

The Savage River Trophy Trout Fishing Area – 2017 Population Results

The Savage River Trophy Trout Fishing Area is a 4.8 mile stream reach of the Savage River between the Savage River Reservoir Dam and its confluence with the North Branch Potomac River. The current regulation strategy includes a Fly-fishing Only Trophy Trout Fishing Area located in the section of the river from below the Savage River Reservoir Dam downstream approximately 1.4 miles to the Allegany Bridge. A Trophy Trout Fishing Area, restricted to the use of single-hook artificial lures or flies, is located between the Allegany Bridge and the mouth of the river, a distance of about 3.4 miles. Regulations for both Trophy Trout Fishing Areas include a year-round open season, a 12 inch minimum size limit for brook trout, an 18 inch minimum size limit for brown trout, and a two-trout daily creel limit. There is no minimum size limit on rainbow trout in either area.



The Maryland Department of Natural Resources Fishing and Boating Service personnel sampling the Savage River Trophy Trout Fishing Area. Photo by John Mullican.

The annual trout population surveys were conducted on August 15-16, 2017. The overall quality of the Savage River Trophy Trout Fishing Area is truly extraordinary, with the adult trout densities meeting our management goal of 1,000 adult trout per mile. The Fly Fishing Area contained about 1,082 adult trout per mile with 89% of the population consisting of wild brown trout and 11% wild brook trout, along with a few rainbow trout. The Artificial Lures and Flies Area contained about 933 adult trout per mile with the population consisting of 88% wild brown trout, 6% wild brook trout and 6% rainbow trout. Reproduction was considered “good” with an average of 637 young-of-year per mile (40% brook trout, 60% brown trout) during 2017.

A large portion of the brown trout population was in the quality-size range of 12 to 15 inches. The number of quality-sized brown trout (≥ 12 inches) was estimated at 395 trout per mile, a record high number. The largest brown trout measured in at 16.7 inches.



A Savage River Quality-Size Wild Brown Trout. Photo by John Mullican

Although brook trout were only about 8 % of the estimated adult trout density in the river during 2017, contacts with anglers indicated that brook trout are routinely caught. Brook trout strike flies and lures aggressively and are relatively easier for anglers to catch than brown trout, thus contributing to the overall fishing quality.



A Savage River Wild Brook Trout. Photo by John Mullican

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