



NEW  
YORK  
STATE

Department of  
Environmental  
Conservation

# Categorization of New York State Trout Stream Reaches

NOVEMBER 2020

Andrew M. Cuomo, Governor | Basil Seggos, Commissioner



Stream	County	Reach Description	Management Category	Miles	Total # of Trout
<b>Region 8</b>					
Sugar Creek	Livingston	From Canaseraga Road bridge (County Route 17) upstream to Dannack Hill Road bridge	Stocked		
<b>Region 9</b>					
Bear Lake Outlet	Chautauqua	From 0.5 miles downstream of Cemetery Road upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Mill Road	Stocked		
Beaver Meadow Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Great Valley Creek upstream to W. Fancy Tract Road AND from Route 240 (W. Valley Road) upstream to 100 yards upstream of Beaver Meadows Road (County Route 75)	Stocked		
Black Creek	Allegany	From the most downstream County Route 16 crossing upstream to the second County Route 16 crossing.	Stocked		
Bone Run	Cattaraugus	From 0.5 miles downstream of confluence with Phillips Brook upstream to confluence with Little Bone Run	Stocked		
Buffalo River	Wyoming	From 0.5 miles downstream of Factory Road upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Sanders Hill Road	Stocked		
California Hollow Brook	Allegany	From County Route 33 upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of confluence with Kansas Hollow	Stocked		
Canacadea Creek	Allegany	From the Allegany/Steuben County line upstream to Hamilton Hill Road in Alfred Station	Stocked		
Canadaway Creek	Chautauqua	From confluence with Unnamed Tributary 0.55 miles upstream of Arkright Falls upstream to confluence with Unnamed Tributary 700 yards upstream of Griswold Road	Stocked		
Canaseraga Creek	Allegany/ Livingston/ Steuben	From the State Route 436 bridge upstream to County Route 24 at Swain	Stocked		
Caneadea Creek	Allegany	From County Route 7B crossing near Rushford Village upstream to 600 yards upstream of County Route 7B near Agett Road	Stocked		
Cassadaga Creek	Chautauqua	From Route 342 in Kabob upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Luce Road	Stocked		
Cattaraugus Creek	Cattaraugus/ Erie	From Hake Road Bridge upstream to confluence with Elton Creek	Stocked		
Cattaraugus Creek	Erie/ Wyoming	From confluence with Elton Creek upstream to 1.0 miles upstream of Java Lake Road	Stocked-Extended		
Cayuga Creek	Erie	From Como Park Lake upstream to Bowen Road	Stocked		
Clear Creek	Cattaraugus/ Chautauqua	From confluence with Conewango Creek upstream to bridge at Cockaigne Ski Area	Wild-Premier		

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<b>Region 9</b>					
Clear Creek	Cattaraugus/ Wyoming	From confluence with Cattaraugus Creek upstream to NYS Route 98 crossing near Phillipi Road	Wild-Premier		
Connoisarauley Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Unnamed Tributary 400 yards downstream of County Route 12 upstream to the Route 219 crossing upstream of Neff Road.	Stocked		
Cryder Creek	Allegany	From the New York/Pennsylvania State Line upstream to confluence with Wileyville Creek in Whitesville	Stocked		
Dodge Creek	Allegany	From Temple Street upstream to Route 305 in W. Clarksville	Stocked		
Dyke Creek	Allegany	From South Broad Street in Wellsville upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Ray Hill Road	Stocked		
East Branch Cazenovia Creek	Erie	From the Route 400 crossing at Emery Park upstream to Savage Road in Holland	Stocked		
East Koy Creek	Wyoming	From Wyoming County Line upstream to Green Bay Road	Stocked-Extended		
Eighteenmile Creek	Erie	From Patchin Road upstream to confluence with Unnamed Tributary 500 yards downstream of W. Hillcroft Dr.	Stocked		
Ellicott Creek	Erie	From 0.75 miles downstream of Glen Ave Bridge upstream to 400 yards upstream of Route 5	Stocked		
Elm Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Little Conewango Creek upstream to NYS Route 394	Wild-Premier		
Elton Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Cattaraugus Creek upstream to Route 16 in Delevan	Stocked		
Elton Creek	Cattaraugus	From NYS Route 16 upstream to former bridge on Swanson Hill Road	Wild-Quality		
Fenton Brook (aka Mud Creek)	Cattaraugus	From Conewango Creek upstream to County Route 6 downstream of Fancher Hill Road	Wild-Quality		
Five Mile Creek	Cattaraugus	From 350 yards downstream of Chapin Cross Road upstream to the most downstream Church Road crossing	Stocked		
Flynn (Spring) Brook	Wyoming	From confluence with Cattaraugus Creek upstream to Youngers Road	Wild-Quality		
Forks Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Great Valley Creek upstream to Sugartown Road	Stocked		
Genesee River	Allegany	From Belmont Dam in Belmont upstream to County Route 29 near York's Corners	Stocked-Extended		
Genesee River	Allegany	From County Route 29 near York's Corners upstream to NYS Route 19 bridge in Shongo	Stocked-Extended <sup>CR</sup>		

