

2007 Conhocton River Creel Survey



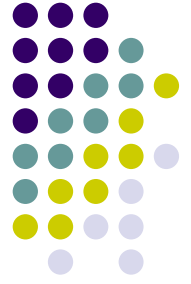
Presented to the Twin Tiers FFF
March 2008

by

Peter Austermann

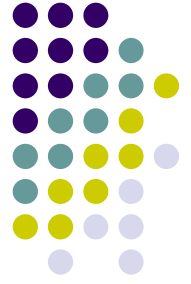
New York State

Department of Environmental Conservation



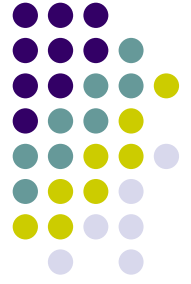
Procedure

- Same survey sites as 2002
- Survey period extended to include July, August, and September
- Two weekdays and two weekend days per week from April through June
- One weekday and one weekend day per week from July through September



Procedure

- AM/PM shifts
- Two angler counts per shift
- Remaining shift time used for angler interviews
- All stocked trout were fin clipped in 2006 and 2007

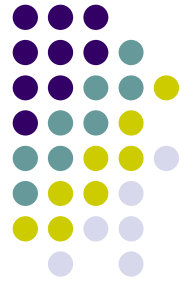


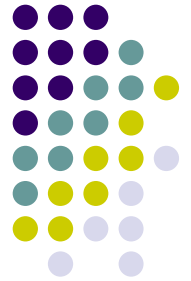
Goals

- Estimate total catch, harvest, and effort for trout in the stocked reaches and special regulation areas
- Evaluate the “5/2” regulation
- Compare 2007 results to 2002 results

Goals

- Utilize fin clips
 - Holdover stocked trout
 - Wild trout

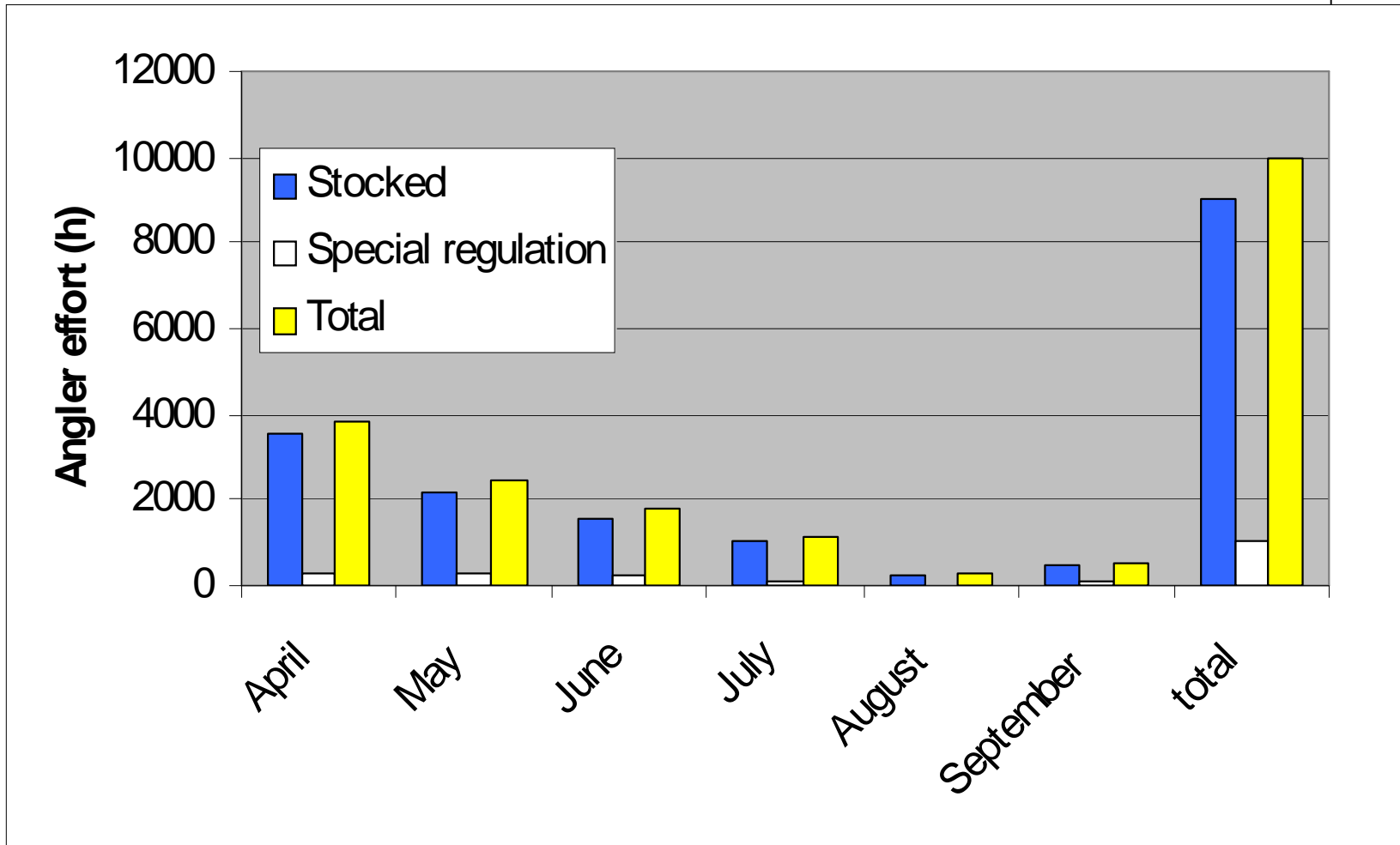
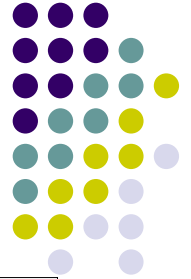




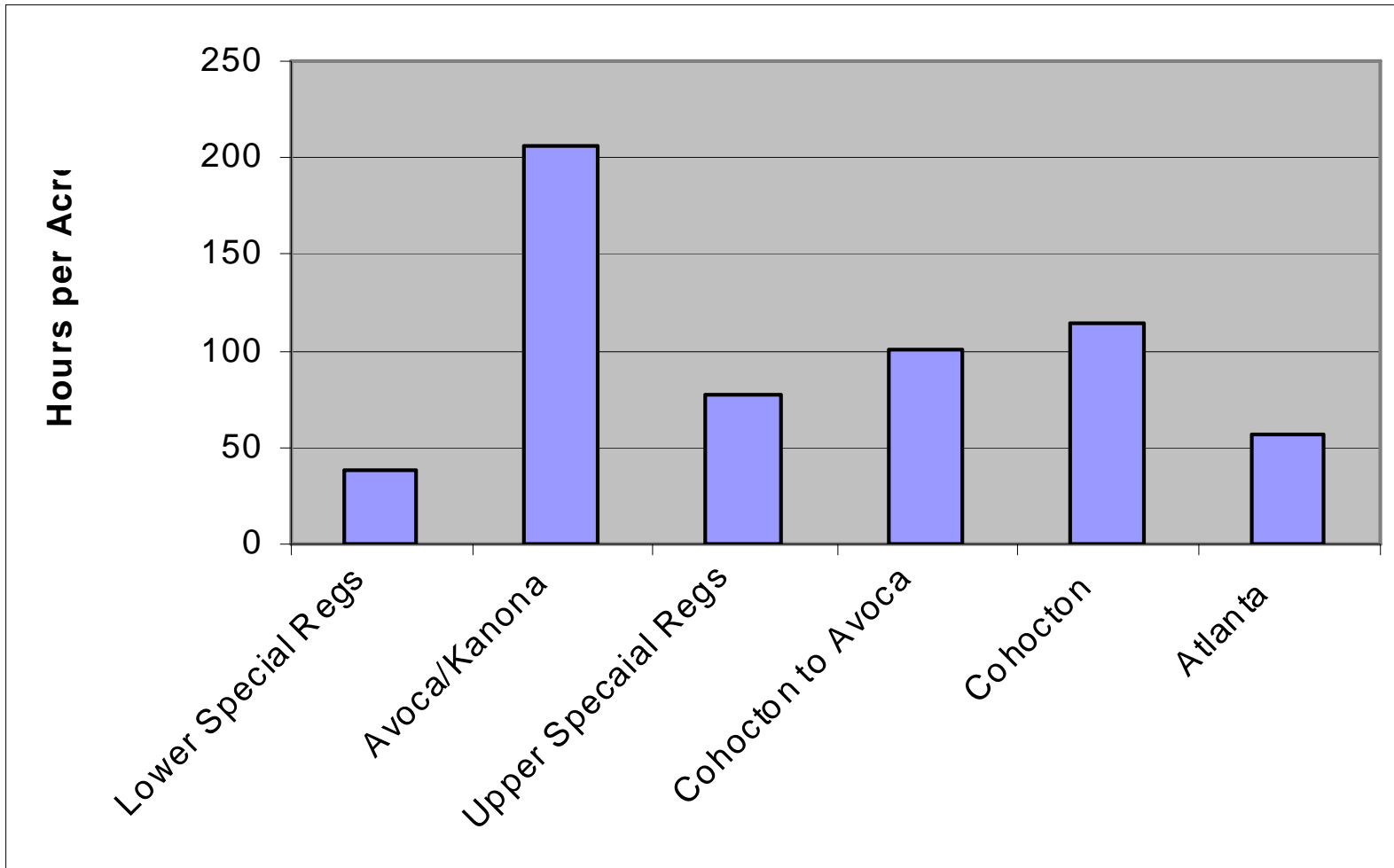
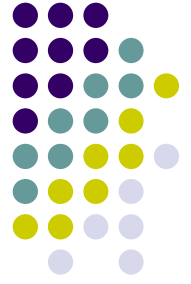
Results

