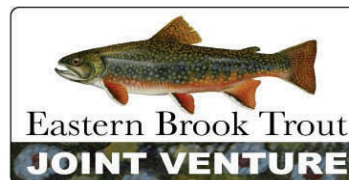


PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

THE EASTERN BROOK TROUT NEWSLETTER



A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN
TROUT UNLIMITED
AND THE
EASTERN BROOK TROUT JOINT VENTURE
TOGETHER WITH ALL WHO VALUE
BROOK TROUT
AND THE HABITAT THEY REPRESENT



MARCIA'S TURN

A MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

This Issue's Contents

Editor's Message.....1

EBTJV Communication Corner.....2

Volunteer's View.....3

Feature Article.....3

TU News.....6
TU's CSI
Mid-Atlantic Region

The FrontLines.....7
(state activity reports)

Events Calendar.....15

So how do you like this new look? I wish I could take credit, but the TU staff took pity on me and pulled together their considerable talent to give this newsletter a face lift. Hope you like it, and feel free to make suggestions for improvement.

As you can see from the format we have lots of spots open for contributions. Each issue we will be asking a TU volunteer to talk about some of the challenges and rewards of his or her project, which may be stream work, advocacy or education, or as in this issue, a combination of all. Hearing how another volunteer succeeded may motivate others to try something new. That is what this newsletter is all about; sharing and learning from one another.

The Feature Article can come from a TU Staff member, State or Federal Agency folks or anyone with a contribution that brings our work into focus.

The state reports will now be divided into two sections: TU Council activities will be in black print and the EBTJV Partners News will be in blue. In some cases they will be inclusive. (purple-no just kidding) When applicable there will be Regional News.

The Calendar will be a regular feature, but keep in mind that only you can help me fill it.

I have one request. Please read this entire newsletter. We can only learn from one another if we know what the other states are doing. Action springs from ideas and ideas come from expanding our knowledge base. I especially would like to draw your attention to a summary of "Education & Outreach" efforts by Ron Urban in NY. This reaching out to expand an understanding of our Brook Trout status and threats is critical in every state. Let me hear more about this kind of outreach.

Tight Lines, Marcia

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

EASTERN BROOK TROUT JOINT VENTURE COMMUNICATIONS CORNER

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM: GARY BERTI, CHAIR

CONSERVATION STRATEGY STATUS:

In early spring 2007, the EBTJV is releasing a range-wide, regional and the individual state conservation strategies for brook trout throughout its eastern range. This plan will lay the foundation for drawing resources and recruiting talent to reverse the trend of diminishing brook trout habitat and populations. Because we have some seed funding and some active partners with definite goals for these fish, we have a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to expand the effort to individuals, organizations, foundations and corporations. The EBTJV Communications Team takes this responsibility seriously and we are in the process of developing a document which, by design, paints the picture that will build the public will to invest in brook trout. Because brook trout is the east's most beloved heritage fish and because it represents so many good things to so many varied interests, we believe this document can have a profound effect on the size, distribution and health of brook trout throughout the east. This document will blueprint the resources needed to implement brook trout projects at the state level. It will create the big tent around common interests, including our traditional partners, and attracting new ones with similar mindsets, and by doing so, the document will serve up the brook trout as an icon, or a banner, to rally forth.

Having this fine document in hand opens the door to change, but effective change will require the efforts of all walks of brook trout advocates in a consistent, coordinated manner. Each partner of the EBTJV has a role and how well each role is played out will ultimately determine the success of the program. One thing is for certain, we need to work together, coordinate our efforts and grow this program with all the resources we can call into this big tent.

The release of the document is scheduled for mid to late February and TU volunteers, together with the state outreach staff, are asked to place this report (and the brook trout conservation message) with media contacts, local land use officials, developers, elected officials, corporate pilots and other conservation organizations. TU will be hosting a webcast briefing for state agency staff and TU volunteers who are interested in making a difference. The briefing will be held at 7:00 on January 23, 2007. If you are interested in participating, or know someone who is, the call in number is 866 740 1260 and the passcode is 2595352#. The website for the concurrent presentation is www.readytalk.com . If you need further information, please drop me a line at gberti@tu.org or give a ring at 828 318-5052.

One last thing: the websites (www.brookie.org and www.easternbrooktrout.org) are online and much more information and news is available through these sites.

To the stream,

Gary Berti

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

VOLUNTEER'S VIEW: **A TU VOLUNTEER SHARES THEIR PERSPECTIVE...**

from Larry Puckett, Virginia's Back the Brookie Chair:

Developing an EAS project can take 2 paths: either you work at it for a year or so up front, getting all your ducks in a row, or you wait till the last minute and let it build like a snowball rolling down hill. The problem with the latter approach is that it can be very difficult to get a rolling snowball under control, so I prefer the advance planning approach. Planning for the Grayson Highlands State Park project began several years ago after I made a couple fishing trips to the park located in southwestern Virginia. The streams in the park are famous for their populations of native brook trout and wild rainbow trout, all protected by a 9" minimum size limit. However the park streams are also potentially sensitive to acid rain impacts due to their location, high altitude, and poorly buffered bedrock leaving us concerned over the future of the fishery.

