

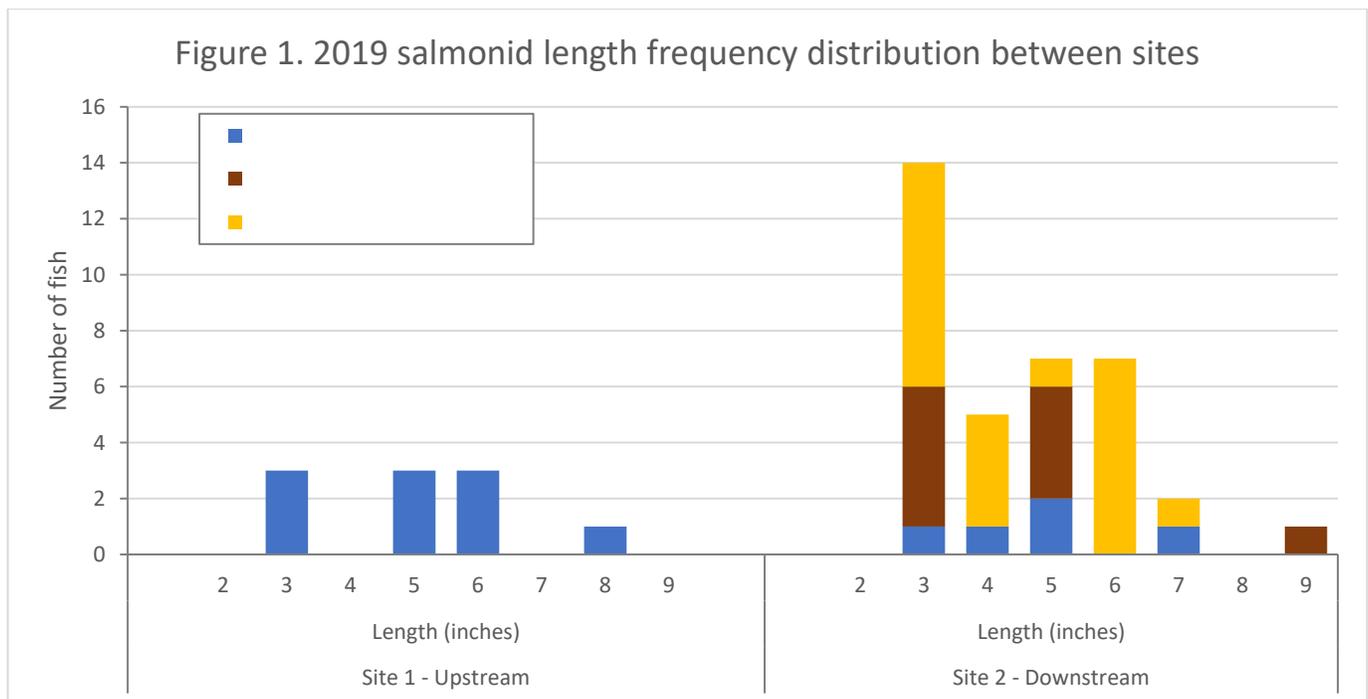
**North Fork Boquet River General Biological Survey #519075:
Tom Shanahan, Region 5 Fisheries**

