

# EASTERN BROOK TROUT WORKGROUP NEWSLETTER

September/October

By

Marcia Woolman, EBTW chair

The EBT Workgroup of the National Leadership Council has been given the charge of providing information that supports coordination of all the efforts of TU's chapters, councils, staff, consultants and many federal and state partners in advancing our Eastern Brook Trout Initiative. This newsletter is a key element in the coordination of these effort.

## NEWS

### **Conservation Strategy Update**

From Gary Berti – TU EBT Coordinator

Following TU's effective work on the **Eastern Brook Trout: Status and Threats** document, the EBTJV will unveil its next campaign - **Eastern Brook Trout: Conservation Strategy** (name not finalized!) in the coming months.

This summer and fall the best minds in the brook trout business are developing the range wide strategy for conserving brookies. The range wide strategy will be supported by three regional plans; the Southeast Region (SC, GA, NC, TN, and VA), the Mid-Atlantic Region (VA WV, MD, PA, NJ, and RI) and the New England Region ( NY, CT, NH, VT and ME). There may be some regional adjustment as the strategies become clearer.

The regional approach will focus on the region's specific issues. For instance, the southern brook trout managers consider genetics, warming, development, and the greatest effort may well be centered on public lands. Meanwhile, the mid-Atlantic region shares the legacy of mining, sprawl, and the effect of acid deposition. The northeast may share some of these issues, with a strong preservation component protecting those intact sub-watersheds where the last major Brookie strongholds exist.

The development of this campaign is scheduled for sometime between November 30 and March 31 (the last day of the Venture's funding, as amended). As soon as the schedule is solidified, Gary Berti will be contacting the Back the Brookies teams in each state asking what role each wants to play in the campaign and how to assist each team. As a whole, TU would like to expand the numbers on the coverage, and we will be relying on our partners and staff to augment the efforts of volunteers.

Our TU National Team of Steve Moyer, Kathleen Campbell and Gary Berti are planning to have media briefings, similar to the Status and Threats campaign, for TU volunteers and state and federal partners. The briefing schedule will depend on the overall Conservation Strategy release schedule, which will be defined in mid-October by the EBTJV Steering Committee. As soon as the schedule is known the information will be passed to the TU state brook trout teams

To date, the EBTJV web site ( [www.easternbrooktrout.net](http://www.easternbrooktrout.net) ) displays only 5 of the 17 state conservation plans, but discussions with the EBTJV strategy team indicate we will have at least 12 to 15 state strategies in the plan, when released. These strategies are important to the states because they will guide potential funding decisions in the regional plans and up to range wide allocations.



## **CSI – A WEB BASED CONSERVATION PLANNING TOOL**

A web-based presentation that really shines is Trout Unlimited's Brook Trout application of the **Conservation Success Index**. This is a computer model that looks at 5 different parameters of each of the following classifications: Habitat Integrity, Population Integrity, Vulnerability, and Range-wide Conditions. The model then calculates the most effective approach to the conservation of each sub-watershed whether it be protection, restoration, monitoring or re-introduction. While not a definitive, final answer to conservation decisions, this product could be instrumental in helping local decisions about brook trout. The program is map based and is served by Google Earth - a free, very cool and powerful download available to most computers on a high speed internet connection. Nat Gillespie will be providing the lecture while the Ready-talk program allows us to follow along with the powerpoint. This program was recently presented at the TU annual meeting and it was given a great review. We intend to schedule this for the early part of November or early December and will serve it through the [www.brookie.org](http://www.brookie.org) website.

## **Brook Trout Symposium @ AFS Meeting**

From Nat Gillespie – TU Fisheries Scientist

The annual American Fisheries Society meeting in Lake Placid featured a very successful symposium all day on September 14<sup>th</sup> titled, “Brook Trout: Conservation Challenges at Multiple Scales.” Organized by Nat Gillespie with help from US Forest Service, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and Maine Department of Inland Game & Fish, the symposium featured 16 speakers (1 cancellation) from across North America working with brook trout. The attendance of the symposium topped out at around 120 people, many of whom took away the 3 publications that were available:

*Brook Trout: Status & Threats.* Produced by Trout Unlimited for the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture.