In addition to being located in a Virginia State Park, three of the park streams originate in the Thomas Jefferson National Forest, and the fish are managed by the Virginia Division of Game and Inland Fisheries—thus bringing 3 sets of potential partners into the planning and coordinating. Rounding out this effort was the desire to include the US Fish and Wildlife Service biologist in the area, along with TU chapters. In all, we ended up with 10 partners on this project.

Fortunately, I had developed a pretty good working relationship with most of those involved since signing on as BTB conservation coordinator in 2004. Developing these relationships with the potential State and Federal professionals well in advance of project planning is a very important part of your TU position. In addition, I had worked through the spring and summer of 2005 discussing various aspects of the project with the potential partners. Consequently by the time we had the first project planning meeting in October 2005 all the potential players were already aware of the details and were able to bring their own resources to the table. This allowed us to build a multifaceted project that includes aquatic invertebrate sampling, fish population and genetic sampling, water chemistry analyses, and an education component built around kiosks we are installing in the park.

Next came the big job—preparing the Embrace A Stream (EAS) proposal. I work as a research ecologist so I am more than a little familiar with the proposal writing process and TU appears to have structured the EAS proposal format after those used by professional funding organizations. Developing a successful EAS proposal is not something that should be approached at the last moment—matter of fact 6 months is about right for getting started on your first one. It's important to download the example provided on the TU website and follow the format. Probably the most important part of the EAS proposal is the executive summary—the evaluation committee relies on it heavily. Another option is to provide maps and photos of the project area as this helps them visualize what you are proposing. Finally, keep in mind that there are a lot of other potential sources of funds out there that can help leverage your EAS project, including the EBTJV, so get out there and roll some rocks.

Editor's Note: The EAS grants are excellent sources of matching funds for EBTJV and any other funding sources requiring matches. The process of planning, discussing, and submitting an EAS grant described by Larry is applicable for any funding source. The extra time spent pays benefits in the long term. TU Staff is also available to help volunteers with planning, coordinating, and identifying grant opportunities.

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Brook Trout Chronicles: Featuring restoration, protection, or activity/success expanding the health of brook trout and the watersheds they inhabit.

Feature Report from Bryan Moore, TU Staff, Potomac Headwaters Project, WVA

In late 2005 and through 2006, TU began the initial implementation of the Potomac Headwaters Restoration Program. Activities during the last quarter of 2005 were devoted to cultivating working relationships with cooperative private landowners to restore eligible stream systems on their lands. We began by identifying streams on agricultural lands that are impaired due to historic land use practices that have resulted in degraded in-stream habitat and reduced riparian areas. By closely working with individual landowners, we developed restoration plans primarily involving restoration of riparian areas through tree planting activities combined with livestock exclusion fencing. These project areas will be funded by leveraging money from various Farm Bill programs and the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) Partners for Fish and Wildlife program.

With the assistance of volunteers from TU chapters, schools and other NGO's, we began riparian tree plantings at the end of December and continued until the first of May, the end of planting season. The work was implemented on two restoration sites, one on public land, and one on private land. The volunteers planted and installed protective tubing on almost 3,000 trees. Over 140 middle school students from three schools participated in the riparian planting activities.

In July, 2006, the Potomac Headwaters program became the coordinating foundation for the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife program in West Virginia. The Partners program provides a pre-determined matching level of materials and labor to install livestock exclusion fencing on private agricultural lands. The match, generally 25%, is combined with Farm Bill funding and landowner financial participation. The Partners program will install approximately 100,000 feet of exclusion fencing in the Potomac watershed in 2007, with approximately 11 miles installed on specific Potomac Headwaters restoration sites. This partnership will help to better position TU in our efforts to restore native brook trout streams in the Potomac watershed.

In August, TU facilitated the first-ever Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) contract in Pendleton County, West Virginia for a section of private agricultural land on Whitethorn Creek of the South Branch Potomac. This program is administered under the Farm Bill by the Farm Services Agency. There will be two additional CREP contracts approved in either September or October. These contracts will provide a 90% cost-share for livestock fencing, alternative water development, protective crossings, and riparian tree plantings along approximately 1.5 miles of brook trout streams, and will protect over 27 acres of riparian corri-

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

dor. Project implementation for these contracts was begun in the third-quarter of 2006.

TU has also actively cultivated private landowners to participate in Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) contracts, administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, to fence and reestablish riparian areas along approximately six-miles of native brook trout streams. EQIP provides a 50% cost-share for implementation of these projects.