03/31/2020

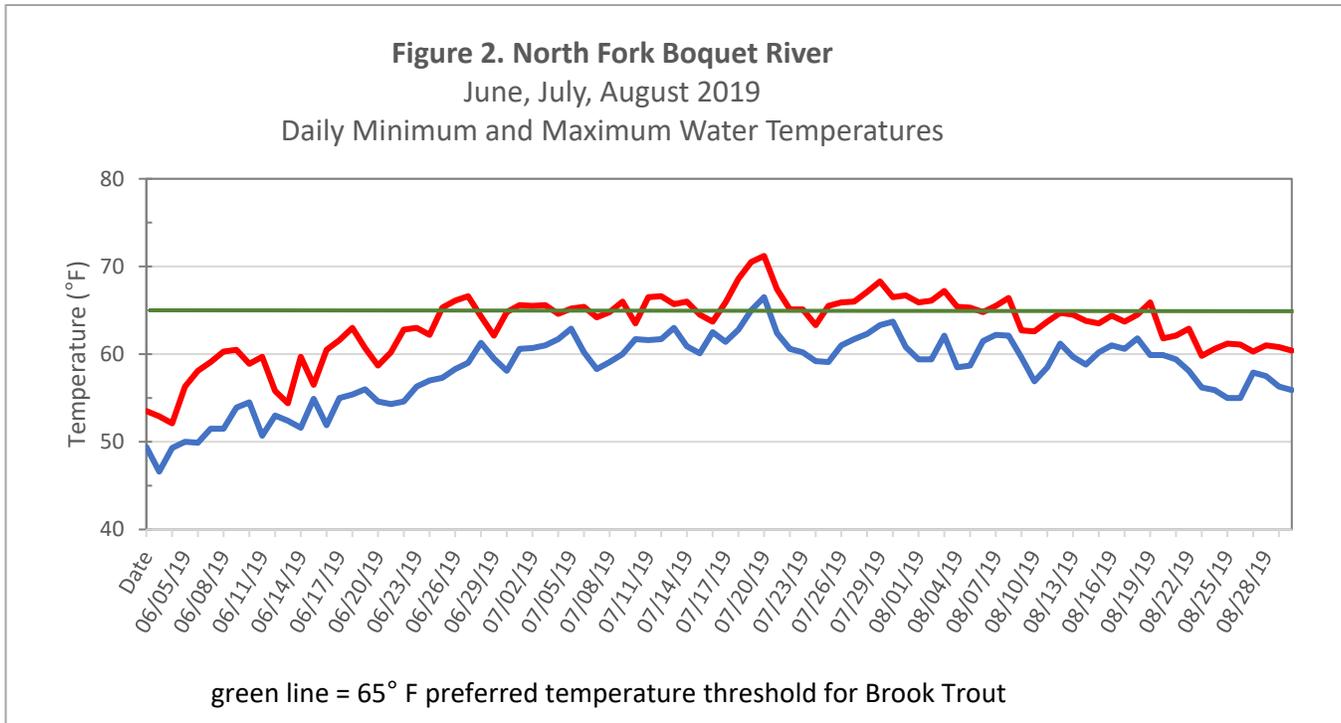
The North Fork of the Boquet River (C-48-67) is a tributary to the main branch of Boquet River in the Town of Keene in Essex County. It is in the Champlain watershed and the entire stream is located in either the Giant Mountain or High Peaks Wilderness areas. The stream originates on the flanks of the Dix Mountain range and is 20 to 30 feet wide in the areas we sampled. The stream has very clear water and features enormous boulders and numerous pools. There is easy public access along Route 73 and also on foot trails leading away from the highway. This was a general survey to collect updated information since the last fisheries survey in 1929 and is also part of a larger effort to look at the distribution of wild brook trout in the Boquet system. The North Fork is not stocked other than receiving landlocked Atlantic salmon fry as part of the Lake Champlain salmon restoration on its lower reaches.

We sampled two sites on the stream using backpack electrofishing units in August 2019. The upstream site was above Route 73 and beyond the stocked salmon area. This site was approximately 1.5 miles above the lower section and had better overhead tree canopy coverage, but both locations possessed excellent salmonid habitat. We caught 10 wild brook trout (Figure 1.) and three blacknose dace with a size range of 2 – 2.9 inches. The lower site was near the mouth where we collected wild brook (n=5) and brown (n=10) trout along with landlocked Atlantic salmon (n=21) and 18 blacknose dace with a size range of 2 – 3.1 inches.

Figure 1. 2019 salmonid length frequency distribution between sites



A temperature recorder was deployed on the North Fork just upstream of our lower sampling site for the summer of 2019 (Figure 2.). This represents a very respectable temperature profile in this era of warmer than average summers. Daily maximum water temperatures were generally at or below the mid-60's °F and surpassed 70 °F on just two days. Water temperatures at the upper location, with greater overhead tree cover, were likely even cooler.



The North Fork of the Boquet River features a mixture of very good habitat and water temperatures and natural reproduction of brook trout was discovered at both sampled sites. No additional stocking or other management action is required at this time. We will occasionally resurvey the stream to monitor water temperatures and species composition. The North Fork is governed by Statewide Angling Regulations and that will continue