



Penns Creek, Section 05 Fishery Update and Regulation Review

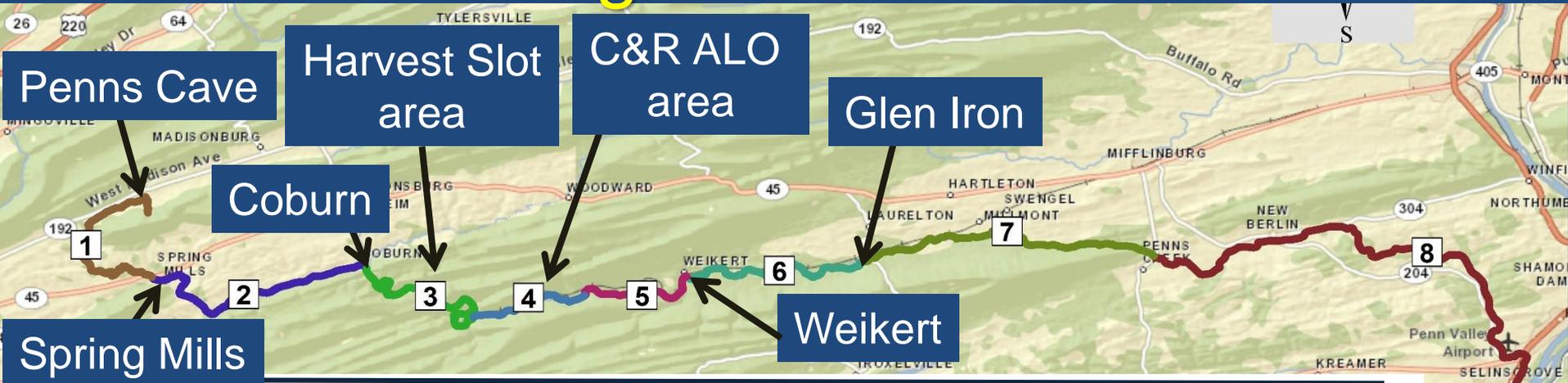
Mission: To protect, conserve, and enhance the Commonwealth's aquatic resources and provide fishing and boating opportunities

Penns Creek

- 66-mile long tributary to the Susquehanna River that drains portions of Centre, Union, Mifflin, and Snyder counties
- Large, limestone-influenced stream that supports strong numbers of wild Brown Trout throughout much of its length
- One of the most popular wild trout streams in Pennsylvania and the eastern U.S.



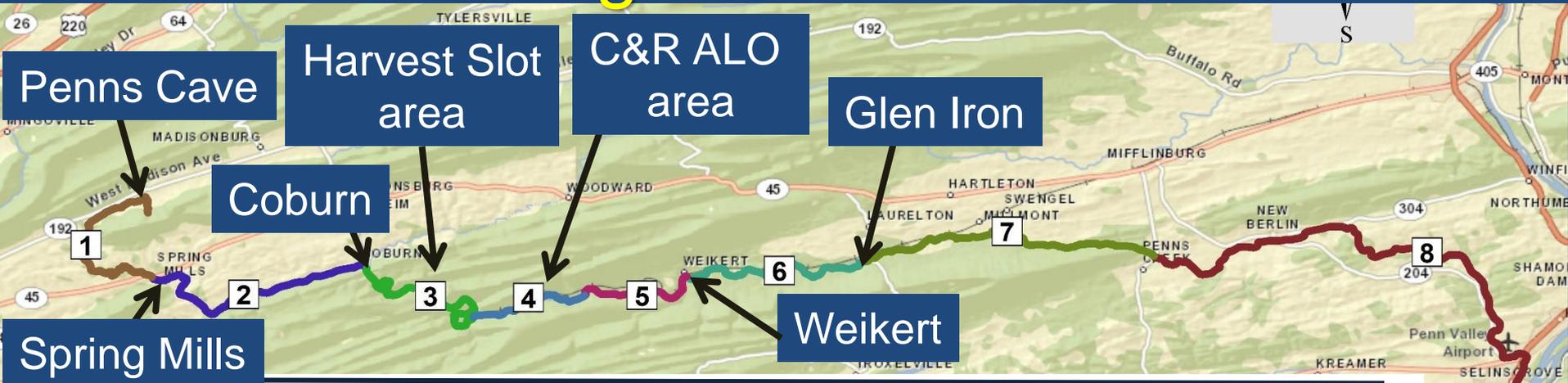
Penns Creek Management Sections



Section	Upper Limit	Lower Limit	Length (miles)
1	Penns Cave	SR 45 @ Spring Mills	6.8
2	SR 45 @ Spring Mills	Elk Creek	8.1
3	Elk Creek	1/2 mile Dnst Swift Run	7.0
4	1/2 mile Dnst Swift Run	1/3 Mile Dnst Cherry Run	3.7
5	1/3 Mile Dnst Cherry Run	Weikert Bridge	4.6
6	Weikert Bridge	SR 235 @ Glen Iron	6.4
7	SR 235 @ Glen Iron	SR 104 @ Penns Creek	9.1
8	SR 104 @ Penns Creek	Mouth	21.0