- 378 anglers were interviewed
- Interviewed anglers reported catching 519 brown trout and 14 brook trout
- 174 anglers caught at least one trout

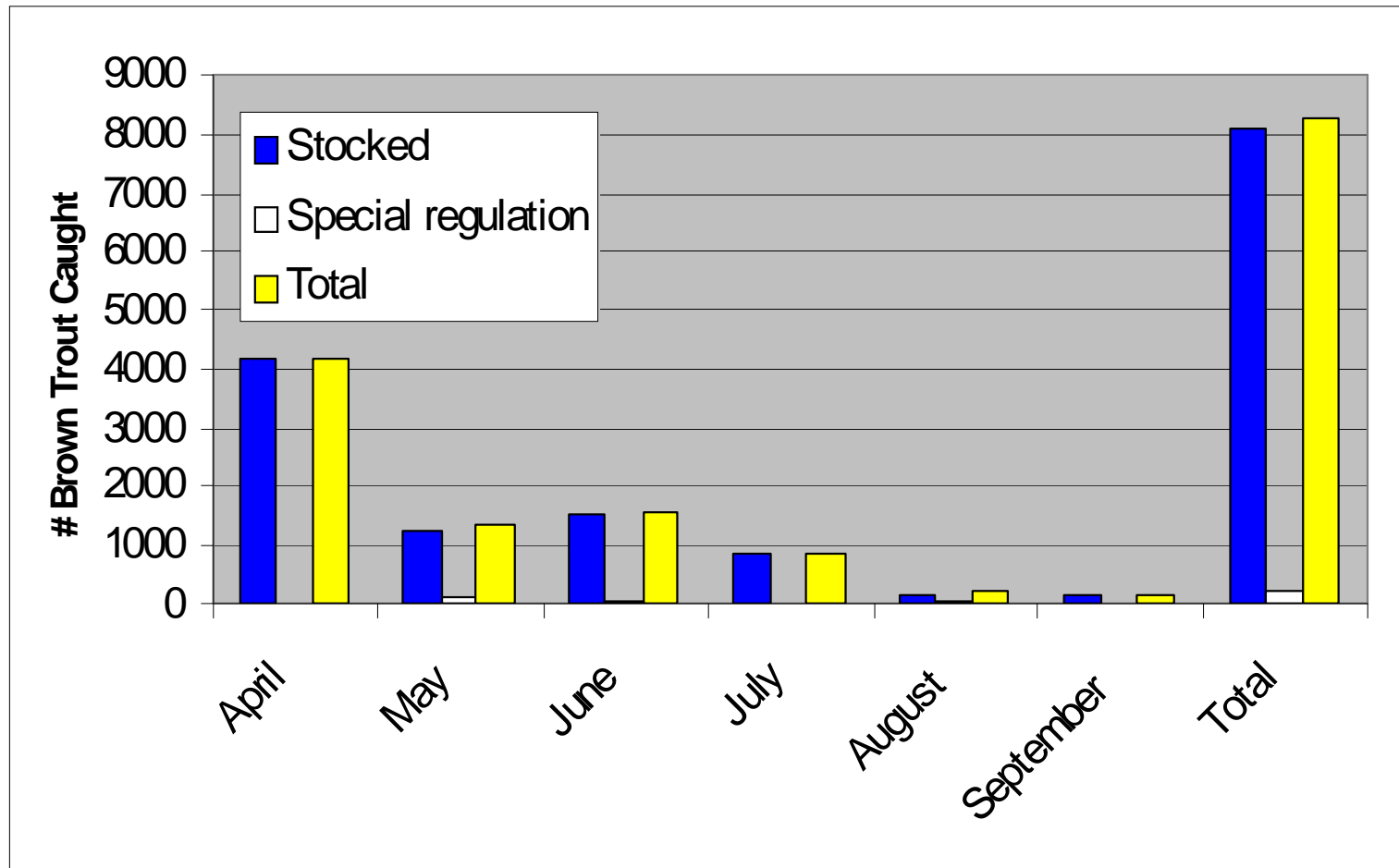
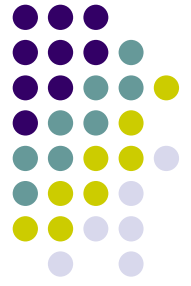
Estimated 10,009 hours of fishing effort



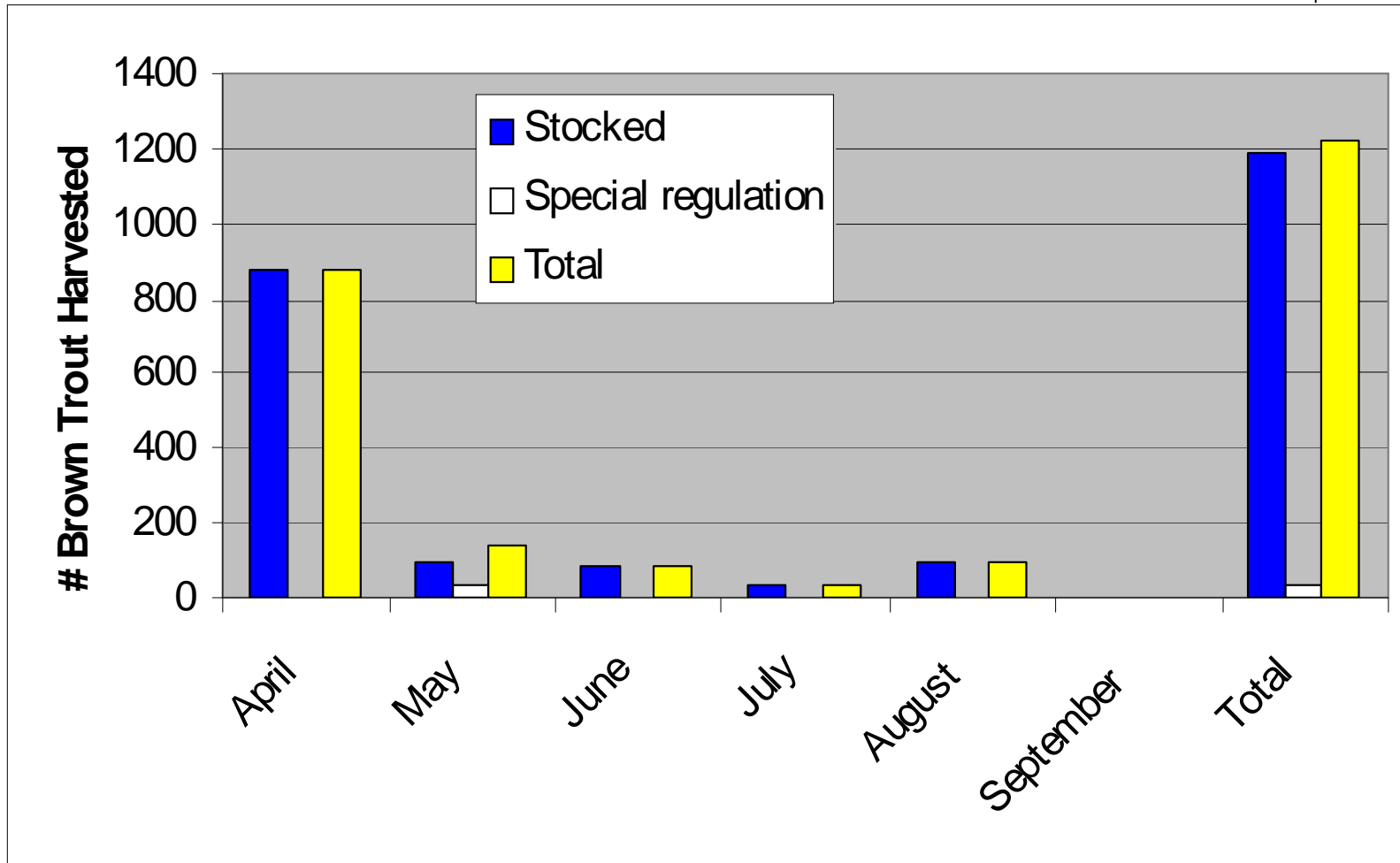
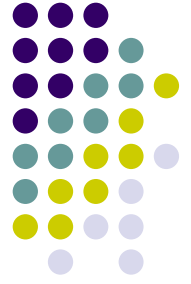
Fishing Effort by Stocking Section



