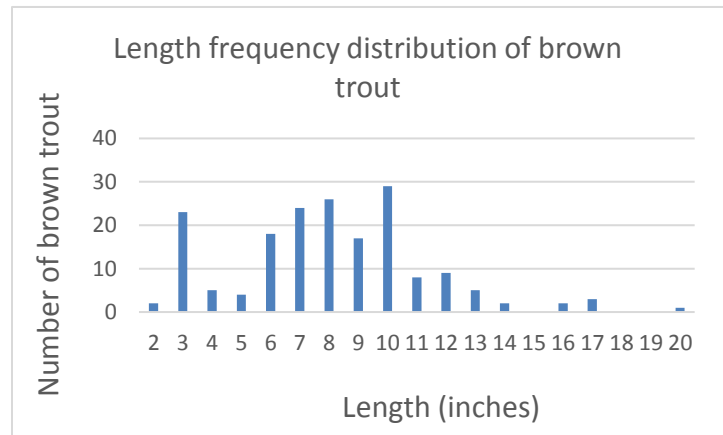


Cohocton River CROTS Survey (Survey #:807020)
Pete Austerman, Region 8 Fisheries

12/6/17

The Cohocton River originates in southern Livingston County and generally flows southeast through Steuben County for 58 miles before entering the Chemung River. A 22 mile stretch of the Cohocton River between the villages of Atlanta and Bath is managed as a mixed wild and stocked brown trout fishery. This section (stream widths range from 20 to 60 feet) is highly accessible and contains about 18 miles of public fishing rights easements. In 2007, the stocking policy was 13,500 yearling and 2,100 2-year-old brown trout. This stocking policy was based on sample data from 1987 and calculated using the CROTS (catch-rate-oriented-trout-stocking) model. An electrofishing survey was completed in September 2007 to evaluate the current fish community and assess possible trout population trends over the 20 year period since the initial CROTS survey was conducted.

One hundred seventy-eight brown trout ranging from 2.7 to 20.2 inches (average length was 8.5 inches) were sampled from nine sites within the stocked portion of the river. Large adult trout were found at most sites. The density of brown trout over 12 inches and over 15 inches averaged 37 and 11 per mile, respectively. Estimated brown trout biomass was 38.5 pounds per acre, which is similar to estimates from popular trout streams nearby such as Oatka Creek and Cayuta Creek. Eighty one percent of the brown trout sampled were of wild origin. Twenty seven young of year (2 to 4 inch) brown trout were collected in 2007 compared to none in 1987. At one site, 27 wild brook trout were also collected. Twenty-six non-trout fish species were collected; mostly representing trout forage rather than species known to compete with trout for food and habitat. Trout competitors were generally more abundant at the downstream sites.



Comparing results from sites that were consistently sampled during the last three surveys suggests that the average biomass of brown trout, particularly wild brown trout, has generally increased since 1987. Although a large proportion of the trout stocked in spring 2007 appeared to be gone by the time we sampled in September, there is a healthy wild brown trout fishery available to anglers throughout the year. Based on the results of this survey and a 2007 angler creel survey, Cohocton River stocking rates must be adjusted to account for the increased abundance of wild brown trout and decrease in fishing pressure.

