

**Conewango Creek Trout Stream Survey**  
Scott Cornett, Region Nine Fisheries

2/15/2024

On June 28, 2023, Conewango Creek upstream of the Village of New Albion was electrofished by Region 9 Fisheries staff for the purpose of evaluating the effectiveness of a stream habitat enhancement project completed in 2019. That project was done to mitigate impacts of a permitted streambank project by Cattaraugus County DPW to protect the adjacent roadway. A similar fish survey had been conducted in this location in 2020 following the DPW work (Survey 920032); a 2001 survey (survey 901002) in the same location found a relatively abundant wild brown trout population. Habitat enhancement work done in 2020 included the installation of three rock barbs (Figure 1) to constrict stream flow, and two rock pool digger structures. This section of the stream is entirely on private land and anglers may need to obtain owner permission to fish the stream.

In the 2023 survey, a 700-foot stream section was sampled of which approximately 350 feet were located in the enhanced habitat project. A total of 20 adult wild brown trout were captured ranging from 5.2-14.2 inches (Figure 2). Two other fish species—mottled sculpin and creek chub—were also observed. Most of the adult trout were captured upstream of the habitat enhancement section where deeper pools in the bedrock provided adequate shelter. No young-of-year (YOY) were captured in this year's survey. In our 500-foot-long site done in 2020, we captured 17 adult wild brown trout and 36 YOY brown trout. Most young-of-year trout that year were captured in the gravel/cobble riffle section of the sampling site where the 2019 DPW work, and 2020 habitat enhancement work were done. Due to a lack of "before work" photos where the DPW work was done, we cannot say how much different the adult and juvenile trout habitat was in this section of stream in 2023 than it was prior to the 2019 DPW and 2020 habitat enhancement project. In 2023, the abundance of adult wild brown trout found in the upper section of our site was consistent with what we found in the 2001 and 2020 surveys. It should be noted that the area where habitat enhancement was done had bedrock very near the surface of the streambed, which limited the ability of the stream to dig deeper pools and form better adult trout habitat.

*Figure 1. Electrofishing on Conewango Creek in habitat enhancement section. Stream barb in the foreground.*



*Figure 2. Wild brown trout captured in Conewango Creek June 28, 2023.*

