

Draft Existing Use Determination and Rationale:

Piney Creek (Garrett County)

December 23, 2021

Description of Setting and Data Sources

Piney Creek (12-digit 050202040038) is located in the Casselman River watershed. The mainstem of Piney Creek flows through Finzel, Maryland north into Pennsylvania and eventually travels south back into Maryland. The upper headwaters of Piney Creek are classified as Use Class III-P, but are classified as Use Class I-P downstream of a confluence near the Maryland-Pennsylvania border. The MDDNR MBSS program conducted surveys of the Use Class I-P segment of Piney Creek that is located near the state line and also deployed a temperature logger in 2020. Figure 1 shows the location of Piney Creek along with the relevant sampling station. Figure 2 displays the temperature profile recorded by the logger and Figure 3 displays the final existing use determination. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the temperature and biological data respectively.

Figure 1: Piney Creek



Temperature Data Summary for Piney Creek

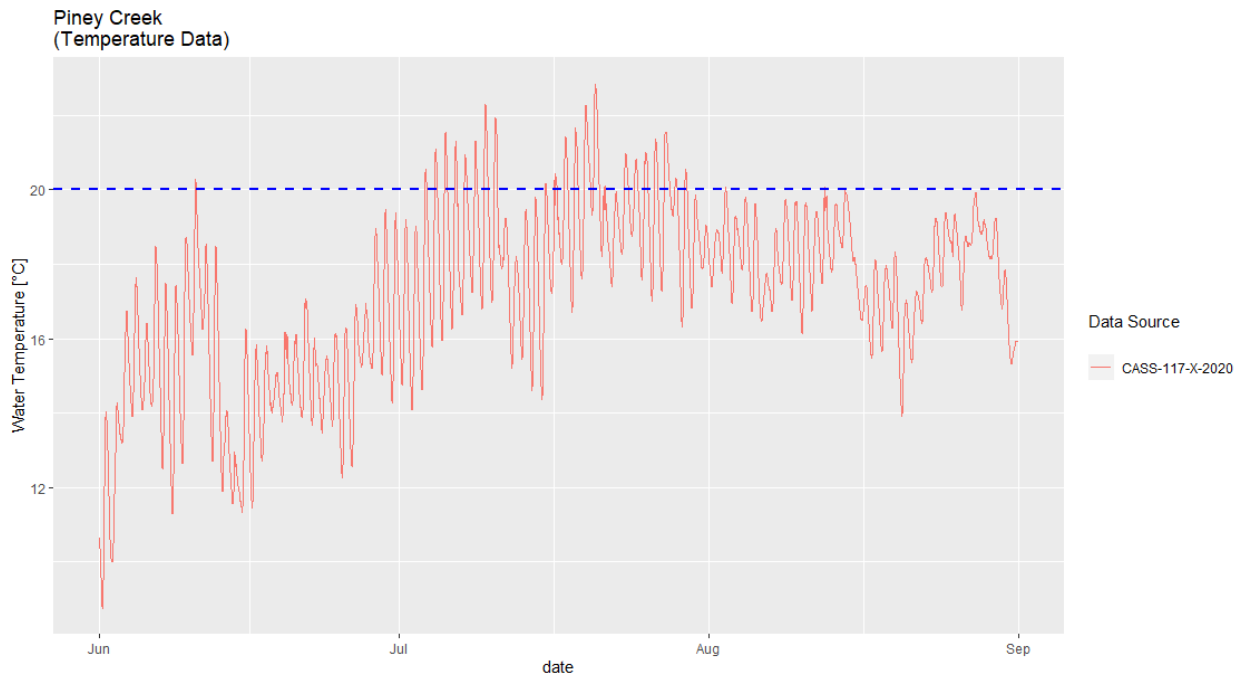
Water temperature data were collected during 1 sampling event in 2020. The water temperature data met the Class III-P criterion.

Table 1. Piney Creek

Date	Station ID	Stream	Data Submitter	# Temp Readings	Percent>20°C	Percent>24°C	Avg Daily Mean	Daily Max
2020	CASS-117-X-2020	Piney Creek	MDDNR MBSS Program	6624	8.5%	0%	17.2	22.85

*Water temperature logger data was assessed from June to August. The “Daily Max” represents the maximum temperature from June 1stth to August 31st.

Figure 2: Temperature Profile of Piney Creek (blue dashed line represents 20 degrees)



Biological Data Summary for Piney Creek

Piney Creek was surveyed by Maryland DNR in 2020. A total of 48 brook trout were found during this sampling event. Multiple year classes of adults and young-of-year (YOY) were documented.

Table 3. Unnamed Tributary Piney Creek

Date	Station ID	Stream	Data Submitter	Species	Count	Maturity
6/26/2020	CASS-177-X-2020	Piney Creek	MDDNR MBSS Program	brook trout	48	Multiple Year Classes of Adults and YOY

*YOY - young-of-year

DNR Fish Stocking

A personal communication with Michael Kashiwagi (Maryland DNR Western Regional Fisheries manager) confirmed that Piney Creek has not been stocked with brook trout within Maryland. Mr. Kashiwagi also confirmed that Pennsylvania has not stocked brook trout in this area of Piney Creek, although brown trout and rainbow trout have been stocked near the town of Salisbury PA. The reproducing brook trout observed in Piney Creek are of natural origin and not the result of stocking.

Existing Use Determination and Rationale for Piney Creek

Current Use Class: Class I-P

Existing Use Determination: Piney Creek, from its confluence with an unnamed tributary [39.722497 °N, -78.964199 °W] upstream to and including all headwaters, supports self-sustaining brook trout, with water temperatures that have a 90th percentile below 20°C, an average daily mean below 20°C, and daily max below 24°C.

Is this Existing Use Determination Consistent with the Current (March 2020) Designated Use Class? **No.** The existing use of Piney Creek, as described above, requires that water temperatures remain significantly colder than the water quality criterion established to protect the current use class (Class I-P) designation. As a result, the existing use of Piney Creek requires protections to maintain the cold-water temperatures currently found in this tributary and are different from those afforded by the current use class designation of I-P.

Changes Proposed to the Currently Designated Use Class: The Department recommends that Piney Creek upstream of the confluence with an unnamed tributary located at [39.722497 °N, -78.964199 °W] be redesignated to Class III-P. Figure 3 shows the extent of the Designated Use Class Change.

Rationale for the Existing Use Determination: Piney Creek, upstream of the confluence with an unnamed tributary, demonstrated attainment of the Use Class III-P temperature criterion at the CASS-177-X-2020 station. The biological data have demonstrated the existence of self-sustaining brook trout.

Figure 3: Piney Creek Existing Use Determination