The TU Potomac Headwaters program has established a working relationship with eight middle school science classes in the Potomac basin which will involve the students in various phases of stream restoration. The students will adopt a stream section where we are implementing, or have scheduled implementation, restoration projects. The students will be responsible for habitat surveys, bug surveys, tree plantings, and ongoing site monitoring. The first classes performed stream site surveys at the end of October and participated in riparian tree planting in mid-November. We are now working to expand this part of the program into high school level Environmental Sciences classes.

We are currently installing livestock exclusion fencing on a Forest Service grazing allotment on Big Run of the North Fork Potomac. This project will result in the protection of over three-miles of wetlands and highly sensitive brook trout spawning and rearing habitat tributaries. We are also installing four cattle bridges, alternative water supplies and we will be planting over 7,000 trees. This is an innovative partnership bringing together TU grassroots volunteers, a number of public agencies, both state and federal, a private corporation, the grazing permit holder, school groups, and other NGO's. The initial project area has been expanded to include an additional two-miles of the mainstem of Big Run which will be implemented in Spring, 2007.

The 2006-07 tree planting season reopened in October with 25 TU volunteers planting 600 willows and dogwoods on the Big Run site on a blustery Saturday. During the last of October and the first of November, the science classes from the Pendleton County middle school participated with stream surveys, habitat assessments and tree plantings on restoration sites in the Thorn Creek watershed. With their assistance we now have extensive baseline data for two sites that will be used to monitor site progress and improvements. The students also planted over 700 trees on the project sites. They will return in the spring to resurvey the monitoring sections. Tree plantings will continue on restoration sites through April resulting in riparian plantings of over 5,000 new trees.



Trout Unlimited News:

The Conservation Success Index:

Or How to measure our success, prioritize and support our work, and use cool maps, Too.

TU's Conservation Staff, led by Jack Williams and Nat Gillespie, has developed what is called the Conservation Success Index, which not only reports the status and, therefore, trends in native fish populations, but can guide the conservationist to those subwatersheds where conservation actions would have the highest chance of success. Conservation actions could fall into four categories: Protect, Restore, Re-introduce, or Monitor. Perhaps the coolest part about this program is that uses the widely available, free Google Earth software to serve the information to any computer with the capacity to use Google Earth, which is most of them. The data that is used to make the program run is the same data the EBTJV used to publish its reports, and is the most up to date, cutting edge data for brook trout.

If you want to see this program explore the TU CSI website <http://tucsi.spatialdynamics.com/> It is well worth the time.

If you are interested in learning more about the CSI, Nat Gillespie will be presenting two webcasts in January on consecutive Tuesdays, the 9th and 11th. If you are mildly interested in brook trout, mapping, modeling, the internet, and whatever Nat says, please join on to the webcast. Call or email Gary Berti at 828 318-5052 or gberti@tu.org for more information.

Mid-Atlantic Region Brook Trout Workshop:

The Cabela's store in Hamburg, Pa allowed our mid-Atlantic brook trout leaders to meet and discuss brook trout initiatives throughout the states of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New York. Also invited, West Virginia and New Jersey, could not attend. The discussion was lively, pro-active, and worthwhile to the attendees. State TU representatives lined out the statewide approach and from this perspective, the attendees really knew their games. If for no other reason, just hearing about the great work going on in each of the state brook trout efforts was encouraging. There are many different approaches to many different situations and these state programs are adapted well to address their situations.

The group decided these regional meetings were worth some time investment, especially if they are held in prime fishing areas, so they decided they would have their next regional meeting in Maryland's brook trout center of the universe, the Savage River Forest. As the plans unfold, it will be posted in this newsletter.

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

FRONTLINES:

State by State Brook Trout Activity Reports

Submitted by professionals and volunteers,
with commentary by the editorial staff...

Hot tip of this issue:

The NH TU Council has just released its new 15 minute DVD presentation entitled "The Eastern Brook Trout: A Real Keeper?". The program was prepared for the council by Heartwood Media as a tool to educate not just anglers, but families, students, civic organizations and others about the brook trout, the threats to its survival and what can be done to conserve and enhance its habitat. The program has received excellent reviews from TU volunteers and others in New Hampshire. Copies of the program have been distributed to all the NH chapters and others in the region. Additional copies can be obtained by sending a check for \$15 (to cover reproduction and mailing cost) to Paul Doscher, NH NLC Representative, 54 Portsmouth St., Concord, NH 03301 (editor's note: Four stars - perhaps, the best brook trout message available.)

GEORGIA:

•Back-the-Brookie Chairman's Note. 2006 was highlighted by GA TU's partnerships at the local level – a deeper collaboration with EBTJV stakeholders GA DNR and USFS (Chattahoochee National Forest), a broader relationship with the GA Wildlife Federation through its Camouflage Coalition, and new associations with the GA Power Foundation, Soque River Watershed Association and North GA Tech. GA TU BTB has also joined with GA TU Chapters on stream projects and water sampling. My thanks to our partners and the many TU volunteers that have made *Back-the-Brookie* so successful in Georgia this past year.

