

Neversink River Trout Survey (Survey #: 319015)
Michael DiSarno, Region 3 Fisheries

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Neversink River is a 54-mile long tributary to the Delaware River that flows through Sullivan and Orange Counties, NY. The river is considered a high-quality trout stream both above Neversink Reservoir and below. A coldwater discharge is provided from Neversink Reservoir and supports a coldwater fishery through summer months. The section from Hasbrouck to Fallsburg (Line ID: 00127) is currently stocked with 1,300 brook trout annually, and this section is also noted for its production of wild brown trout. A special regulation exists on the Neversink River downstream of Neversink Reservoir for trout: open season of April 1 through Sept 30, 9" minimum size, and a daily limit of five. This survey was conducted to determine wild and stocked trout abundance in this stocked reach, and to evaluate the current brook trout stocking policy here. This barge electrofishing survey was conducted on 8/26/19 as a depletion estimate of trout abundance. Blocking seines were set at the upstream and downstream ends of the 425' section sampled. Three runs of this site were conducted, and all trout sampled were measured to the nearest millimeter and released outside of the sample stretch. An additional three sites were intended to be sampled in the stocked reach, but due to equipment malfunction, this did not occur.

A total of 30 brown trout and two brook trout were caught during this survey. All trout caught were wild, and no stocked trout were observed during this survey. Brown trout lengths ranged from 2.2 to 20.3 inches (Figure 1). Ten of the 30 brown trout caught were young of year. Yearling and older brown trout abundance was estimated at 33.2 trout/acre and the biomass was estimated at 16.6 lbs/acre.

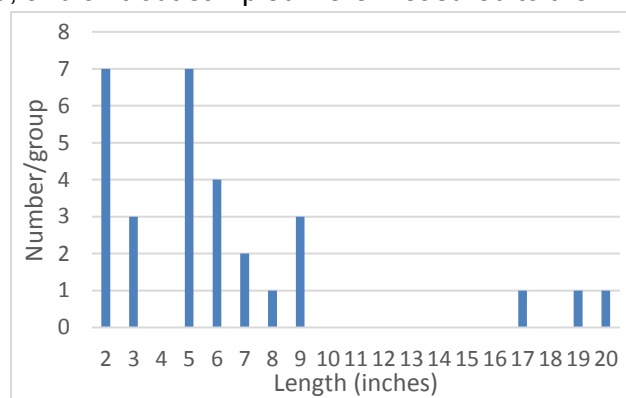


Figure 1. Length distribution of brown trout caught during 2019.

Results from this survey indicate survival of stocked brook trout to mid-summer does not occur in this section of creek. However, since the remaining three sites were not sampled in this stocked section, no change in the current stocking policy is recommended at this time. It's recommended that the remaining three sites which were scheduled to be sampled during this survey be sampled in 2020 to better evaluate this stocking policy. If poor survival of stocked brook trout is confirmed then this stocking should be discontinued. Stocking brown trout instead of brook trout or management as a wild brown trout fishery should be considered as alternative strategies.