*A Guide to Native Trout Restoration: Science to Protect and Restore Coldwater Fishes and Their Habitats,* by TU.

*Conservation Genetics of Brook Trout (Salvelinus fontinalis): Developing a Roadmap to Identify and Restore Native Populations,* by Tim King, US Geological Survey, Leetown Science Center.

All of these publications will be available on the [www.brookie.org](http://www.brookie.org) website.

The symposium featured several broad categories of presentations: assessment and modeling, habitat mapping, genetics issues, and restoration of brook trout waters. We will be making all of the powerpoint presentations available on the [www.brookie.org](http://www.brookie.org) website as well. The symposium presentations are listed below:

### Speakers and Topics:

1. Nat Gillespie (Trout Unlimited). *Summary of Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture assessment findings.*
2. Mark Hudy (U.S. Forest Service/James Madison University). *Distribution, status, and perturbations of brook trout by subwatershed within the eastern United States.*
3. Teresa Thieling (James Madison University). *Modeling eastern brook trout habitat with GIS data.*
4. Silvia D'Amelio and Jack Imhof (Trout Unlimited Canada). *Identification of coaster brook trout tributary habitats at multiple scales.*

5. Forrest Bonney (Maine Department of Inland Fisheries). *Brook trout habitat as an indicator of stream health.*
  6. Casey Jackson (University of Maine). *Critical conflict between brook trout and smallmouth bass in the Rapid River*
  7. Jason Coombs (U.S. Geological Survey, S.O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center) *Movers and stayers: differences in brook trout survival and growth in a fragmented landscape.*
  8. Ben Letcher (U.S. Geological Survey, S.O. Conte Anadromous Fish Research Center). *Population consequences of brook trout movements in a fragmented landscape.*
  9. Timothy King (U.S. Geological Survey, Leetown Science Center). *Conservation genetics of brook trout: phylogeography, population structure, and captive breeding management.*
  10. Brendan Annett (Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve). *Conservation genetics of remnant anadromous brook trout populations at the southern limit of their distribution: population structure and impacts of historic stocking.*
  11. Glenn Forward (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources). *Calibration of brook trout index netting in lakes stocked with brook trout.*
  12. Peter M. Stevens (Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources). *Implementing a topographic index approach to identify locations of groundwater input along Adirondack lake shoreline.*
  13. Brian Weidel (University of Wisconsin, Center for Limnology) and Clifford E. Kraft (Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources). *Smallmouth bass as a nuisance invader and the decline of brook trout in Adirondack lakes: Identifying populations at risk.*
  14. Bill Schoch (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation). *Restoration of brook trout in ponded waters of New York State's Adirondack Park.*
  15. Jeff Reardon (Trout Unlimited). *The Rapid River: approaches to reducing smallmouth bass impacts.*
  16. Larry Mohn (Virginia Department of Game & Inland Fish). *An overview of brook trout habitat restoration projects in Virginia.*
  17. Steve Moore (National Park Service, Great Smoky Mountains National Park). *Native Brook Trout Restoration, Great Smoky Mountains National Park . . . Past, Present and Future*
- (1 hour) Panel Discussion. Mark Hudy (U.S. Forest Service/James Madison University), Forrest Bonney (Maine Department of Inland Fisheries), Tim King (USGS Biological Resources Division), Jim Daley (New York State Department of Environmental Conservation), Nat Gillespie (Trout Unlimited). *Brook trout conservation: next steps, and at what scales?*

In summary, the level of interest and excitement in brook trout issues and the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture is extremely high. Scientists are making much progress across many fields, particularly with brook trout movement patterns, genetic makeup of different brook trout populations and life forms (salter, coasters), and on-the-ground restoration projects in different parts of the range. Trout Unlimited's Conservation Success Index (CSI) of the Eastern Brook Trout has been largely completed, and the national office is in the process of develop a series of maps and recommendations based on this scientific process that will prioritize protection, restoration and reintroduction areas for TU and the partner agencies across the eastern range.