0 5 10 20 Mile

Penns Creek Management Sections

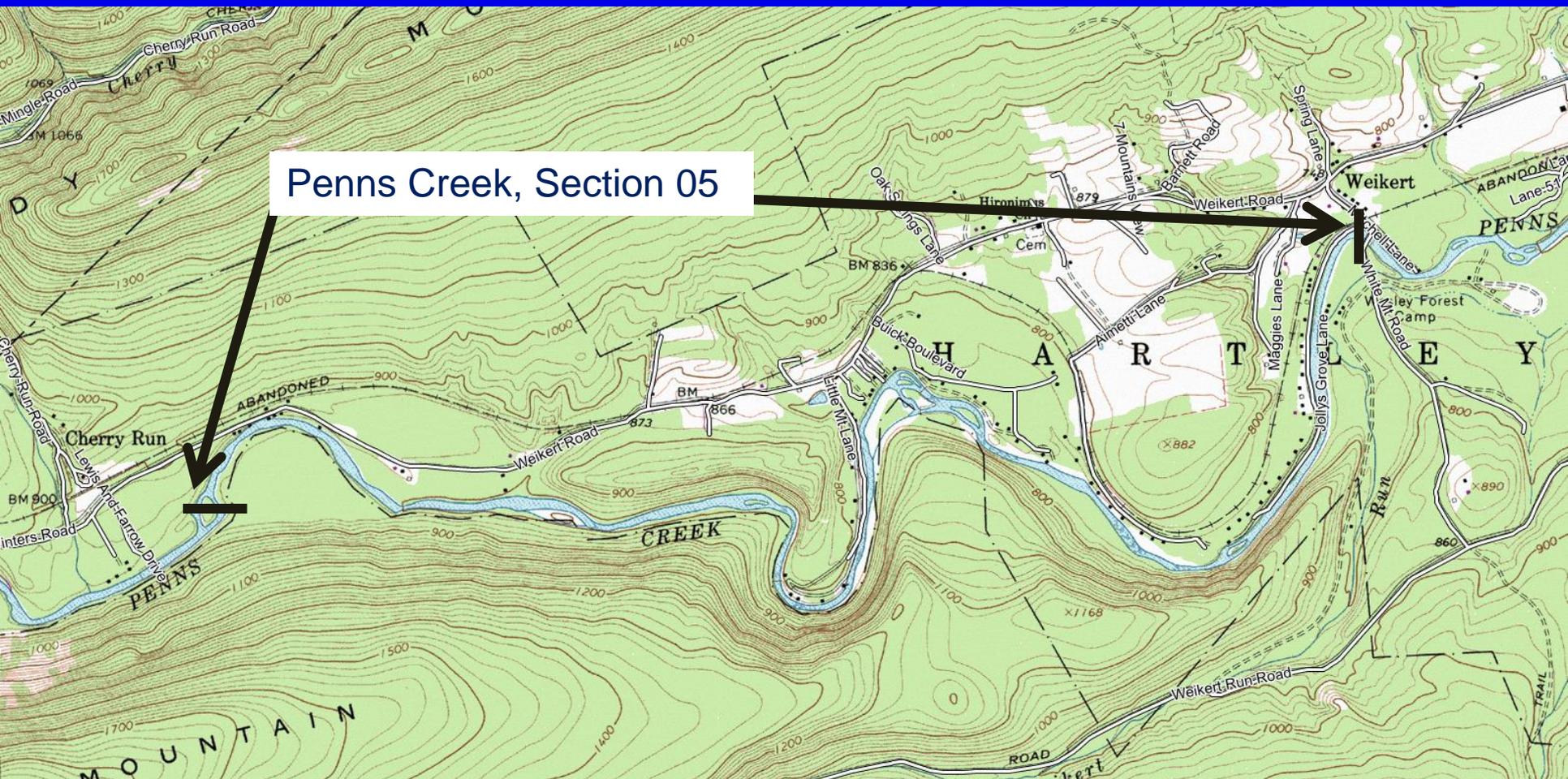


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0 5 10 20 Mile

Penns Creek, Section 05

- Extends 4.6 miles from 1/3 mile downstream of Cherry Run downstream to White Mountain Road bridge in Weikert



Management History – Section 05

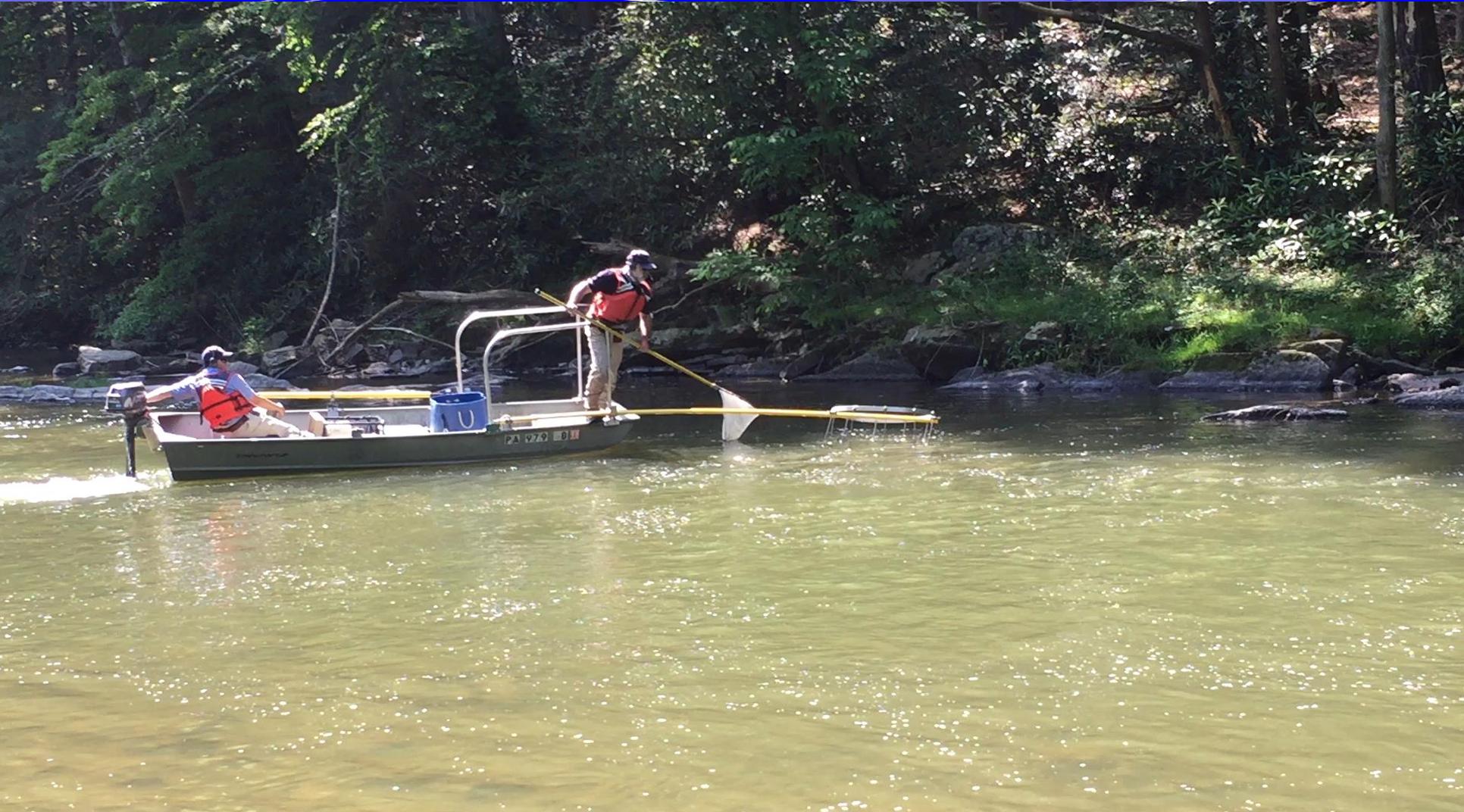
- Currently stocked with adult trout by PFBC and Union County Sportsmen
- Previous fishery survey - 1977
- Fishery survey conducted in June 2017 to determine present status of fishery



Fishery Sampling

- Sampled using two electrofishing towed boats and small electrofishing boat



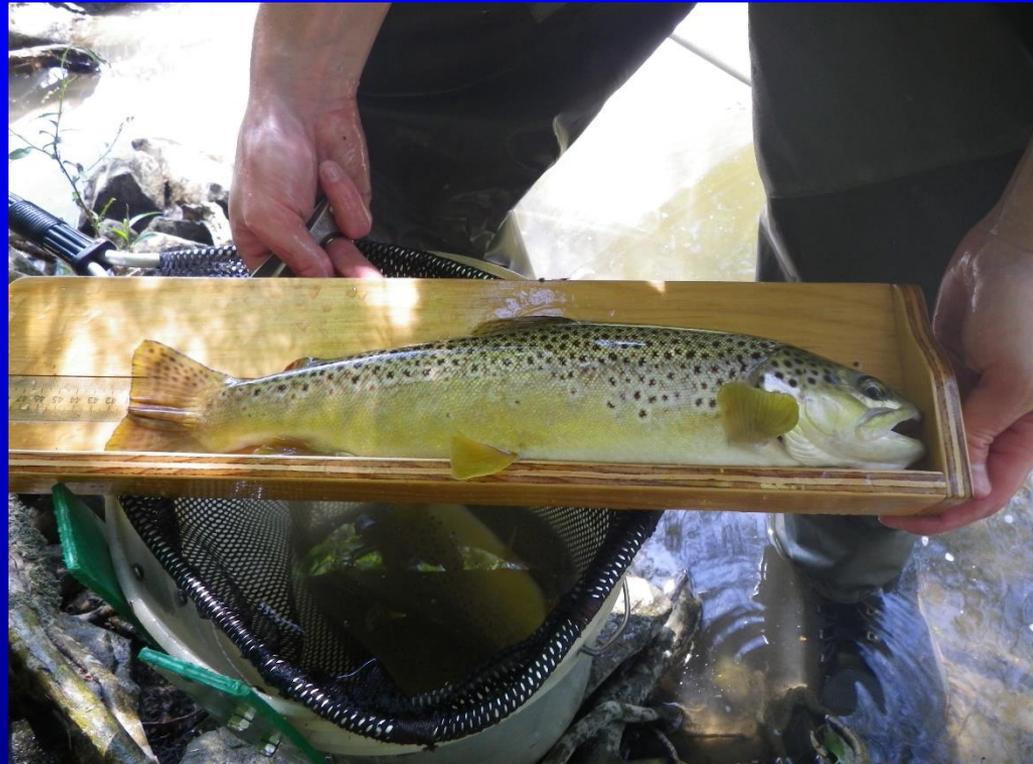






Fishery Sampling, cont'd

- All trout are measured, recorded, and released
- Population size and biomass estimates then computed based on the wild fish collected and stream area sampled







