

Indian Creek Stream Survey
Scott Cornett, Region Nine Fisheries

12/11/2020

On August 31st, a section of Indian Creek, located near Andover in Allegany County was sampled by electrofishing for the purpose of temporarily moving wild brook trout and other fish from a section of stream where a project was being done to improve fish passage through a driveway culvert. This stream was known to support an abundant wild brook trout population (survey 999404) and the improvement of fish passage at this culvert was considered a high priority to maintain the strength and genetic health of this trout population. The ability of fish to pass this culvert was improved by the installation of an engineered rock riffle that eliminated the nearly two-foot outlet drop of the culvert (Figures 1 and 2). This project was funded by a USFWS fish passage grant and the work performed by the Steuben County SWCD.

Using a single battery backpack electrofishing unit, we carefully sampled 150 feet of stream below the culvert prior to the project being started. This included the 15-foot long culvert plunge pool and 135 feet of riffle downstream. In this section we captured 71 adult wild brook trout, 50 young-of-year brook trout, 25 mottled sculpin and five blacknose dace. All captured fish were moved to holding tubs located in a pool upstream of the project area and were returned to the stream following the completion of the project. This small stream had an excellent flow even during an ongoing drought, which likely explains the high abundance of brook trout. This stream is entirely on private land and anglers need to obtain owner permission to fish.

Figure 1. Culvert on Indian Creek impassable to fish prior to construction of a rock riffle.



Figure 2. Culvert and engineered rock riffle on Indian Creek following project completion.