## A Perspective of the EBTJV

From Jared Kosa – USF&WS

### EBTJV as Role Model: The Western Native Trout Initiative

The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture has been a ray of hope for those concerned about the decline of the only trout native to the eastern U.S.

The EBTJV is having direct effects on brookie populations through increased funding and assessment work, as well as indirect effects such as encouraging an increased focus by research and management agencies. In fact, several full-day sessions were dedicated to the research and conservation of brook trout at the American Fisheries Society Annual Meeting held in September at Lake Placid, NY. Doug Stang, the Chief of Fisheries for the State of New York, and his numerous dedicated employees at the NY DEC were central to making this event happen.

The Western agencies have taken notice of the early success of EBTJV. Using the organization of EBTJV as a model, the state fisheries agencies along with USFS, USFWS, BLM and USGS formed a partnership called the Western Native Trout Initiative or WNTI. This partnership seeks to reverse the declines in the trout species of the west using the same game plan outlined by the EBTJV partners: assessment, strategy, action. The WNTI partners acquired funding through a Multistate Grant which they are using to fund a full-time coordinator, Robin Knox (303-236-4402). By having a single point of contact, the WNTI partners hope to streamline communications and expedite the development of a West-wide conservation strategy. WNTI implemented five on-the-ground, pilot restoration projects this year thanks to over \$2 million in funding provided directly to WNTI by Congress, as well as \$200,000 provided through the National Fish Habitat Initiative.

## STATE/REGION BTB REPORTS

### **Southeast**

#### **West Virginia**

from BTB Chair -Chris Shockey

Only thing to add from WV, our program chairman and Gary Berti had a very productive meeting with leaders of USFS and Monongahela National Forest. The objective was to develop a project/priority list that also reflected the goals and objectives of the above mentioned groups. Among the ideas discussed were looking for partnership possibilities, planning a Winter Brook Trout Planning Meeting, looking at the FS new Stewardship Program.

We are also attempting to schedule a meeting with the head of WV DNR coldwater fisheries, with the same goals as the meeting with the USFS and MNF. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for late September.

#### **Georgia**

From BTB chair - Kevin McGrath

#### **Advocacy**

**Advocacy Alerts.** GA TU is partnering with the Georgia Wildlife Federation (GWF) Camouflage Coalition [www.camocoalition.com](http://www.camocoalition.com). GWF Camouflage Coalition is an advocacy email alert network with thousands of members state-wide. This is a way to reach non-TUer's on issues important to TU and support GWF in its mission. Expect to co-sponsor alerts this fall.

### **Conservation**

**Interns.** Seven hundred man hours of assistance provided to GA DNR and USFS through funding by GA Trout Unlimited.

**Stream Survey.** Documented two additional brook trout streams through electro-shocking by interns working with GA DNR and USFS. Flesh samples are being DNA tested for type.

**Water Sampling.** Computerized database constructed of recent and historic pH, ANC and water temperature readings from GA TU, GA DNR and USFS files. Data to be shared by Trout Unlimited, GA DNR, USFS and local academic institutions.

**Stream Projects.** Ongoing multiple-structure projects on five brook trout streams.

### **Development**

**Fund Raising.** GA TU raffle of a donated Cabela's rod and reel outfit raised over \$2000 for Back-the-Brookie. Proceeds from the raffle are being matched by GA Back-the-Brookie for purchase of thermographs to monitor stream temperatures in brookie stream across North Georgia. The thermographs will be used by GA DNR and USFS.

### **Education**

**Classroom Presentations.** Contracted with an experienced elementary school teacher to construct six presentations about brook trout. The presentations will meet Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) and be offered through a GA DNR educational program at Smithgall Woods Conservation Area targeted at elementary and middle school grades. The subjects are: Anatomy; Natural History; Food Chain; Habitat; Human Impact; and Restoration. The first presentation is completed.

## **Virginia**

### ***Report from Larry Mohn –VDGIF fisheries biologist***

Chapel Run (Clarke County) - this is a small spring creek where a private landowner hired a stream restoration firm to reconstruct his spring into a spawning habitat for brook trout. We stocked wild brook trout in 9/05 and resampled this summer. The trout held over and reproduced in the newly constructed spring run.

