

Black Earth Creek – Fish Surveys

- All trout streams in BEC watershed monitored every 6 years
- Trout trend sites on BEC
 - Sample annually at the same locations
 - Analyze size structure, catch rates, reproduction, year class strength, and body condition
- Locations:
 - Zander Park
 - South Valley Road
 - Park Street



Photo Credit: Roberta Herschleb, Groundswell Conservancy

Black Earth Creek – Trout Abundances

5-year average catch rates (2019-2024)

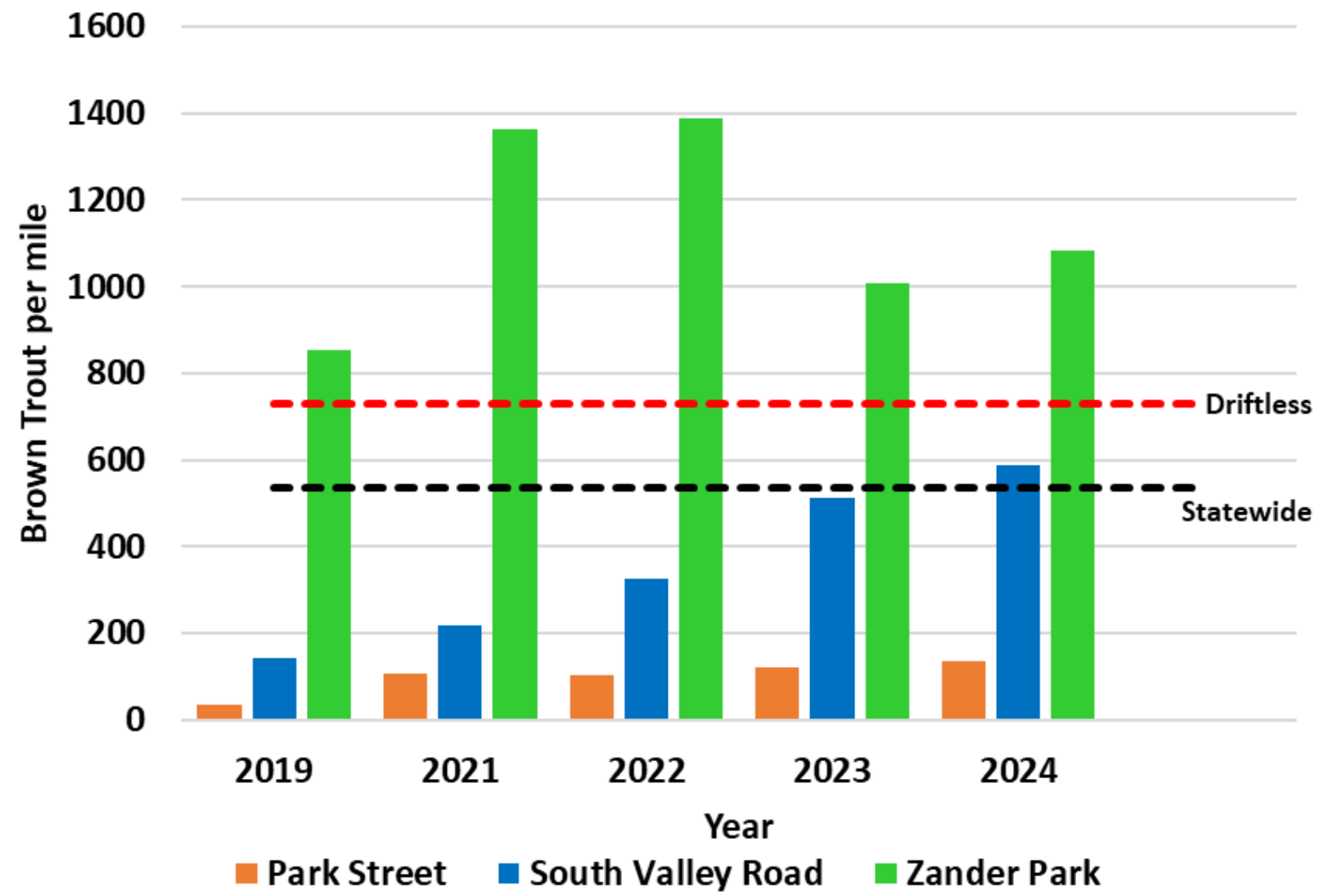
- **Zander Park:** 1140 trout per mile
- **South Valley Road:** 357 trout per mile
- **Park Street:** 101 trout per mile

