



# Use of Trail Cameras to Assess Angler Usage on Trout Streams

September 2015



Fisheries biologists with the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission have completed a research project identifying trail cameras as an effective cost-savings tool to collect information on trout anglers that will help the Commission manage trout streams. The new method proved to be effective in assessing angler usage, while saving the Commission money and staff time.

The study collected information about wild trout fisheries, including the frequency and duration of fishing trips, weekly and seasonal usage trends, and important demographic information regarding wild trout anglers.

Biologists will build on this project's success by continuing to use trail cameras to monitor angler usage of trout waters with restricted entry points. Study methods and summary results include:

- Using trail cameras, fisheries biologists compared angler use of Garden Creek and Basin Creek in Wilkes County because the two creeks are representative of other wild trout streams in western North Carolina.
- Angler use was low for both Garden Creek and Basin Creek, with anglers fishing less than a third of the available dates on either stream.
- About half of the anglers fished alone, suggesting trout anglers' desire for solitude when fishing these streams.
- Most anglers were adult, Caucasian males using fly-fishing gear, but there was a high incidence of youth with spin-fishing gear.
- Trail cameras provided a low-cost method for fisheries biologists to obtain information on angler use and angler demographics from these wild trout waters to assist in the management of wild trout resources.



Trail cameras were installed on trout streams in Wilkes County.



Cameras were set to capture images of anything walking along the access trail.

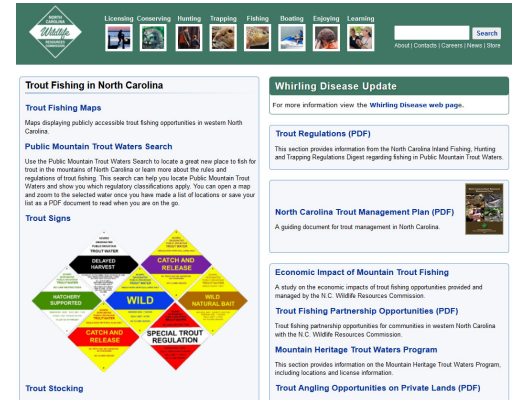


Anglers were typically easy to identify — fishing rod, fishing vest, waders, wading boots.



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- Download a [final report of the study](#):  
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- For more information on trout fishing in North Carolina, visit the Wildlife Commission's [Trout Fishing Page](#).



Visit [www.ncwildlife.org/trout](http://www.ncwildlife.org/trout) for information on trout fishing in North Carolina.



Trail cameras allowed biologists to obtain information on angler use and angler demographics on wild trout waters so they could make decisions on how to best manage wild trout resources and enhance angler satisfaction when fishing these resources.



Biologists set up trail cameras like the one above in trees along trout streams.

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## How You Can Help

Your purchase of fishing tackle, fishing licenses and motorboat fuel helps support fisheries work conducted by N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission fisheries biologists through the Sport Fish Restoration Program administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

