

Eastern Brook Trout JOINT VENTURE



THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE EBTJV

MAY 2009

Mid-Atlantic Division



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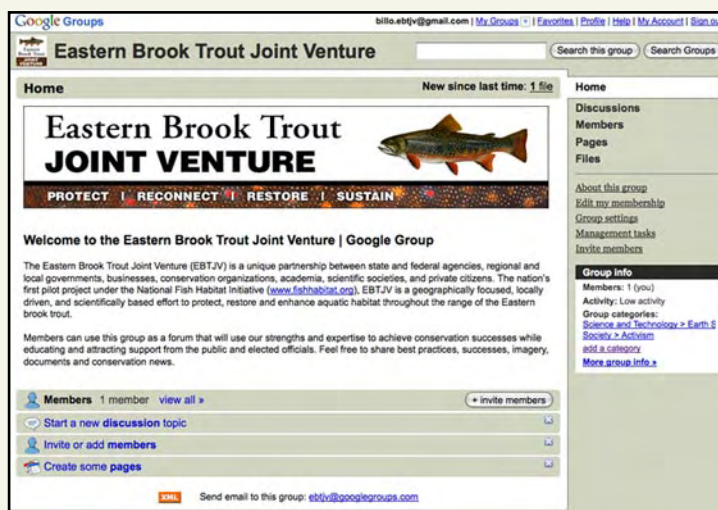
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Editor's Notes

Welcome to our Spring edition and the first in 2009. Now that all the snow is melted and the trout are chasing mayflies, it's a good time to focus our efforts on our local watersheds.

Please keep me informed of new interested parties for my mailing list and also keep me updated on changes of positions within councils and chapters. Our distribution list is now over 160 and still growing. There are quite a few folks in the east that are interested in our native brookies.

I've continued to add links to all the url's and email addresses contained in the newsletter. You just need to click on them to send an email or visit a website. As always, I'm open to suggestions and new ideas so feel free to send them to me at williamo@maine.rr.com.



Osprey with Brookie
photo by Donna Lorello Branford

The membership of our EBTJV Google Group is growing nicely. It's a site where we will have a forum for discussions, a place to upload and post files/documents/newsletters and send a reminder to the entire group. Hopefully this opens up broader lines of communication throughout the EBTJV. You can easily apply for group membership by clicking the tab on the right side of <http://groups.google.com/group/ebtjv>. I urge you to visit it often... I have a feeling that this will be a useful tool for the EBTJV.

Please Note that this month we'll be opening up discussions on Google Group, so if you're interested in commenting or have some great ideas, feel free to share them with us all.

Enjoy the Newsletter and our Google Group — Tight Lines!

by Bill Oleszczuk

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Brook Trout on Social Networks

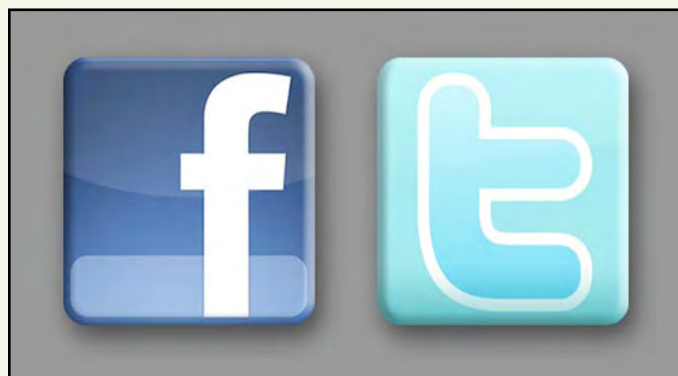
The joint venture recently increased its communication reach with some social media tools. We now have a blog and joined three social networking sites.

The Brook Trout Blog, at <http://brooktrout.wordpress.com/> offers a running commentary on the activity of the joint venture. We will be posting information and updates on a regular basis.

We have created a facebook page, the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Eastern-Brook-Trout-Joint-Venture#/pages/Eastern-Brook-Trout-Joint-Venture/59207767524?v=info&viewas=1633323785>. You will need a facebook account to view this page. If you are already on facebook we hope you will become a "fan" of this page.

We are on the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation's social media site Fishington as well. You can see it at: <http://www.takemefishing.org/community/sn/profiles/view/name/eastern-brook-trout-joint-venture>.

We also are on Twitter, at <https://twitter.com/EBTJV>. You will need a twitter account as well if you want to "follow" us or send as a "tweet".



Many of us are still "old school" and these social media tools are sometimes hard to understand. Not to worry... they are not near as hard to figure out as you may think and are chock full of good information. Check them out.

by Tom Sadler



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New York

Notes on the McIntosh Brook Project

McIntosh Brook is a small stream in southern Cattaraugus County, New York State. It is located within the perimeter of Allegany State Park and sustains a small population of wild brook trout. The spring and summer of 2008 saw the initiation of a major stream enhancement project whose goal is the improvement of brook trout habitat on McIntosh Brook. Under the direction of Mr. Scott Cornett, of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and Mr. Ray Li, of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Red House and Western New York chapters of Trout Unlimited took part in the construction of in-stream log and stone structures, whose impact will be the subject of scientific study over the next few years.

