

Sauquoit Creek Trout Survey (Survey 617202) David Erway, Region 6 Fisheries

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Sauquoit Creek originates in southern Oneida County and flows generally north for 21 miles before meeting the Mohawk River. A 12.6 mile stretch of the creek between Cassville and New York Mills is managed as a mixed wild and stocked brown trout fishery. The stocked section is split into two reaches. The upstream reach (T11-T29) is between Cassville and Chadwicks. The downstream reach (T4-T11) is from Chadwicks to New York Mills. The stocking policy for 2017 includes 6,150 yearling and 330 2-year-old brown trout. This stocking policy was based on survey data collected in 1992 and calculated using the CROTS (catch rate-oriented trout stocking) model. An electrofishing survey was conducted in May 2017 and repeated in August 2017. All of the stocked trout were marked with a fin clip prior to stocking to easily identify them during the survey.

One hundred ninety-seven brown trout ranging from 3.3 to 15.7 inches (average length was 8.1 inches) were sampled from four sites within the stocked section. These four sites were surveyed in May and repeated in August. Overall, the catch was comprised of 31% stocked brown trout and 69% wild brown trout. Wild trout were 50% of the catch in May as compared to 93% of the catch in August. Two wild brook trout were also collected and measured 6.9 and 4.4 inches.

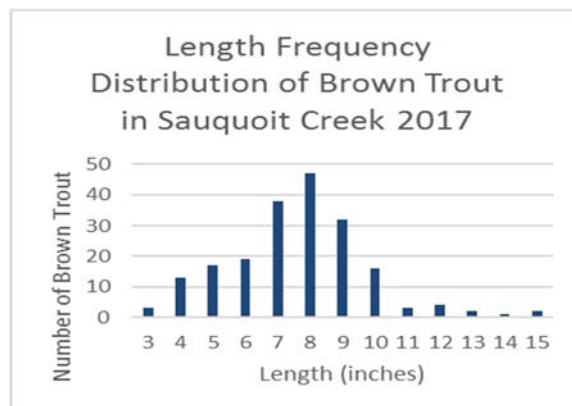


Table 1. Biomass (lbs./acre) of wild brown trout

Section	1992	2017
T11-T29	18.02	37.65
T4-T11	1.2	13.69

Table 2. Total Brown Trout Caught Per Month in 2017

Trout Origin	May	August
Wild Trout	54	84
Stocked Trout	53	6

Despite seeing a sharp decline in stocked trout throughout the summer, this survey shows an increase in wild trout yearlings between May and August which provide angling opportunities throughout the season. This seasonal trend is widely observed in New York trout streams (Alexiades et al. 2014). Estimated biomass of wild brown trout has increased between 1992 and 2017. Along with this increase in biomass, there has been a general decrease in fishing pressure. Based on the results of this survey, Sauquoit Creek stocking must be adjusted to account for these changes.

Literature Cited

Alexiades, A., B. Marcy-Quay, P. Sullivan, and C. Kraft. 2014. Evaluation of the NYSDEC Catch Rate Oriented Trout Stocking Program: Project Report. Ithaca: Cornell University.



