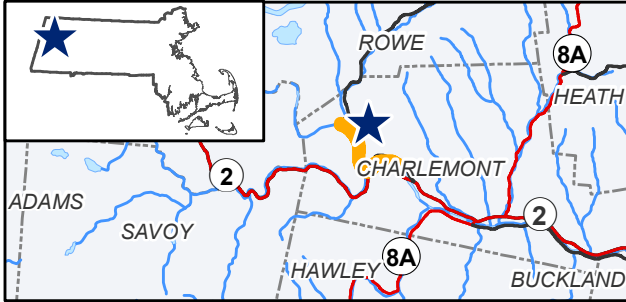














Deerfield River

Catch-and-Release Area (Lower Section)

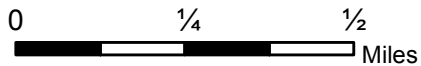
Charlemont, MA
Deerfield Watershed
USGS Quad: Rowe



Legend

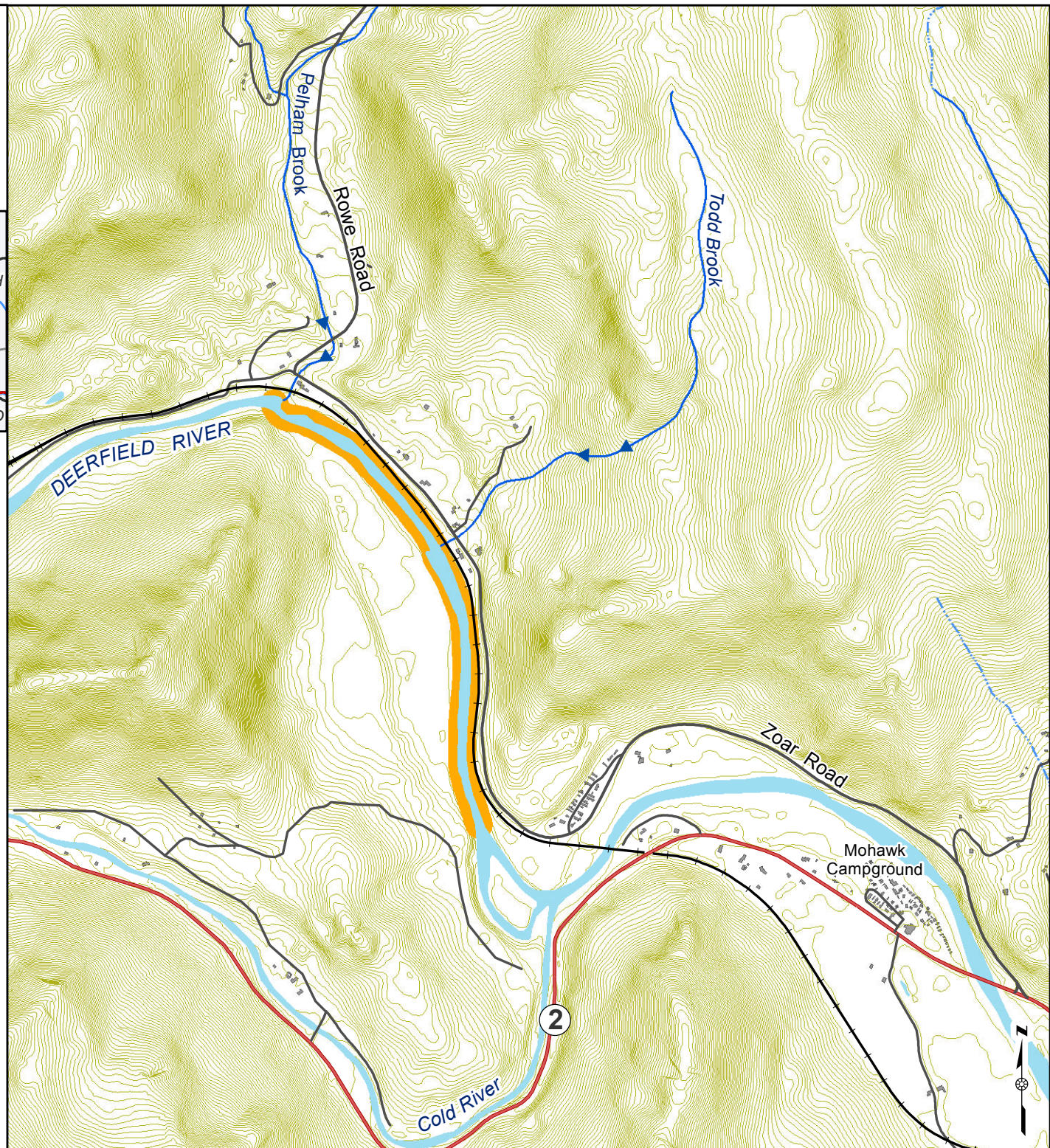
- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|--------------------|
|  | Catch and Release Area |  | Interstate |
|  | Stream-Flow Direction |  | Major Road |
|  | Dam |  | Road |
|  | Parking |  | Buildings |
| | |  | Access Path |
| | |  | Cartop Boat Access |

