

Chubb River Biological Survey (Survey # 517065)
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The Chubb River is located in the Town of North Elba in Essex County and originates in the High Peaks region of the Adirondacks. It is part of the Champlain drainage and is a tributary of the West Branch of the Ausable River. Our sampling site and much of the river upstream is within the High Peaks Wilderness and thus available to the public. This section of river has a long-standing stocking policy for yearling brook trout. The lowest section of the Chubb is stocked with yearling brown trout. The current effort is essentially a duplication of an earlier survey from 1996 at the same location, and part of a larger effort to look at the distribution of wild brook trout in the Ausable system.

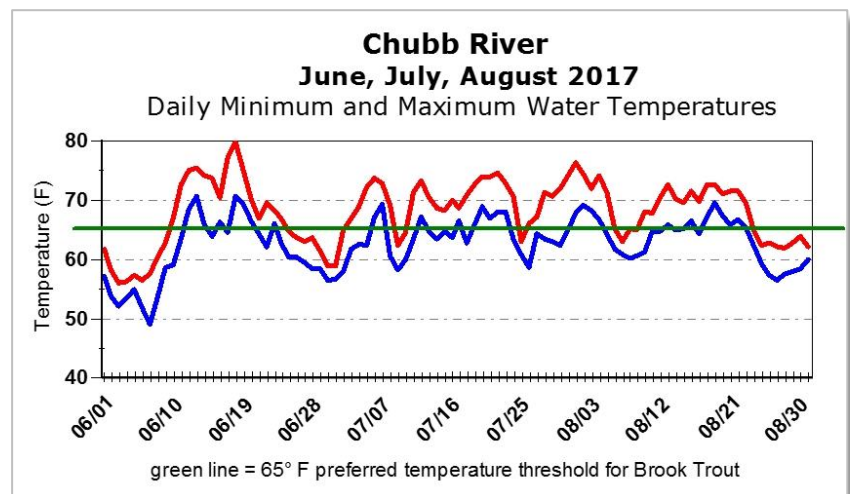
We surveyed a single site just above the upstream-most road crossing using backpack electrofishing units in August 2017. Only four brook trout, all wild, were caught with a size range of 3 to 6 ½ inches. Other species included lake chub, common shiner, eastern blacknose dace, longnose dace and rock bass. The '96 survey had a generally similar species composition, but did better for brook trout (Table 1). The most disturbing difference between the two surveys is the presence of rock bass, which had not been previously documented in the upper part of the river.

Table 1. Comparison of brook trout numbers and size ranges from the Chubb River from two separate sampling events.

Year	# caught	# wild	range (in.)
2017	4	4	3.0 - 6.5
1996	20	20	1.5 - 7.5

A temperature recorder placed at this site during the summer of 2017 revealed that the water temperatures reached the mid-70's (°F) on several occasions. Although there was good overhead forest cover at the sampling site, the river corridor is more open upstream with extensive wetlands before reaching steeper and forested terrain.

The presence of rock bass combined with elevated water temperatures are ominous signs for the Chubb River brook trout fishery. We will maintain the current stocking policy, but continue to monitor species



composition and water temperatures in the future to determine if the river can support a brook trout population.