed anglers or angling party spokespersons were given the opportunity to rate their overall satisfaction with their day fishing on the upper Oahu River. Some anglers were interviewed multiple times during the survey and were given the opportunity to comment on each occasion. Fifty responses were recorded. Most anglers rated their day “very satisfied” (64%), some anglers were “satisfied” (26%) and a relatively small number rated their experience as “neutral” (10%). No anglers rated their experience as “unsatisfied”.

In summary the high satisfaction ratings were based on the quality of the fishing, the large fish, and the scenic surrounding. The “neutral” ratings were based on previously experiencing better fishing success at the same river and for not catching any fish on the day.

Angler perceptions of the spring-season

All interviewed anglers or angling party spokespersons were given the opportunity to comment generally on the opportunity provided by the new spring-season (September / October) on the upper Ohau River. Some anglers were interviewed multiple times during the survey and were given the opportunity to comment on each occasion. In summary, anglers appreciated the opportunity and experience offered by fishing when it is not traditionally available. They considered the fishery as enhanced by the canal system rather than a wild fishery and they were keen to see the spring-season continued, provided spawning was enhanced and their interaction with spawning fish can be managed sustainably.

A full list of responses is available in Appendix 2 of this report.

General field observations

Anglers tended to fish short sections of the river and target congregations of fish, often associated with notable areas of spawning redds. The difficulty traversing the large slippery boulders, limited safe crossing points and thorn riddled riparian vegetation also facilitated only fishing short sections of river. Although the entire length of the river was fished, there were favoured sections, especially by anglers who returned to fish the river on more than one occasion.

The fishing appeared to be more productive in September and although October still provided for many highly satisfied anglers the fish number and catchability appeared to reduce notably. Some anglers reported that there was still the occasional canal trout in the river in early November 2018.

There were essentially no negative angler interactions because anglers, by and large, did not actively compete for the same fishing areas. There was ample space to spread out to alternative spots if a favourite area was already occupied. Anglers appeared to favour fishing the river in a traditional sight-fishing style with early to mid-morning starts and mid-afternoon finishes.

It is CSI staff opinion that the river provides very challenging fishing as the riparian terrain, slippery didymo covered boulders and challenging sight fishing conditions make for tricky fishing. Add to that the frustration involved with trying to avoid hooking didymo and subsequently unhooking it when fouling lures and flies.

It is a fishery that mainly suits physically capable intermediate to expert level anglers who enjoy the challenge of fishing boulder rivers. It also attracts anglers who are willing to tolerate the challenge of the terrain to secure a very large fish. There is a large component of the angling community who will much prefer the easy access fishing options available nearby in the Twizel area once they have experienced the challenging fishing on offer in the upper Ohau River.

Word of mouth rather than active promotion seemed to result in a steady stream of newcomers to the river throughout the spring-season. There was very little conspicuous social media activity exposing the new opportunity by anglers, however towards the end of October a prominent YouTube influencer produced a video on the experience and although the angler did not name the river it was evident from the backdrop and likely canal origin of the fish that the upper Ohau River was the only place it could be. The spring-season is likely to make a more explicit appearance on the social media platforms of "influencer" anglers during the 2020 season which will increase its popularity, especially internationally.

Discussion

This survey has established that the September-October 2019 spring-season on the upper Ohau River provided a highly valued and satisfying fishing experience. This validates the efforts of CSI and Meridian to invest in spawning habitat enhancement and to introduce the unique spring-season. The key to the success of the spring-season was to allow anglers to access trout of extreme size that originate from the canals in a semi-natural river habitat. Without the spring-season the upper Ohau River would retain its spawning values but continue to offer a depressed fishing experience.

The levels of angler use encountered over the 9 stratified survey days did not cause any conflict and the levels of catch (approximately 148 trout) and harvest (approximately 14 trout) appeared to be modest with most fish (92.7%) being released.

A total spring-season catch or harvest estimate was not made as it was considered likely to provide an unreliable estimate. This is because the survey days were not all randomised and are biased

towards fair-weather. To simply scale-up the data represent the total period would likely provide an appreciable overestimate of spring-season catch and harvest. The opinions and recommendations of staff have been formed by reviewing the 9 stratified survey dates as a fair-weather index of the spring-season angling dynamics. It is assumed that on days with poor general weather for fishing that catch and harvest levels would be lower than what was observed in this survey, which occurred on only days considered either “good” or “OK” fishing conditions.

If the 2019 September-October spring-season levels of angler use, catch and harvest were maintained in future seasons, CSI staff would consider the spring-season sustainable. This assessment would be conditional on maintaining the existing spawning enhancement programme and annual monitoring of the spawning population.

The fish caught and harvested during the spring-season should generally be considered a component of the spawning run of Lake Ruataniwha and the Ohau B Canal. The spring-season has provided an additional, novel and highly regarded way to fish for the resident trout of Lake Ruataniwha and the Ohau B Canal. For some anglers who do not like the aesthetics of the canals, this is their opportunity to sight-fish extremely large trout in a semi-natural river fishery.

