

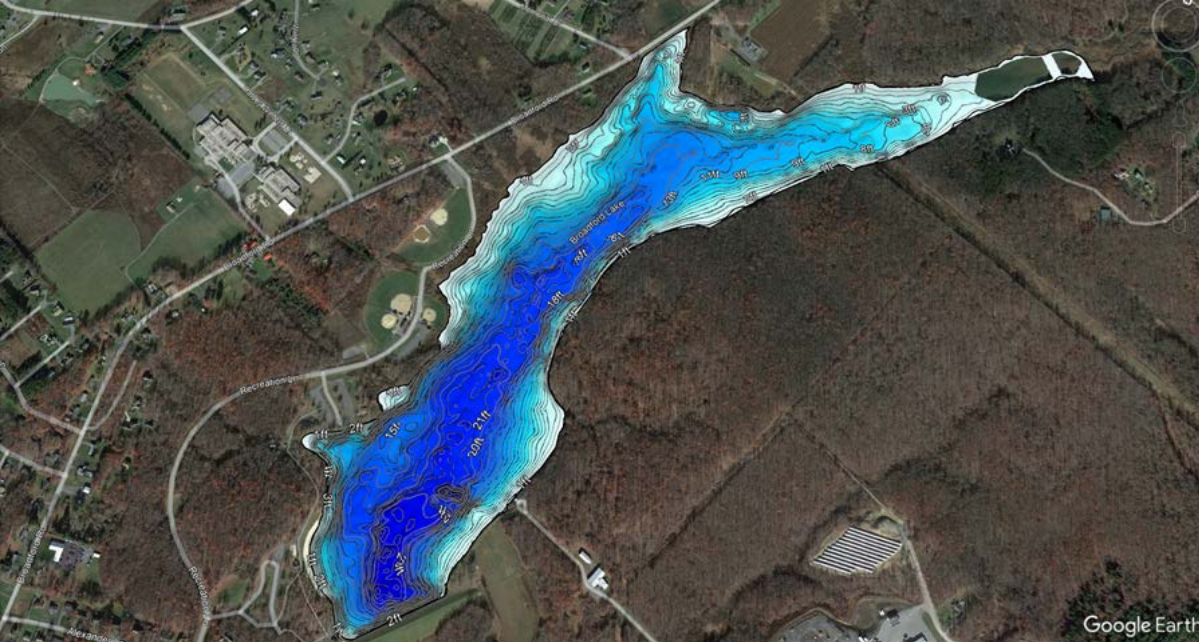
## Freshwater Fisheries Monthly Report – December 2022

### Freshwater Fisheries - Habitat and Water Quality

**Environmental Review** - Provided aquatic resource information for the following environmental review projects:

- A project that would remove the remnants of a dam in Wolf Den Run. Wolf Den Run supports a brook trout population below the dam, but the blockage prevents upstream passage and occupancy. Removal of the dam is supported by Fishing and Boating Services to open additional habitat for brook trout. Comments were submitted to request minimal disturbances to the riparian buffer and best management practices to limit downstream sediment transport. This project will complement previous work that removed and replaced culverts with a single span bridge. Furthermore, preliminary planning is underway to improve water quality in the stream by treating low pH with limestone sand. If successful, these projects will extend brook trout habitat in Wolf Den Run by at least one mile.
- Western Region I staff provided comments on two Project Open Space properties in Garrett County.
- Plans for a Dollar General to be constructed in Mount Savage Maryland. Recommendations were made for stormwater management to protect coldwater resources in Jennings Run.
- A bridge refurbishing project for Seven Spring Run in Allegany County Maryland. Comments were provided for stream bottom substrate and bridge abutment protection.
- Infrastructure development plans associated with a housing development within the Deep Creek Lake watershed. Comments were provided to protect coldwater and lake resources.
- Infrastructure development to build a new interchange at I-95 and Belvidere Road. Several meetings have taken place to discuss stormwater management options to improve/balance erosion protection, thermal conditions, and preserve water quality in affected streams and wetlands.
- A 850-linear-foot stream restoration project proposed by Frederick County to improve instream and riparian condition as well as convert an existing pond to a floodplain wetland feature in a Use III tributary within the Tuscarora watershed.
- A culvert repair project on an unnamed tributary to Tuscarora Creek; a culvert replacement on an unnamed tributary to Little Bennett Creek; a culvert repair project on an unnamed tributary to Catoctin Creek in Frederick County.
- A culvert replacement project on an unnamed tributary to Owens Creek in Frederick County. Owens Creek is a Use Class III stream that is stocked with hatchery trout as part of our Put-and-Take Program.