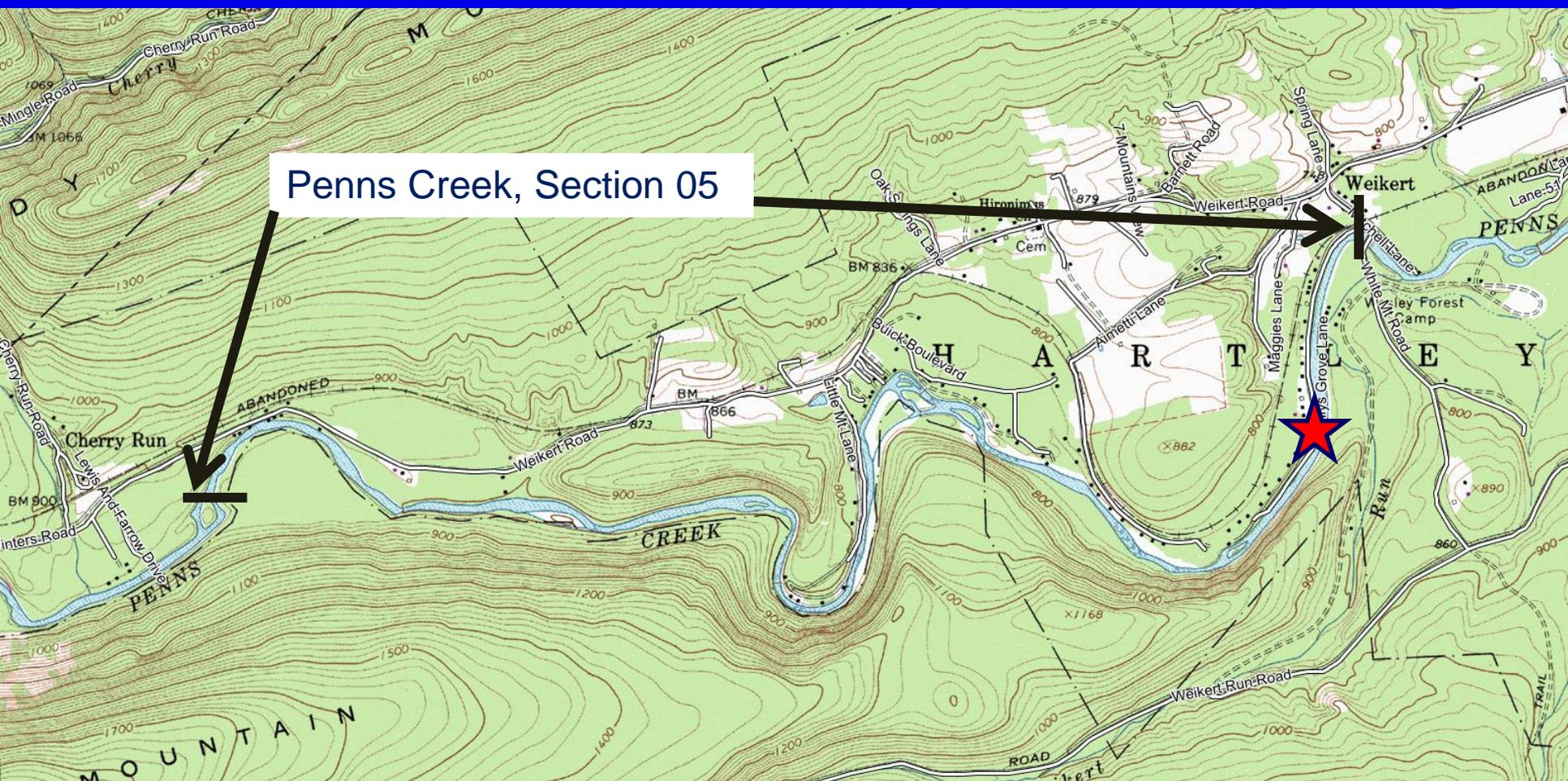
Hatchery Brown Trout

Wild Brown Trout

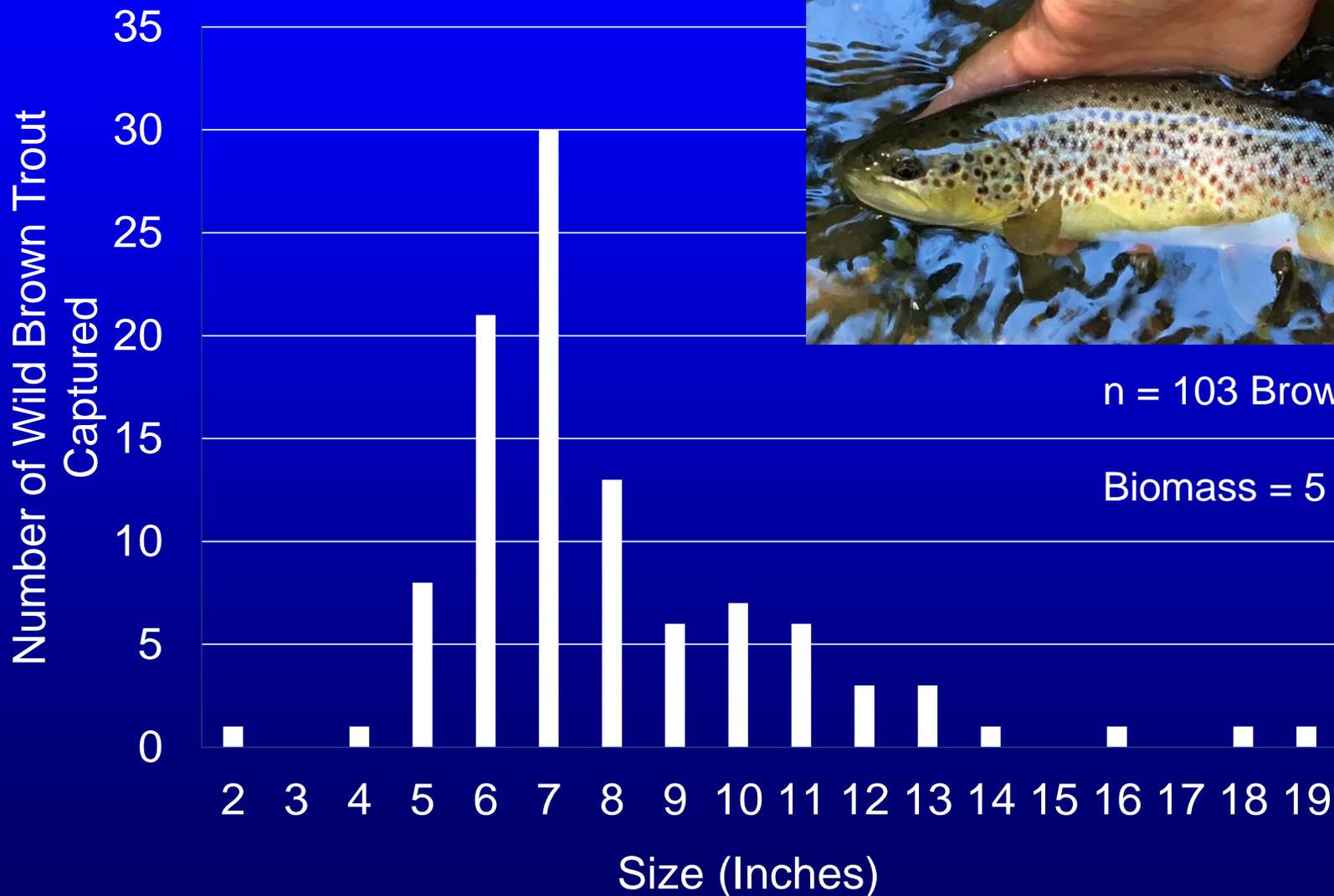


1977 Fishery Survey Location

- Fishery survey conducted at 1 site



1977 Survey Results

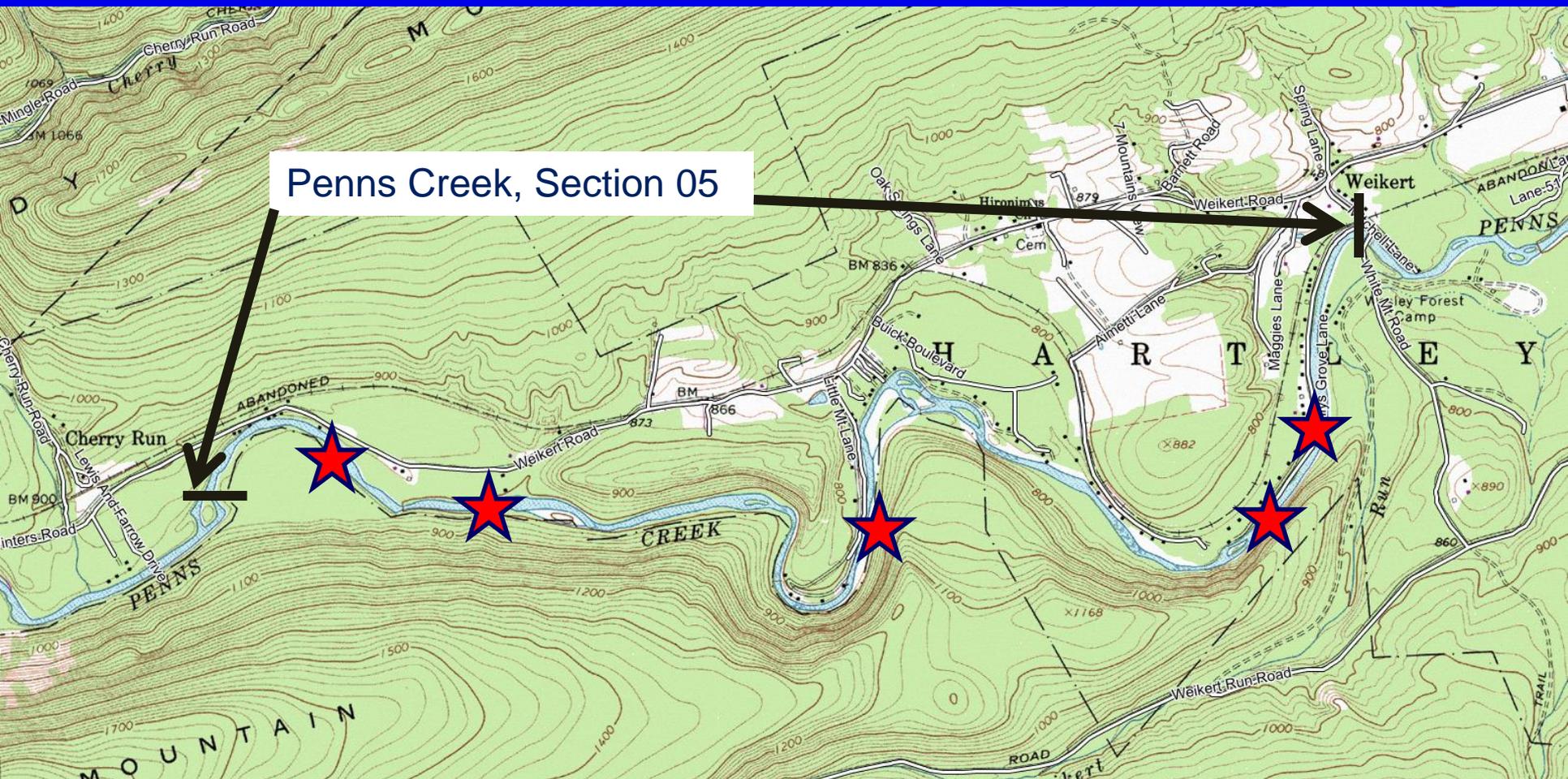


n = 103 Brown Trout

Biomass = 5 kg/ha

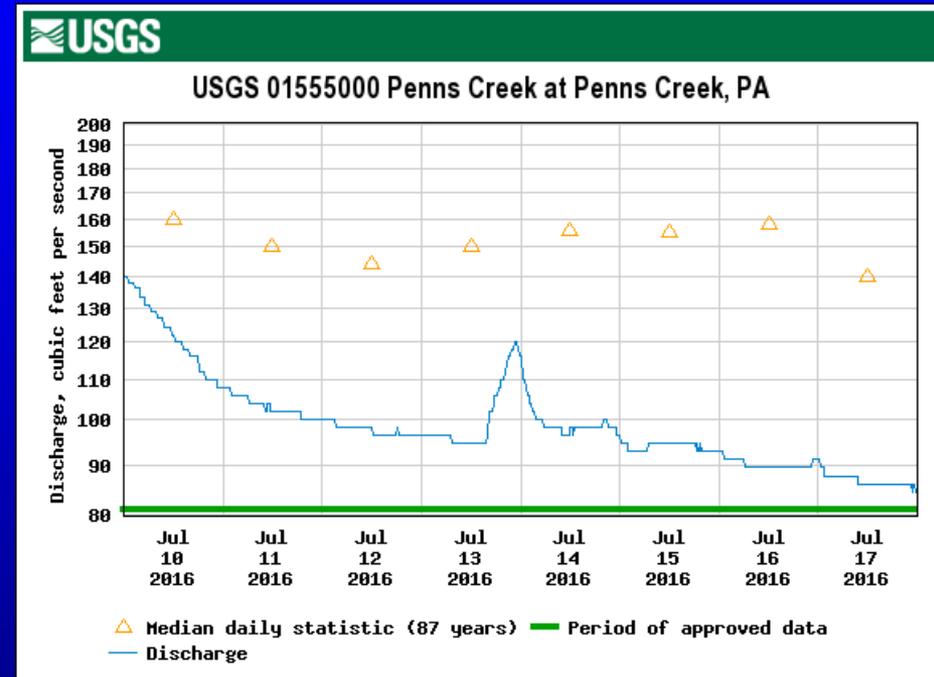
2017 Fishery Survey Locations

- Fishery surveys conducted at 5 sites



2017 Fishery Survey Results

- Upper 3.8 miles (1/3 mile downstream of Cherry Run to upstream end of Jolly Grove Lane) – strong, Class A Wild Brown Trout population
 - Wild Brown Trout Biomass = 45 kg/ha
- Lower 0.8 miles (upstream end of Jolly Grove Lane to White Mountain Road in Weikert) - moderate densities of Wild Brown Trout
 - Wild Brown Trout Biomass = 17 kg/ha

