



Oak Knob 2016 and Gainor 2016 Trespass Grow Site Complexes Reclamation Operation Synopsis

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Six Rivers National Forest is home to numerous game species and non-game wildlife which are dependent on the unique critical habitat attributes that public lands within this bioregion provide. In the summer of 2016, several large public land trespass marijuana cultivation complexes were discovered on the Six Rivers National Forest managed by the United States Forest Service. Two of these sites were Oak Knob 2016 and Gainor 2016. Both of these complexes lie within tributaries of the South Fork Trinity River, a Hydrological Unit with a salmonid population that is functionally independent with a high risk of extinction and which is on the list of impaired waterbodies under State of California Clean Water Act Section 303(d) for sediment and temperature (NMFS 2014). These sites lie within United States Fish and Wildlife Service delineated Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted owl (*Strix occidentalis caurina*) which is listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ECOS 2016). Finally, ongoing research conducted by Integral Ecology Research Center (IERC) has detected Pacific fishers in these complexes, which are a species of conservation concern, both state and federally.

Both of these complexes were quickly eradicated by federal, state and local Law Enforcement in summer 2016 in order to disrupt the continued misuse of these public lands, and approximately 18,283 plants were removed from these two complexes. Research scientists from IERC were brought into the sites to document and ascertain the magnitude of impacts that these trespass grows caused. During initial documentation of the site, an estimated several thousand feet of irrigation line, numerous substantial water diversions, significant tree removal, hundreds of pounds of fertilizer and several gallons of pesticides were recorded. The sites were placed on a high-priority list for documentation and reclamation due to these factors. Reclamation operations were conducted April 20 and April 21, 2017.

References

- Environmental Conservation Online System. 2016. United States Fish and Wildlife Service <http://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/> accessed 9/2016.
- National Marine Fisheries Service. 2014. Final Recovery Plan for the Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Evolutionarily Significant Unit of Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*). National Marine Fisheries Service. Arcata, CA.



Oak Knob 2016 and Gainor 2016 Reclamation Statistics

April 20-21, 2017

Organizations Involved

Governmental: California Department of Fish and Wildlife Law Enforcement Division (CDFW), United States Forest Service Law Enforcement and Investigations (USFS), Trinity County Sheriff's Office (TCSO)

Non-Governmental: Integral Ecology Research Center (IERC), Trinity County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD), The Watershed Center (TWC), Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Reclamation Organizers: Drs. Greta Wengert and Mourad Gabriel (IERC); Donna Rupp (TCRCD); Tom Evans and Josh Smith (TWC)

Support: Logistical and financial support was contributed by the above-mentioned entities. Specific funding for the reclamation of these trespass marijuana cultivation complexes was provided by a California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery Grant to Trinity County Resource Conservation District and a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation grant to Integral Ecology Research Center.

Number of trespass sites cleaned: Two large complexes

Location of sites: Six Rivers National Forest

Watershed impacted: South Fork Trinity River

Personnel: 27 total; TWC (8), IERC (7), TCRCD (4), CDFW (4), TCSO (3), USFS (1)

Total water diversions restored to watersheds: 16.45 million gallons (900 gallons per plant, per grow season (Humboldt Marijuana Growers Association water use data))

Minimum amount of rodenticide used at sites: 31.5 lb

Minimum amount of fertilizer used at sites: 1,387 lb

Insecticides used at sites: 1,904 oz (14.9 gallons) plus 16 oz of the banned toxicant Carbofuran in an illegal container

Grow site trash and infrastructure removed during reclamation: 5,140 lb (2.6 tons)

Irrigation pipe removed during reclamation: 12,000 ft (2.27 miles)

Long-line loads: 15 loads (Total long-line flight time = 3.0 hrs)

Figure 1: One of several trash pits found within the Oak Knob and Gainor trespass grow complexes on the Six Rivers National Forest.



Figure 2: Bucket of a neurotoxicant rodenticide discovered at one of the grow site complexes on Six Rivers National Forest. This represented 4 pounds out of a total of 31.5 pounds discovered.



Figure 3: Top and Bottom Photo: Two of the truck and trailer loads of the 2.6 tons (5,140 lbs) of grow site infrastructure and trash removed from two grow site complexes on the Six Rivers National Forest, April 2017.



Figure 4: Before and after photos of trash pits left behind by trespass marijuana cultivators on Six Rivers National Forest.

