

East Branch Salmon River CROTS Survey (Survey 719042)

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On September 12th and 14th 2019 the Region 7 Fisheries staff completed a CROTS survey on the East Branch of the Salmon River. There has been one Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (2011) and one CROTS survey (1995) completed in the past. The justification for the survey was the 25+ year gap in CROTS surveys as well as angler observations of declining trout populations.

Two sites, Waterbury and Ryan roads, were sampled in 2019. A single electrofishing sampling run was completed at each of the sites, but no trout were captured at either location. A single brown trout was reportedly observed at site 2 but could not be verified. A third site was surveyed during the previous CROTS survey, but the property is now heavily posted against trespass. There were numerous other fish species present, but all in low numbers. The most numerous species was blacknose dace with 23 fish captured, followed by fantail darter with six and cutlips minnow, smallmouth bass, and longnose dace all with four fish total. Because there were so few fish in the survey areas, we collected all the fish observed by the netters.

The stream has been impacted by recent flood events, and merganser predation is also a likely culprit for the low trout catches. Smallmouth bass migrating upstream from the reservoir also likely impact the trout population through competition and predation. Bank stabilization and habitat improvement projects are sorely needed on this formerly high-quality trout stream. In stream cover seems to be the limiting factor. Recording thermographs placed in the river in 2014 did not reveal frequent or long duration water temperatures that would be stressful or lethal for trout.

Species	Site	
	1	2
Cutlips minnow	2	2
Smallmouth bass	4	0
Blacknose dace	8	15
Longnose dace	3	1
Bluntnose minnow	1	0
Mimic shiner	0	2
Fantail darter	1	5
White sucker	1	0
Pumpkinseed	1	0
Mottled sculpin	1	0
Tesselated darter	1	0