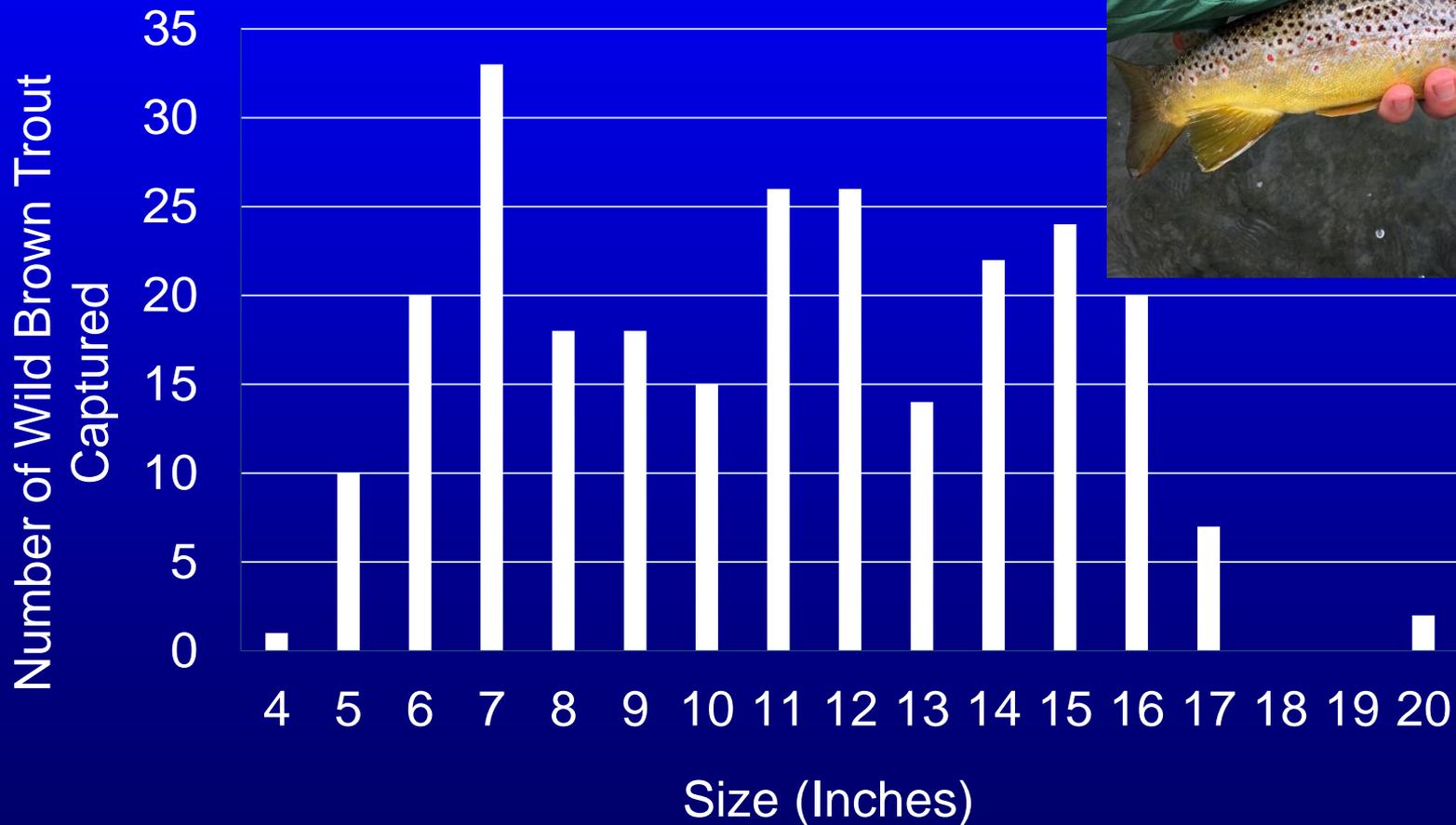


Class A Wild Brown Trout

- Stream section supports ≥ 40 kg/ha of wild Brown Trout
 - Best of PA's wild trout streams
- Only 2% of stream sections qualify for Class A designation
- Unique and high quality nature of Penns Creek's wild Brown Trout fishery especially given it's large size in a wilderness-type setting

