

TABLE 1 - PRE-1870s ACCOUNTS OF SAN PEDRO RIVER STREAMFLOW CONDITIONS¹

LOCATION	YEAR	DESCRIPTION	SOURCE	PAGE(S) IN FULLER (2004)	COMMENTS
UPPER SAN PEDRO RIVER (International Border to Benson)					
International Boundary	1854-1855	"At this point, approaching from the east, the traveler comes within a mile of the river before any indications of a stream are apparent. Its bed is marked by trees and bushes, but it is some sixty or one hundred feet below the prairie, and the descent is made by a succession of terraces. Though affording no great quantity of water, this river is backed up into a series of large pools by beaver-dams, and is full of fishes."	Emory	3-11, 3-16	Beaver dams would have posed obstacles to commercial boat travel at the time.
Hereford to Benson	December 1846	"On we pushed, and finally, when twenty paces off, saw a fine bold stream! There was the San Pedro River we had so long and anxiously pursued (on 12/9)...Fish are abundant in this pretty stream. Salmon trout are caught by the men in great numbers; I have seen them eighteen inches long (on 12/10)...An abundance of fine fish are caught, some that are three feet long..." (on 12/11).	Cooke	3-14, 5-10	Cooke followed the San Pedro from south to north over five days before travelling west to Tucson.
		"...a small clear stream which runs into the Gulf of California...one of our mess brought 6 fine Trout that he caught today to camp."	Bliss	3-14	Member of Mormon Battalion commanded by Cooke.
near Lewis Springs	1854	"The San Pedro River, where we struck it, in latitude 31° 34' is a small stream at this stage, about eight feet wide, and shallow; between steep banks 10 feet high and 25 to 50 feet apart...At three points that I have crossed it, it is a living stream with large fish...Occasional bunches of mezquite and cotton-wood are seen upon its borders."	Gray	3-17	
near mouth of Dragoon Wash	September 1851	"We looked in vain for a line of trees, or of luxuriant vegetation to mark the course of the San Pedro--when all of a sudden we found ourselves upon the banks. The stream...was here about two feet deep and quite rapid. The water, though muddy, was pleasant to the taste."	Bartlett	3-11, 3-15	Account suggests storm water conditions.
		"The San Pedro was pretty high when we arrived here. It is very muddy, with a quick current, resembling very much the Pecos, or Rio Puerco, for this is its proper name--which means dirty or muddy river...My assistant, Mr. Clark, took from this stream several new species of fishes..."	Graham	3-16	Member of Bartlett's boundary survey party; account suggests storm water conditions.
MIDDLE SAN PEDRO RIVER (Benson to Redington)					
near Benson	February 1854	"The stream is about eighteen inches deep and twelve feet wide, and flows with a rapid current, at about twelve feet below the surface of its banks, which are nearly vertical, and of a treacherous miry soil, rendering it extremely difficult to approach the water, now muddy and forbidding. The banks are devoid of timber, or any sign indicating the course or even the existence of a stream, to an observer but a short distance removed..."	Parke	3-17	
at Tres Alamos	1830s	"Tucson settlers planted and harvested crops on the San Pedro River at Tres Alamos. Because of the Apache menace, they were escorted to and from their fields by presidio soldiers."	Officer	3-3, 3-4	Recent (1987) description by Officer of historic conditions at Tres Alamos
	1854	"At the Tres Alamos the stream is about fifteen inches deep and twelve feet wide and flows with a rapid current over a light, sandy bed about fifteen feet below its banks, which are nearly vertical. The water here is turbid, and not a stick of timber is seen to mark the meandering of its bed."	Parke	3-17	
above The Narrows	March and April 1858	"The San Pedro, at the first point reached in the present road, has a width of about twelve (12) feet, and depth of twelve (12) inches, flowing between clay banks ten or twelve feet deep, but below it widens out, and from beaver dams and other obstructions overflows a large extent of bottom land, forming marshes, densely timbered with cottonwood and ash, thus forcing the road over and around the sides of impinging spurs. This stream is not continuous all the year, but in the months of August and September disappears in several places, rising again, however, clear and limpid."	Hutton	3-18, 5-10	Beaver dams and marshy conditions would have posed obstacles to commercial boat travel at the time.
	September 1858	"Exceedingly to the surprise of every member of the expedition who had passed over this route in the months of March and April it was discovered after a march of a few miles that the waters of the San Pedro had entirely disappeared from the channel of the stream...Where the present reporter took quantities of fine trout in March and April 1858 not a drop of water was to be seen."	Leach	3-18	Intermittent flow would cause temporal limits on any possible boat travel.
within and below The Narrows	1854	"In the gorge below and in some of the meadows, the stream approaches more nearly the surface, and often spreads itself on a wide area, producing a dense growth of cottonwood, willows, and underbrush, which forced us to ascend and cross the out-jutting terraces. The flow of water, however, is not continuous. One or two localities were observed where it entirely disappeared, but to rise again a few miles distant, clear and limpid."	Parke	3-17	Discontinuous flow would require portages and could restrict any possible boat travel.
LOWER SAN PEDRO RIVER (Redington to Gila River)					
a few miles above Gila River confluence	November 1846	"An insignificant stream a few yards wide, and only a foot deep"	Emory	3-13, 5-13	
		"An active man could jump across"	Johnson	3-4, 5-13	
	1854	"Water sinks below the surface and rarely runs above it."	Parke	5-13	Discontinuous flow would require portages and could restrict any possible boat travel.
SAN PEDRO RIVER (unspecified reach)					
downstream to mouth of Aravaipa Creek	late 1857	"The Sanpedro river as they Call it--is a stream one foot deep six feet wide & runs a mile & half an hour & in ten minutes fishing we Could Catch as many fish as we Could use & about Every 5 miles is a beaver dam this is a great County for them--& we have went to the river & watterd & it was running fine & half mile below the bed of the river would be as dry as the road--it sinks & rises again & we went down as far as the aravipa & 8 miles below that the pedro Emties into the hela river."	Tevis	3-18	Discontinuous flow would require portages and could restrict any possible boat travel; beaver dams would have also posed obstacles at the time.

Notes:

¹ According to Fuller (2004, pp.3-10 and 3-12), Apache raids were an obstacle to colonization of the San Pedro Valley throughout the Mexican Period and, from 1846 through 1859, United States military expeditions and parties of forty-niners found the area filled with ruins of abandoned ranches and large herds of wild cattle. During the Civil War, military posts in Arizona were abandoned and the San Pedro River was "largely left to the Apaches" until homesteaders began to resettle the area in 1867. The accounts presented in this table are believed to represent a period of limited cultural impact on San Pedro River streamflows.