Smith Creek (Rockingham County) - this is another spring stream restoration being headed by Mark Hudy, USFS/JMU. Over 12,000 trees have been planted over about 1 mile (?) of stream. Survival of planting is excellent and the stream has shown great improvement already. We stocked wild brook trout last September and again found limited reproduction. Also documented growth from 150mm to 325mm (6" to 13") in a 9 month period. This project was partially funded by the EBTJV.

We are currently restoring an additional section of North River in Augusta County. We completed about 2500' last year and will completed about 2000 additional feet by next week. Sampling this summer showed a very significant increase in the number and size of trout in the reconstructed area. This project was also partially funded last year by EBTJV. This year it is being funded with VDGIF and TU Embrace a Stream money.

From VCTU Conservation Chair Larry Puckett

Grayson Highlands project is pretty much on schedule. The invertebrate and fish population surveys were done in May/June and water chemistry sampling will be completed in Nov. (unless we decide to keep sampling for another year). The native brookies we stocked in Mill Run last December will be inventoried by VDGIF this fall.

VCTU is working with the new VA Museum of Natural History on developing an interactive display there to teach about brook trout.

Trout in the classroom projects have been initiated in the Martinsville area and the surrounding county. Dr. David Jones, who won National TU's coveted "Conservationist of the Year Award" is the benefactor of this program which will reach about 20 schools.

Two other schools in Northern Virginia are hoping to add this program this year.

Recently, Shenandoah National Park, in conformity with their preservation of native species plan, removed about 800 brown trout from park streams that abut waters stocked over the years with invasive species. The resulting encroachment of these fish has threatened the continued robustness of the brook trout population. Several VA TU members provided assistance to the Park biologists. There were many other members upset by this removal. It has become abundantly clear that educating our members as well as the public about the importance of native species is a job not yet done.

## **Tennessee-**

From Steve Brown -NLC

Conservation – McNabb Creek project has gotten some excellent newspaper coverage in the Sept. 10<sup>th</sup> front page of the local section in the News Sentinel, Knoxville. The complete article is attached complete with pictures and a description of the SABT restoration and the road project that did in this stream.

The TN Council has. voted to reserve \$2000 for grant-matching funds for brook trout projects in the Cherokee National Forest. Four volunteers from the Appalachian Chapter have already had chain saw training, and the Cherokee Chapter has volunteers to take the training. The NF has found that cutting a window in the rhododendron above the stream can improve the flow regime, and therefore the habitat. and it is a very inexpensive and effective way to improve the habitat on brook trout streams.

Education – The science curriculum DVD on Brook Trout, their life cycles and that of the insects and the weather all are interwoven into an excellent guide for integrated science lessons with brookies at the core. Linda Good has scripted a DVD based learning module for high school wildlife and ecology curricula. It is now finished except for a few bookmarks and is expected to be piloted this school year.

## **South Carolina**

From: BTB Chair -- David Van Lear

### **Conservation**

Our first Embrace a Stream grant (Restoration of Brook Trout to King Creek) yielded positive results this summer. Electroshocking of the stream by SCDNR and USFS crews in June found young of the year brookies. This reproduction was spawned following introduction of southern Appalachian strain Eastern brook trout last fall into this headwater stream on the Sumter National Forest.

Our second EAS grant is being used to help fund restoration of southern Appalachian brookies to another stream (Crane Creek) on the Sumter National Forest. Non-native

species have been removed by SCDNR and USFS crews in preparation for stocking of pure southern Appalachian strain brook trout in the stream this fall. TU volunteers assisted the professional fisheries crews in numerous aspects of both of these restoration efforts, which will provide sustainable populations of brookies in approximately 5 miles of streams.

A third stream (Carrick Creek in Table Rock State Park) was stocked with wild brookies in mid-September. These were not the southern Appalachian strain brookies, but wild mixed northern/southern strain brookies that were removed from Crane Creek.

TU volunteers, working with the DNR team, carried wild brookies to a rather remote section of this previously barren headwater stream in one of the state's most popular mountain parks.