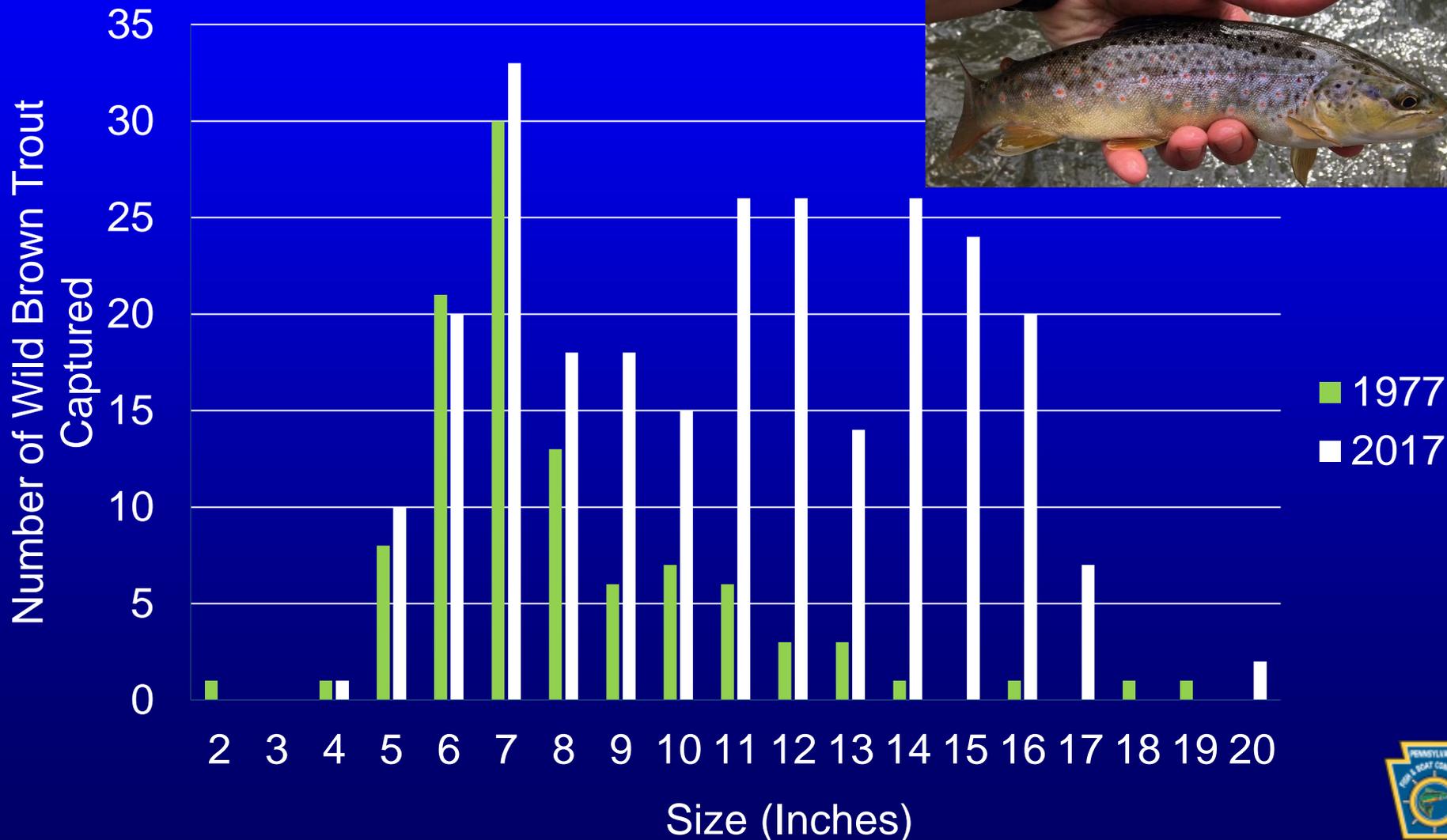


Length-Frequency of Wild Brown Trout – Section 05 in 2017

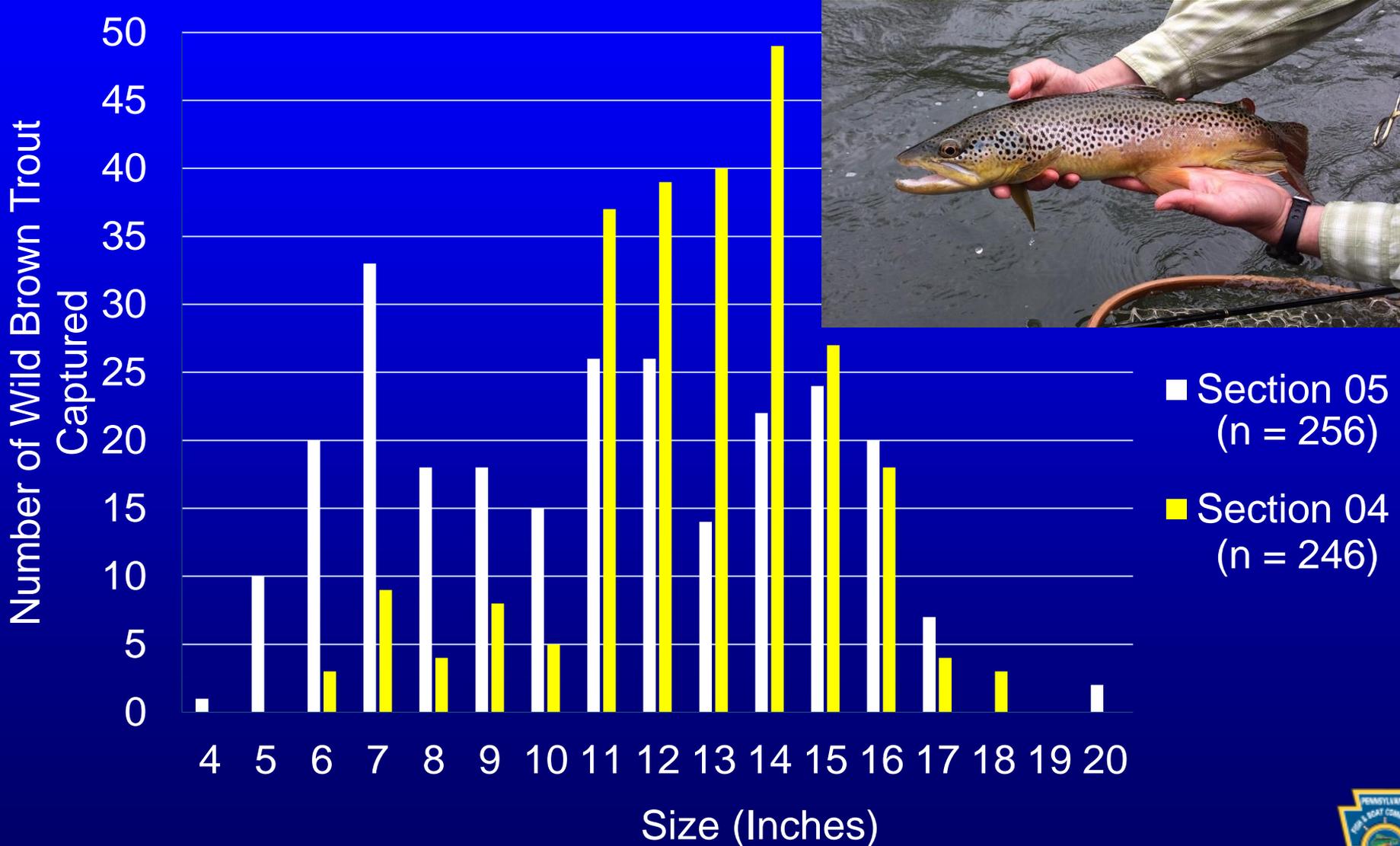


n = 256 wild
Brown Trout

Length-Frequency of Wild Brown Trout – Section 05 in 1977 and 2017



Length-Frequency of Wild Brown Trout Section 04 vs Section 05 in 2017



Biomass of Wild Brown Trout Section 04 vs Section 05 in 2017

- Section 05 biomass = 45 kg/ha
- Section 04 biomass = 73 kg/ha



2017/2018 Management Review

- Wild Brown Trout population has improved substantially over time in terms of both abundance and size structure - Class A wild trout
- Objectives:
 - Biological: conserve and provide the highest quality wild Brown Trout fishery as possible in Section 05
 - Social: Meet landowner and angler interests



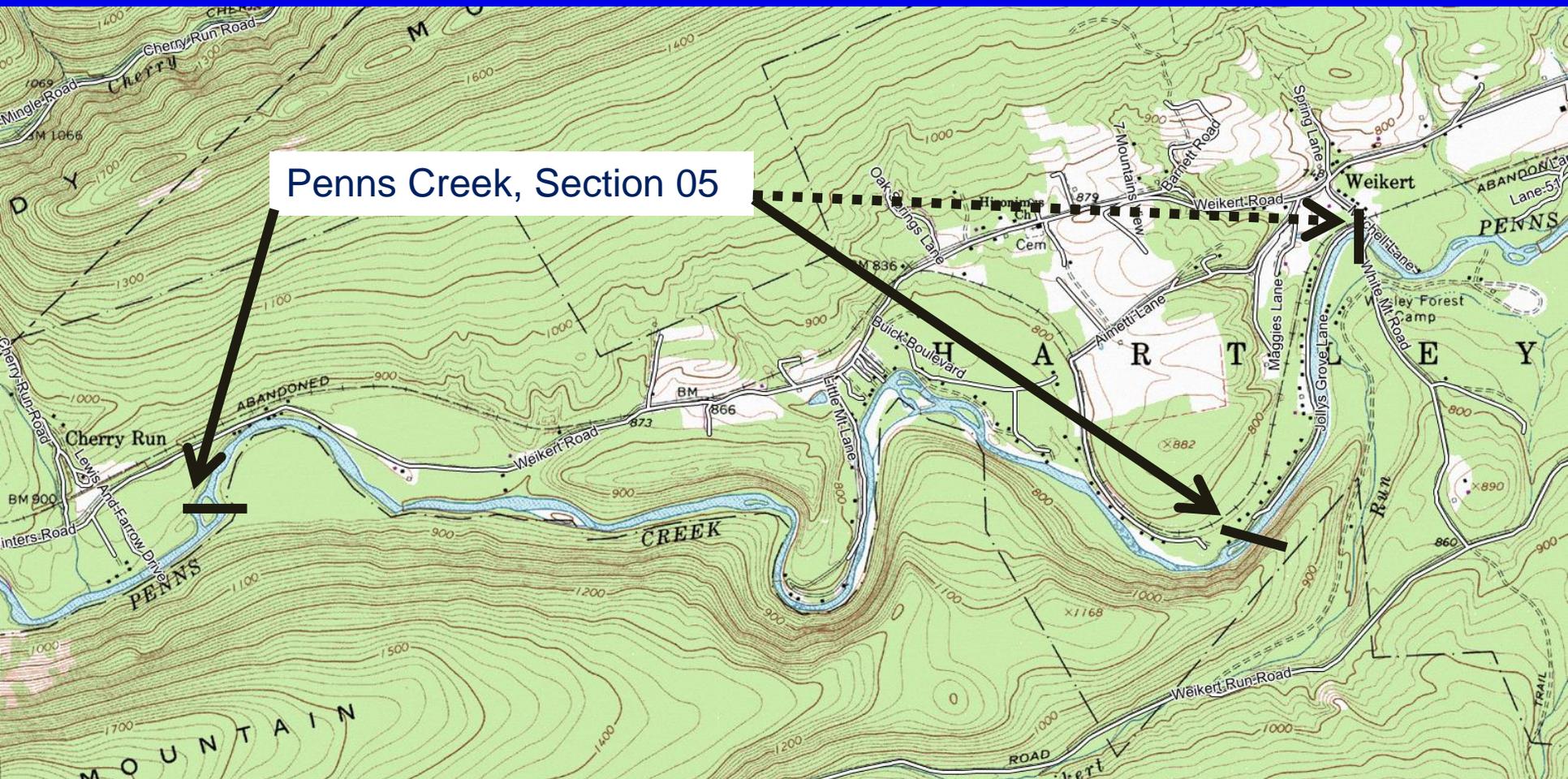
2017/2018 Management Review

- Determine which regulations for Section 05 will best maintain and/or improve the Wild Brown Trout population and best meet the preferences of landowners and anglers
- Section 05 is stocked with trout – what do we do with these fish?



