

Canada Lake General Biological Survey # 519030:
Chris Powers, Region 5 Fisheries

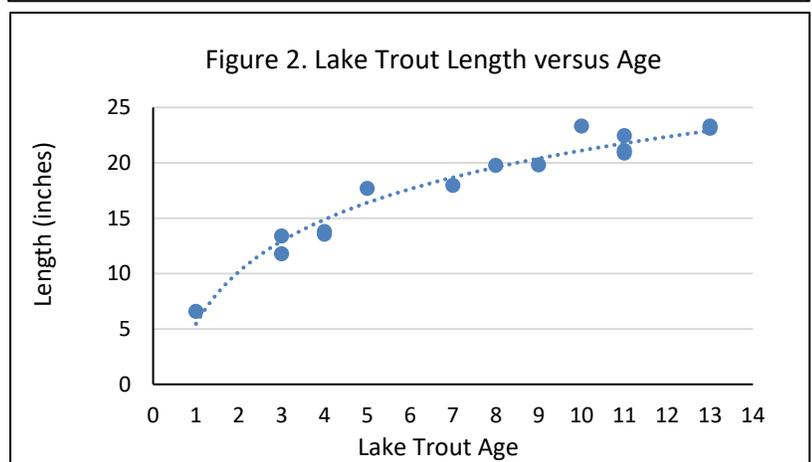
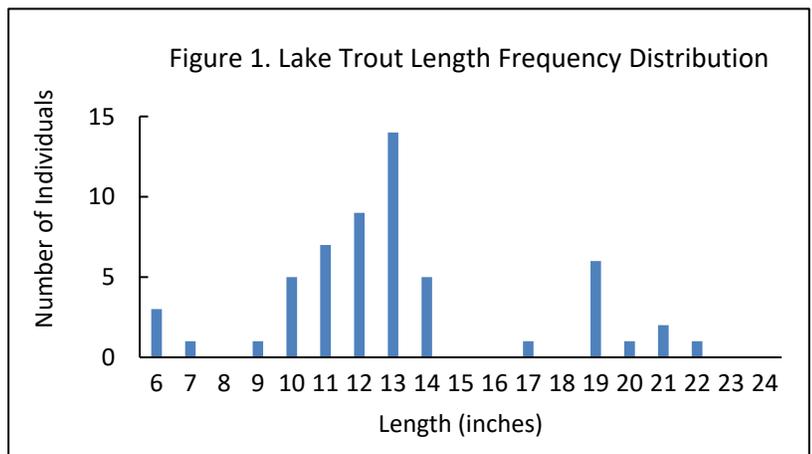
02/18/2019

Canada Lake is a 554-acre lake located in the Town of Caroga, Fulton County. The lake is impounded and subject to seasonal drawdowns by way of a water level control structure at the outlet. West Lake and Green Lake are connected to Canada Lake and are also impounded by this structure. There is no boat launch on Canada Lake, however the lake can be reached via the NYSDEC boat launch on West Lake. Canada Lake is over 100' deep in certain areas and supports a two-story fishery composed of lake trout, brown trout, rainbow smelt, largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, chain pickerel, brown bullhead and panfish. NYSDEC stocks 1,600 yearling brown trout and 2,600 spring yearling lake trout annually to provide a recreational fishery. Gill-netting surveys were conducted in June of 2019 to examine the growth rate of stocked lake trout. Scale samples were collected from 15 lake trout of varying sizes to investigate growth rates.

A total of 156 fish composed of 12 species were captured; 56 of those fish were lake trout. The smallest lake trout captured was 6.3 inches and the largest was 22.4 inches. The majority of the lake trout captured were between 10 and 15 inches (Figure 1).

NYSDEC Region 5 objectives for management of trout and salmon in Adirondack lakes and ponds establishes a growth rate objective for lake trout to reach a mean length of 16" by age 6+. Age versus length data (Figure 2) suggests that stocked spring yearling lake trout are growing at a rate that meets or exceeds the regional objective.

Stocked lake trout appear to be growing at desirable rates and legal sized fish (>21") are available to anglers. Furthermore, several warm water sportfish species have self-sustaining populations. Seasonal water level drawdowns are likely influencing the success of natural lake trout reproduction by drying up spawning habitat after eggs have been deposited. Data from a 2002 survey supports this theory as a large majority of the lake trout captured that year had hatchery applied fin clips and were identified as stocked fish. Changes



to water level management practices may allow for some natural reproduction of lake trout at which point stocking numbers should be re-evaluated. Stocking of yearling lake trout should continue at the current rate of 2,600 fish/year to support a recreational fishery. No brown trout were captured during this study, future efforts should be taken to evaluate brown trout growth and survival and inform stocking rates.