

Bay State Brook Trout Population Evaluation #918011
Scott Cornett, Region Nine Fisheries

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On June 21, 2018 Region 9 Fisheries Staff conducted a trout stream survey at one site on Bay State Brook, a tributary of lower Red House Brook. The stream is located in Allegany State Park and on private lands, in southern Cattaraugus County. Bay State Brook is stocked each spring with hatchery yearling brown trout and also contains a limited population of wild brown trout. This stream has been surveyed by DEC numerous times from the 1930s to the early 2000s. From the 1930s to the 1980s, it supported a limited wild brook trout population. Beginning in the early 1960s and continuing through the early 2000s, a very limited wild brown trout population was found in the upper half of the creek. No wild brook trout had been found in the stream since the 1980s. Extensive beaver impoundments in the headwaters of the stream were believed to be leading to greatly elevated water temperatures, while excessive sedimentation in the creek was attributed to the beaver activity and the dirt park road paralleling the stream for its entire length.

Our survey site this year was located 0.2 miles below T-2A, just upstream of the State Park boundary. We electrofished 500 feet of stream having an average width of 15 feet and a flow of two cfs. Adult trout habitat was very good with several pools containing larger woody debris shelter. We captured five adult wild brown trout ranging from 5.7-13 inches and one adult wild brook trout (8.6 inches). In addition to the trout, we captured blacknose dace, mottled sculpin, creek chub, fantail darter, common shiner and white sucker. The brook trout we captured was the first one seen since the 1986 survey. While their abundance (63 fish/mile) was low, it was encouraging to see at least a slight increase in the wild brown trout abundance. This along with finding a wild brook trout may indicate some improvement in the water quality of this stream. Recent angler reports also appear to indicate that brook trout are again being captured in Bay State Brook. No changes to stocking or regulations is recommended at this time.

