

Mill Brook Special Regulations Evaluation (Survey #417073:)

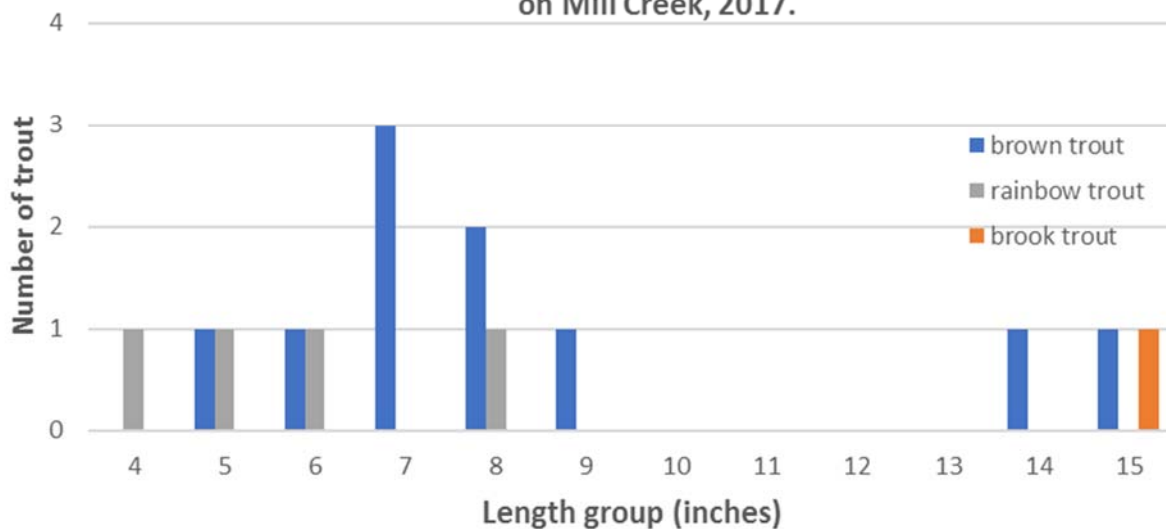
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Mill Brook is a well-known medium sized trout spawning tributary to Pepacton Reservoir in Delaware County. It is part of the East Branch Delaware River watershed. Access is gained, with a valid NYCDEP access permit, through NYCDEP owned lands near the mouth of the brook. The Tuscarora Club of Millbrook owns most of the land along the creek. Brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) can be found in the upper reaches and most of the tributaries, the brook is stocked annually with an unknown number of brook trout, brown trout (*Salmo trutta*) and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) by the Tuscarora Club of Millbrook. Rainbow trout were first detected in the creek in 1976. Special regulations allow for a daily limit of 5 trout/any size per angler. Fishing is open April 1st through September 30th, the season closes two weeks prior to the statewide trout closure to protect spawning Pepacton Reservoir brown trout.

Survey purpose was to evaluate whether closing the trout season two weeks earlier than the statewide closure is necessary to protect reservoir trout that are known to be early spawners. A Smith Root LR-20B backpack shocker was used on 10/13/18 for 200 linear feet of stream at the mouth. A total of 15 trout (4.4-15.6 in, 0.04-1.40 lbs) were collected, which included 4 rainbow trout (4.4-8.0 in, 0.04-0.17 lbs), 1 ripe female brook trout (15.3 in, 1.21 lbs) and 10 brown trout (5.7-15.6 in, 0.06-1.40 lbs) of which one was a spent female (14.3 in, 1.03 lbs) and one was a ripe male (15.6 in, 1.4 lbs). Additionally, multiple large trout were observed in the large, deep culvert pool, but were not collected. One reservoir male 18-20" was observed but not collected, just below the culvert pool. Two redds were observed at tailout of the culvert pool.

Figure 1: Length distribution of brown, rainbow and brook trout captured on Mill Creek, 2017.



Based on the presence of spawning trout documented in this survey and in surveys conducted on other Pepacton Reservoir tributaries at this time, it was recommended that the existing special regulations remain unchanged.

