

**Unnamed Stream General Biological Survey # 519070:
Tom Shanahan, Region 5 Fisheries**

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Unnamed in our database, this stream (C-25-26-31), is the outlet from Holcomb Pond located outside of the Village of Lake Placid in the town of North Elba, Essex County. The stream flows into the West Branch of the Ausable River and is part of the Champlain watershed. The stream banks are entirely on public land; the mouth is located in the Saranac Lakes Wild Forest with the remainder of the stream in the Sentinel Range Wilderness Area. This was a general survey to update information on the fishery since an earlier survey in 1965 and is also part of a larger effort to look at the distribution of wild brook trout in the Ausable system. The stream is not currently stocked.

We sampled a single site above the River Road crossing with a backpack electrofishing unit in August 2019. The stream was about 13 feet wide in a section that was just under 200 feet long and featured a full overhead tree canopy. The substrate was mostly cobble and gravel in the sampled segment, but the water was very dark and had few defined pools. The water temperature was 67 °F, considerably warmer than nearby Roaring Brook (survey # 519069) which was surveyed the same day. Captured in the survey were wild brook and brown trout along with blacknose dace and longnose dace (Table 1).

Table 1. Numbers caught and size ranges of fish from Holcomb Pond outlet in 2019.

Species	Number caught	Length range (inches)
Brook trout	4	2.6 – 5.4
Brown trout	1	6.9
Blacknose dace	20	2.0 – 3.0
Longnose dace	2	3.1 – 3.7

Though the stream produced wild brook trout, the catch rate and lengths (Figure 1) were disappointing relative to other Adirondack brook trout streams. The stream has its origin in higher terrain, but draining 23-acre Holcomb Pond and its associated wetlands could have a warming effect. Our sampling site was in a low-gradient area below the pond. A possible future survey objective could be to sample upstream of the influence of Holcomb Pond to investigate if water temperatures and habitat are more suitable for wild brook trout. No stocking or other management is proposed at this time, other than periodic monitoring of species composition and water temperatures. The stream is governed by Statewide Angling Regulations and that will continue.



Figure 1. Holcomb Pond outlet length frequency distribution