The Deerfield River Catch and Release area consists of two separate reaches. The lower reach extends from the mouth of Pelham Brook downstream one mile to the Mohawk Campground.



Map updated July, 2018

Elevation contours: 3 Meters





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Deerfield River Catch and Release Area Rowe/Florida (upper section) and Charlemont (lower section)

General Information

The Deerfield River, located in northwestern Massachusetts, flows south out of Sherman Reservoir in Vermont and flows into the Connecticut River 43 miles downstream in the town of Deerfield. There are two Catch-and-Release Areas on the Deerfield River. The upper section extends from below the Fife Brook Dam for 1 ¹/₂ miles downstream to the Hoosac Tunnel railroad bridge. The lower section begins at the mouth of Pelham Brook and continues 1 mile downstream to the Mohawk campground.

Both sections of the Catch-and-Release Area flow through a largely undeveloped landscape of steep, forested hills. The river mostly consists of large rocks and boulders and contains a series of deep swift runs, extensive riffles, and several large, very deep pools. Water levels on the Deerfield can change quickly when water is released from Fife Brook Dam for power generation. When fishing this section, be mindful of the changing flow conditions for your own safety and for the effect that water releases may have on the fishing. A quick internet search can provide information on the Fife Brook Dam release schedule.

Fish Populations

The upper section of the Catch and Release area can support coldwater fish year round thanks to the coldwater release from the Fife Brook Dam. The lower section is further from the Dam and is more susceptible to summer heat and drought, which can cause coldwater fish to move out of the main stem and into tributaries that maintain coldwater refugia. Fish surveys conducted by MassWildlife have found Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Brook Trout, White Sucker, Slimy Sculpin, and Longnose and Blacknose Dace.

Recreational Access

There is excellent wading access to the upper Catch-and-Release Area from River Road, which runs the entire length of this section. Starting below Fife Brook Dam and moving downstream there are several unmarked pull-offs where parking is available. Rafts and other small watercraft can be launched at the Fife Brook Dam access.

The lower section can be accessed from Mohawk State Forest off of Route 2, but involves a substantial walk to the river. There is another access point from a small pull-off on Zoar Road near the mouth of Pelham Brook. Most anglers access this area from a boat by launching near the Zoar Gap Bridge and floating downstream.

Fishing

Fishing is allowed with artificial lures only and all fish must be released. The use of natural or artificial baits such as worms, shiners or other live bait, cheese, corn, or fish eggs is prohibited. MassWildlife stocks the Deerfield River with a large number of catchable-size Rainbow and Brown Trout every spring and also stocks some Rainbow Trout in the fall. For the most part, you can fish for trout year round. The excellent habitat, abundant and varied food, and usually ideal water temperatures allow for stocked trout to holdover from year-to-year and provide real potential for catching trophy size fish, in particular Brown Trout. There is some evidence of natural reproduction of Brown Trout in the main stem and Brown and Brook Trout in the tributaries. This is a popular multi-user waterbody that might be somewhat crowded in the summer with anglers, kayakers, rafters, and tubers so be ready to share the river.