

Bradley Pond Biological Survey (Survey # 521069)
Tom Shanahan, Region 5 Fisheries

3/28/2022

Bradley Pond (Pond# 717-UH) is a small (approximately 9 acres) pond that sits at 2,900 feet on the eastern flank of the Santanoni Mountains. It is located in the Town of Newcomb in Essex County and is in the Upper Hudson drainage; its outlet forming Santanoni Brook and flowing into Henderson Lake. Though privately owned until recently, the pond is now entirely within the High Peaks Wilderness and open to the public. There is no vehicle access; reaching the pond requires a hike of more than four miles on a foot trail. No fish or chemistry data had previously been recorded, so this was the initial biological survey for our records. Bradley Pond is not currently stocked.

The pond was surveyed in September 2021 using our standard suite of sampling gear: 150' experimental gill net, 30' minnow net and a metal minnow trap. No fish were captured or observed. Despite the lack of fish, the nearly 50-foot-deep pond had very good water chemistry. The pH was 6.3 and the acid neutralizing capacity (ANC) was 24 $\mu\text{eq/l}$ along with water temperatures and dissolved oxygen values that were very favorable for brook trout. Water samples from two depths (5 and 30 feet) were also analyzed for silica levels. Silica values were 4.26 and 3.85 mg/l at the respective depths.

Current habitat and chemistry conditions in Bradley Pond appear to be highly conducive for supporting trout, so management recommendation is to initiate a stocking policy for the Windfall heritage strain of brook trout. High silica levels in a pond can indicate a strong influx of ground water, which is an important component in a water's ability to sustain a brook trout population through natural reproduction. The silica readings for Bradley Pond are on the high side, so realizing a self-reproducing population of brook trout seems promising. Another biological survey should be scheduled in a few years to assess the stocked brook trout growth and natural reproduction. As is the case for all waters in the High Peaks Wilderness, the use of baitfish is prohibited; the pond will otherwise be subject to statewide angling regulations.

