

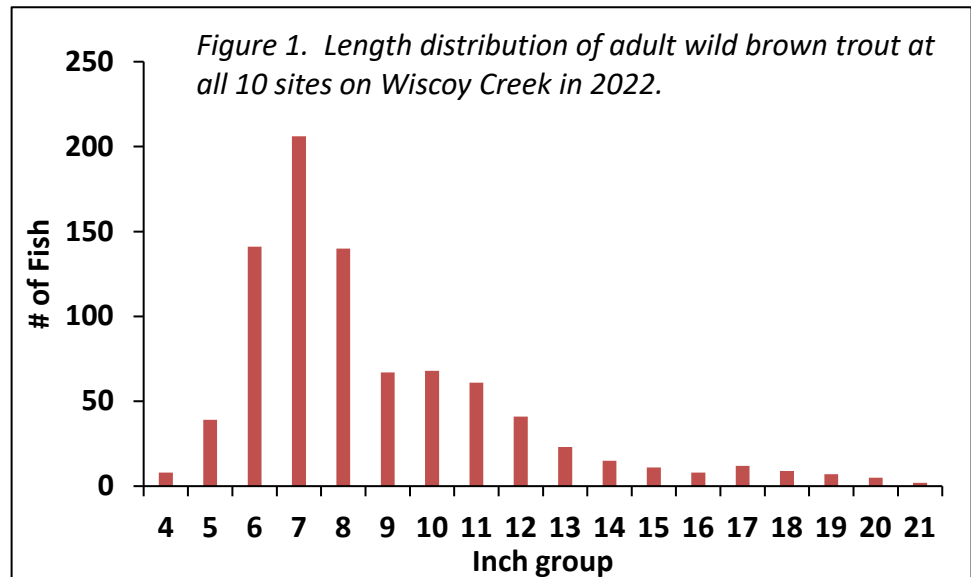
Wiscoy Creek Trout Population Estimate

Scott Cornett, Region Nine Fisheries

12/19/2022

Wiscoy Creek flows for over 22 miles through southern Wyoming and northern Allegany Counties before joining the Genesee River. The stream, averaging 30 feet wide, provides a high-quality fishery for wild brown trout. There is abundant angler access with public fishing rights easements totaling 12.6 miles. The majority of Wiscoy Creek has been managed solely as a wild trout fishery since 1972, and currently is managed with a “Wild-Premier” designation from the mouth to Flynn Road, 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, one fish/day may be harvested of any size. In 2022, as part of New York State’s trout stream management plan, the stream was sampled in the “Wild-Premier” section by electrofishing at 10 sites, totaling 5,480 feet of stream, for the purpose of estimating the adult wild trout population abundance and biomass. Nine of the ten sites have been sampled from 6 to 15 years between 1978 and 2022. The site at Albro Road was new in 2022. From 2016-2020, as part of regional monitoring efforts, the stream was sampled at only four sites per year and at six sites in 2001. In all sampling years, to estimate adult trout population abundance, we utilized two electrofishing passes.

In the 2022 survey, we captured 863 yearling and older (adult) wild brown trout. Adult brown trout ranged in length from 4 to 21 inches (Figure 1), with an average length of 9.1 inches. Table 1 presents the number of adult brown trout found on a per mile basis at each of our sampling sites for 2022. They are compared with values in 2006, 2009, 2012 and 2015 surveys. For all 10 sites combined, the



average abundance of adult brown trout in 2022 was 921 fish/mile and the average biomass was 100 lbs/acre. These values well exceeded the minimum criteria for inclusion in the “Wild-Premier” management category.

Overall, adult brown trout abundance in Wiscoy Creek has decreased substantially from values recorded in the 1990s through the mid-2000s. Despite apparent long-term declining trends, we did observe a leveling off, or slight increase of the population in recent survey years (Table 1). Long-term declines were likely due to increased predation (mammalian, avian or from larger trout), declines of in-stream habitat quantity and quality, declines in water quality or some



combination of these factors. In Wiscoy Creek, we now capture a higher abundance of large wild brown trout (>15 inches), particularly since 2009, than in earlier surveys. The abundance of brown trout >15 inches in 2022 was the highest we have measured in any sampling year (52/mile). The increase in larger trout abundance may be a product of lower overall trout abundance (leading to increased growth rates) and/or higher rates of release of these fish by anglers than in the past. Based on this year's sampling, it appears Wiscoy Creek will continue to provide good fishing for anglers wishing to pursue wild brown trout, however, catch rates will likely be lower than anglers experienced under higher trout abundances in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Table 1. Adult wild brown trout population abundance estimates (number of fish per mile) in Wiscoy Creek surveys 2006-2022.

Site	2022	2015	2012	2009	2006
Village of Wiscoy	929	163	361	537	1046*
Pond Road	563	315	368	84	216*
Scout Camp	1221	480	1133	947	1300
Grey Cabin	645	414	509	412	1254
Fairgrounds	956	289	1404	1105	1596
Albro Road	978	---	---	---	---
Above Trout Brook	1035	456	1272	811	2602
Barlow/Rt 39	704	1156	1670	1480	1705
Hillside Road	1000	806	1602	1581	1935
Old Rt 39	910	416	742	1361	1310
Average of all sites	921	486	1001	906	1419

**Indicates sites were done in 2007, due to high flows in 2006.*