Section 05 – New Limits

- 3.8 miles of Section 05 (1/3 mile downstream of Cherry Run to upstream end of Jolly Grove Lane).



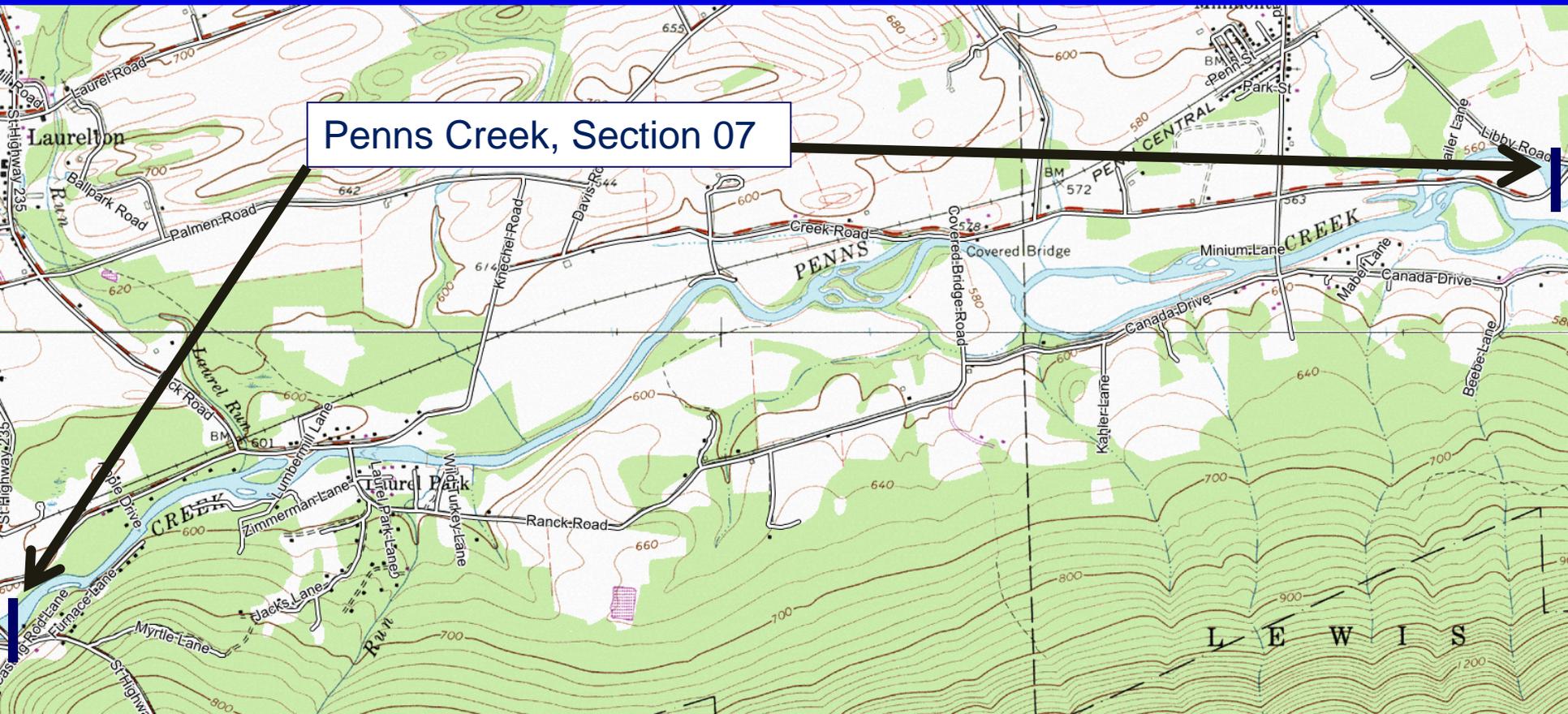
Trout Stocking

- PFBC currently stocks 2,000 Rainbow Trout in Section 05
- Is there a local option to move these stocked trout to further increase angling opportunities on Penns Creek via a stocking extension?



2019 Stocking Extension – Section 07

- 4.3 mile stocking extension from SR 235 bridge downstream to Creek Road Bridge at Libby Road
- 2,100 Rainbow Trout will be stocked by PFBC



Angling Regulation Options

- What angling regulations are the best fit for Section 05?



3 Regulation Options for Section 05

1. Catch and Release Artificial Lures Only
 - Provides highest level of protection to wild trout population
 - Open to fishing year-round
 - Artificial lures or flies
 - Downstream extension of same regulations covering Section 04



3 Regulation Options for Section 05

1. Catch and Release Artificial Lures Only

- Provides highest level of protection to wild trout population
- Open to fishing year-round
- Artificial lures or flies
- Downstream extension of same regulations covering Section 04

2. Harvest Slot Limit

- Provides high level of protection to wild trout population
- Focus limited harvest (2 trout/day between 7-12") to intermediate size fish
- Open to fishing year-round
- All-tackle permitted
- Same regulations covering Section 03



3 Regulation Options for Section 05

1. Catch and Release Artificial Lures Only

- Provides highest level of protection to wild trout population
- Open to fishing year-round
- Artificial lures or flies
- Downstream extension of same regulations covering Section 04

2. Harvest Slot Limit

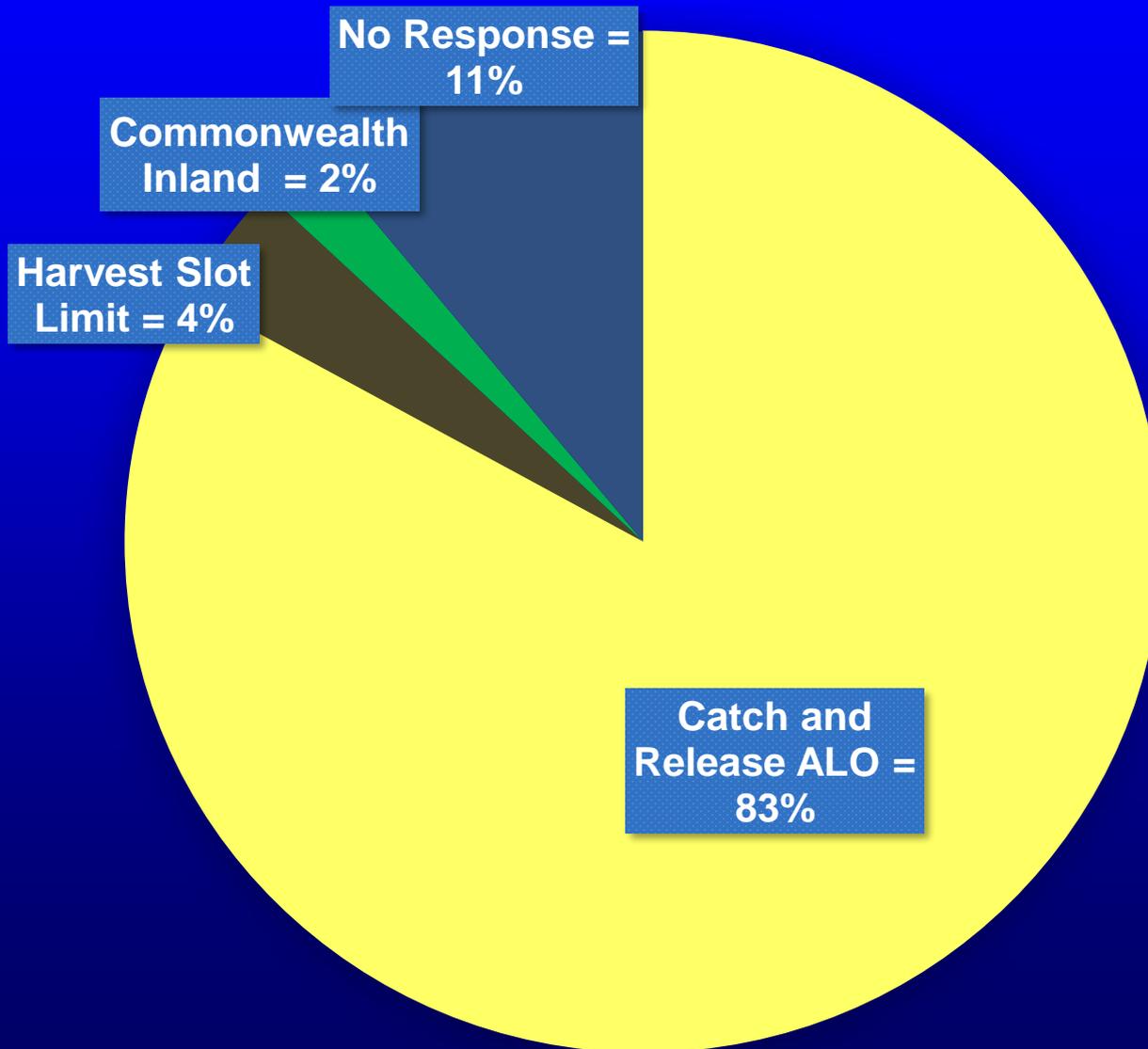
- Provides high level of protection to wild trout population
- Focus limited harvest (2 trout/day between 7-12") to intermediate size fish
- Open to fishing year-round
- All-tackle permitted
- Same regulations covering Section 03

