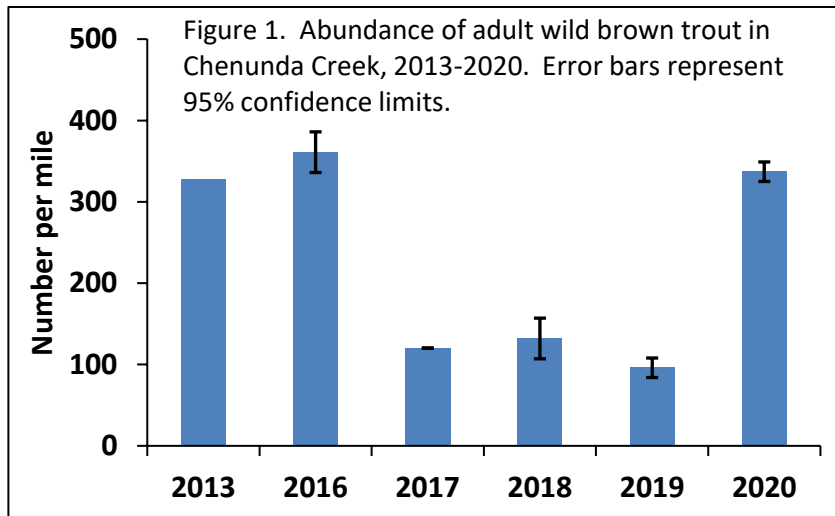


Chenunda Creek Trout Population Evaluation

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On June 15, 2020, Region 9 Fisheries staff electrofished one 440-foot long site on Chenunda Creek, located 300 feet above Dutch Hill Road. The 20-foot wide stream located in southern Allegany County supports a fishery for both wild and stocked brown trout. Chenunda Creek is stocked each spring in mid-April with 300 yearling brown trout, from Hallsport, downstream for 2.2 miles. The stream is currently managed with a year-round fishing season with the period from October 16 through March 31 limited to catch and release, with artificial lures only allowed. There are no public fishing rights easements on this stream, with public access via non-posted, private lands. This survey was part of region-wide trout population monitoring. This site had also been sampled in 2013 and 2016-2019. To estimate the trout population abundance, we utilized two electrofishing passes in 2016-2020, while in 2013 we utilized single pass methodology.



In 2020, we captured 28 adult (yearling and older) wild brown trout, ranging from 4.6 to 18.6 inches long. This catch resulted in an abundance estimate of 337 wild brown trout/mile (± 12). Adult wild brown trout abundance at our site has been highly variable and has not shown any significant trend from 2013 to 2020 (Figure 1). A substantial drop in abundance was observed in the 2017-2019 surveys; however abundance in 2020 returned to levels seen in

2013 and 2016. It should be noted that the habitat at this site (rip-rap installed by NYSDOT to protect Route 248) is atypical of the stream overall. Poor adult trout habitat is common in many sections of the creek, due to channelization projects done in the early 1970s, following Hurricane Agnes. Still, due to the stability of the habitat at this site, it should make a good year to year population comparison site and also highlights the importance of stream habitat protection and enhancement to wild trout populations. No young-of-year brown trout were captured in any of the six years at this site, indicating that reproduction apparently occurs in tributaries. The closest stocking site on Chenunda Creek was located one mile upstream of our shocking site, and we did capture one yearling hatchery trout in 2020. None had been captured in 2013, 2016 and 2018. We also captured one larger hatchery trout that was probably stocked as a two-year-old in the Genesee River and had moved up into Chenunda Creek. Based on low angler use and the small number of trout stocked in the stream, following recommendations in the 2020 state-wide Inland Trout Stream Management Plan, stocking will be terminated in 2021 and the stream will be managed as a wild trout fishery. Chenunda Creek should provide moderate quality angling, where good habitat exists, throughout the season.