<sup>CR</sup> Catch and release regulations apply all year.

Stream	County	Reach Description	Management Category	Miles	Total # of Trout
<b>Region 9</b>					
Genesee River	Allegany	From NYS Route 19 bridge in Shongo upstream to State Line	Stocked-Extended		
Goose Creek	Chautauqua	From NYS Route 474 in Ashville upstream to Wall Street	Stocked-Extended		
Great Valley Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Wrights Creek upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Brewer Road	Stocked		
Great Valley Creek	Cattaraugus	From Route 242 near Irish Hill Road upstream to the confluence with Beaver Meadows Creek	Stocked		
Hosmer (Sardinia) Brook	Erie	From confluence with Cattaraugus Creek upstream to Genesee Road	Wild-Quality		
Ischua Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Oil Creek upstream to Franklinville/Farmersville Town Line	Stocked		
Lime Lake Outlet	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Elton Creek upstream to Lime Lake	Wild-Premier		
Little Buffalo Ck	Erie	From 0.7 miles downstream of Schwartz Road upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Schwartz Road AND From 0.5 miles downstream of Town Line Road upstream to East Ave.	Stocked		
Little Conewango Creek	Cattaraugus	From Swamp Road upstream to 0.6 miles upstream of County Route 9 (Price Corners Road)	Stocked		
Little Genesee Creek	Allegany	From 0.5 miles downstream of Sanford Hollow Road upstream to 0.6 miles upstream of second County Route 8 (Inavale Road) crossing	Stocked		
Little Tonawanda Creek	Wyoming	From County Route 1 (W. Middlebury Road) upstream to Pflaum Road	Stocked		
Mansfield Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with S. Branch Cattaraugus Creek upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of the western-most County Route 13 (Maples Road) crossing	Stocked		
Mansfield Creek	Cattaraugus	From 0.5 mi upstream of the western most County Rt 13 (Maples Rd) crossing upstream to Hinman Hollow Road crossing near Poverty Hill Road	Wild-Quality		
McKinstry Creek	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Lime Lake Outlet upstream to source	Wild-Quality		
Mill Creek	Chautauqua	From 0.5 miles downstream of Route 60 Bridge upstream to Hall Road	Stocked		
North Branch Wiscoy Creek	Wyoming	From confluence with Wiscoy Creek upstream to NYS Route 362	Wild-Quality		
Oatka Creek	Wyoming	From confluence with Stony Creek upstream to 0.5 miles upstream of Keeney Road	Stocked		
Quaker Run	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Quaker Lake upstream to Science Lake dam	Stocked		

