

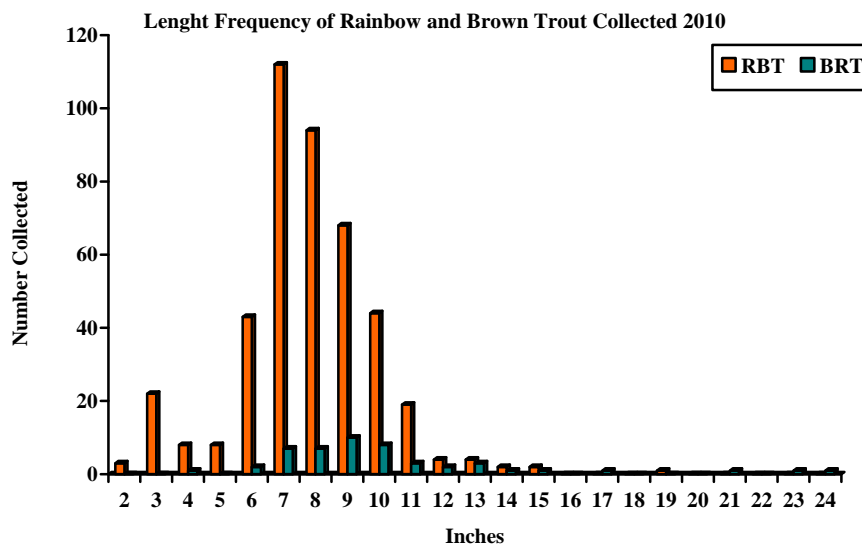


South Fork Holston River 2011

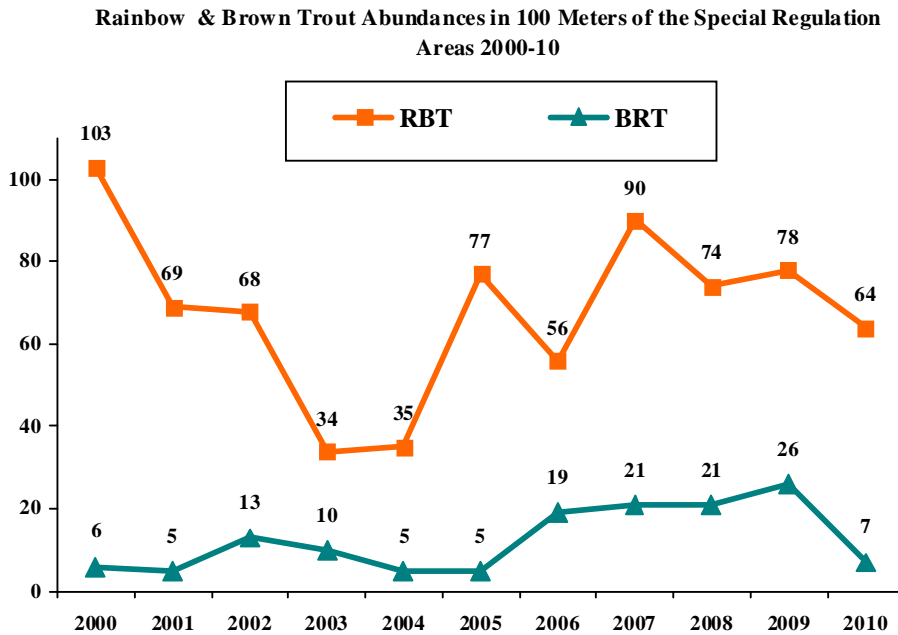
The South Fork Holston River in Smyth and Washington Counties is managed to provide trout fishing opportunities for different angler groups. Sections of the river are managed as special regulation areas and put and take (stocked) areas. This report summarizes the fisheries population monitoring activities and fisheries population data collected in 2010 and previous years.

Special Regulation Areas

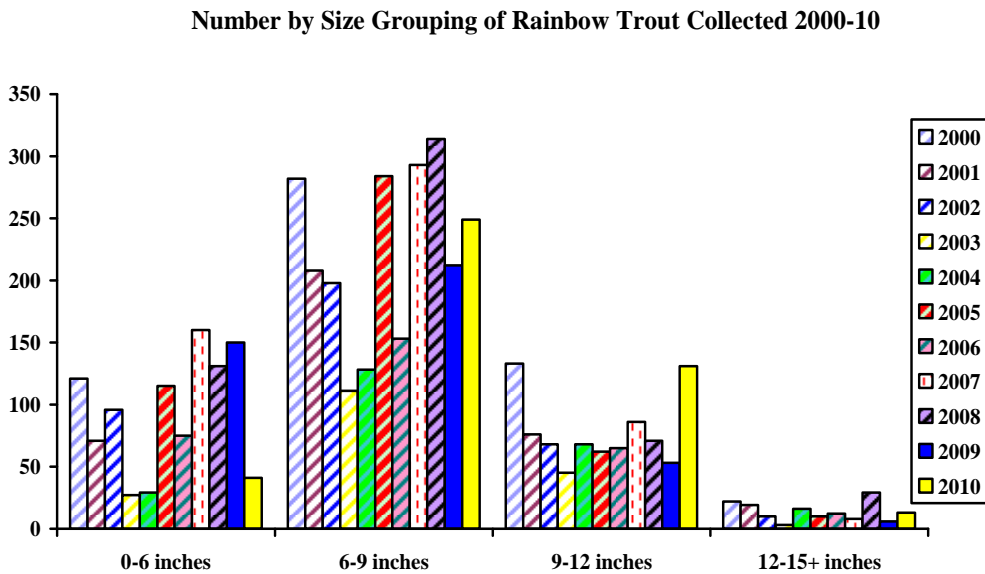
The special regulation areas of the river are managed using restrictive size and creel limits of 16 inch minimum size with a 2 fish daily creel in one section and a catch and release only section. To assess the effectiveness of these regulations, fisheries biologists with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries monitor the trout population annually. In 2010, five sampling sites, approximately 148 yards (135 m) each, were chosen for routine fish data collection. The sites were located in the special regulation section of South Fork Holston River and are sampled annually as part of ongoing fish monitoring and management. Collections were made using three to four backpack electrofishing units. A total distance of approximately 738 yards (675 m) was sampled from the combined sampling sites (5) within the special regulation sections of the river yielding a catch of 434 rainbow trout and 49 brown trout. The following graph shows the sizes and numbers of rainbow and brown trout collected in 2010 samples from the special regulation areas.



