

Black Brook Trout Survey (Survey #: 321009)
 Michael DiSarno, Region 3 Fisheries

3/10/22

Black Brook is a 6.6-mile-long tributary to Mongaup River in the Town of Forestburgh, Sullivan County. Public access is found along Plank Rd and is provided by Eagle Creek Renewable Energy and the Mongaup Valley Wildlife Management Area. There have been no stocking policies implemented by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, but private stockings of brown and brook trout have previously been permitted. Previous surveys conducted on Black Brook were limited to presence/absence surveys, and no trout population assessment has been attempted here. This 2021 survey was conducted to estimate trout abundance and to determine the best management strategy as part of the Trout Stream Management Plan (NYSDEC 2020). Black Brook was sampled on 8/5/21 and 8/9/21, with two backpack electrofishing units and three additional scappers. Three sites, averaging 323 feet, were sampled from the confluence with Mongaup River upstream to Mill Rd (Figure 1). Two passes were made at each reach with blocking seines set at the upstream and downstream end of each site. All trout collected were measured to the nearest millimeter and then released outside of the sample stretch.

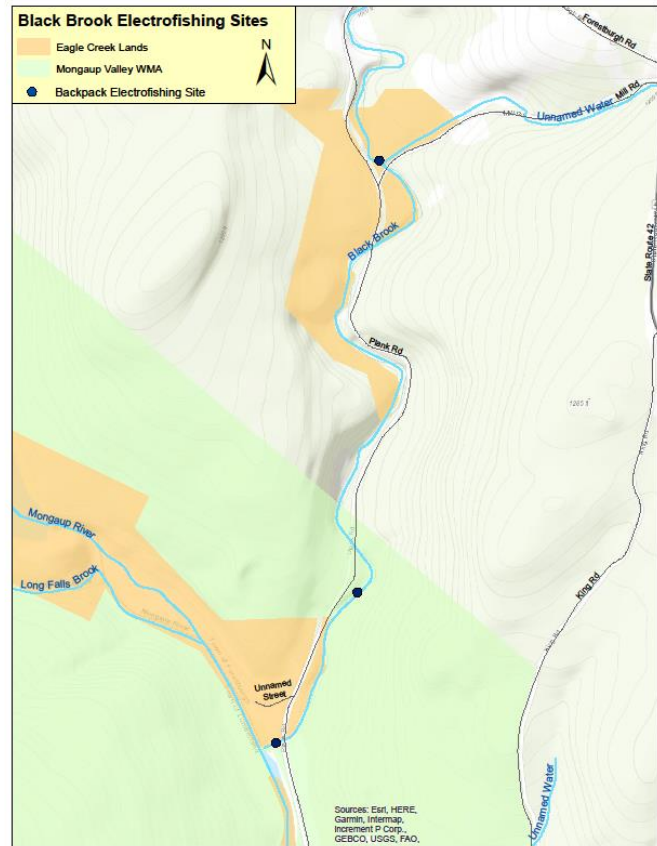
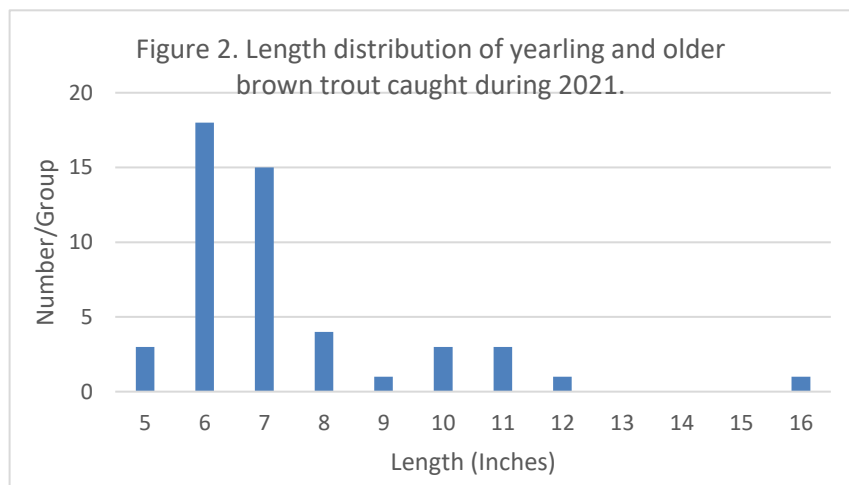


Figure 1. Black Brook electrofishing sites from 2021.

A total of 65 trout were caught during this survey including 61 brown trout and four brook trout. Twelve young-of-year brown trout were caught while no young-of-year brook trout were observed. Lengths of yearling and older brown trout ranged from 5.6 to 16.5 inches (Figure 2). Brook trout lengths were 8.2, 8.2, 9.8 and 12.3 inches. The estimated pounds/acre for all wild trout caught was 25, while wild, yearling and older trout/mile was estimated at 294.



The Trout Stream Management Plan specifies target numbers for the 'Wild Quality' category for wild trout at 40 pounds/acre or yearling and older wild trout of 300/mile. The combined estimate for Black Brook fell just below these targets during this survey. Therefore, no change in



management is proposed at this time, and it is recommended that Black Brook continue to be managed as 'Wild.' Black Brook should be assessed further for additional public access, and if available, it is recommended that a stocking policy of brown trout be initiated here. It is recommended that trout abundance in Black Brook be sampled again in 3-5 years to determine if any change in management is necessary.

Literature Cited:

NYSDEC. 2020. New York State Trout Stream Management Plan. Albany: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.