Driftless area (730 trout per mile)

Statewide (537 trout per mile)



Black Earth Creek Brown Trout Catch Rates

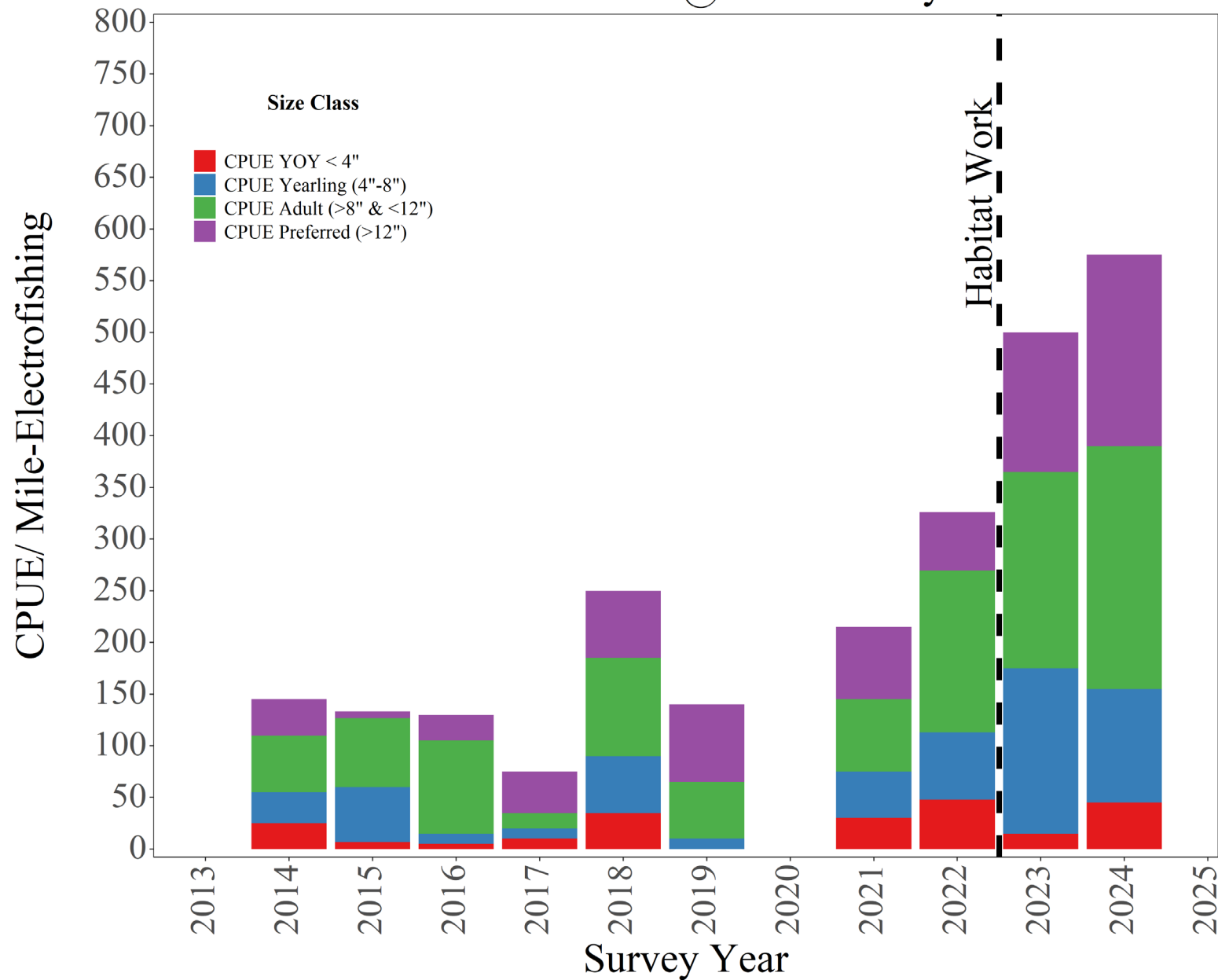


Black Earth Creek - South Valley Road

- Habitat project completed in spring 2023
- Pre-habitat project catch rate: 229 trout per mile
- Post-habitat project catch rate: 549 trout per mile
- 2024 catch rate was highest on record at 587 trout per mile
- Increased numbers for all year classes including YOY and yearlings