Stream	County	Reach Description	Management Category	Miles	Total # of Trout
<b>Region 9</b>					
Red House Brook	Cattaraugus	From Bay State Road upstream to Red House Lake dam	Stocked		
Red House Brook	Cattaraugus	From Red House Lake upstream to 1.5 miles upstream of France Brook Road	Stocked		
Root Creek	Allegany	From confluence with Little Genesee Creek upstream to 350 yards upstream of Black/George Hollow Road	Stocked		
South Branch Cattaraugus Creek	Cattaraugus	From 300 yards downstream of Main Street in East Otto upstream to County Route 75 crossing near Mason Hill Road	Stocked		
The Ram	Cattaraugus	From confluence with Elm Creek upstream to NYS Route 394	Wild-Quality		
Tonawanda Creek	Wyoming	From Route 20A upstream to County Route 9 (Perry Road) in N. Java Station	Stocked		
Trout Brook	Wyoming	From confluence with Wiscoy Creek upstream to 0.1 miles upstream of Hillside Road	Wild-Quality		
Vandermark Creek	Allegany	From the most downstream County Route 10 crossing upstream to the County Route 10 crossing immediately South of Duke Road	Stocked		
West Br Conewango Creek	Chautauqua	From 350 yards downstream of Route 83 in Hamlet upstream to confluence with Farrington Hollow Brook 150 yards upstream of Wentworth Road	Stocked		
Wiscoy Creek	Allegany/ Wyoming	From confluence with Genesee River upstream to Flynn Road	Wild-Premier		
Wrights Creek	Cattaraugus	From 0.5 miles downstream of Howe Hill Road upstream to confluence with Unnamed Tributary near the junction of Bozard Hill Road and Golden Hill Road	Stocked		

## Assigning Management Categories to Reaches

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Management categories were assigned to publicly accessible stream reaches using the criteria listed in Tables 1a and 1b. Initial assignments were made by DEC regional biologists using the best information available. These assignments are listed by DEC Region in *Categorization of New York State Trout Stream Reaches* (NYSDEC 2020), which should be considered a dynamic component of this Plan that will be updated accordingly as new information becomes available. As part of this process, biologists prioritized reaches for resurvey (High, Medium, Low) based on the date of the last biological survey, the potential for subsequent changes to trout abundance and carrying capacity, the need to update angler use information, and assessing public access. As reaches are resurveyed and the current status is reevaluated, reach category assignments and boundaries may change in accordance with the category criteria and reach boundary guidance (NYSDEC 2020).

## Angling Regulations

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In the last decade, special regulations on inland trout streams in New York State reached a peak of 26 different combinations of possession limit, length regulation, and season length. In many cases, only slight differences distinguish these regulations. Four regulations apply to the Plan's management categories. These regulations and the waters to which they would apply are listed in *Categorization of New York State Trout Stream Reaches* (NYSDEC 2020).

The guiding principle of simple, understandable management demands that management categories and their associated angling regulations be simple and understandable. DEC acknowledges the general tendency of fisheries management agencies to establish large portfolios of complex but well-intentioned special regulations that cannot be effectively evaluated

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<sup>7</sup> While recent research shows that the ability to predict catch rate from trout density is unreliable at best (Alexiades et. al. 2014 and Kirn 2017), this metric is included as a benchmark for the persistence of stocked trout in the reach.

(Radomski, et al. 2001). Such complexity is accepted and sometimes actively sought by avid trout anglers with the assumption that trout population characteristics can be reliably fine-tuned by imposing water-specific measures. However, it can discourage participation and recruitment of new anglers to the sport (Knoche and Lupi 2016) (Radomski, et al. 2001). Moreover, because trout populations are

simultaneously influenced by the unregulated mortality associated with natural predators and environmental stressors, water-specific angling regulations seldom achieve the desired outcome in a consistent or precise manner. This is particularly true when non-harvest mortality varies greatly from year to year, and in many years, exerts a greater influence on the population than harvest.

## Seasonal Framework



Under this Plan, the same angling seasons are proposed for all five management categories.