The new opportunity provided at the upper Ohau River could reduce the opportunities for anglers at Lake Ruataniwha and the Ohau B Canal if catch and harvest levels were too high. Staff are of the opinion that this is not currently the case and the catch and harvest levels observed on survey dates in the 2019 spring-season were modest and insignificant, respectively.

Lake Ruataniwha and the Ohau B Canal sustain resilient fisheries with varied river, lake and canal habitat that supports all trout life stages and has a ready supply of supplementary food from the two salmon farms operating in the Ohau B Canal. These fisheries also have multiple sources of recruitment and do not rely on the upper Ohau River trout spawning alone for their recruitment. Trout migrate downstream into these waterways from Lake Ohau via the Ohau weir and from lakes Pukaki and Ohau via the canal system.

It is also unlikely that the impact of 2019 spring-season harvest of upper Ohau River trout negatively affected recruitment to downstream fisheries. The available spawning gravels in the upper Ohau River continued to be fully utilised and spawning habitat enhancement produced additional recruitment by increasing the area and quality of spawning gravels to offset harvest of spawning fish.

There is little doubt in the minds of CSI staff and some anglers interviewed that the future popularity of the upper Ohau River spring-season will exceed that observed during the 2019 survey. The fishing opportunity in 2019 was not actively promoted by CSI in the lead-in to this survey period and angling-community knowledge of the opportunity grew throughout the season, mainly through word of mouth and to a limited extent via social media. Whether or not CSI choose to actively promote the upcoming 2020 season or not, there will be an increase in its use.

Fishing conditions for the 2020 spring-season covering 1 to 30 September 2020 are already in place and were gazetted in June 2019. Council’s current review of the CSI Region’s Anglers Notice is for the period 1 October 2020 to 30 September 2021. Further, the current Anglers Notice review for the upper Ohau River covers that part of the upper Ohau 2020 spring-season starting 1 October and finishing 31 October 2020, then the normal season of 1 November 2020 to 30 April 2021, and for the first month of the 2021 spring-season - 1 September to 30 September 2021. The only change Council can make to the 2020 spring-season in the current Anglers Notice time frame is to close October

2020. This would create an unusual situation of the fishery being open in September, closed in October, then open again in November.

If angling conditions remain as they are for the 2020 spring-season this provides the opportunity to assess the sustainability of the spring fishery under predicted increased fishing pressure and possibly higher harvest. The 2020 season should represent the future of angling dynamics much more accurately than did the 2019 season with its limited promotion.

There is a possibility that with further exposure and promotion of the fishery during the 2020 spring-season, that angler usage and catch of the following 2021 spring-season could reach levels that are considered unsustainable and angler conflict could cause dissatisfaction with the fishing experience. The assessment of the likelihood of that happening can only be made by repeating the 2019 survey reported here, during the upcoming 2020 spring-season.

Given staff concern at the potential for angler use and catch in September 2021 to reach unsustainable levels and anglers to become unsatisfied with the experience it is recommend that for the spring-season of 2021, a precautionary approach is taken and the month of September 2021 is closed to fishing in the upper Ohau River. Subject to results of the spring 2020 season survey it may be that our concerns of high catch and harvest are allayed and Council may consider reinstating September at the next opportunity.

Staff recommend retaining the October 2021 part of the spring-season to maintain a highly valued opportunity. The 2016 and 2017 spawning surveys indicate that most fish have returned to Lake Ruataniwha and the Ohau B Canal by early October and a relatively small proportion of the rainbow trout spawning run remains available to anglers. Staff believe that by maintaining October 2021 component of the spring-season, it is unlikely that this fishery will be subject to unsustainable catch or harvest.

If monitoring of the 2020 spring-season results in the assessment that angling opportunities should be restricted, then all management options should be explored in an effort to maintain a sustainable and satisfactory spring-season that retains spawning run fishing options. Traditional and novel ways to manage potential over-use in future should be considered thoroughly including but not limited to management by designating the waterway a Controlled Fishery. Controlled fisheries are approved under current legislation and are already in place in other Fish & Game Regions where angler use is controlled through a permit system. Although a Controlled Fishery requires resourcing for administration and enforcement, it offers an appropriate tool for monitoring and maintaining the highly valued fishing experience under pressure from increasing popularity.

A further support mechanism for maintaining the spring-season under increased angler use would be to create new spawning enhancement sites that increase recruitment of trout in the Upper Ohau River, Lake Ruataniwha and Ohau B Canal systems.

Staff Angler Notice Recommendation

- 1. Notify a 1 October 2020 to 30 April 2021 open season for the upper Ohau River.**

Note: this recommended season represents a precautionary approach to managing potential over-use by closing the September 2021 part of the 2021 spring-season and provides time to further assess the ongoing sustainability of upper Ohau River spring-season fishery subject to a creel survey undertaken during the 2020 spring-season.