**Sonar Recordings** - Completed sonar recordings and analyzed them to create bathymetry maps for Broadford Lake and Piney Reservoir using ReefMaster 2.0 Software. Staff intend to make these maps publicly available as an angling tool that can be downloaded on the Western Region I webpage.



*(Bathymetric map of Bradford Lake in Garrett County created using ReefMaster software)*

**Muddy Creek Liming** - Worked with Garrett County Roads Department and the Youghiogheny Chapter of Trout Unlimited to place ten tons of high calcium lime into Muddy Creek. The purpose of the liming project is to buffer the stream pH during spring melt/runoff events in order to prevent fish kills from acidification.

**I-95 Belvidere Road Exit Review** - Eastern Regional and Operations staff continue to work with the Environmental Review Program and other agencies to provide comments on the construction of a new exit off I-95 at Belvidere Road in Cecil County. The proposed location is unique- the area is rich with non-tidal forested wetlands which harbor RTE species as well as several high quality streams which are classified as Use III and designated as Tier II. The most protective course of action would be to select an alternative site for the project, but planners have determined that the site is the best location to serve the rapidly growing commercial businesses in the area. Impacts to aquatic resources in the area are likely; however, comments were made to protect them to the maximum extent possible. New strategies are being considered to help maintain the hydrological systems and thermal conditions that feed the wetlands and high quality streams.

### **Freshwater Fisheries - Stocking and Population Management**

Worked with the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources to identify the best location to stock surplus fingerling rainbows in the North Branch of the Potomac River watershed.

### **Freshwater Fisheries - Outreach**

**Habitat Maps** - Staff began “beta-testing” the use of bathymetric and habitat maps via Google Earth on mobile devices. This angling tool is being developed with the goal of providing angling information in areas where it is not commercially available. Once the tool is properly vetted

internally, staff intend to make it publicly available via download from the Western Region I webpage.

**Ladies Night at Angler's**– Collaborated with Angler's Fishing and Hunting Shop to host a Ladies Fishing Night. Local Lady Anglers from Coastal Conservation Association, High Octane Custom Baits, JLS Custom Rods, River Queen Guide Service, and Shimano were on hand to provide fishing information and answer questions. Each participant received a free "swag bag" from Shimano and discounts for all fishing related purchases at Angler's. It was a very successful first time event, and DNR received valuable data from a survey given to participants.

**Freshwater Fisheries - Angler Access**

**Fishery Management Areas** - Participated in a critical maintenance meeting to discuss future projects. Black Oak and McCoole boat ramp access are scheduled to be improved in 2023 along with other upgrades to the Mt. Nebo Facility.

**Urieville Lake Reopening** - Dredging work has been completed and Urieville Lake Fishery Management Area has been reopened for public use. Approximately 450 cubic yards of material were dredged from the area around the boat ramp providing easier access for small boats and improving shoreline access for anglers. A small dock was installed to assist in boat launching and retrieval, as well as improve fishing access. The improvement in bottom substrate will provide enhanced spawning habitat for nesting fish like largemouth bass and bluegill. The project was funded by the State Lakes Protection and Restoration Fund.



*Actively removing material from Urieville Lake*



*Improvements to the boat ramp area*

### **Freshwater Fisheries - Coldwater Program**

As a result of House Bill 784 (Delegate Stein, 2022) titled "Irreplaceable Natural Areas Program - Establishment," staff, working with other colleagues within the department, continued efforts to designate lands directly adjacent to brook trout streams as Irreplaceable Natural Areas. The lands associated with over 500 stream segments on state properties were recommended. The next steps will include determining the extent of the land that will be protected and compatible and incompatible activities on the land. The outcome of these activities will provide critical protections for the riparian buffer of brook trout streams that are located on state land.

Attended the Maryland Water Quality Council annual conference. Engaged with colleagues about recent investigations on the effectiveness of stormwater best management practices and current monitoring trends in Maryland's streams.