3. Commonwealth Inland Waters Regulations

- Lowest protection to wild trout population
- 5 trout/day, 7" minimum size
- Current regulations



Landowner Survey Results



n = 43 riparian
landowners contacted

Summary and Next Steps

- No changes for 2018 – Section 05 will still be stocked
- New Section 05 - 3.8 miles (1/3 mile downstream of Cherry Run downstream to upper end of Jolly Grove Lane) will be managed as a Class A wild trout stream with no stocking starting in 2019
- Objectives:
 - Biological: conserve and provide the highest quality wild Brown Trout fishery as possible in Section 05
 - Social: Meet landowner and angler interests



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Summary and Next Steps

- The 0.8 mile reach from the upper end of Jolly Grove Road downstream to White Mountain Road in Weikert will be added to Section 06 and continue to be stocked in 2019
- A new stocked trout section (Section 07) will be added to the stocked trout program for 2019
 - 4.3 miles from SR235 bridge in Glen Iron downstream to Creek Road Bridge at Libby Road – 2,100 trout



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Summary and Next Steps

- Staff will be collecting public input as part of tonight's meeting
- All public input will be reviewed along with biological data and fishery objectives and a recommendation will be developed regarding which regulations are the best fit for Section 05 moving forward and we'll present this to the PFBC Board of Commissioners later this year



One of a Kind

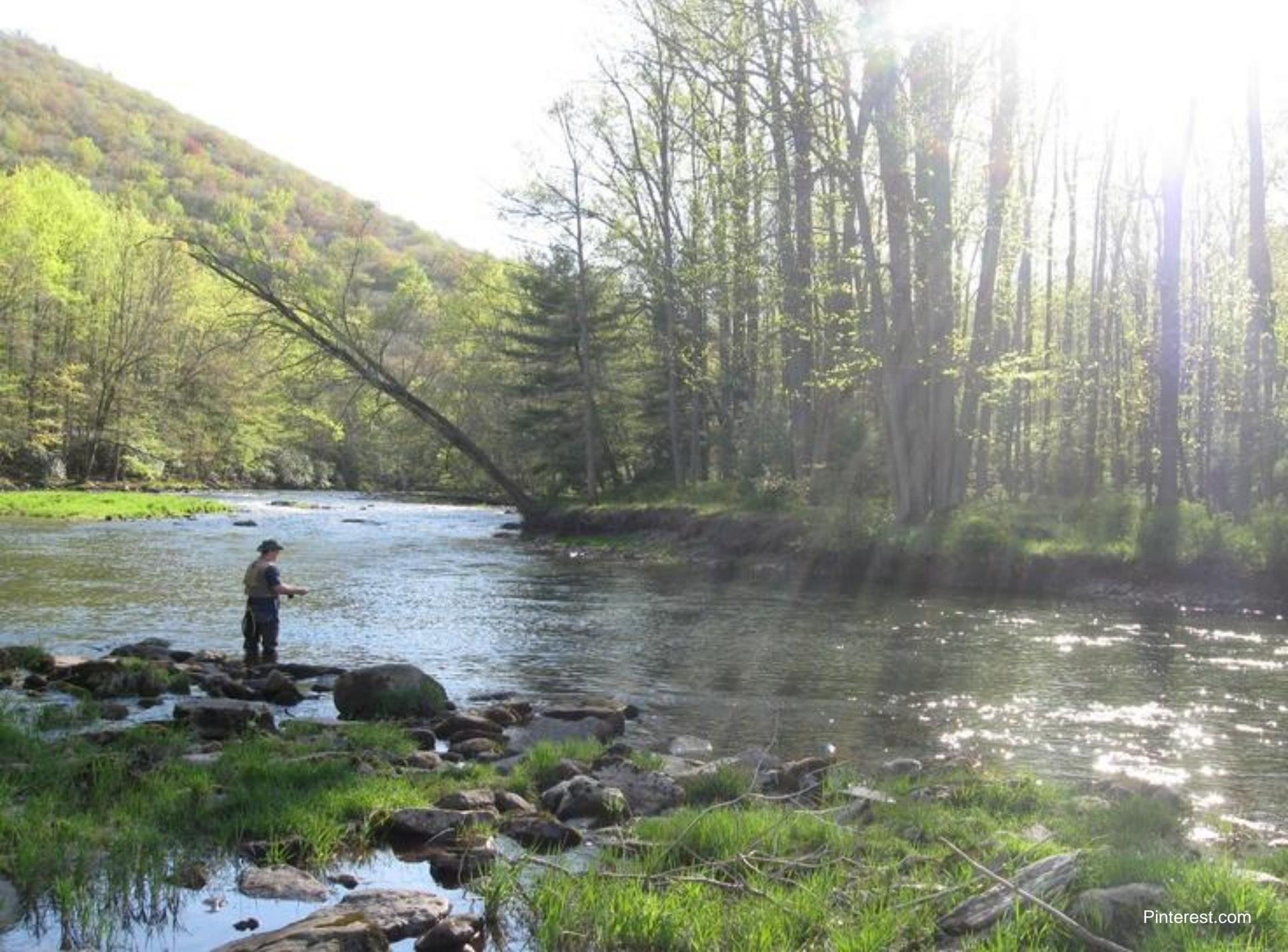
- Penns Creek is one of the most popular wild trout streams in Pennsylvania and the eastern U.S.
- The scenery and ability to catch large, wild trout in a wilderness-type setting is what makes it so special and why anglers travel long-distances to fish here
- Only about 2% of Pennsylvania streams qualify for Class A wild trout designation
- It is truly something special, especially for a stream the size of Penns Creek, to be able to support a high quality wild trout fishery. It is simply an amazing resource.



One of a Kind

- Penns Creek is also a popular stocked trout stream
- Moving forward, Penns Creek will receive more stocked trout from the PFBC and will have more stocked trout miles than it currently has and will also have more water managed for wild trout than it currently has
- This is an exceptional and rare opportunity to improve both at the same time













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Thank You