GEORGIA - by Kevin McGrath – BTB chair

Advocacy

Advocacy Review Committee. Formed an Advocacy Review Committee to advise the State Chair on potential issues and recommend courses of action.

Advocacy Alerts. GA TU has partnered with the Georgia Wildlife Federation's (GWF) Camouflage Coalition 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.

Conservation

Brook Trout Streams. GA DNR and GA TU Interns identified two previously undocumented brookie streams through an electro-shocking survey. Flesh samples are being DNA tested.

Stream Mapping. GA DNR, USFS and GA TU Interns mapped six streams with potential for brook trout restoration. Additional streams identified for mapping in 2007.

Water Quality. 96 brook trout/potential brook trout streams measured for water quality. Data has been loaded into a computerized data base shared by GA DNR, USFS and GA TU. Analysis of data will deter-

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

mine priorities for brook trout management. This effort is strongly supported by chapter volunteers supervised by GA DNR and USFS. GA DNR and USFS conduct opportunity samplings (after rain, long dry spell...) that can't be scheduled for volunteers. North Georgia Tech performs the lab analysis of the water samples.

Interns. GA Back-the-Brookie in partnership with GA DNR, USFS, Soque River Watershed Association, and Georgia Power Foundation employed summer interns pursuing fisheries studies and careers to work on brook trout projects in Georgia. Their work included water sampling, fish sampling, stream habitat mapping, and stream enhancement work on brook trout streams in conjunction with TU volunteers, GA DNR and USFS personnel. Funding for the intern came from two GA TU Chapters – Rabun and Upper Chattahoochee, TU's Embrace a Stream Program, and the Georgia Power Foundation. Over 700 man hours of work was conducted.

Stream Projects. Five Chapters participated in projects on three brook trout streams.

Development

Southern Appalachian Brook Trout Named as Georgia's State Cold Water Game Fish. The Georgia legislature added the Southern Appalachian Brook Trout to the list of state symbols by naming it Georgia's State Coldwater Game Fish. Citing the fish as a significant component of the state's and region's ecological integrity, biological diversity, and sport fishing legacy - the bill highlighted protection of the Southern Appalachian Brook Trout as a major conservation concern. Noting that brook trout have been prized by Georgia's citizens, the bill recognized that brook trout habitat has been decimated by sedimentation and erosion; nonnative trout; and air pollution.

Cabela's Fly Fishing Outfit Raffle. GA TU received a rod and reel outfit from Cabela's to raffle off. Proceeds from the raffle will be matched by GA Back-the-Brookie for purchase of 24 thermographs to monitor stream temperatures in brookie stream across North Georgia.

TU Embrace-A-Stream. GA TU awarded a two year grant for \$9,840.

Georgia Power Foundation. GA TU awarded a grant of \$5,000 per year for three years to support BTB field work and education.

Education

GA TU Trout Camp. One day of trout camp was devoted to brook trout. Twenty four campers worked with the USFS and GA DNR on a local brook trout stream. All campers saw a wild brookie during an electro-shocking survey and learned about a brook trout's habitat and life cycle.

Brook Trout Educational Series. GA DNR, USFS and GA TU partnered to develop six presentations about brook trout. They are designed to meet Georgia Performance Standards (GPS) for lesson plans. The subjects are: Anatomy; Natural History; Food Chain; Habitat; Human Impact; and Restoration. Funded by GA TU, they will be available to schools through the GA DNR Educational Center at the Smithgall Woods-Dukes Creek Conservation Area. Estimated completion in IQ2007.

Chapter Back-the-Brookie Presentation. Completed informational presentation to GA TU Chapters on the Back-the-Brookie Program.

Educational Display. GA TU constructed an indoor/outdoor display to be used at public events to promote TU and coldwater conservation. A portion of the display is dedicated to Back-the-Brookie/EBTJV.

SOUTH CAROLINA:

– by Dave VanLear- BTB Chair

Conservation:

In mid-September, TU volunteers helped DNR crews transport wild brookies to a stream in Table Rock State Park (TRSP) and to the headwaters of another stream in Sumter National Forest that once maintained a population of brook trout.

Advocacy:

We continue to maintain and update our Back the Brookie website at <http://scbrookie.org>. Officers of the state's three TU chapters were brought up to date recently at their Council meeting about the status of the restoration project. In summary, over 7 miles of two headwater streams have been restored to the pure southern Appa-

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

lachian strain brook trout and two other streams, including a state park stream, have been stocked with wild mixed-strain brookies. Brook trout reproduction has been documented in one restored stream and it is expected that reproduction will be found in the second restored spring this summer. These efforts have been publicized in various media over the past two years. Members of two chapters have heard presentations by the BTB coordinator about the program and the third chapter is scheduled for a presentation in January, '07. Officers and members are urged to spread the word about the benefits of restoring the brook trout.

Education:

TU members are in preliminary discussions with DNR and SC PRT about preparing brochures and other educational materials describing the brook trout recovery program for distribution at TRSP. We also hope to assist DNR in writing an article about brook trout restoration in SC Wildlife Magazine in the next year.