### **Advocacy**

The South Carolina Council of TU is partnering with SCDNR, US Forest Service, South Carolina Wildlife Federation, Clemson University, and Great Smoky Mountains National Park in these restoration efforts. The South Carolina Wildlife Federation has about 8,000 members and TU's message about the brook trout's status and current restoration efforts has been and will continue to be publicized in its newsletter on a periodic basis.

### **Education**

TU will work closely with SCDNR and SCPRT agencies to develop brochures about the brook trout's century-long decline and efforts to reverse that trend. Table Rock State Park's nature center, which sits along side Carrick Creek, will be used to provide educational materials about the brook trout. Our restoration efforts in South Carolina will be briefly described in the fall issue of Trout, along with a picture of volunteers working on Crane Creek. DNR is filming some of these restoration activities and will soon have that available for distribution.

Periodic updates of our Back the Brookie program are printed in chapter newsletters and included on the websites of the state's three chapters and on the Council's brook trout restoration website <http://scbrookie.org/>

### **More from SC-DNR**

#### **Report from Dan Rankin –region 1 fisheries coordinator**

SCDNR, USFS, GSMNP, TU and GADNR worked together the last two weeks to remove non-native trout from a 4+ mile reach of stream on Sumter National Forest using Fintrol (antimycin). After days of hard work the project was a success. Pure southern Appalachian brook trout will be stocked in the stream in the next few weeks.

SCDNR videographers shot footage of the restoration efforts for an upcoming SC Wildlife Magazine TV show to air this Fall.

This past month SCDNR and USFS worked with local TU chapters to relocate wild brook trout to 2 streams that did not maintain a brook trout population, but appear to maintain suitable habitat. One stream is on Table Rock State Park (property of the SC Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism). The trailhead to the stream starts at an environmental education center. TU will work with SCPRT and DNR to develop educational displays on brook trout at this center.

SCDNR is working with a private landowner to renovate his pond in the Caesars Head area. This private pond sits at the head of the largest publicly accessible brook trout stream in SC. The majority of the property is held by SCDNR in the Watson Heritage Preserve. We have convinced the landowner not to stock species which may prove detrimental to the brook trout population downstream.

SCDNR recently coordinated with The Nature Conservancy to identify brook trout monitoring needs on TNC easement properties. One stream will be sampled by DNR and TNC with volunteer help from the adjacent private landowners in October. Our goal is to develop a greater appreciation of the resource with these landowners. These landowners own an adjacent stream that maintains great habitat but no brook trout. These landowners have proposed to build a pond on this stream. We hope to convince the private landowners to withdraw the pond proposal in favor of restoring their stream for eastern brook trout.

Personnel from the USFS Center for Aquatic Technology Transfer at Virginia Tech are scheduled to train 3 SCDNR personnel in the Basinwide Visual Estimation Technique for habitat assessment. This training will allow SCDNR to conduct habitat assessments on state and privately-owned streams in SC. BVET surveys on USFS streams are essentially complete.

## **New England – New Hampshire –**

The NH Council has completed a 15 minute power point presentation on the status of Brook Trout in NH and the threats to its continued survival. The education of TU members as well as other conservation organizations, service groups and legislators will be included in this outreach.

NH is also planning a brochure titled, “The Brook Trout: Our State Fish” will be illustrated with pictures and graphs from “The New England Brook Trout” published by TU in 2004

Kirk Mayland, TU staff, has acquired, in conjunction with the NH council a fair number of beautiful brook trout prints. If you are interested in purchasing some at cost (\$2) from the NHTU please contact [kmayland@tu.org](mailto:kmayland@tu.org). They can be used for any number of things but mostly to get information out to the public about the importance and beauty of our native fish.

## **Maine From Don Grosset, Jr.**

The Maine brook trout stream survey, evaluation and profiling project is off to a good start with a number of field exercises both in the upper 10 million acres of the state and in central Maine. In addition, a secondary effort has begun to evaluate the sea-run (salter) brook trout populations in coastal Maine. Maine fisheries biologist Bobby van Riper and his TU volunteer crew found an impressive number of salters in mid-coast Maine streams.

