

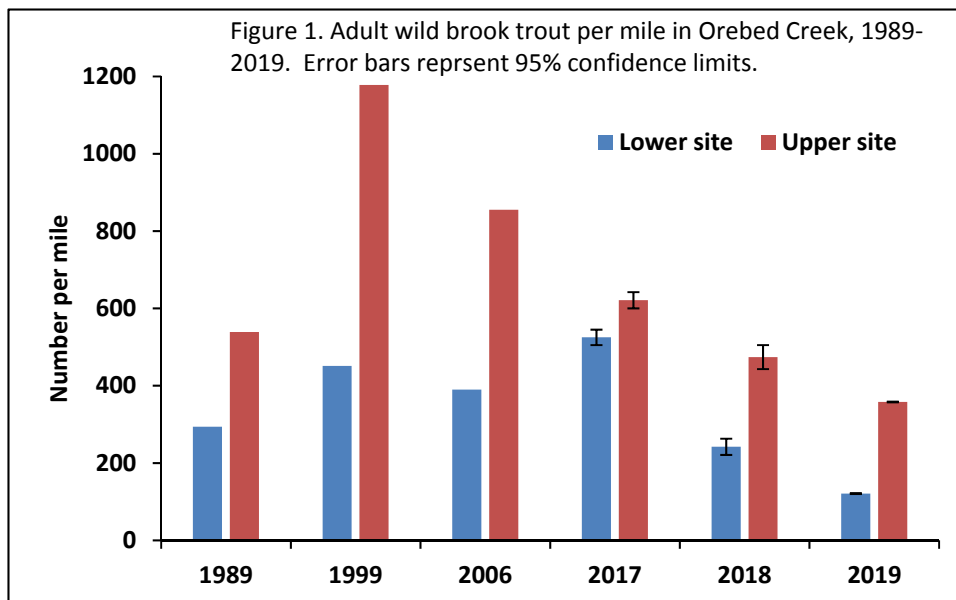
Orebed Creek Trout Population Evaluation

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Orebed Creek, flowing through southern Allegany County, provides a fishery for wild brook trout. There are no public fishing rights easements on this stream, and access is only through posted and unposted, privately-owned property. The stream is not stocked with trout. In 2019, as part of region-wide trout population monitoring, Orebed Creek was sampled by electrofishing at two sites. The lower site was located upstream of Graves Road and the other 0.5 miles below the Pennsylvania line. The two sites totalled 1,025 feet of stream. Both sites were previously sampled five times (Figure 1). To estimate the trout population abundance, we utilized two electrofishing passes in 2017-2019, while prior to this we utilized single pass methodology.

In 2019, we captured 46 yearling-and-older (adult) wild brook trout. They ranged in length from 4.4 to 10.7 inches, with an average length of 6.4 inches. This small average size is typical of low productivity wild brook trout streams in Western NY. If angler harvest is low, some fish will live long enough to achieve quality size, but the average size of adult fish will be small.



At the lower site in 2019, we found an adult brook trout abundance of 121 fish/mile (± 0). This value was the lowest we have measured in any of the six survey years (Figure 1). At our upper site in 2019, we saw a higher abundance of adult brook trout (358 fish/mile (± 0)). This value, however, was also the lowest we have measured in any survey year (Figure 1). Adult brook trout abundance at both sites has shown a short-term

declining trend from 2017 to 2019 (Figure 1). Western NY brook trout streams saw high levels of reproduction in 2015 and 2016, leading to generally good abundance of yearling and two-year-old brook trout in 2017. However, reproduction of brook trout in Orebed Creek in 2017 and 2018 appeared to be poor, likely resulting in lower abundance of adult brook trout this year. Reproduction of brook trout in 2019 varied greatly by site, with the number of young-of-year captured at the lower site being very low, but the numbers at the upper site being quite high (Figure 2). Based on this year's sampling, it appears Orebed Creek will provide good fishing for anglers wishing to pursue wild brook trout in a wooded, small stream setting. Minor changes to



angling regulations are expected for this stream beginning in 2021, based on the 2020 state-wide Inland Trout Stream Management Plan.

