

Kitfox Pond General Biological Survey (Survey #: 517016)

Jonathan Fieroh, Region 5 Fisheries

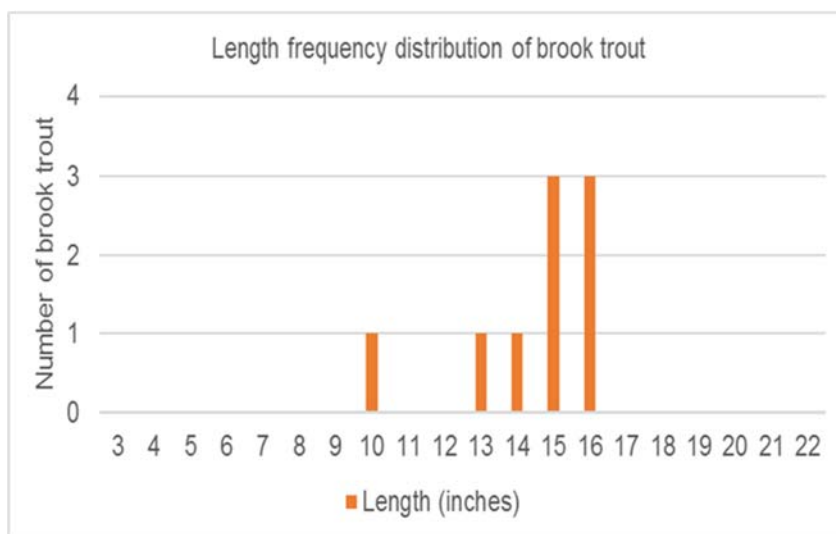
07/16/2018

Kitfox Pond is a remote 9-acre water located in the Saint Regis Canoe Area in Franklin County. It is a brook trout monoculture sustained by yearly fingerling stocking. Kitfox Pond is 32 feet deep and has sufficient dissolved oxygen for trout to about 18 feet. Acidity has been problematic here and Kitfox was limed in 1970 and 1983. Because Kitfox Pond is in the liming program, its pH and Acid Neutralizing Capacity (ANC) are checked yearly, and in 2017 the pH was 6.97 pH units, with an ANC of 52 $\mu\text{eq/L}$, both in the acceptable range. However, the last time the fish population was sampled was in 1986 by ALSC.

Kitfox has been stocked since 1952 and from 1996 to 2012 it received 500 Temiscamie x Domestic brook trout yearly. In 2013 the stocking policy was experimentally changed from Temiscamie x Domestic hybrid brook trout fingerlings to Windfall x Domestic hybrid fingerlings, and in 2014 the stocking rate was recalculated and reduced to 250 fingerlings yearly. These stocking changes prompted the 2017 survey.

In early June 2017, a single 150-foot Swedish experimental gill net, a 30-foot minnow net and a minnow trap were set overnight. Only brook trout were captured, and those 9 fish had an average length of 15.1". While there was no recent survey for comparison, and much remains unknown about the Windfall x Domestic strain; the 2017 survey showed that the Windfall x Domestic strain of brook trout performed admirably and was able to sustain a quality brook trout fishery here.

This water has a reputation for producing small numbers of large trout and the 2017 survey shows this pattern, with most of the sampled fish between 13 and 16 inches long. Likely it is the fairly remote nature of this water that allows such a fishery to persist. The size at age (Table 1) reflects the high quality but fragile nature of this fishery.



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Table 1. Average size at age of brook trout at Kitfox Pond 2017.

Strain	Age	Average length (inches)	Average weight (pounds)	Sample Size
Windfall x Domestic	1	10.7	0.51	1
Windfall x Domestic	2	14.1	1.49	2
Windfall x Domestic	3	15.9	1.86	2
Windfall x Domestic	4	16.0	1.68	3

Production of the Windfall x Domestic strain has ended but the current stocking policy (250 brook trout fingerlings per year) is maintaining the unique nature of this fishery and will continue; the policy will simply revert to the Temiscamie x Domestic strain.