Estimated 8,291 trout caught during the survey period



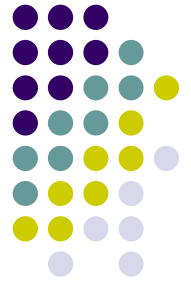
Estimated 1,225 trout harvested during the survey period (14.8%)





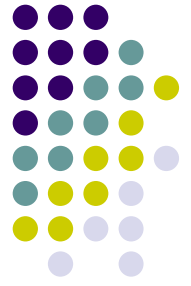
Catch/Harvest

- About 1,780 brown trout caught were ***greater than 12 inches***
 - About 21.5% of all trout caught
 - About 657, or 37%, were harvested
 - Estimated 93% stocked 2-year-olds from 2007 stocking
 - No wild (unclipped) >12 inches observed



Catch/Harvest

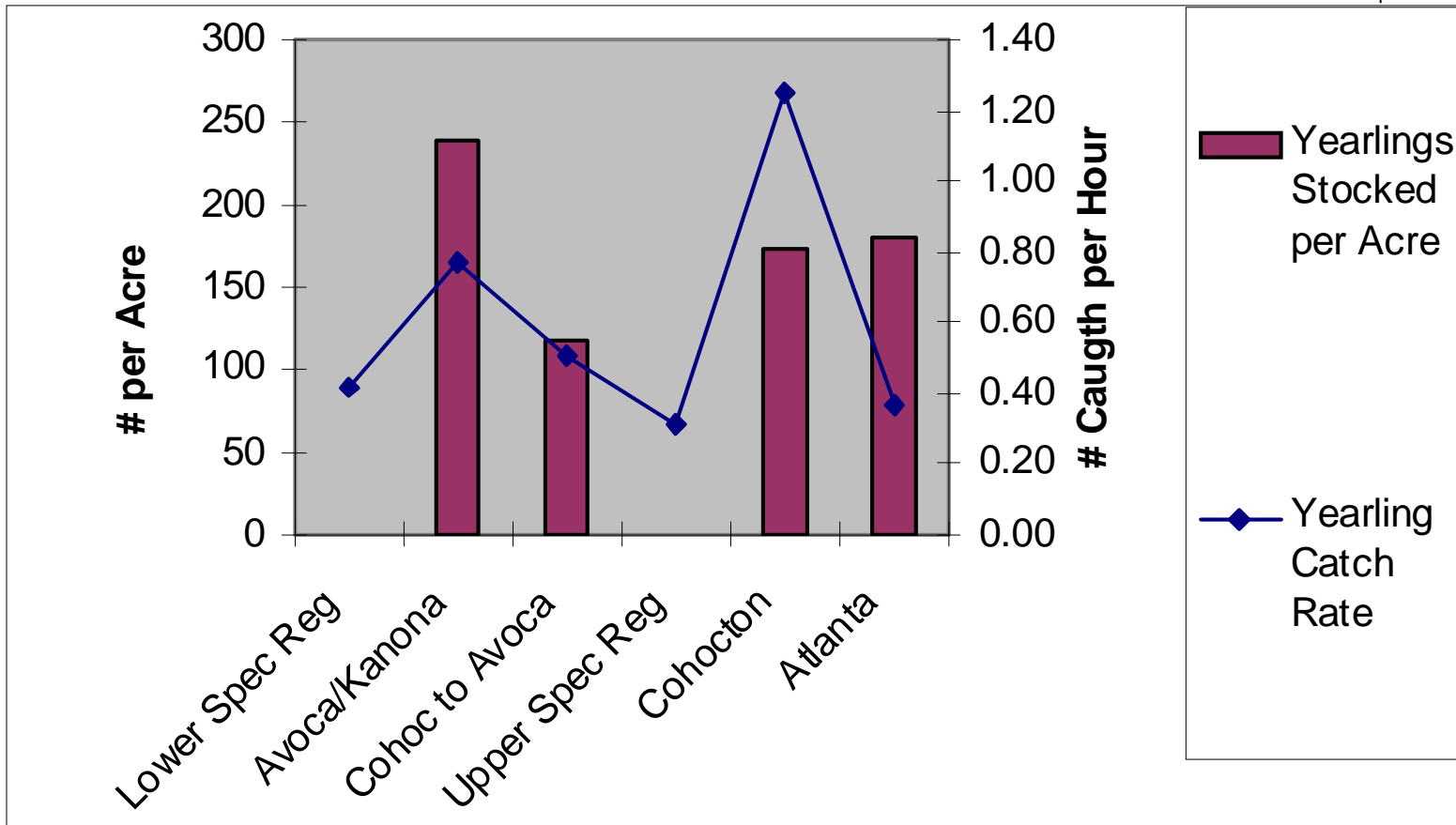
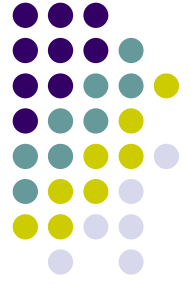
- About 6,511 brown trout caught were ***less than 12 inches***
 - About 78.5% of all trout caught
 - About 568, or 8.7 %, were harvested
 - Estimated 98% of trout <12 inches were stocked (only one unclipped trout observed)

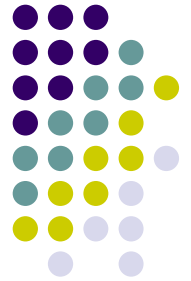


Catch Rate

- Overall catch rate of 0.83 trout/hour
- April was the month with the highest catch rate (1.09 trout/hour)
- Very good catch rates
- Statewide objective is 0.5 trout/hour

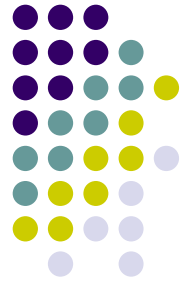
Catch Rate in Relation to Stocking Numbers





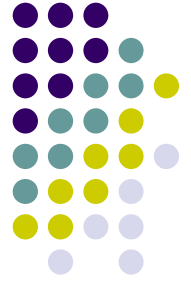
Harvest Rate

- Overall harvest rate of 0.12 trout/hour
- August was the month with the highest harvest rate (0.34 trout/hour)
 - Based on relatively small number of fish caught
- April was the month with the 2nd highest harvest rate (0.21 trout/hour)



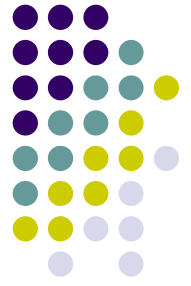
5/2 Regulation

- Estimated 47.7% of the 1,060 2-year-old stocked trout were caught within **one** week of the first stocking (4/3, 4/4)
- Estimated 81.3% were caught within **two** weeks of the first stocking



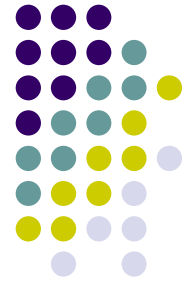
5/2 Regulation

- Estimated 18.9% of the 1,060 2-year-old stocked trout were harvested within **one** week of the first stocking (4/3, 4/4)
- Estimated 35.5% were harvested within **two** weeks of the first stocking



