

Fisheries Report
By Nels Kramer, Fisheries Biologist

Regional personnel set trapnets at Cold Stream Pond on October 13th, and tended them every other day until the 1st of November, when they were removed from the lake. Trapnets are very similar to a herring weir, not unlike what you used to see along the coast. The difference is that a trapnet is set with the lead tied to shore, and very much smaller of course. As cold-water game fish like landlocked salmon and brook trout move around the margins of the lake in the fall of the year looking for a likely place to spawn, they encounter the trapnets. As they try to swim around the net, they are funneled into the trap part of the device, where they cannot usually find their way back out.



We tend the net by opening the trap and scooping the fish out into tubs, where they are anesthetized, measured, weighed and examined for hooking wounds, parasites, and fin clips. Before fish from the hatchery are stocked they have a fin removed to aid in age identification at a later time. Every year a different fin is removed in a four-year rotation, with Both Ventral (BV in 2003), Right Ventral (RV in 2004), Adipose (Ad in 2005), Left Ventral (LV in 2006) and BV will repeat in 2007, as the schedule will start again. Lake trout with their longer life span have a 13-year rotation, utilizing both pectoral fins as well as the ventral and adipose fins.



This was certainly a banner year for landlocked salmon at Cold Stream Pond during our trapnet operation this fall. We captured a total of 236 salmonids, composed of 8 brook trout, 41 lake trout, and 187 landlocked salmon. Some of these fish we captured more than once. We know that by the upper caudal clip that is applied at the time of first capture to ensure that we don't double count and measure and weigh the same fish twice. We also captured hundreds of white suckers, white perch, sunfish, bullheads and an unusually large number of American eels. Some of the eels were real trophies, over four feet long and as big around as my arm!

The average length and weight of all salmon examined was 19.9" and 3.0 lbs., with the average of the IV year old fish being 22.9" and 4.6 lbs.! The largest salmon that we handled was 26 1/4 "and 6.83 lbs., a very impressive salmon by any standards! One of the interesting aspects of the sample was the size of the salmon that were stocked this spring at 6" to 8 ". After being in the lake for only 5 1/2 months, the average size of these young salmon in the traps was 14.6" and 1.0 lbs.!



We had heard of some very impressive salmon caught over the summer, the largest confirmed report was of a 7 1/2 pounder. We also have had a number of reports of some large brook trout, most likely leftovers from our fall yearling program. We are, by the way, planning to again stock 1500 fall yearling brook trout based upon the excellent results so far. My advice would be to take a kid fishing, and limit your kill of those large brook trout. Let a few go for later.