Unfortunately, the plan to stress Rapid River smallmouth bass fingerlings this past spring by manipulating water volumes through Middle Dam at the top of the river was derailed by the enormous rainfall which necessitated constant and heavier than normal flows through the dam

## **Mass/ Rhode Island From Warren Winders**

On Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> the MA/RI Council raised \$2500 for Red Brook at the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Red Brook Family Day barbeque and fund raiser. This event is hosted at Red Brook and is hosted by the Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter of Trout Unlimited. On Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> the first of four dams slated for removal was removed from Red Brook. The work was done by a Red Brook partnership consisting of the Trustees of Reservations,

MassWildlife's Riverways department, A.D. Makepeace Company and Trout Unlimited. Funding came from American Rivers. Funding for technical assistance came from MassWildlife's Riverways program. Technical assistance was provided by Interfluve Company. On the last day of September, members of the Southeastern Mass. Chapter met at Red Brook to finish placement of erosion control matting.

In other parts of the state, the Pioneer Valley Chapter has completed restoration of the Swift River below Quabin Reservoir. The swift is home to a population of naturally reproducing brook trout. Electro-fishing/brook trout population studies are being conducted in brook trout streams in the southwestern part of the state. The town of Plymouth MA, with help from Riverways, is restoring brook trout habitat to a section of the historic Eel River where native brook trout were discovered living in an abandoned cranberry bog.

Meanwhile, TU's Kirt Mayland continues to press the Massachusetts Legislature for a responsible water withdrawal policy for the state. Trout Unlimited member, Steve Angers has been appointed to a "Blue Ribbon" panel charged with studying the state's water situation, and advising the legislature and the Governor on the matter. At present, real estate developers, along with several municipalities, are resisting any reasonable oversight of water withdrawal by state agencies. The outcome of this issue has significant and long lasting implications for the continued survival of brook trout populations in Massachusetts. The third most densely populated state in the country, Massachusetts' ever increasing thirst poses a very real threat to its rivers and streams and the wildlife that they support.

## **North East Region-**

Comprised of NJ, NY, PA & the Mid Atlantic Council (MD & DC)

### **Pennsylvania**

From BTB Chair Jack Williams

#### **Conservation**

An important meeting was held 21 Sept. 2006 at Pleasant Gap, PA to move the EBTJV forward in PA. Attending were representatives from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PADCNR), National Trout Unlimited (TU), PA Council of Trout Unlimited (PATU), PA Fish and Wildlife Cooperative Research Unit (PA Coop Unit), EBTJV Steering Committee and PA Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads. Maureen Gallagher, USFWS updated attendees on the status of the EBTJV and funding opportunities through the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. Tom Green, PFBC introduced the PA Brook Trout Conservation Strategies as a guide to PA's role in the EBTJV. Dr. Bob Carline, PA Coop Unit and member of the EBTJV Steering Committee discussed available program information and media. Follow-up discussion evolved a potential framework for developing effective, broad based partnerships to implement the goals of the EBTJV in PA by working closely with the PFBC's new Division of Habitat Management in each of the six PFBC administrative regions. This regional approach was felt necessary in view of the diversity of threats posed to brook trout across PA.

Ken Undercoffer, President of PATU, has just completed a project looking at the effects of acid deposition on the headwaters of Lick Run in central PA. A report has been written and is ready for distribution. This project was funded by a Coldwater Heritage Partnership grant and sponsored by the Allegheny Mountain Chapter of PATU. More information? Contact Ken [kcoffer@pennswoods.net](mailto:kcoffer@pennswoods.net)

A major EBTJV project to restore adult wild brook trout habitat and spawning areas on 3.5 miles of Cross Fork Creek in Potter County, Pennsylvania is now underway. Partners include Trout Unlimited, PA Fish and Boat Commission, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Fish America Foundation, Boot Camp Volunteers, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and local private landowners. More information? [Maureen\\_Gallagher@fws.gov](mailto:Maureen_Gallagher@fws.gov)

### **Education and Outreach**

The EBTJV and the PA Brook Trout Conservation Strategies were highlighted in the front page, feature article of the Autumn issue of Pennsylvania Trout, the publication of the PA Council of Trout Unlimited. This publication is sent to 11,000 members in 55 chapters statewide. More information? [www.patROUT.org](http://www.patROUT.org).