5/2 Regulation

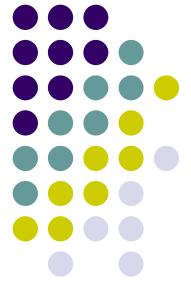
- Anglers who had caught 1 or 2 brown trout >12 inches harvested approximately 52% of them
- Only 8 interviewed anglers caught 3 or more brown trout >12 inches and none of those anglers kept their legal limit (2 >12 inches)
- Anglers were often releasing trout > 12 inches for reasons other than the 5/2 regulation



5/2 Regulation

- No increase in yearling trout harvest rate was observed following the 5/2 regulation
 - 8.7% harvested in 2007 vs. 22% harvested in 2002
- 5/2 regulation may be more important in years with more fishing effort

2007 vs. 2002 (Spring only)



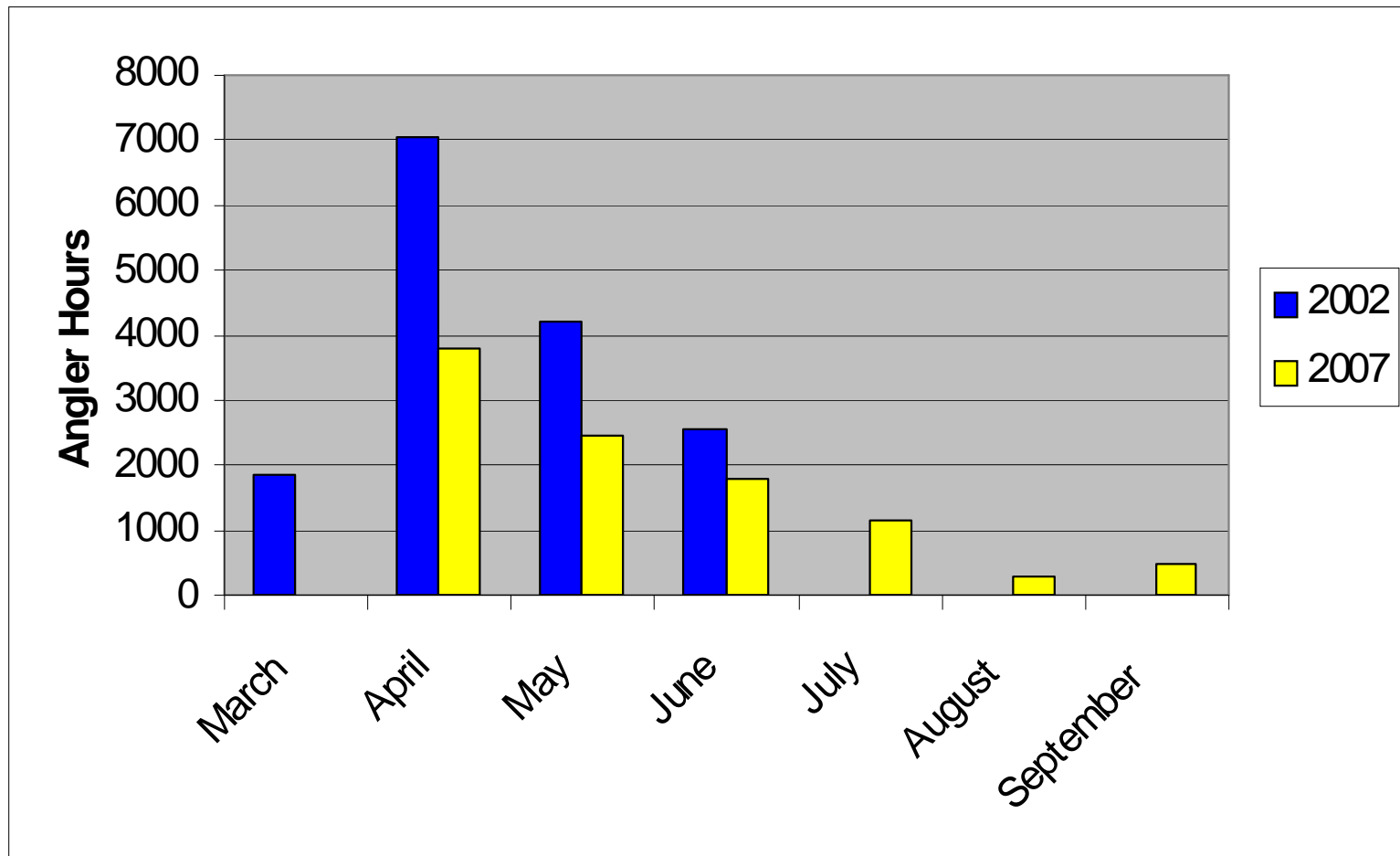
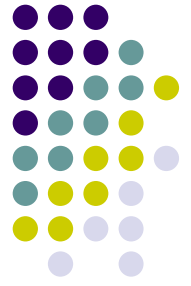
● 2007

