

## Wells Creek and Tributaries Fisheries Update - 1999

DNR Fisheries personnel collected fish population data on Wells Creek and several tributaries again in 1999. An electrofishing assessment of Wells Creek on 7/1/99 yielded a population estimate of 125 adult brown trout per mile, with an estimate of 67 per mile greater than 12 inches long. This is similar to estimates for the past few years (see table). The largest brown trout sampled was 19 inches long. No young-of-year trout were sampled. Brown trout fingerlings had been stocked before sampling took place, but none were recovered.

### Wells Creek Brown Trout Abundance - Station 4A

<u>Year</u>	<u>Adults/mile</u>	<u># &gt; 12 inches/mile</u>	<u>Fingerlings/mile</u>
1999	125	67	0
1997	106	48	286
1996	139	43	384
1995	47	ND	105
1994	26	ND	18

Brook trout have been introduced in several Wells Creek tributaries in the past few years with good results. Unnamed Creek (through Stan Klairs' property) was stocked in 1997 and 1998, and has been sampled for the past two years. Brown and brook trout are present in that reach. Electrofishing in 1998 yielded an estimate of 88 brook trout per mile. The 1999 estimate of brook trout was 65 adults per mile. Brook trout reproduction was excellent, with an estimate of 3,242 fingerlings per mile. Brook trout growth has been excellent with some age 2 fish over 11 inches long.

The brook trout introduction on Clear Creek appears to be successful. Clear Creek was stocked with brook trout in 1997 and 1998. Electrofishing in 1998 yielded an estimate of 168 brook trout per mile. An electrofishing assessment on 6/30/99 yielded an estimate of 179 adults and 110 fingerlings per mile. The presence of fingerlings indicates some reproduction is taking place. Some of the adult (age 2) brook trout were over 11 inches long.

Another tributary, Rock (or Unnamed) Creek was stocked with brook trout in 1998 and 1999 and sampled for the first time in 1999. Sampling took place on July 23, before this years stocking, and yielded an estimate of 355 brook trout per mile. These were all age 1 fish from the 1998 stocking and some were over 8 inches long.

With continuing improvements in land use within the watershed we hope to see the brook trout establish self-sustaining populations, and be able to support some angling pressure. So far things look great!