- April 1–October 15: Harvest Season
- October 16–March 31: Catch-and-Release Season (artificial lures only)

The single biggest change proposed for the trout stream angling regulations is the addition of a catch-and-release, artificial-lures-only season from October 16 through March 31 to provide year-round trout fishing opportunities statewide. While New York State has traditionally closed trout stream fishing during the winter period as a precaution against the disruption of wild trout reproduction, many states, including neighboring Pennsylvania, have sustainably managed wild trout populations without a closed season. In New York, we have monitored trout populations in inland trout streams that have been open to year-round angling by special regulation for over a decade. Through this experience, DEC has gained confidence and found that it is feasible to sustainably manage wild trout with a winter Catch-and-Release Season. Applying this regulation statewide expands fishing opportunities for avid anglers who are motivated to fish on a catch-and-release basis outside of the regular season.

This change was included in the Plan based on the current science and DEC’s objective to provide for increased fishing opportunities whenever possible. “Appendix 1” summarizes the information considered in developing the proposal and in response to concerns expressed by the public during the fall 2019 public meetings. While the argument for prohibiting angling during the spawning and egg incubation seasons is intuitive and long-established in angling tradition, the science shows no evidence of harm at the population level where catch-and-release angling is permitted (Kelly 1993) (Roth, et al. 2019).



The Catch-and-Release Season expands fishing opportunities outside of the regular harvest season.

## Category Harvest Regulations

Daily harvest limits under this Plan are tied to the management category objectives as described earlier and summarized below (Table 2). Except for the *Wild-Premier* category, where only 1 trout per day may be harvested, the daily limit is lower for trout over 12 inches in length than for smaller trout. This approach serves two purposes: to provide more anglers a chance to catch a large hatchery trout and to provide a greater degree of protection for mature wild trout. The daily limit of 5 trout with no more than 2 longer than 12 inches is the new statewide trout stream regulation applicable to:

- *Stocked* reaches,
- *Wild* reaches, and
- Uncategorized reaches.

Anglers planning to harvest trout during a day of fishing different reaches must understand that the daily possession limit of the reach being fished includes trout placed or stored in a vehicle. These fish count even if they were previously caught in a water with a greater possession limit than the reach the angler is currently fishing (Revenaugh 2020).

Table 2. Harvest Regulations for Trout Stream Management Categories Apply from April 1 through October 15	
Category	Daily Limit
<b>Wild</b>	5 trout, no more than 2 trout over 12"
<b>Wild-Quality</b>	3 trout, no more than 1 trout over 12"
<b>Wild-Premier</b>	1 trout, any size
<b>Stocked</b>	5 trout, no more than 2 trout over 12"
<b>Stocked-Extended</b>	3 trout, no more than 1 trout over 12"
<b>Uncategorized<sup>1</sup></b>	5 trout, no more than 2 trout over 12"

<sup>1</sup> Uncategorized includes any reach not specifically categorized, including reaches without public access, and is the default statewide trout stream regulation.

*Anglers planning to harvest trout during a day of fishing different reaches must understand that the daily possession limit of the reach being fished includes trout placed or stored in a vehicle. These fish count even if they were previously caught in a water with a greater possession limit than the reach the angler is currently fishing.*

## Use of Catch-and-Release Regulations

Nearly all reaches already managed under a catch-and-release regulation will be grandfathered into this Plan under a year-round catch-and-release, artificial-lures-only regulation with no further evaluation required (NYSDEC 2020). Over the life of the Plan, a catch-and-release regulation on a specific reach may be reevaluated if its value comes into question. New year-round catch-and-release regulations in *Stocked* or *Stocked-Extended* reaches will not be considered. However, a temporary catch-and-release regulation may be considered on a formerly stocked reach or a *Wild* reach that has been converted to a *Wild-Quality* as a strategy to reach the trout biomass objective if there is evidence that harvest pressure is a significant obstacle. In this case, an evaluation will be required.

The Plan retains the special catch-and-release regulation specific to brook trout in Nassau and Suffolk counties. The handful of reaches that support brook trout in these counties are very small in extent, isolated from each other, and are surrounded by densely populated suburban neighborhoods. Given the scarcity of similar trout stream fishing opportunities to diffuse angling pressure in a region with a human population exceeding 2.86 million, these populations were considered uniquely vulnerable.