

Plumb Brook CROTS Survey (Survey #622306)
Anthony Bruno, Region 6 Fisheries

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Plumb Brook (SL-2-45) is a 19.3-mile tributary to the Grass River. It is in the Towns of Russell and Fine, St. Lawrence County. It is classified as a C(T) stream (i.e., suitable for fishing and trout present). Plumb Brook has a 17-mile stocked reach that extends from the confluence of the Grass River to 154 yards upstream of Irish Hill Road; however, only 5.15 miles has public access through Public Fishing Rights, Silver Hill State Forest and Whippoorwill Corners State Forest. Statewide Inland Trout Stream regulations allow harvest of trout from April 1 to October 15, no minimum length, daily limit of 5 with only 2 longer than 12 inches; and an October 16 – March 31 catch and release, artificial lures only season

In July 2022, a Catch Rate Oriented Trout Stocking (CROTS) Survey was conducted at four sites within the stocked reach to evaluate the status of the stream and trout population, and to determine future management actions. Plumb Brook was last sampled using the CROTS methodology in 1998.

In July 2022, four sites were surveyed in the stocked reach of Plumb Brook using backpack electrofishing. A total of 19 stocked brown trout, eight wild brook trout were caught, and other fish species common to the area (Table 1). Determination of origin (stocked vs. wild) was made by size and field observations of deformed or eroded fins.

The CROTS model estimated a wild trout biomass of 1.37 lbs/acre and a wild trout yearling or older density of 18.7 fish/acre (86 fish/mile). We recommend continued stocking of Plumb Brook where Public Fishing Rights, Silver Hill State Forest and Whippoorwill Corners State Forest provides public access. Additional stocking is pending verification that the public can access the stocked reach from private property. Currently, NYSDEC is verifying that anglers have access to stocked trout stream reaches on private lands along DEC stocked waters. We will continue to stock waters where the public can access a stream for fishing. We recommend that the stream classification be upgraded from C(T) to C(TS) (i.e., Trout Present to Trout Spawning) given the capture of wild brook trout.

Table 1. Fish species and numbers collected during the 2022 Hopkinton Brook CROTS Survey.

| <u>Species</u> | <u>Number</u> |
|------------------------|---------------|
| Brook Trout | 8 |
| Brown Bullhead | 7 |
| Brown Trout | 19 |
| Common Shiner | 55 |
| Creek Chub | 14 |
| Cutlips Minnow | 26 |
| Eastern Blacknose Dace | 35 |
| Longnose Dace | 41 |
| Northern Redbelly Dace | 1 |
| Pumpkinseed | 4 |
| White Sucker | 3 |

