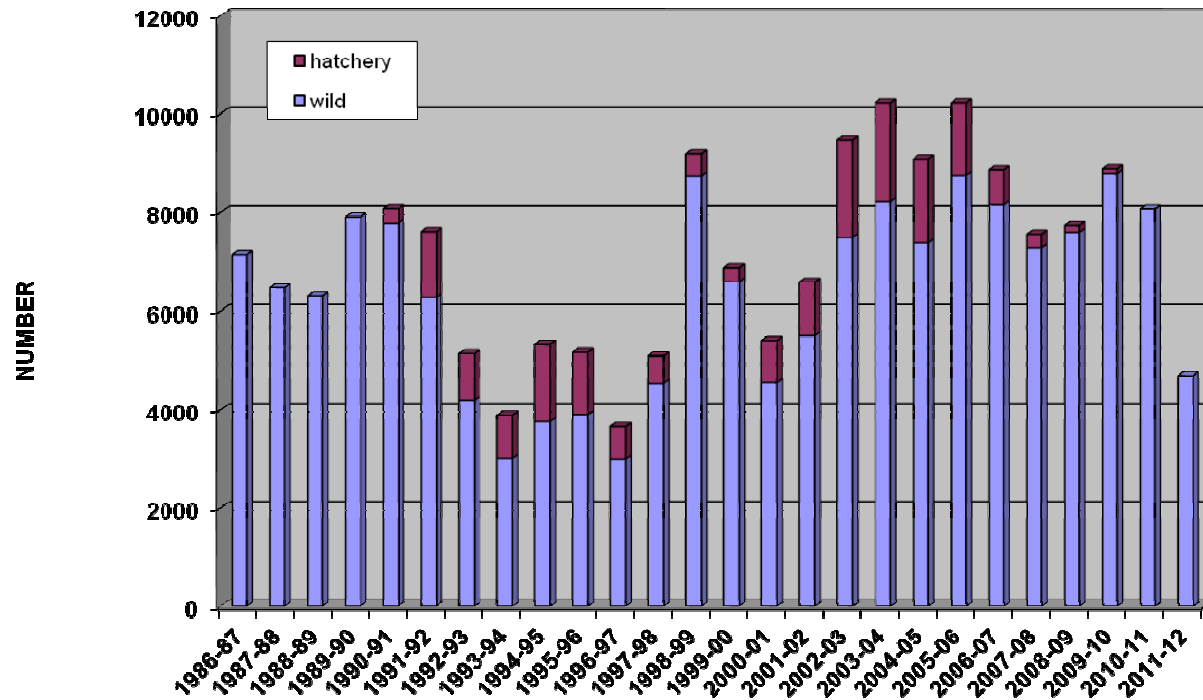


## Brule River Steelhead Population Status, 1986 – 2012

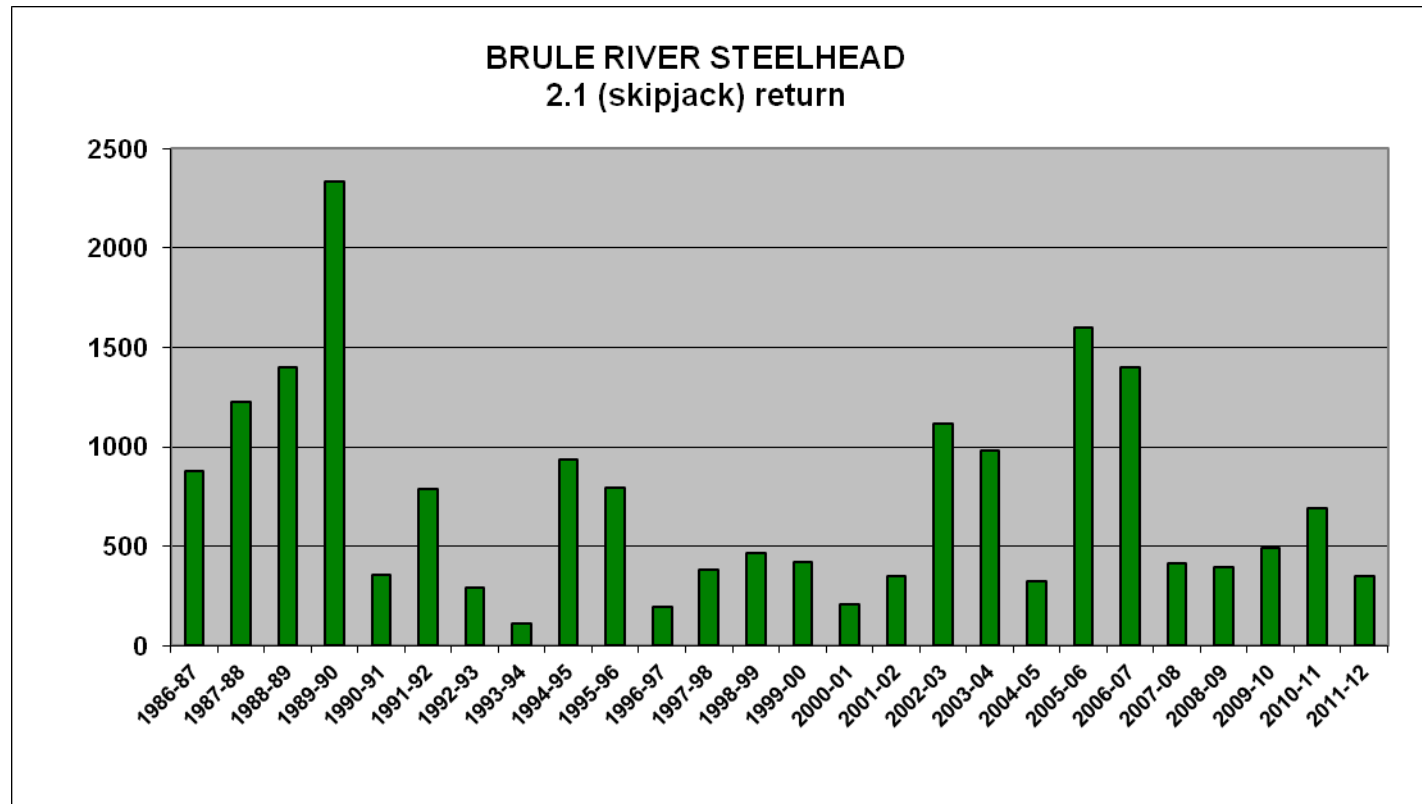
The following graphs describe the status of the steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) population returning to the Brule River in 1986 – 2012. Data were summarized and provided by Bill Blust of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