Data collected from 2010 samples indicate that there are approximately 64 rainbow trout and 7 brown trout collected per 100 meters. The following graphs show summary data of rainbow and brown trout collected from the special regulation areas from 2000-10. Under the current management strategies catch data has fluctuated over time as population levels rise and fall.

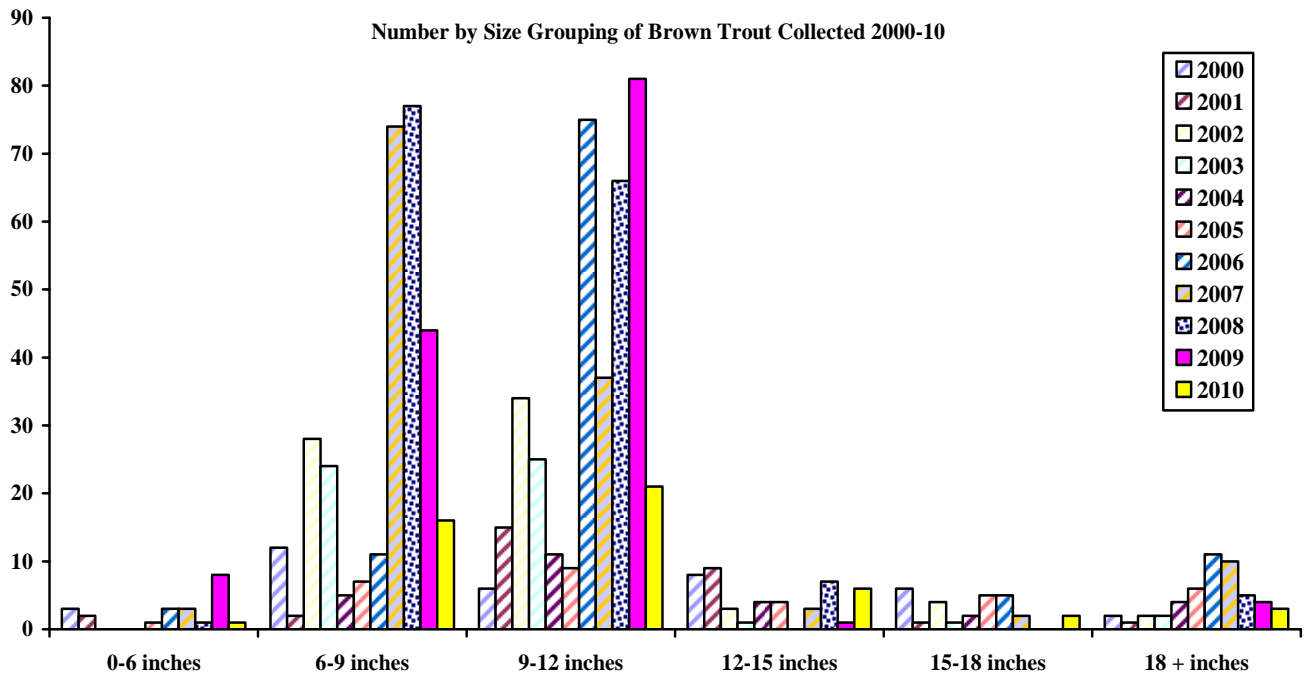


Size categories of rainbow trout are grouped as young (< 6 inches), stock (6-9 inches), quality (9-12 inches), and preferred (12-15+ inches). The following graph displays the annual catch by the number collected from the various size groups. The rainbow trout population is dominated by fish less than 9 inches which have constituted a majority of the population since 2000.



Brown trout size categories are grouped as young (less than 6 inches), stock (6-9 inches), quality (9-12 inches), preferred (12-15 inches), memorable (15-18 inches), and

trophy (18 inches and larger). Comparisons of size groups annually since 2000 show a brown trout population with an abundance of fish from many year classes as the graph displays.



Stocked Areas

There are four separate areas of stocked trout water on the South Fork Holston River in Smyth County for a total of approximately 5 linear miles. These areas are stocked 8 times annually from October through May. Anglers are required to possess a special trout license in addition to a freshwater state fishing license to use these areas. Trout must be at least 7 inches minimum size to be kept with a total daily creel of six fish. One of the Put and Take areas (Buller Dam) has a handicapped accessible fishing platform.

Management Recommendations

Future management of the South Fork Holston River Special Regulation Areas should focus on population monitoring of trout populations. The annual supplemental stocking of brown trout will continue in the spring of 2011. An angler survey should be considered in the next 3 years to evaluate angling pressure and catch and the economic value of the fishery.