Dan Rankin, SC DNR Fisheries Biologist, reports that:

- SCDNR aired a 30-minute South Carolina Wildlife Magazine TV Show on SCETV that overviewed the SC brook trout restoration project. The video of this show should be available of SCDNR's website in the near future.
- SCDNR employees assisted a private pond owner in the renovation of his private pond this past month. This pond sits at the headwaters of the DNR's Watson-Cooper Heritage Preserve, and is on one of SC's blue ribbon brook trout streams. DNR personnel conducted the renovation to assure the brook trout stream was not impacted. DNR also sampled the brook trout stream downstream of the pond to assure no impacts (escapement of exotics) had occurred.
- SCDNR traveled to GA to collect pure southern Appalachian strain brook trout to translocate into the 7+ miles of brook trout habitat reclaimed on Andrew Pickens District of Sumter NF. 200 brook trout were relocated to 2 streams to support the recovery. Many thanks go out to our good neighbors with GADNR for their assistance with this effort.

TENNESSEE

by George Lane – BTB Chair

Conservation:

The Overmountain and Cherokee Chapters are requesting An Embrace a Stream grant the for Hampton Creek Brook Trout Habitat and the Little River Chapter is requesting an Embrace a stream grant for Lynn Camp Prong Brook Trout restoration in the Great Smokey National Park.

Education:

The Educational DVD for 11th grade Environmental Studies classes in almost completed and will be finished with funds donated in memorial to Joe Bogle, Linda Goods late husband and avid environmentalist and trout fisherman. The curriculum package will piloted in a school this year.

[Tennessee EBTJV update \(November 2006\):](#)

Jim Habera, TWRA

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency biologists discovered four previously undocumented brook trout populations in east Tennessee during 2006. Three of these are located on privately owned land and one (Sinking Creek) is less than two miles from the city limits of Johnson City, the largest urban area in Washington County. The other population is located on the Cherokee National Forest. All of these are low-abundance brook trout populations and only one is apparently free of rainbow trout. The total number of known brook trout populations in Tennessee (outside Great Smoky Mountains National Park) is now 112.

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Jim Habera, Tennessee, cont'd

Additionally, an upgrade to the fish passage barrier on Left Prong Hampton Creek, which may be Tennessee's best brook trout stream (biomass often over 100 kg/ha), is currently being planned. An abundant wild rainbow trout population exists downstream of this barrier, which currently consists of a culvert with a vertical drop of about 4 feet. Annual monitoring has shown that rainbows have been moving into the brook trout zone the past few years, requiring maintenance efforts to keep them in check. Trout Unlimited will provide financial assistance with this project, which will likely involve replacement of the culvert with a low-water ford or a bridge and a small dam a short distance upstream.

NORTH CAROLINA

VIRGINIA:

by Larry Puckett -BTB Coordinator

Conservation:

In early November VDGIF electrofished Mill Run, our EAS project stream, and reported that the brook trout we transplanted there in December 2005 had survived and a good population was present. The males were in their spawn colors so we're hoping that by this time next year we'll have young of the year fish in this stream for the first time in decades.

Newly reactivated Clinch Valley Chapter in SW Virginia is designing a project on the Dismal Creek watershed including its tributaries. An EAS grant is being applied for with the USFS and USF&W as partners. This project hopes to expand small populations of native brookies in the tributaries back down into the main creek so as to allow genetic diversity. This project will evaluate the water chemistry in the first year along with a restoration of a large horse camp site along the creek which is being relocated. The second year's activities will be determined by the results of the stream evaluation completed in the first year. The entire watershed is in the Jefferson National Forest.

Education:

The new Museum of Natural History in Martinsville, VA will feature a live aquatic environment designed to display and inform about VA state fish the native Brook Trout. The project is presently in the planning and funding stages. (editor)

WEST VIRGINIA:

by Charles Harris

The P. Pendleton Kennedy Chapter centered in Morgantown, WV, supported a project to restore Little Laurel Run, a tributary of Big Sandy Creek that flows through Coopers Rock State Forest. This stream was formerly a native brook trout stream but acid rain and siltation due to forestry had eliminated trout from all but one small tributary. Working with Dr. Kyle Hartman, WVU Fisheries Biologist, and his students, the WVDNR, WVDOH and Coopers Rock State Forest officials, this stream was studied and found to require limestone fines. These applications were made this fall and must be supplemented by yearly treatments by the DNR. It is expected that brook trout from the unaffected tributary will repopulate Laurel Run, but if not, native brook trout will be relocated. The chapter was also active in fighting the construction of another coal burning power plant in the immediate region, adding to 5 others in a 30 mile radius. The emissions from these plants continue, but it is hoped that, with time, acid deposition will decrease from these power plants.

