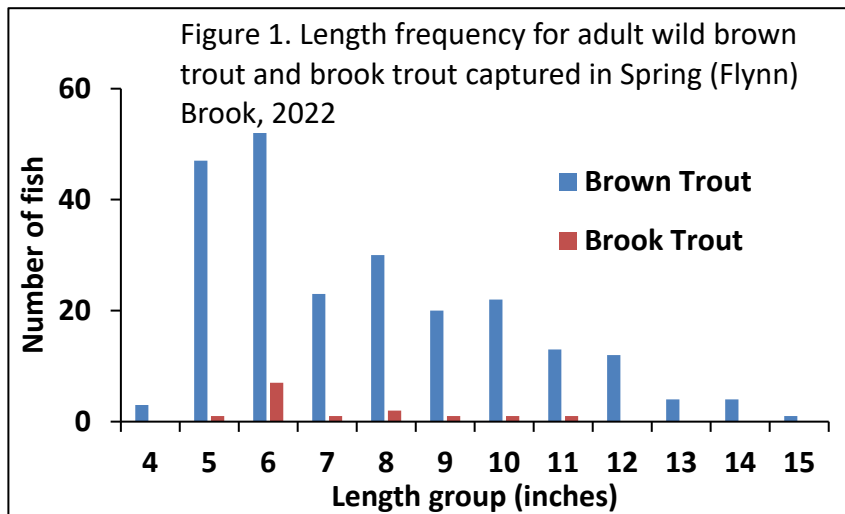


Spring (Flynn) Brook Trout Population Evaluation

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In late June 2022, Region 9 Fisheries staff conducted a survey to estimate the wild brown trout and brook trout population in Spring Brook (also known as Flynn Brook). This tributary to upper Cattaraugus Creek is located in southern Wyoming County. The stream from its mouth to Youngers Road is managed with a “Wild-Quality” designation, having a year-round open season, including catch and release – artificial lures only from October 16 through March 31. From April 1 through October 15, three fish may be harvested, only one of which can be >12 inches. In 2022, as part of New York State’s trout stream management plan, the stream was sampled by electrofishing at four sites totaling, 2,153 feet. Our site at Sullivan Road had previously been sampled seven times from 1996 through 2020, while the other three sites (below Allen Road, above Allen Road and below Youngers Road) had been sampled one time each. To estimate the trout population abundance and biomass, we utilized two electrofishing passes in 2016-2022 surveys; prior to this we utilized single pass methodology. Spring Brook is a small (average width 12 feet), but highly fertile stream. There are 0.9 miles of public fishing rights easements on the stream, with other sections open for angling on privately owned, non-posted lands.



In our 2022 sampling, we captured 231 adult brown trout ranging in length from 4.4 to 15.9 inches (Figure 1) and averaging 8.0 inches. We also captured 14 adult brook trout ranging from 5.7 – 11.0 inches. One adult wild rainbow trout was also captured. Based on our catch at all four sites, the 2022 adult brown trout average abundance estimate was 582 fish/mile (±37) and the average adult brook trout abundance estimate was 34 fish/mile. The

adult brown trout biomass for all four sites was 92 lbs/acre, while for adult brook trout it was 4 lbs/acre.

The abundance of adult brown trout at the Sullivan Road site in 2022, where we had eight years of survey data was, by far, the highest we have measured at 716 fish/mile (Figure 2). Adult brown trout abundance at the other three sites ranged from 300-696 fish/mile. Adult brook trout are found in the sampled reach of this stream at much lower abundance, apparently being limited by competition with wild brown trout and warm summer water temperatures. Sampling farther upstream and in two tributaries indicate this is where most brook trout exist and reproduce. This is only the second time we have sampled wild rainbow trout in Flynn Brook, with one also being captured in 1996. This species apparently occasionally strays into the stream from farther down



the Cattaraugus Creek watershed where they are found much more abundantly. Young-of-year brown and brook trout have never been found to be abundant at our sampling sites on this stream, with most reproduction apparently happening in other areas of the stream or in tributaries. The estimated total abundance (616 fish/mile) and biomass (96 lbs/acre) of yearling and older wild brown and brook trout in this reach of Spring (Flynn) Brook in 2022 well exceeded the level needed to qualify for inclusion in the “Wild-Quality” management type, according to the new trout stream management plan for New York streams. Based on the results of this year’s survey, it appears the stream should continue to provide good fishing for both wild brown trout and the occasional wild brook trout for anglers wishing to fish in a small stream setting.

