Oatka Creek, south of the Village of Warsaw in northern Wyoming County, provides a fishery for wild brown trout. It is also stocked each spring with hatchery brook and brown trout. Public fishing access on Oatka Creek is only on privately owned, non-posted lands. In 2018, as part of region-wide trout population monitoring, Oatka Creek was sampled by electrofishing at two sites, Munger’s Mills Road and at the Route 19 bridge below the falls in Rock Glen, totaling 760 feet of stream. Both sites had been sampled previously, in 1991, 2001, 2013, 2016 and 2017. To estimate the trout population abundance, we utilized two electrofishing passes in 2013-2018, prior to this we utilized single pass CROTS methodology.

In 2018, at our two sites, we captured 63 yearling and older (adult) wild brown trout along with 36 stocked yearling brown trout. No stocked brook trout were captured. Adult wild brown trout ranged in length from 4-14.6 inches (Figure 1), with an average length of 8.4 inches. Stocked brown trout ranged from 4-11 inches (Figure 1). At the Route 19 site, we found a moderate adult wild brown trout abundance of 397 fish/mile (±15) (Figure 2). At our site at Munger’s Mill Road in 2018, we found a slightly higher abundance of adult wild brown trout (474 fish/mile (±26)) (Figure 2). No young-of-year trout were captured at either site and it is believed that most reproduction occurs in the areas above Rock Glen and in upstream tributaries.

Wild brown trout abundance at the Route 19 site in 2018 was lower than we found in 2001-2017 surveys, but much higher than we found in 1991 (Figure 2). Stocked brown trout occurred at an abundance of 147 fish/mile at this site. Conversely, the abundance for wild brown trout at our Munger’s Mills Road site in 2018 was the highest we have recorded at this site (Figure 2), while stocked brown trout were also moderately abundant at 342 fish/mile. Trout population estimates could not be obtained at Munger’s Mills Road in 2017 due to poor electrofishing efficiency. However, based on the total number of fish captured in 2017, it appears that the abundance of wild brown trout at this site was similar to 2016 values. Hatchery brown trout are stocked in May, while the stream receives brook trout in its April stocking. As with this year, we did not capture any stocked brook trout in 2016, while in 2013 and 2017 very low numbers were captured.
appears that stocked brook trout do not survive long into the season in this stream, being lost to angler harvest, natural mortality and/or migration out of the stocked section. Based on this year’s sampling, it appears Oatka Creek will continue to provide satisfactory fishing for anglers wishing to pursue wild and stocked brown trout and perhaps for stocked brook trout early in the season.

Figure 2. Adult wild brown trout abundance at both sites on Oatka Creek, 2018