- 8,065 angler hours
- 7,067 trout caught
- 14.7% kept
- 0.88 trout/hour

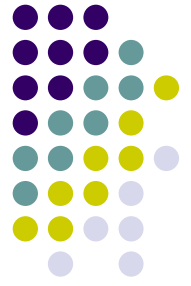
● 2002

- 15,632 angler hours
- 16,333 trout caught
- 32.4% kept
- 1.04 trout/hour

Fishing Effort: 2007 vs. 2002



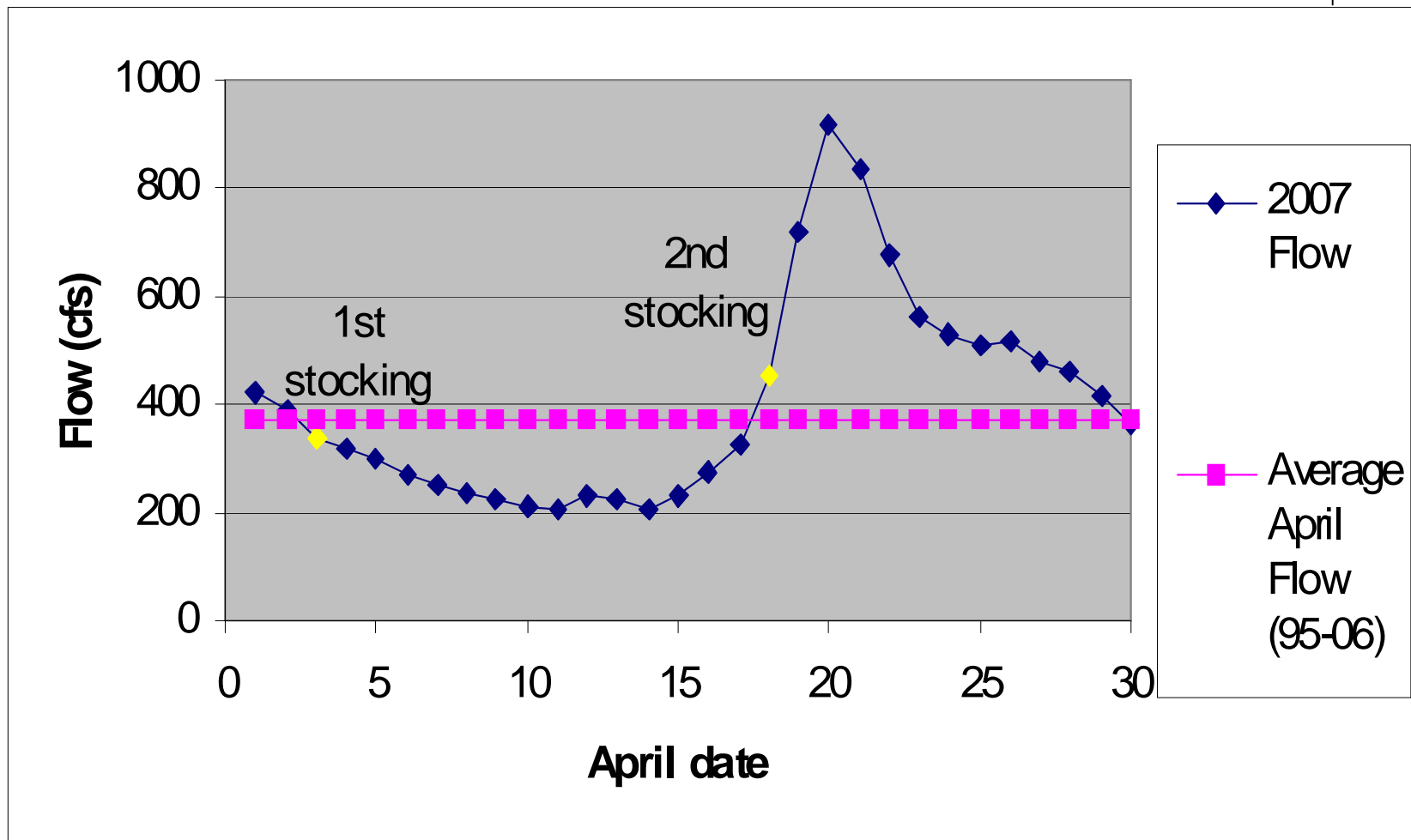
Fishing Effort: 2007 vs. 2002



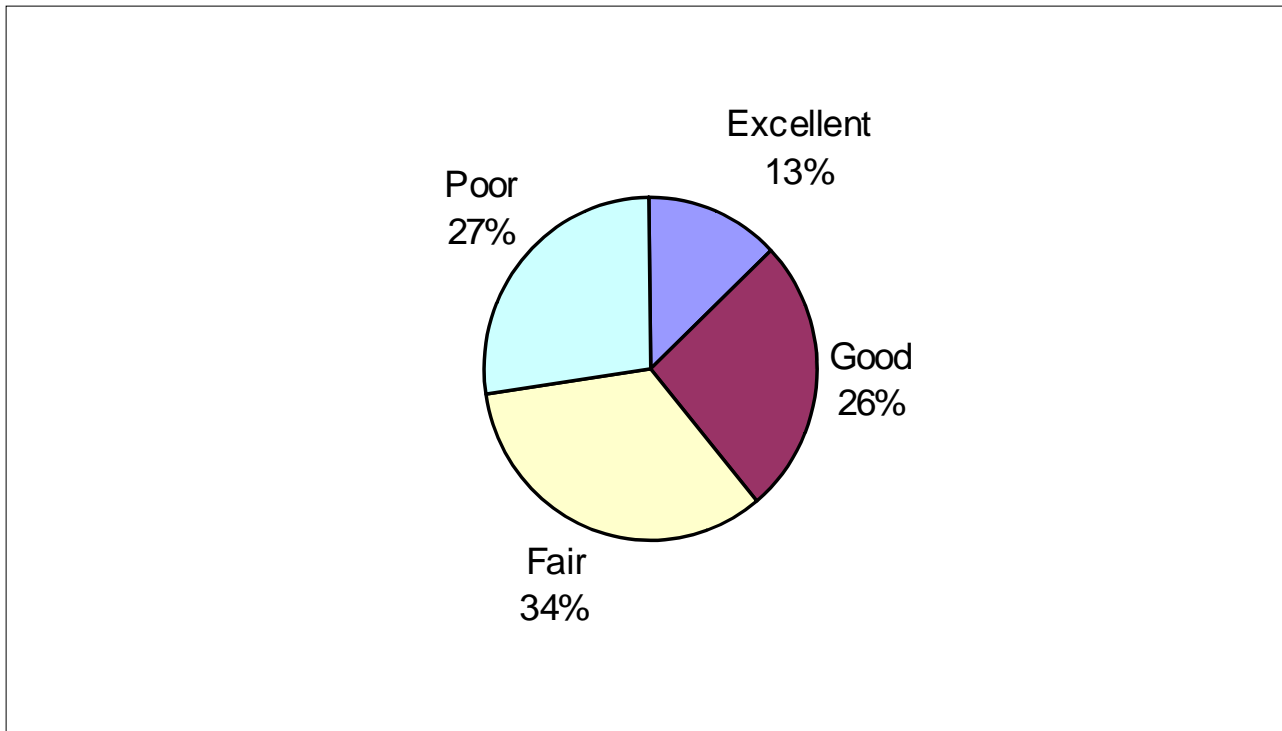
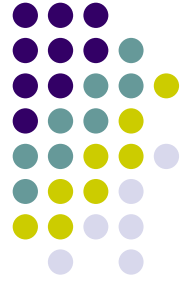
- 2007 effort affected by weather
- High flows led to delayed first stocking date in 2007
- Very little April 1 fishing effort in 2007
- High flow events in mid to late April

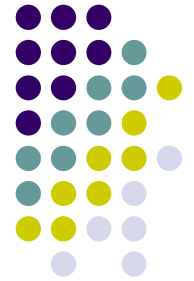
April Flows

(data from <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/ny/nwis>)