Staff General Recommendations

- 2. Repeat the 2019 creel survey in the 2020 September and October 'spring-season' season in 2020.**
- 3. Continue to maintain the existing enhanced spawning habitat and work with Meridian Energy to enhance additional areas of spawning habitat.**
- 4. Subject to the 2020 creel survey indicating increased angler use of the upper Ohau River spring-season, identify options for managing angler use including management as a Controlled Fishery.**
- 5. Continue to undertake annual spawning surveys.**

Appendix

Appendix 1. A summary table of 9 survey dates data from the 2019 spring-season creel survey of the upper Ohau River including recorded and estimated angler use, and angler catch and harvest. "trout" means combined brown and rainbow trout.

Survey date	Estimated total anglers	Number of Interviewed anglers	Number of anglers providing full catch and effort records	Minimum trout landed per angler	Maximum trout landed per angler	Average number of trout landed per angler	Average catchrate (trout/hour)	Sum of recorded trout landed	Estimated total angler's total trout landed	Average number of trout harvested per angler	Sum of recorded trout harvest	percentage of catch harvested	Estimated total angler's total trout harvested
1-Sep	24	22	22	0	9	2.2	0.5	48	52.4	0.36	8	16.7	8.7
5-Sep	4	4	4	0	1	0.8	1.1	3	3.0	0.25	1	33.3	1.0
10-Sep	7	5	2	2	3	2.5	0.3	5	17.5	0.00	0	0.0	0.0
21-Sep	10	8	5	0	9	2.2	0.2	13	23.8	0.40	2	15.4	4.0
27-Sep	11	10	10	0	6	1.9	0.3	19	20.9	0.00	0	0.0	0.0
6-Oct	6	6	6	0	5	1.3	0.4	8	8.0	0.00	0	0.0	0.0
8-Oct	5	5	5	0	0	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0.00	0	0.0	0.0
19-Oct	9	8	8	0	3	0.5	0.1	4	4.5	0.00	0	0.0	0.0
31-Oct	3	1	1	6	6	6.0	1.0	6	18.0	0.00	0	0.0	0.0
Survey dates totals	79	69	63	0	9	1.7	0.4	106	148.1	0.17	11	7.3	13.7

Appendix 2. responses to the survey question: "Fish & Game is interested to hear if you have any other comments regarding the opportunity provided by the new September / October season on the upper Ohau River.

1/09/2019	happy in the knowledge more spawning redds being constructed by F&G to help with sustainability, not wild fishery rather a by-product of the salmon farm, Great idea for the season thanks F&G
1/09/2019	The reason Fish & Game have opened the season early makes good sense
1/09/2019	pot hunting - any good condition fish would be harvested
1/09/2019	great to have the opportunity for fly fishing to have a realistic chance of catching a canal size fish
1/09/2019	concerned about lack of spawning gravels so want F&G to introduce more to help with sustainability
1/09/2019	worried people could be poaching pre-season
1/09/2019	Think it's a great idea - happy with new season, saw the article in last years F&G Magazine and made a trip of it for a new experience. Wouldn't fish canal but would fish for canal fish in river.
1/09/2019	Fantastic opportunity - there is bugger all fish in the river in summer. I fished the river 20 years ago and remember it being hard fishing.
1/09/2019	Good to have September Option with 1 October upcoming - positive about the opportunity
1/09/2019	Rapt for October, now we have September - you beauty.
5/09/2019	Think its great F&G give anglers an opportunity to fish for these fish when they are there. When the season normally opens there are no fish in the river. great job F&G
10/09/2019	Positive, provides winter opportunity, happy about spawning enhancement.
21/09/2019	Very Unique, think it will become much more used when more people hear about it, Best flyfishing Alan has ever had in 30 years flyfishing, likely to need further management of anglers.
21/09/2019	Great opportunity, Great River and challenging
21/09/2019	2 sections may need angling restricted as spawning is prevalent, not great fighting fish, would support Fly only and C&R in Sept/Oct, Would support October only fishing.
21/09/2019	Great thing, get away from everyone
21/09/2019	Fish not easy to catch spin fishing
27/09/2019	New to me, keen to see the potential - interested to hear the survey statistics
27/09/2019	nice to be able to fish it for a longer season
27/09/2019	haven't really got comment but wouldn't like to see it overfished
27/09/2019	Great idea if it can be controlled, C&R good idea.
27/09/2019	compared to opening day only 10% of fish left
6/10/2019	All good awesome job on the season
6/10/2019	Been a great thing for me. Concerned about how others may utilise fishery i.e. take fish unsuitable for eating. General greedy people. (I) won't be publicising fishery at all.
6/10/2019	Good to see Fish & Game out monitoring and great place to fish
8/10/2019	Very Good idea, enhanced spawning is good, world class fishery
8/10/2019	Its excellent but reservations about spawning fish - would never kill one.
19/10/2019	First year fished it, its great, be cool to see it remain open for September
19/10/2019	no change - protect fishery

19/10/2019	I am super fortunate to have the opportunity- next time I'll fish from the top down
19/10/2019	no change, great
31/10/2019	Great Idea - cool to have unique fishery - will encourage visitors - look forward to coming back - needs to be flooded, huge asset.