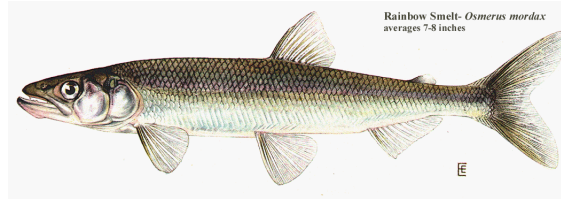


HELP US MONITOR THE 2010 ANNUAL SPAWNING MIGRATION OF RAINBOW SMELT IN LAKE GEORGE



This year the Lake George Waterkeeper and the Lake George Fishing Alliance are asking YOU to participate in a study to monitor the annual spawning migration of rainbow smelt in Lake George streams. Smelt are slender with a long pointed head, protruding lower jaw, and a deeply forked tail. The migration is an exciting phenomenon, where thousands of fish in the spring swim from the lake to the streams in masses to spawn. In Lake George this typically occurs in mid-April just after ice-out.

Smelt are an extremely important part of the Lake George fishery as a prey item for larger fish, such as the lake trout. In the 1980's, concern over the number of smelt in Lake George led to a ban on the collection or possession of the fish in Lake George by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). Since the ban was implemented the number of smelt appears to have bounced back. However, many longtime observers argue the number is not close to where it used to be and the state continues to be worried about the stability of the smelt population.

Due to the importance of rainbow smelt to the Lake George fishery and the continued concern over the stability of the smelt population in Lake George, the Lake George Waterkeeper in collaboration with the NYS DEC initiated an observational study in 2009 to see if streams were being used by smelt for spawning. Waterkeeper staff visited 16 streams along the west shoreline of Lake George. Smelt were observed in 75% of the streams and all data were compiled into a report that is available to the public at www.lakegeorgewaterkeeper.org. However, over 140 streams have been identified along the shoreline of Lake George and we need your help to better understand the smelt population.

This year the Lake George Waterkeeper and the Lake George Fishing Alliance are asking for your help. We are seeking volunteers to visit the mouth of a stream(s) during the two-week spawning migration as often as possible and fill out a data sheet that will be provided by Lake George Waterkeeper. At the end of the spawning period, the field data sheets will be collected and data will be used to create a report, which will be available to the public.

The Lake George Waterkeeper and the Lake George Fishing Alliance encourages you to participate! If you are interested, please call or email Chris Navitsky, the Lake George Waterkeeper at (518) 668-5913 x301 or cnavitsky@lakegeorgewaterkeeper.org. When you call Chris, he will record the stream you would like to monitor and your contact information so that he can send you the appropriate material and notify you when the smelt run begins. We look forward to hearing from you and your assistance in this important project!

LAKE GEORGE



Fishing Alliance

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