

Fenton Brook Trout Stream Survey Scott Cornett, Region Nine Fisheries

2/15/2024

On June 28, 2023, upper Fenton Brook was electrofished at one site for the purpose of evaluating the impacts of a permitted streambank project by Cattaraugus County DPW to protect the adjacent roadway. This project included the installation of stacked rock on the bank adjacent to an existing waterfall pool (Figure 1). This section of the stream is entirely on private land and anglers may need to obtain owner permission to fish the stream.

A 250-foot section of stream was sampled by Region 9 Fisheries in this survey. A total of nine adult wild brown trout were captured ranging from 5.0-15.1 inches along with one young-of-year (YOY) brown trout (Figure 2). Four other fish species—mottled sculpin, blacknose dace, fantail darter and creek chub—were also observed. All but two of the adult trout were captured in the deep pool below the waterfall. The wide, deep waterfall pool combined with above average flows and turbidity led to low estimated capture efficiency (50%) for adult trout at the site. Due to a lack of “before work” photos where the DPW work was done, we cannot determine the extent of adult trout habitat lost or added to the site from the DPW work. This survey indicated the headwaters area of Fenton Brook, where habitat was good, supports a moderate population of wild brown trout. However, the population does not appear to be as robust as what is found downstream nearer to Leon, likely due to better spring water inputs and habitat in the lower section.

Figure 1. DPW stacked rock project adjacent to Fenton Brook, June 28, 2023.



Figure 2. 15-inch wild brown trout captured in Fenton Brook, June 28, 2023.