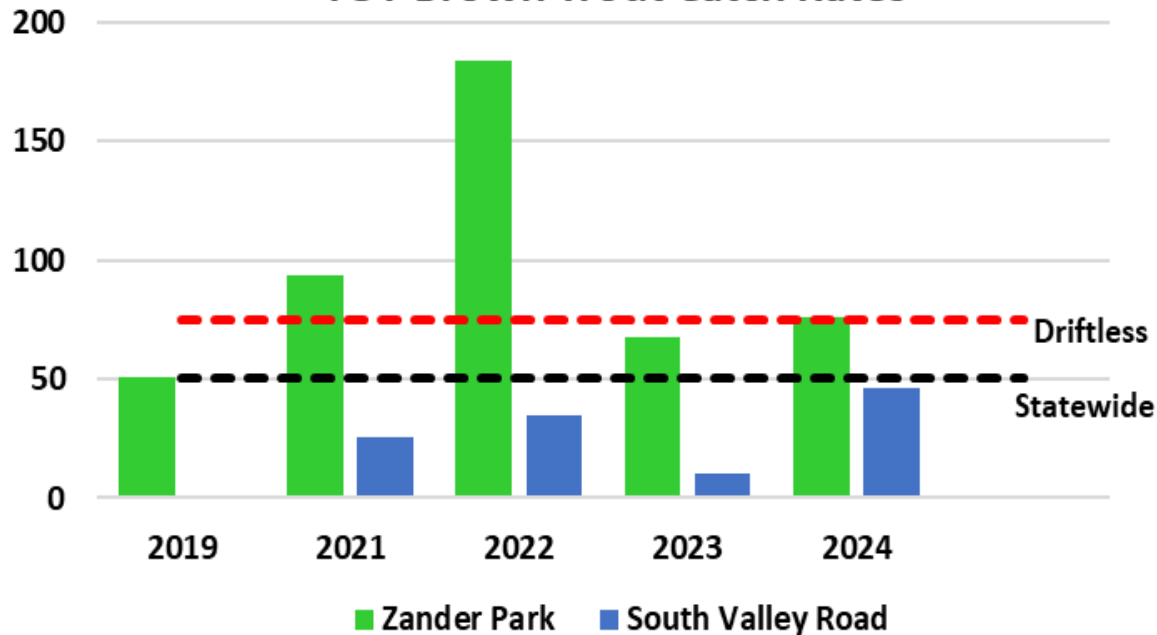


Black Earth Creek @ South Valley Rd

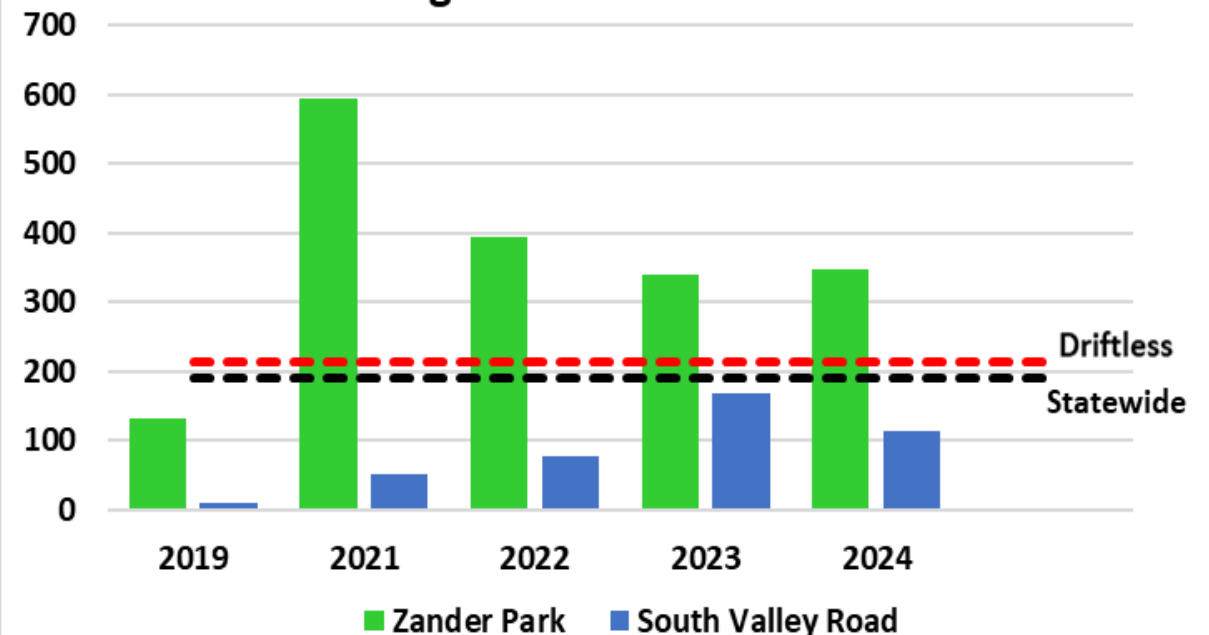


Black Earth Creek – Reproduction & Recruitment

Black Earth Creek
YOY Brown Trout Catch Rates