Volunteers also assisted in a project with Bryan Moore in the Upper Potomac. There have been two tree planting sessions on that watershed, one on Big Run in conjunction with a fencing project to restore headwater tributaries. The other planting was on Thorne Creek one of the best brook trout streams of the Upper Potomac. The third project which is just now getting underway is a project to restore Spring Run, a tributary of the Potomac that joins that river near Petersburg, WV.

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

PENNSYLVANIA:

by Jack Williams BTB Chair & Ken Undercoffer (CC)

(editor's note: Jack has recently stepped up to be the Pennsylvania NLC Rep for TU. TU's national organization, Pa TU and brook trout, in general, will be well represented by Jack. Congratulations and Appreciation.)

Conservation:

The Allegheny Mountain Chapter of Trout Unlimited (AMCTU) is mid-way thru an acid precipitation study of the Trout Run watershed. Trout Run is a medium-sized mountain freestone stream in Clearfield County. AMCTU just finished a similar study of Lick Run, a slightly smaller freestone in an adjacent watershed (see www.coldwaterheritage.org and click on Conservation Plans). Both streams flow into the West Branch of the Susquehanna between Clearfield and Karthaus, PA.

This fall, during high water, we measured pH values between 4.8 and 5.0 in the upstream study section of Trout Run and no pH levels above 5.9 were measured. During the Lick Run study the threshold pH value for brook trout was 5.0. That, in Trout Run, would be expected to be similar. A rod and reel survey of Trout Run in mid-October showed a population of brook trout to be present in the upstream study section. It will be interesting to see if brook trout are still present in this area next spring and if reproduction was successful this fall. Their existence in these waters is certainly tenuous.

Once this study is complete, the AMCTU will be looking toward doing some acid precipitation remediation work in the headwaters of both Trout Run and Lick Run. Stocking was halted in these streams in the mid-1980s because hatchery trout could not survive the sudden flushes of acidity during high water events. Interestingly, wild brook trout have managed to survive and reproduce in these waters (ed. - Maybe, BT are more educated).

The bright side of the effects of acid precipitation is that naturally reproducing brown trout - because of their reduced tolerance to acidic water - have been extirpated from many of the freestone streams in the Appalachian Plateau Region. These acid precipitation impacted freestone streams represent an excellent chance to enhance or restore brook trout populations, free from competition with non-native trout. (ed. - let's do it!)

Development:

On November, 19 2006, Deb Nardone, Ken Undercoffer and Jack Williams attended an EBTJV/BTB Mid-Atlantic Regional meeting at Cabela's in Hamburg, PA. The meeting was attended by representatives from NY, MD, Washington, DC, PA and by Gary Berti of National TU. Each group shared progress to date together with many challenging ideas for future work. The attendees all agreed that such meetings were very useful. A next meeting, organized by Maryland TU near the Savage River in western MD is contemplated for spring or summer 2007.

Education and Outreach:

PATU is looking to place EBTJV/BTB representatives and information tables at two conferences early in the new year. The first, The Seventh Goddard Forum Pennsylvania's Third Forest: Challenges and Opportunities for the Next Century, on January 29 and 30, 2007, will focus on ecological changes challenges and opportunities, climate change challenges and opportunities as well as social, water resource and economic issues that are expected to arise in the forest over the next century. The second, Preparing for the Storm: Stormwater Solutions for Pennsylvania Communities on February 15 and 16, 2007 will focus on implementation of PA's new Stormwater BMP Manual. Both conferences will be held at The Penn Stater Conference Center Hotel, State College, PA. Through these information sharing opportunities we continue to raise awareness of the EBTJV initiative among key segments of PA's conservation leadership.

In October, PATU selected six recipients for Trout in the Classroom grants and two recipients for First Cast grants. A training session was held for teachers and TU volunteers responsible for the programs. The EBTJV initiative will be a component of both.

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

NEW YORK:

Conservation

By John Braico – BTB Chair

NYS DEC released the NYS Brook Trout Conservation Strategy, developed in cooperation with Trout Unlimited, on 9/30/06. The five adopted priorities (in order) are: assessment; habitat protection, improvement & fish passage; protection, restoration & enhancement; outreach & recreational fishing. Five & ten year goals were identified for the top 3 priorities, while 5 year goals were identified for the last two. This document was very warmly received by all TU members of the BT team & the NYS Council of TU as it provides a very solid platform from which to proceed, encompassing all geographic areas and all facets of concern with a very progressive plan.