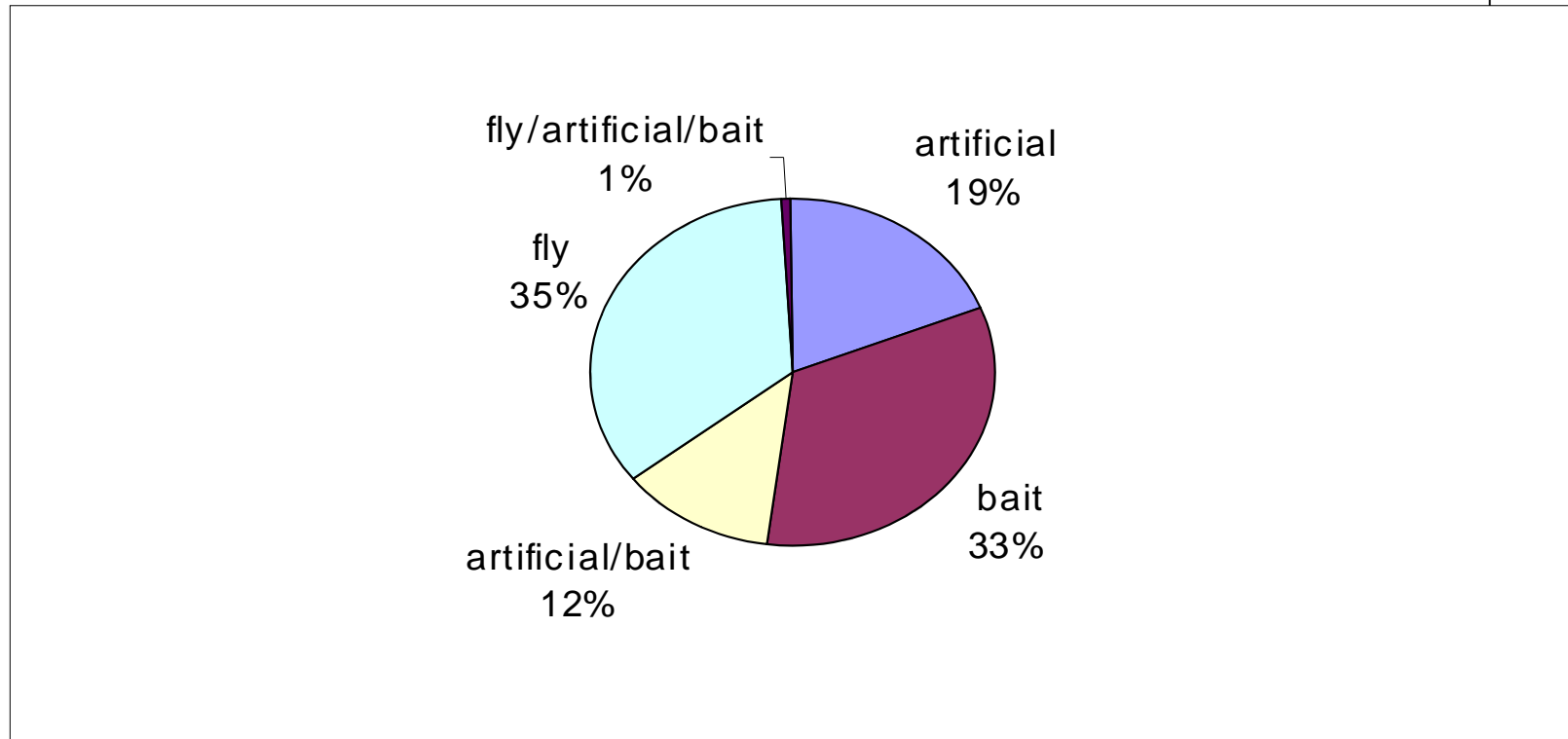


Angler Satisfaction



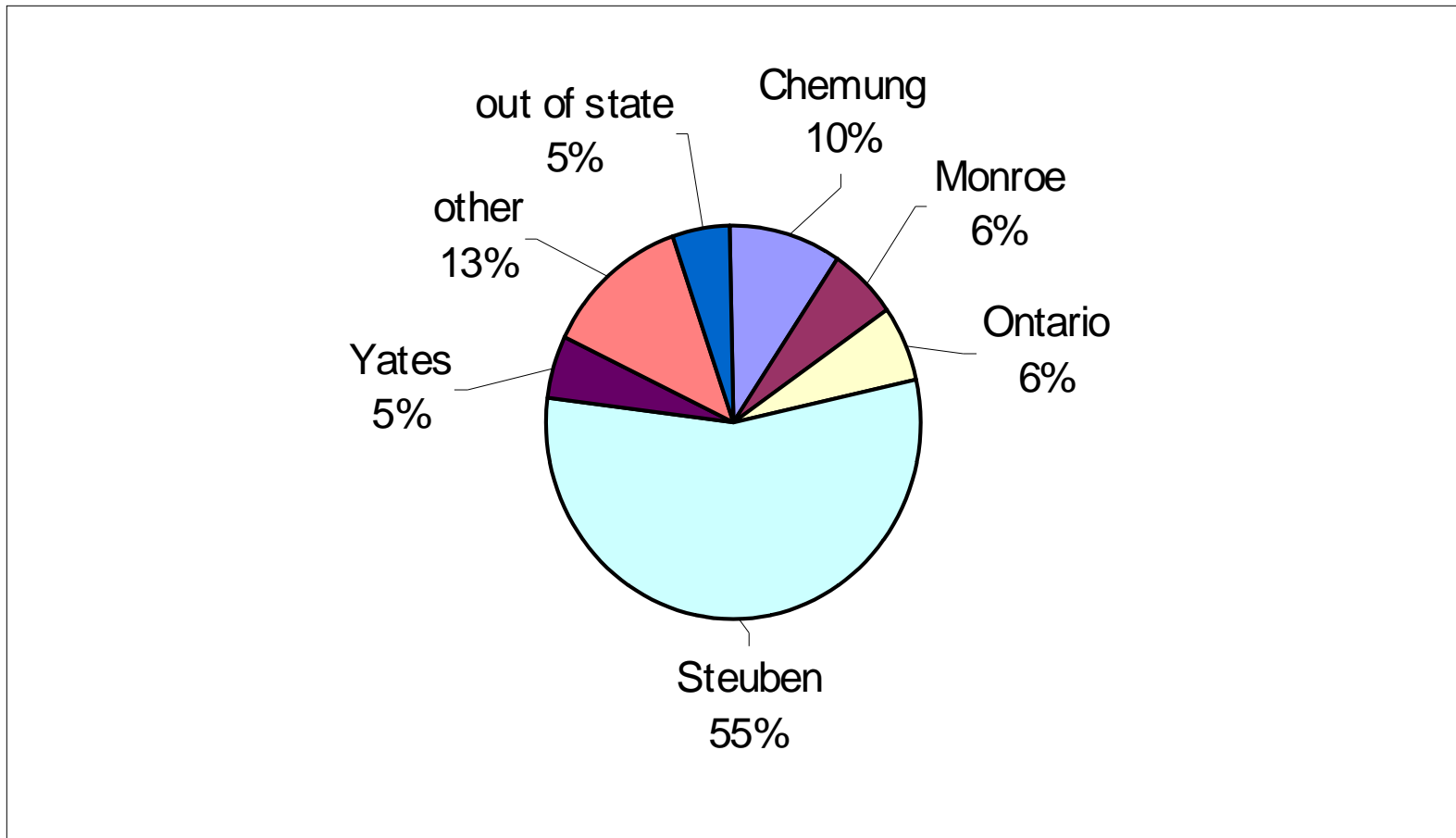
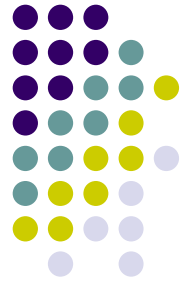


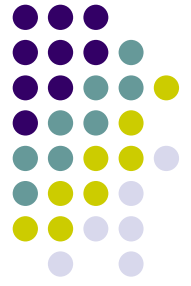
Fishing Methods



- 0.84 trout/hour for fly anglers vs. 0.65 trout/hour for all other anglers

Angler Residency

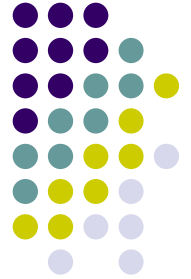




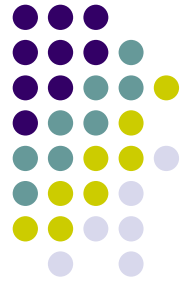
Summary

- Angler effort lower compared to 2002- negatively affected by weather/stocking delay
- Catch rates slightly lower than 2002
- A lot of catch and release; 5/2 reg was not as much of a factor in 2007
- Few wild fish caught

Electrofishing Survey

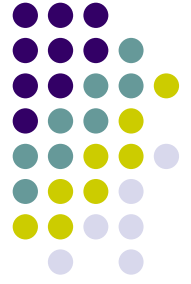


- Late September
- 12 sites
- Collected 250 trout ranging from about 2.5 inches to 21 inches in length
- Good numbers of trout considering harsh summer conditions