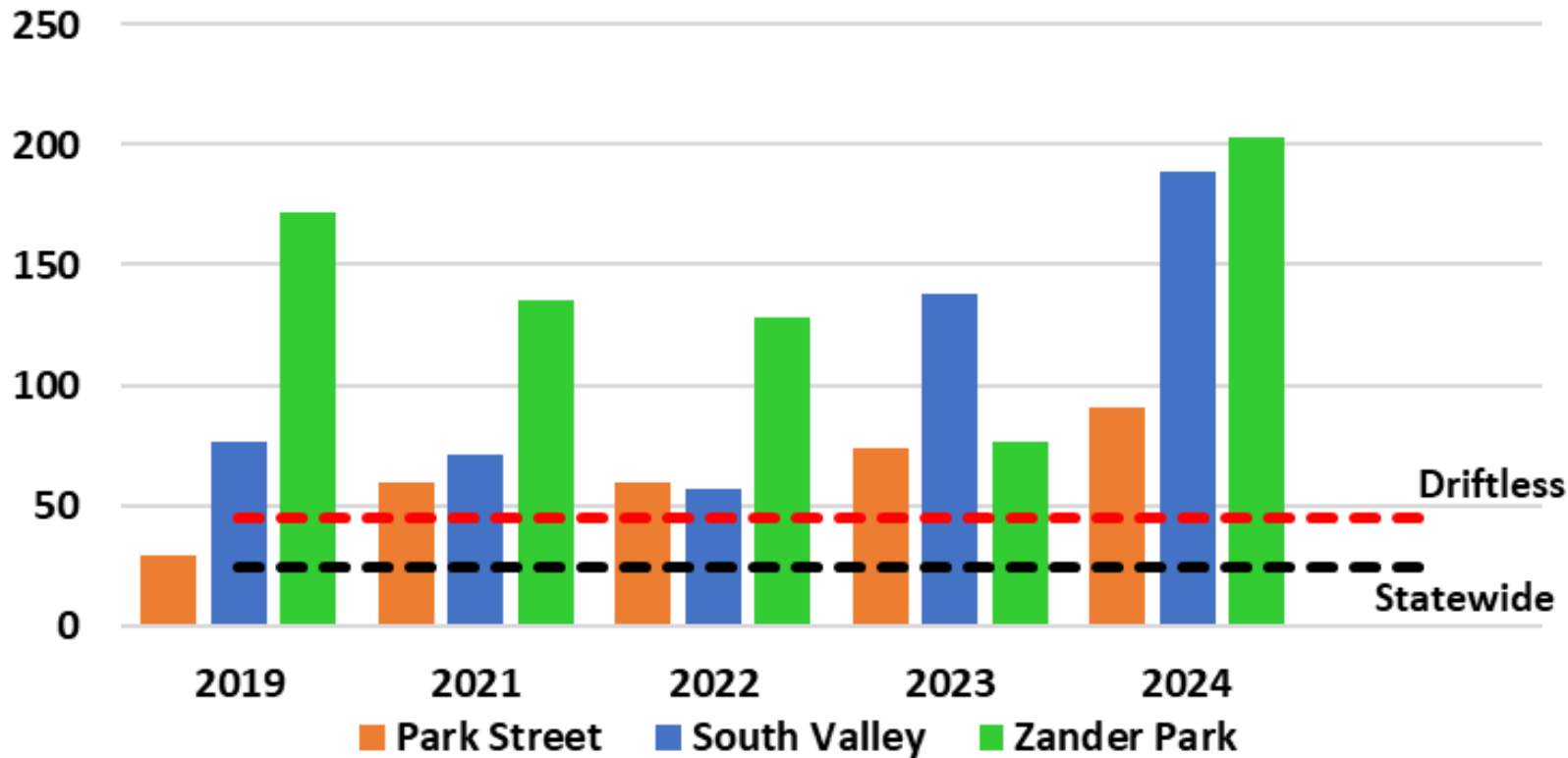


Black Earth Creek
Yearling Brown Trout Catch Rates



Black Earth Creek – Trout Size Structure

**Black Earth Creek
Brown Trout >12" Catch Rate**



Proportional Size Distribution

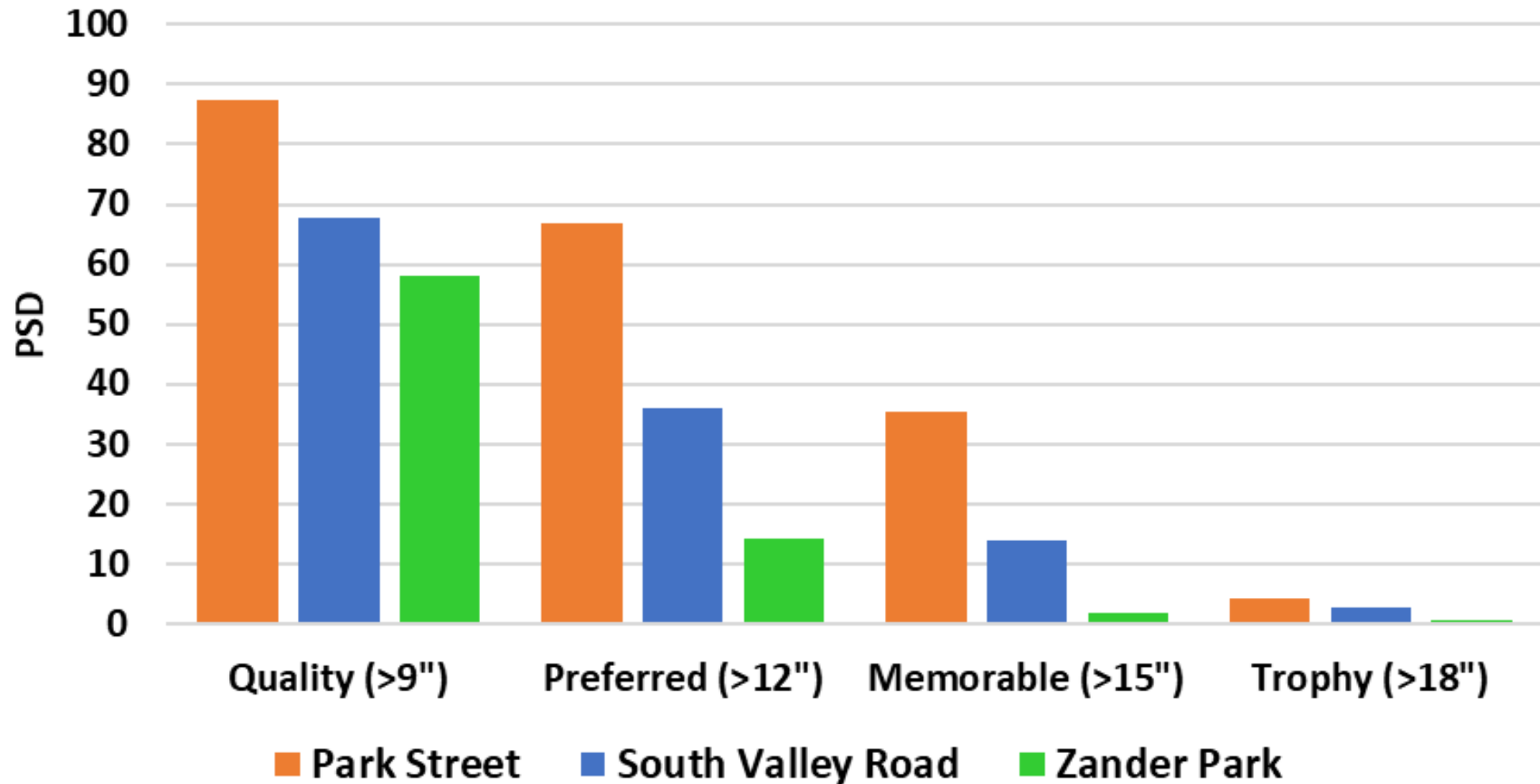
South Valley Road

- Memorable Trout (>15") – 13.8
- Trophy Trout (>18") – 2.7

Park Street

- Memorable Trout (>15") – 35.5
- Trophy Trout (>18") – 4.3

Black Earth Creek Brown Trout Size Structure



What's Next For BEC Watershed?

