

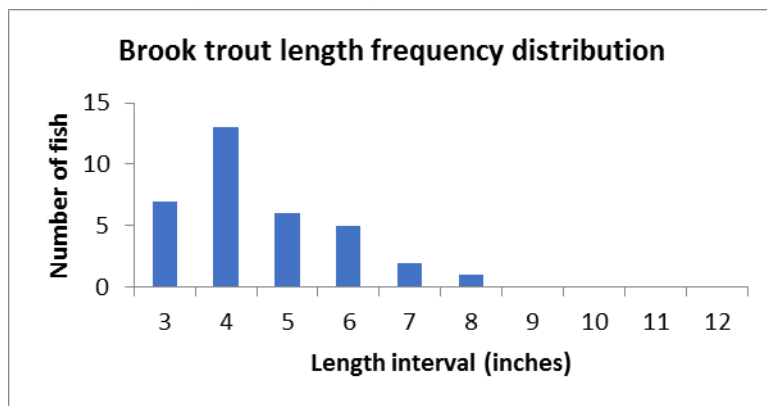
Little Black Brook Biological Survey (Survey # 517063)

Tom Shanahan, Region 5 Fisheries

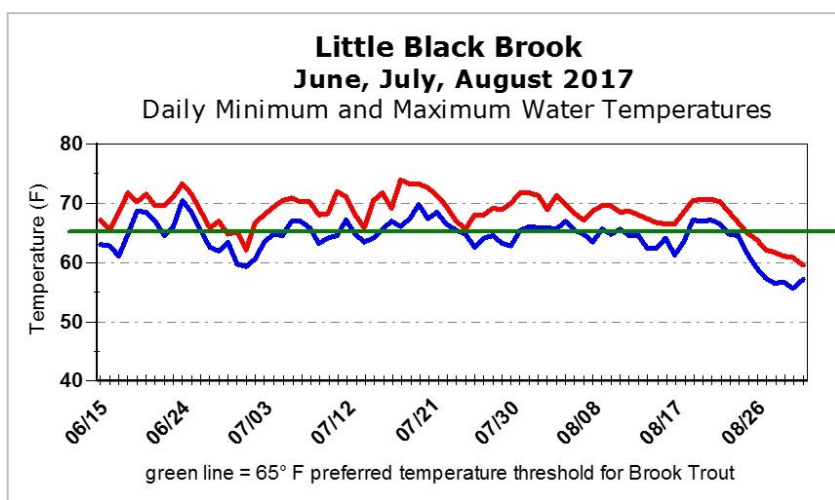
8/8/2018

Little Black Brook (C-25-26-5) is in the Town of Black Brook in Clinton County. The sampled area is in a mixture of state (Taylor Pond Wild Forest) and private lands. It is part of the Champlain drainage and is a tributary of the West Branch of the Ausable River. This was a general survey to check if conditions have changed since the previous survey in 1996. Although stocked with yearling brook trout at the time of the 1996 sampling, the stream was deemed to have sufficient natural reproduction and is no longer stocked. The survey is also part of a larger effort to look at the distribution of wild brook trout in the Ausable system.

Three sites were sampled using backpack electrofishing units in August 2017. A total of nine species was captured across the three sites: brook trout, common shiner, northern redbelly dace, eastern blacknose dace, longnose dace, creek chub, white sucker, pumpkinseed and slimy sculpin. This is similar to the species composition from the '96 survey, but the pumpkinseed is a troubling new addition, since it is a warmwater species not typically found in an Adirondack trout stream. All the brook trout were wild fish, 34 in total, and ranged from 3 to 9 inches long. The overall brook trout numbers are also very close to the '96 results, but there were fewer fish in the lower two sections.



The upstream-most site in this survey had complete overhead canopy coverage and should be the most resistant to warming temperatures; it contributed the bulk of the brook trout catch. The lower two sites were wider with less shading and are likely more susceptible to warming. Water temperature data from the lowest survey site indicate warmer than optimal temperatures during much of the summer period.



No management changes are proposed at this juncture, but we will continue to monitor this stream to assess its species composition and water temperatures. Brook trout may be pushed



further upstream and there will likely be greater incursions from warmwater species if water temperatures increase.