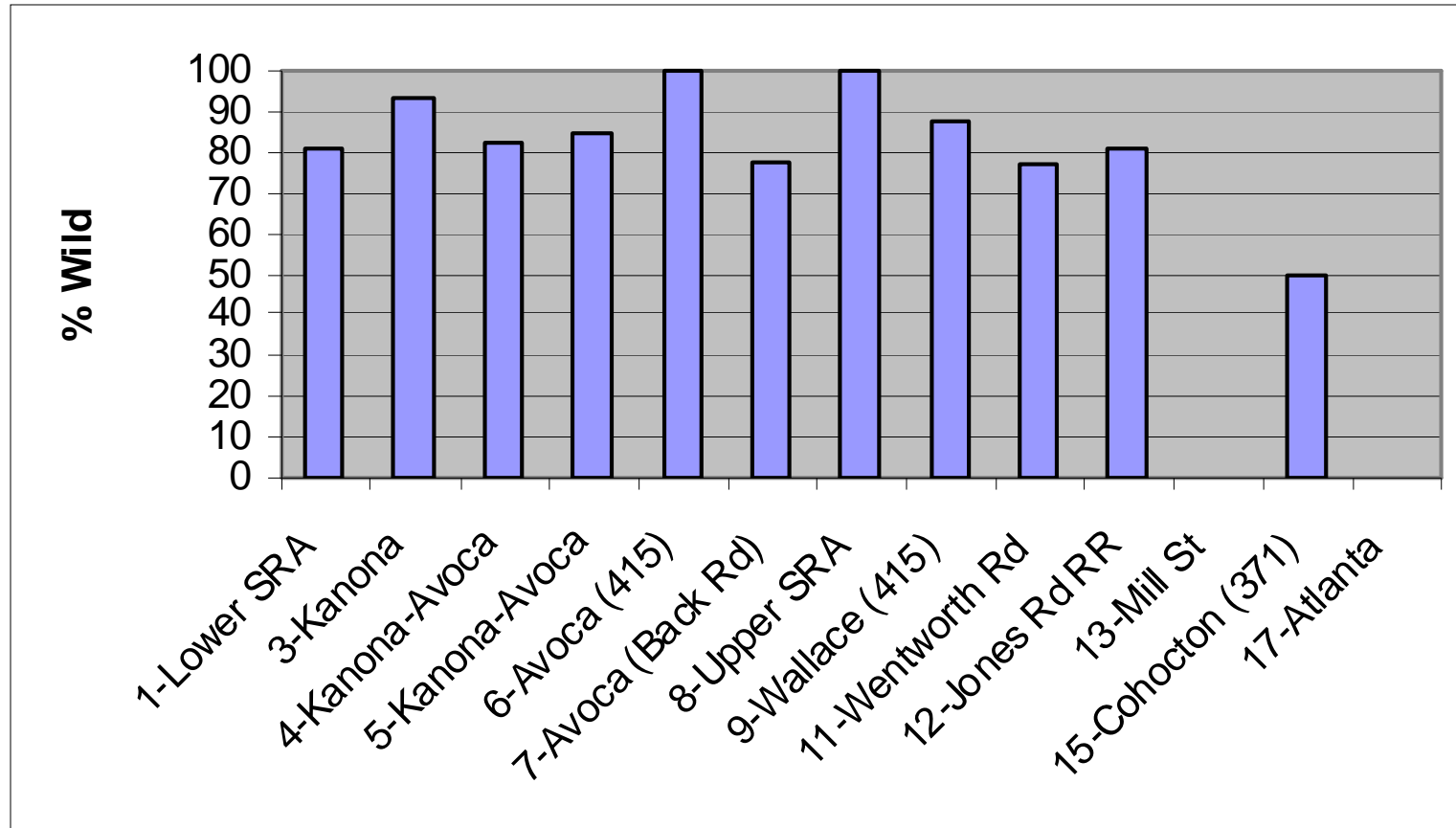


Results

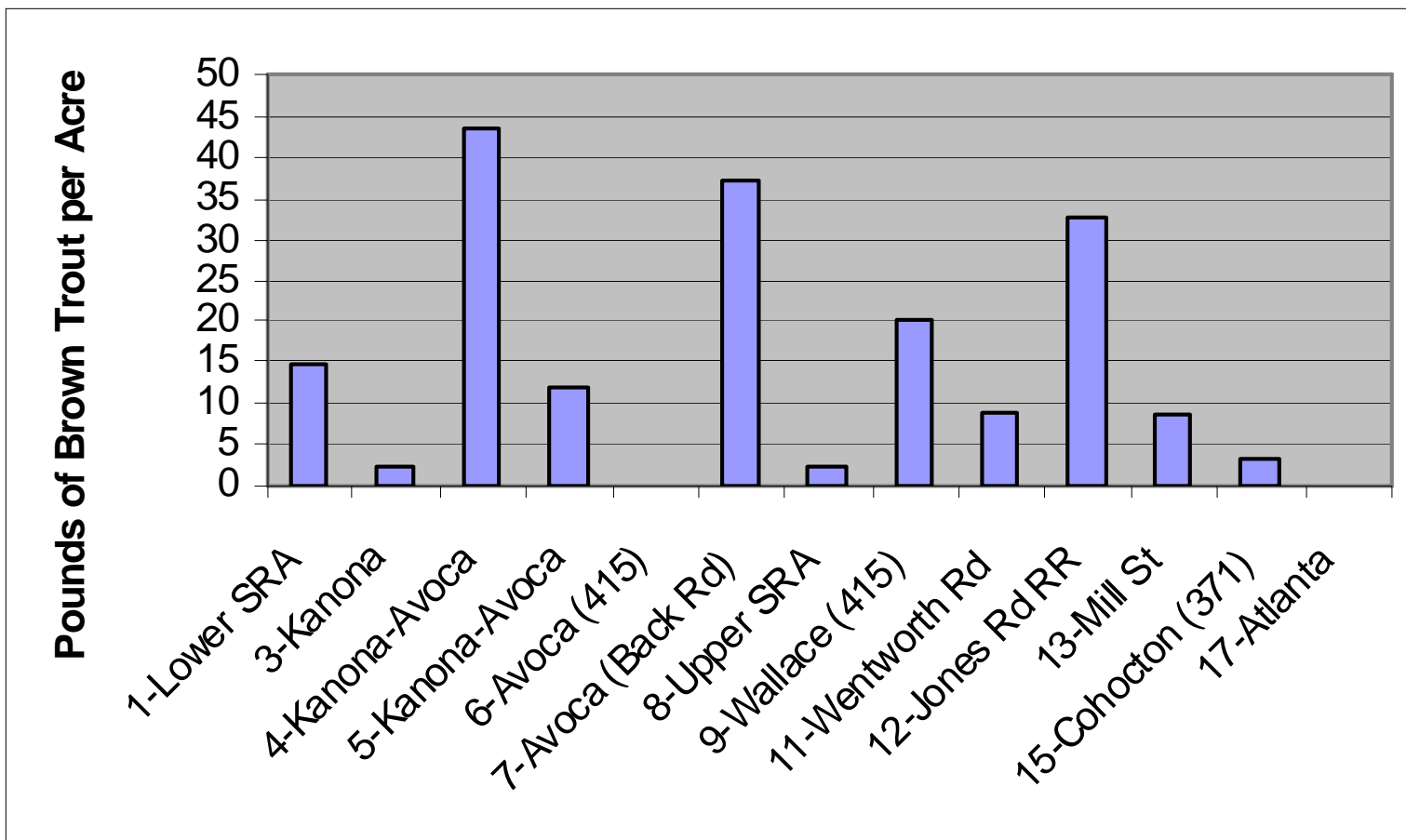
- Approximately **80%** of brown trout collected were wild
- 34 YOY brown trout
- 27 Brook trout collected at Wentworth Rd site (3.3 to 10.3 inches)