NYDEC posts "Protecting Adirondack Fish: non-native fish impacts on native Adirondack fish" to alert anglers about the effects of bait & non native fish introductions into ponds & lakes. The article also reviews the historic brook trout distribution and prevalence throughout this sparsely populated region, its current severely restricted status, the causes of population decline and essential ongoing restoration efforts by the Department of Environmental Conservation over the past 25 years. see: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/reg5/r5fish/adkfish.html>

Over the past several months, NYS Region 5 fisheries manager Bill Schoch has been taking an excellent power point presentation on NYS DEC's Adirondack Brook Trout Restoration Program, directly to key Adirondack agencies and & NGOs. A clear goal of this outreach is to improve their understanding of the essential nature of this work as aquatic ecosystem restoration. Since brook trout are currently reduced to about 3% of their former range in this region, broadened support is essential to maintain both a viable Adirondack BT program and to sustain representative wild brook trout populations in a small number of suitable ponds. Restorations are limited to roughly 40 smaller water bodies located in designated wild forest, canoe & wilderness areas of the Park utilizing available Heritage Strains of BT. (This program also supports re-introductions of the round whitefish into selected waters.)

Recently, the NY chapter of the Nature Conservancy published "Meet the Brookies" in their winter 2006 edition of Nature NY. (See nature.org/newyork for a downloadable version.) This article introduces readers to the Windfall Pond strain of brook trout as one of 11 identified heritage strains in NY and as an illustration, uses this strain to point out the vulnerability of all recognized strains to introduced non native fish species & the critical work needed to ensure their survival.

Education & Outreach

by Ron Urban

I have been out speaking about the EBTJV and specifically the NY part of the program. I have spoken at four meetings this month, once to the NYS DOT headquarters in Schenectady, NY engineers, to the Hudson River Water Estuary Symposium with 190 attendees all working in water quality programs associated with the Hudson River and its watersheds. I have several more related engagements in the coming months. Also, the isolated and recognized heritage strains we have in NY and the several identified strains that remain secluded in the hatcheries will be protected until time for reintroduction into streams and ponds,

To my knowledge, we have almost distributed 100% of our NY specific brochures out at these meetings and local meetings also of the chapters.

NEW JERSEY

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

CONNECTICUT:

Trout Unlimited in Connecticut is proud of the work that the CT Dept. of Environmental Protection has done on Inland Fisheries. We are active with the Fisheries Advisory Commission that is led by the DEP and we participate in a number of conservation programs that focus on Brook Trout and Trout waters. With habitat preservation being a major concern as development continues to exert pressure upon sensitive habitats we are working with Land Trusts, Municipal Wetlands and Conservation Commissions to protect these critical watersheds. Many other grassroots organizations along with TU are also working in these same areas and with the support of our state agencies in the protection of trout habitats and various restoration projects statewide progress is being made. We are finding that the community is more aware of the environment and to have protections for wildlife and fisheries. Our forming of great working relationships with like minded organization have had great impact upon on a continued success to restore our fisheries and habitats.

MASSACHUSETTS/RHODE ISLAND:

NEW HAMPSHIRE

– by Diane Emerson, NH Fish and Game Division,

Conservation:

Nothing really new in NH but I did want to mention some streamside restoration work we did in Nash Stream. This is just a quick summary: It is a river that was dammed at the head end. In 1969 that dam blew out which dried out the standing water in Nash Bog. The river still meanders through the bog but there isn't any ponded water to speak of. When this dam blew out it scoured the river and its banks all the way down to it's confluence with the Upper Ammonoosuc River, a tributary to the Connecticut River. There was so much damage the roads needed to be rebuilt as well as the river banks. There are large areas of gravel in the floodplain with very little growth. The thought was if we could get some nutrients into these areas they would repair themselves over time. We were going to rent a chipper and shoot wood chips into the barren riparian zone. Well unfortunately plan A-the wood chips-was foiled due to early snow, so we went to plan B. We cut small saplings from the other side of the road and dragged them to the barren flood plain. We interweaved the sapling's branches between the sparse few trees and shrubs that were there, as well as into each other to hold them in place during spring runoff. It looks great. It looks like it should capture leaves and other debris that will later provide nourishment to the area. Only time will tell.

We will be sending Tim King our fin clips for genetic analysis by the end of this week. This is the first step of many and hopefully we will be able to draw conclusions in the next couple of years.

That is all I can think of beyond the telemetry project. We have only four fish left and can account for two. Times are tight!!

VERMONT:

by Rich Kern, Vermont DNR

Conservation:

I have presented these projects in the past...as they are complex and long-term projects we are still working on them.

Vermont Fish Passage Initiatives:

The Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department (VFWD), in partnership with the Vermont Transportation Agency (VTrans) and Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (VDEC), is in the process of developing technical guidelines on the proper design and installation of stream crossing structures that will achieve fish and aquatic organism passage. Recent studies have shown brook trout movement to be much greater than previously thought. There have been many recent gains within the nation in understanding the needs of fish

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

and aquatic organism passage at culverts, and bringing this knowledge and expertise to Vermont to build our capacity to better design, install, and maintain stream crossing structures is essential to restoring aquatic habitat connectivity and aquatic organism movement in Vermont's rivers and streams. Guidelines are expected to be complete by the summer of 2007.

VFWD and VTrans staff are working together to utilize new design alternatives for fish and aquatic organism passage at critical structures slated for replacement.