### **New York**

Report from LI chapter BTB Rep. Jeff Plackis

On January 13th of this year, the Long Island Chapter of Trout Unlimited, partnered up with Environmental Defense and Friends of the Bay to submit a funding proposal in the amount of \$32,000 to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation - Long Island Sound Futures Fund to conduct a fish passage assessment within the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor Watershed and its sub watersheds. The eventual goal of this project being to mitigate the impacts of existing barriers, ponds and impoundments on the health of the ecosystems throughout the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor watershed, specifically the depletion of diadromous fish populations, the effects of artificial heating of stream water, fragmentation of streambed and stream channel, and loss of wetlands. To that end, we are VERY pleased to report that our application has been APPROVED for funding!!!

The first step of the project will be to prepare an RFP for the engineering assessment portion of the project at Oyster Bay Mill Pond, send it out for a competitive bid, draft up the contracts and then analyze, select and award the bid. The next step will be the collection of some field data associated with a complete tributary survey, which will identify, characterize, evaluate, and prioritize for removal/mitigation all impoundments, ponds, lakes and dams, in addition to smaller barriers, throughout the watershed. In addition, a series of public meetings will be conducted to bring together all the stakeholders at the onset of the process to increase the likelihood of a successful fish passage project as well as to educate and inform the public of the project and the diadromous fish in the watershed and their importance.

The Long Island Sound Stewardship Initiative has highlighted the Oyster Bay/Cold Spring Harbor complex as it supports the only known spawning population of native brook trout in Nassau County. Sea-run brook trout spawning had already been documented in the Mill Pond outlet stream as well as its inlet upstream. According to a

May 25, 2001 document titled “Trout in the Oyster Bay Mill Pond Creek System (OBH-47),” prepared by DEC Biologist Gregory Kozlowski. It is this unique population– and others like it – and its passageways that were chosen to be the focus of this project, with the potential to restore access to more than 3 miles of river corridor along Mill River. Brook trout were already successfully restored a few years ago in another Oyster Bay tributary, Beaver Brook within the Shu Swamp Nature Preserve located in Mill Neck, through the efforts of LITU & NYS DEC removing brown trout that were stocked there. At Beaver Lake Dam, the impoundment immediately downstream of Beaver Brook, a low head corrugated steel structure is currently in place that allows limited passage upstream only on extreme high tides. A new rock weir fishway, to replace the existing ineffective steel fishway, has been designed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and funding for the installation was recently obtained by the DEC. This will ultimately facilitate successful passage from Mill Neck Creek into Beaver Lake, reestablishing and providing unimpeded access to approximately 1 ¼ miles of Beaver Brook and over 75 acres of vital spawning and nursery habitat for brook trout, which currently exist above this barrier, supporting the overall success of this species locally and throughout the watershed.

NY News from Dee Maciejewski – NY NLC rep

See attached article on Spring Creek with native brookies in Erie County, NY. This stream is in need of immediate protection as a downward slide in populations is evident from recent samplings. It appears that declining water temperatures may be one of the culprits. (Entire article attached.)

## **CALENDAR**

### **Just a reminder**

October 13<sup>th</sup> is the deadline for applications for the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, EBTJV Cost Share Program in the 2007 funding cycle. A full announcement and supporting materials can be found at [easternbrooktrout.org](http://easternbrooktrout.org). For inquiries contact Maureen Gallagher at USFWS 276-376-4597 or [maureen\\_gallagher@fws.gov](mailto:maureen_gallagher@fws.gov) (Any applications for grants under \$10,000 may still be submitted, and if funds are not available, TU EAS funding may be made available.)

Oct. 6, 2006 – The Maryland Brook Trout Alliance meets at ThorpeWood from 10-4

Next issue of TROUT magazine will have an article titled “Why Native Trout?” Don’t miss it!

Now available through TU National - Booklet titled, “A Guide to Native Trout Restoration” by Jack Williams, Nat Gillespie, Warren Colyer, Amy Harig, Dana DeGraff and Joe McGurrin.