

**Alder Creek CROTS Survey (Survey #: 621007)**  
**Les Resseguie, Region 6 Fisheries**

6/8/2022

Alder Creek (ONT-66-11-P26-24-14-29) is a 13.8-mile-long tributary to the East Branch of Fish Creek in the Towns of Lewis and West Turin, Lewis County. This stream is classified as C(T) by NYSDEC Division of Water (i.e., suitable for fishing and trout present). NYSDEC has a 5.2-mile trout stocked reach defined as “From the confluence with East Branch Fish Creek upstream to Michigan Mills Road”, with an annual stocking policy of 1,395 yearling and 155 two-year-old brown trout. Public access is available through 4.85 miles of Public Fishing Rights (PFR) and two parcels of Lesser Wilderness State Forest. The fishing regulation for trout in streams is an open season of April 1 – October 15, a daily creel of five fish with no more than two over 12 inches; and an October 16 – March 31 catch and release only season, artificial lures only. Current angling effort is unknown yet is likely low. In June 2021, a Catch Rate Oriented Trout Stocking (CROTS) survey was conducted at five sites within the stocking reach. Alder Creek has never been sampled using the CROTS methodology. This survey was conducted to evaluate the current status of the stream and trout population, and to determine the appropriate management category for current conditions as outlined in the New York State Trout Stream Management Plan (TSMP; NYSDEC 2020).

Using backpack electrofishing, five sites were surveyed along the stocking reach on Alder Creek June 23 through June 25, 2021. Alder Creek was stocked with 1,400 yearling and 230 two-year old brown trout on May 27, 2021, and despite surveying 1,807 feet of stream with 2.22 hours of effort, no brown trout were collected. Six wild brook trout (4-9 inches) were collected at two sites in the Lesser Wilderness State Forest along with other species common to the area (Table 1). A large group of presumably stocked two-year old brown trout were observed at the stocking location on Sweeney Road. A large beaver dam appeared to be preventing downstream movement making the trout very vulnerable to sampling; therefore, it was decided not to survey that location to prevent any potential mortalities. The uppermost site at Michigan Mills road likely has low fishing effort because the stream is very small, and banks have a high density of alders.

Based on 2021 survey results, we recommend that the bounds of the stocking reach be redefined, and stocking numbers adjusted, to exclude the upper section of stream within the State Forest where wild brook trout were found. A stream must have a minimum of 75 angler hours/acre/year to meet the criteria for the Stocked Management Category according to the TSMP. We recommend that an angler survey be conducted on this stocking reach to verify annual angling effort meets these criteria.



**Table 1. Fish species and numbers collected during the 2021 Alder Creek CROTS Survey.**

Common Name	Number
Brook Trout	6
Eastern Blacknose Dace	121
Common Shiner	105
Creek Chub	54
Cutlips Minnow	92
Fantail Darter	14
Green Sunfish	28
Hornyhead Chub	31
Lepomis species	1
Longnose Dace	10
Margined Madtom	11
Northern Hog Sucker	8
Pumpkinseed	1
Redside Dace	15
White Sucker	41

**Literature Cited**

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