### BRULE RIVER STEELHEAD 1986-2012

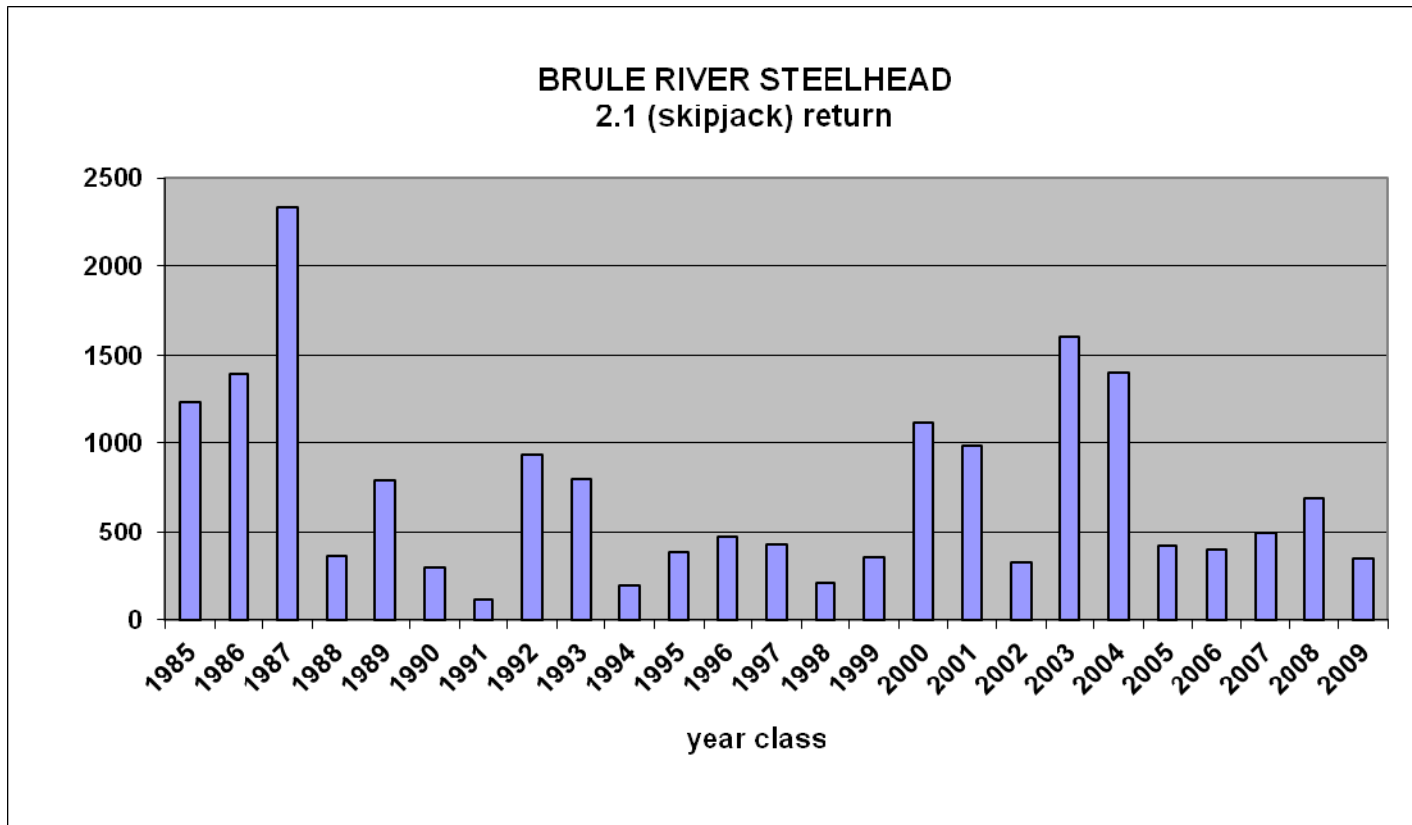


**Figure 1.** Total steelhead counted (fall, spring) at the Brule River sea lamprey barrier/fishway observation window. The stocking experiment contributing hatchery fish from 1990 – 2009 began with the first egg take in 1988 and concluded with the 2000 year class. To read a report on the stocking experiment, [click on Stocking Experiment Report \(draft 3\)](#).

The next 2 graphs illustrate the skipjack return by run year and year class. Skipjacks spend 2 years in the Brule River and one summer in Lake Superior. Their return is a reliable indicator of year class strength before most of the year class matures at age 4-6. Large year classes are typically represented by >1,000 fish with a super year class having 1,500 – 2,200. Annual variability is large with the best runs being period when large skipjack year classes occur in back to back years. Year class strength is dictated by a combination of stream and lake survival which can influence total returns dramatically.



**Figure 2.** Skipjack return by run year, 1986 – 2011.



**Figure 3.** Skipjack return by year class, 1985 - 2009.