In the past 3 years VFWD, through funding from VTrans, has conducted hundreds of culvert surveys throughout the state. Preliminary results indicate that a high percentage of these structures are complete or partial barriers to movement of fish and other aquatic organisms.

VFWD is funding an additional study to use the above inventories and other fisheries data to prioritize fish passage enhancement projects. It is hoped that this project will help identify fish passage enhancement projects and better utilize existing federal funding programs. VFWD, USDA-NRCS and USFWS are working cooperatively to prioritize and design fish passage enhancement projects eligible for federal funding programs (WHIP, USFWS fish passage).

Vermont Triploid (Sterile) Trout Study:

The potential for negative consequences from genetic interaction between wild trout populations and hatchery stocks is a growing concern among fisheries managers throughout the nation. The use of sterile triploid trout has been proposed in several states as a strategy for conserving native stocks while meeting the public demand for recreational angling opportunities. Triploid trout are produced by exposing fertilized eggs to specific temperatures or pressures which renders them effectively sterile. Beginning in 2007, the VFWD will begin evaluations on the performance of yearling triploid brook trout in several Vermont stream and ponds.

Vermont Wild Brook Trout Poster:

VFWD is putting the finishing touches on a poster describing Vermont's wild brook trout populations and habitat needs. This outreach effort is intended to inform a wide variety of Vermonters of habitat issues surrounding Vermont's only native stream-dwelling trout. The poster is expected to be available in early 2007.

MAINE

by Don Gossett – BTB Chair

Conservation

Maine's brook trout program, part of the Northeast Brook Trout Initiative/Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, has made significant progress during 2006 and has an extensive agenda for 2007.

Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife (IF&W) has made a good start with regards to evaluating and inventorying the state's streams to assess wild brook trout populations, physical characteristics, water quality, watershed forest health, and related analytical inputs.

IF&W brook trout biologist Forrest Bonney took a crew, which included TU members Dick Walthers and Steve Hines, to Allagash Stream during this past August and found a quality watershed with abundant wild trout. Forrest's comprehensive book, MAINE BROOK TROUT, Biology, Conservation, and Management, is available @ \$10.00 plus taxes and postage at www.mefishwildlife.com. Copies may also be purchased at IF&W headquarters, 284 State St. Augusta, ME. Progress was made by Forrest and staff in restoring South Bog Stream and the Sandy River.

An Embrace A Stream Grant enabled IF&W biologist Bobby VanRyper and assistants to survey 112 streams in Maine's fisheries Regions A & B, the southern and central areas of the state. Fifty of those waters have wild brook trout, while others have the potential to support wild fish. In addition, Bobby and a crew of volunteers, including TU member and newly elected Maine Council Chair, Sean McCormick, surveyed 22 mid-coast brooks to inventory brook trout. Ten of those streams had significant numbers of trout at their mouths, many of which sported the salter's silvery sheen.

PROTECT, ENHANCE, RESTORE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The salter evaluation exercise has been assisted by volunteer anglers who have submitted scale samples and outing reports to IF&W. In addition, the department is closely monitoring the salter habitat of Stanley Brook, Mt. Desert Island.

Merry Gallagher, IF&W biologist and point person for brook trout stream surveys, has received generous grants totaling \$244 000 over two years for the comprehensive brook trout stream evaluation program. She intends to hire 5 seasonal field crews, each of which will consist of two biologists-in-training, to implement the plan.

Maine Council member Greg Ponte is meeting, December 8, with IF&W biologist Francis Brautigam, two game wardens and two public members to revise Maine's complicated brook trout regulations. The goal is to make the rule book easier to read, more consistent, and more concise and clear. Better compliance is the target.

Plum Creek's massive Moosehead Region development plan is in stage 2, a "revised" proposal which, like the first submission, will still have severely adverse impacts on the northern forest wild brook trout waters, if it is approved by Maine's Land Use Regulatory Commission. The Maine Council is reviewing the proposal.

Calendar Of Brook Trout Events

December	Happy Holidays from all of us to all of you.
January 9 7– 8pm	Conservation Success Index web cast with Nat Gillespie Call in to conference (call 866 740-1260 and enter 2595352# when prompted) and follow along on your computer at www.readytalk.com
January 16 7– 8pm	Conservation Success Index web cast with Nat Gillespie Call in to conference (call 866 740-1260 and enter 2595352# when prompted) and follow along on your computer at www.readytalk.com
January 23 7– 8pm	Conservation Strategy: Using The Media web cast with TU's Press Secretary Kathleen Campbell and EBT Coordinator Gary Berti discussing using the Conservation Strategy to garner media coverage and building the message around brook trout. Call in to conference (call 866 740-1260 and enter 2595352# when prompted) and follow along on your computer at www.readytalk.com
February 15	Earliest possible release date for EBT: Conservation Strategy
March 1	Latest plausible date for release of EBT Conservation Strategy
April 27-29	Southeast Rally in Abingdon, Va.
TBD	Mid-Atlantic Brook Trout Leadership Field Trip