Wild Brown Trout by Site

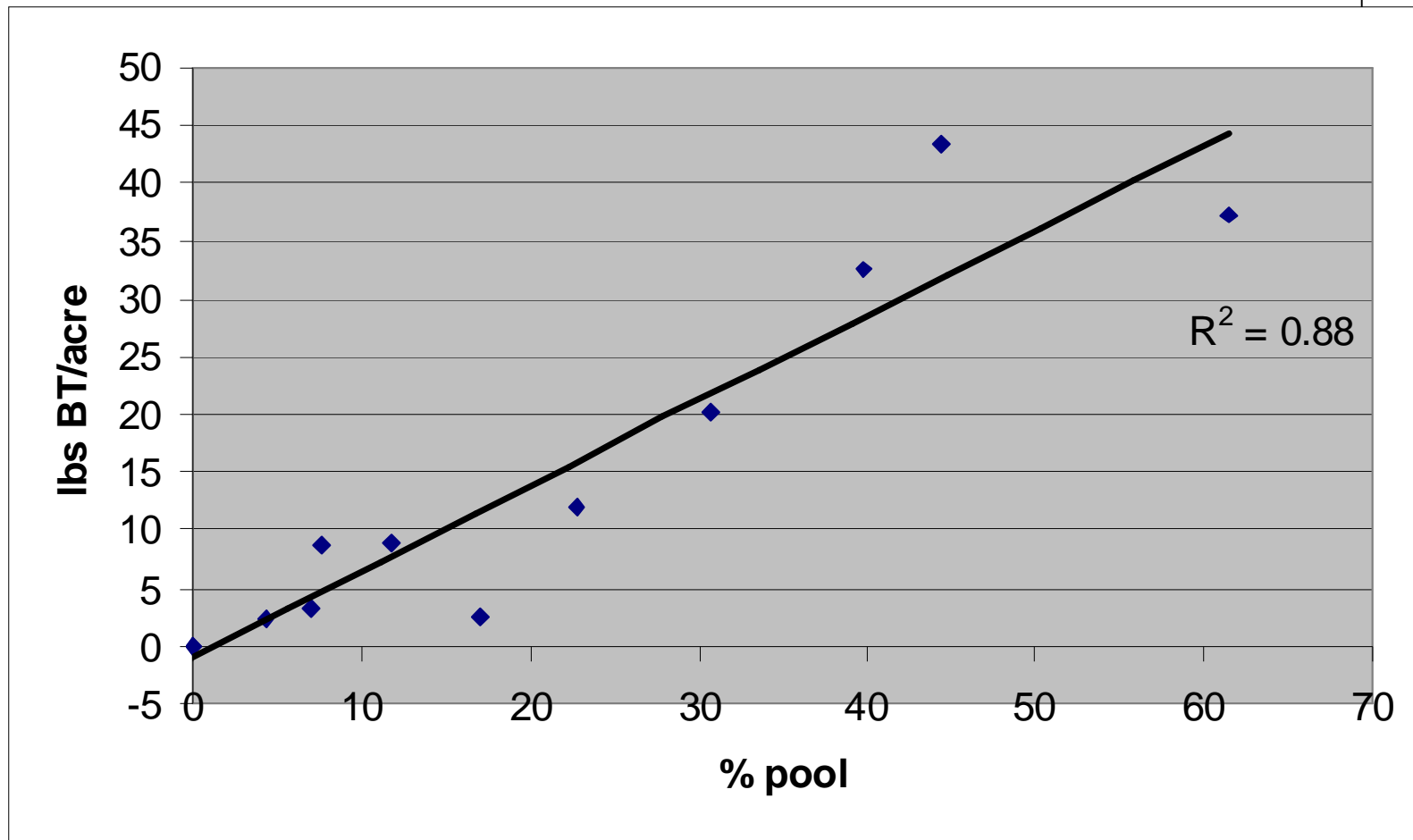


Brown Trout Biomass



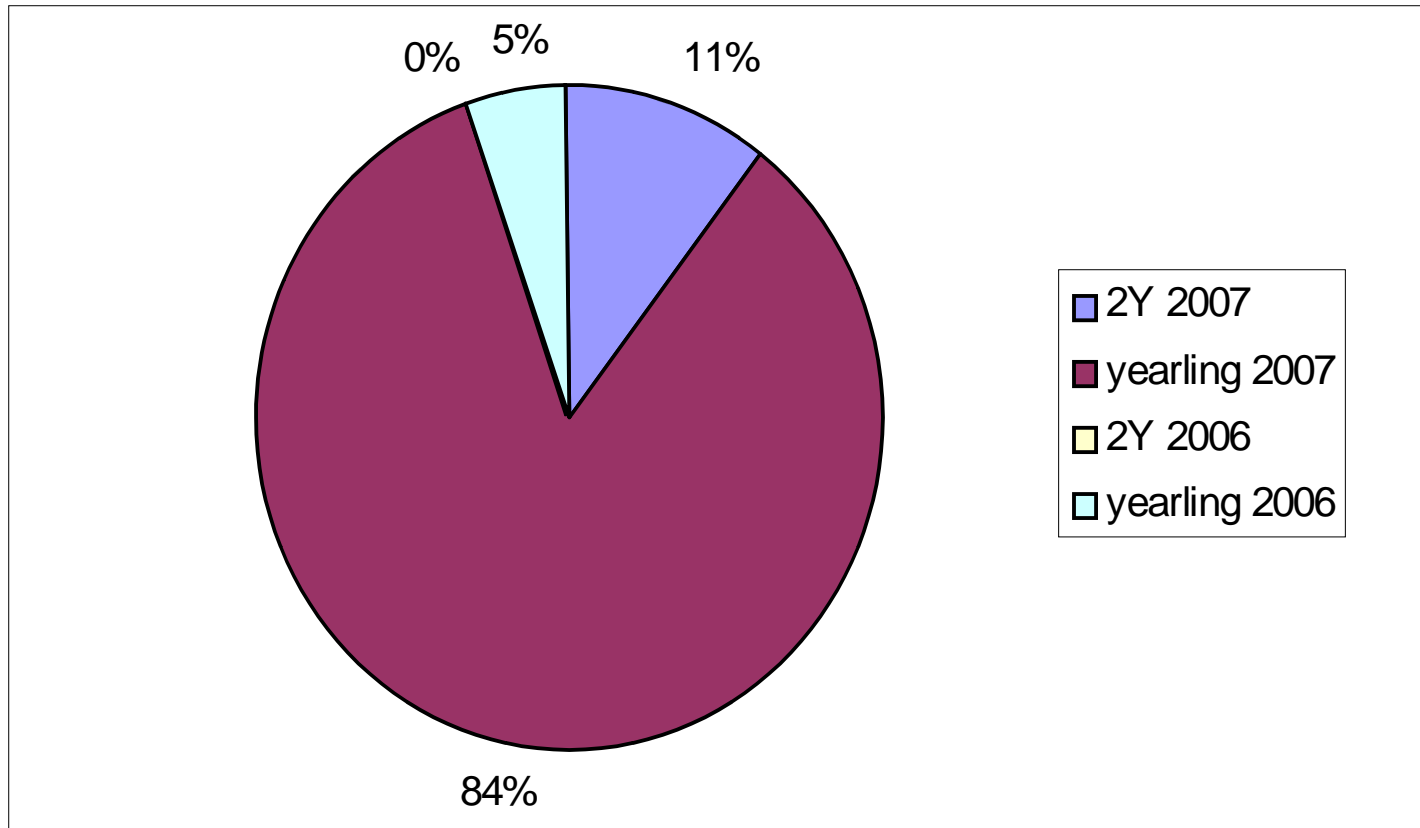
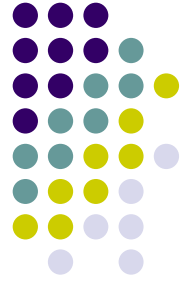


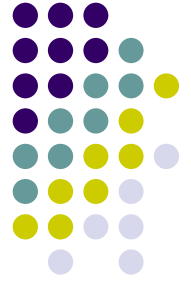
Pools held the most fish



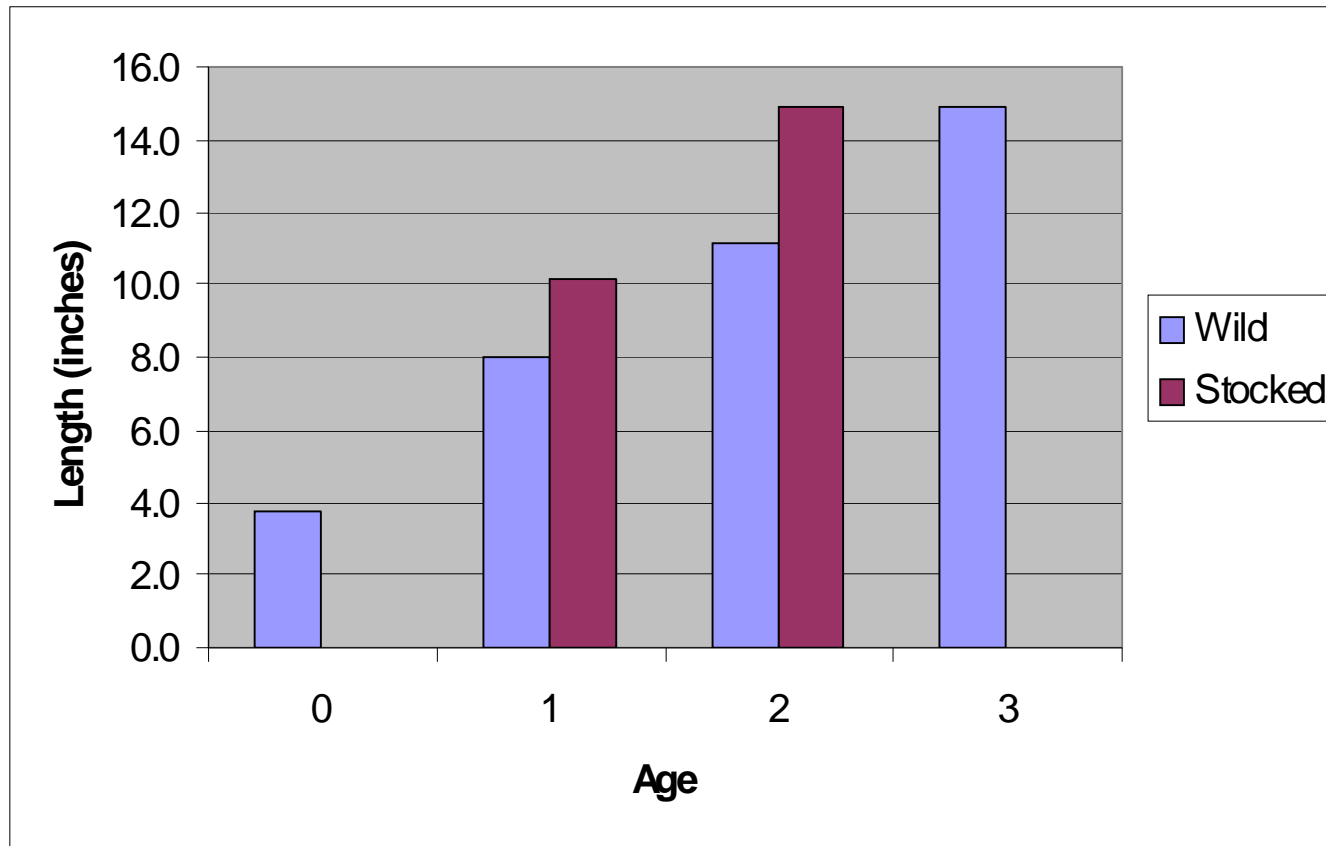
- Sites with more pool habitat had higher trout biomass

Stocked Trout

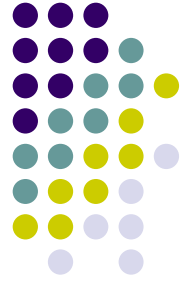




Stocked fish are bigger



- In general, stocked fish larger than wild fish of same age



Summary

- A lot of wild fish in 2007 electrofishing sample (very few observed during creel survey)
- Trout from tributaries may have moved into main stem due to low water
- Trout were often confined to pool habitat
- Good numbers of YOY trout
- Several quality sized brown trout collected (3 >21 in)