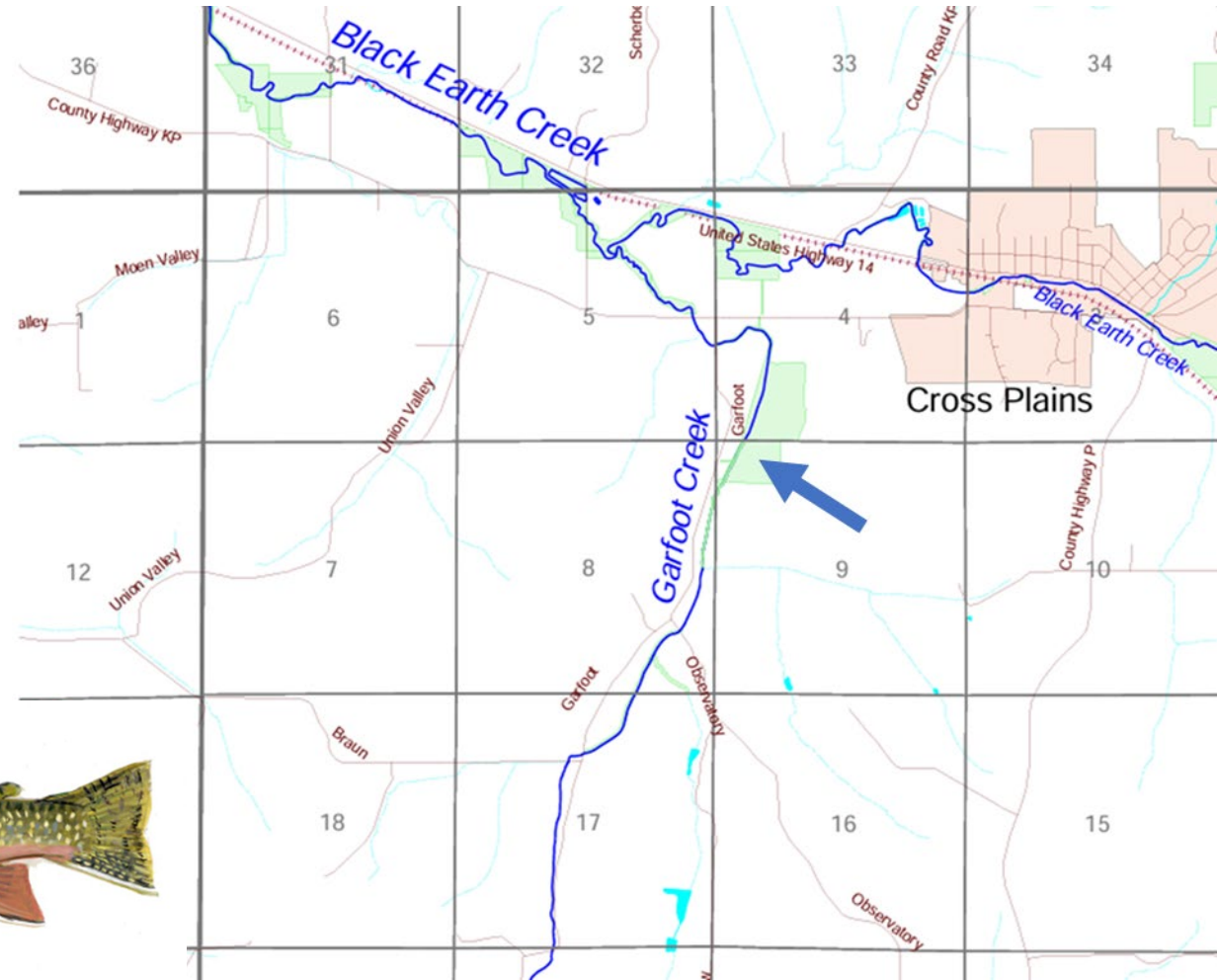
Black Earth Creek watershed rotation 2025

- Assess trout populations using electrofishing on streams in the BEC watershed
 - Size structure, abundances, year class strength, reproduction, habitat, water quality
- Sampling Locations
 - Black Earth Creek (11 sites)
 - Garfoot Creek (3 sites)
 - Vermont Creek (3 sites)
 - Brewery Creek (3 sites)
 - Wendt Creek (1 site)
 - Halfway Prairie Creek (1 site)



What's Next For BEC Watershed?

- Streambank easement outreach in winter 2025-2026
- DNR habitat project on Garfoot Creek in 2026/2027
 - 2,700 feet of stream
 - Add habitat features that favor Brook Trout over Brown Trout



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