The McIntosh Brook Project was developed under a grant obtained by the USFWS from the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and other sources. Several agencies partnered in the endeavor: The US Fish and Wildlife Service, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, Allegany State Park (NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation), and State University of New York at Fredonia. As noted, the Red House and WNY Chapters of Trout Unlimited, along with some unaffiliated volunteers, participated.

Mr. Cornett has explained that, even though McIntosh does support some wild brook trout (181, according to a pre-project survey), it lacks sufficient pools during low flow periods to sustain a more sizable population. The low flows are common during the summer months. There appear to be a couple of factors which contribute to this situation. For one, during the last Ice Age, glaciers did not cover enough of what is now Allegany State Park to provide the extensive gravel deposits which are typically the source of high volume cold springs. The springs which feed McIntosh, while cold, do not produce sufficient water to maintain good flow during droughts, given the way the stream has been configured. The latter seems to be due to another problem, namely, the scarcity of trees, of sufficient size, in the stream to create large plunge pools. The project is an attempt to address that problem.

The goal of the McIntosh Project is to help nature along by the construction, using hand labor, of log structures which exploit the power of running water, during high water events, to scour deep pools in the stream bed. These

pools would, in turn, conserve the precious spring water during droughts, thereby providing refuge for brook trout.

Over the summer of 2008, volunteers, including TU members, many of whom were organized by Mr. Chuck Godfrey, Stream Projects Chairman of WNY TU, built sixteen in-stream structures. These were generally of two types: "cross log and revetment" and "general plunge pool". The former consists of two logs, one placed in the stream at an angle and the second installed nearly parallel to the stream bank and at an angle to the first timber. The "general plunge pool" style consists of log which crosses the stream at a right angle. The areas immediately above each upstream log are filled with rocks to prevent undercutting of that log.

It is anticipated that, especially during times of high flow, water will pass over the upstream logs and scour out a plunge pool and, in the case of the revetment style, perform some undercutting. The structures are low enough that fish can jump over them. They are not "dams" as far as the trout are concerned. Essentially, the structures accomplish what nature would with some well placed fallen trees. The logs used in construction were often hemlocks found in the vicinity of the stream.

After a number of high water periods, some readjustment of the log structures will probably be necessary. This procedure will likely take place during the summer of 2009.

Meanwhile, in February of 2009, Mr. Cornett walked McIntosh Brook after a mid-winter thaw. The water was high, but not yet at "bankful", the point at which maximum scouring is expected to occur. Even so, the water appears to be behaving as hoped.

Using the "good science" principle of wildlife conservation, a survey of McIntosh Brook was taken in the spring of 2008, prior to onset of in-stream construction. In addition, several potential enhancement sites on the stream were left untouched and will serve as "controls". Another nearby stream will be left in its current state to provide an additional "control". In this way, scientists will be able to get a more valid picture of "what works". Eventually, studies will evaluate changes in both fish and habitat. These investigations will take place over the next four years, during which McIntosh will be closed to fishing. It is hoped

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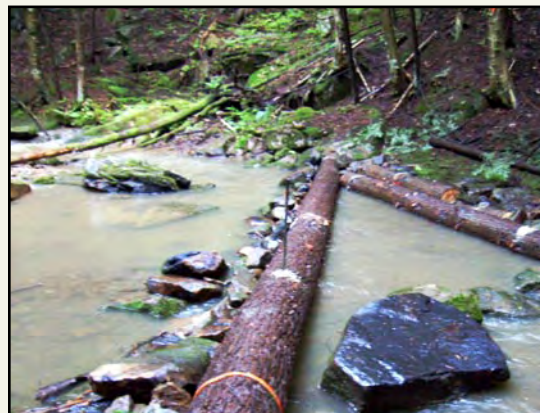


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New York *continued*

that the stream enhancements will improve trout habitat leading to an increase in brook trout population and larger size fish.

Here are some in-stream structures shortly after their construction (summer, 2008):



Photos taken (by Mr. Cornett) in February, 2009, after a thaw. The flow, though high, is not "bankful", which is the point at which maximum scouring occurs.



by Russell Shefrin (WNY Chapter of TU)



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New York *continued*

Temiscamie Hybrid Brook Trout Study

In the fall of 2007 and 2008, all brook trout stocked into 55 western Adirondack brook trout ponds were fin clipped "Temiscamie-hybrid" brook trout. These trout are a cross between a wild Canadian strain and a domestic hatchery strain. They have been shown to grow and survive well in Adirondack waters, and it is suspected that they sometimes reproduce in the wild. These 55 waters are made up of ponds that range from 3.5 acres to 167 acres but that average only 31 acres. This year we NYS DEC staff will be conducting extensive netting surveys with the intention of accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Determine if Temiscamie hybrid brook trout are capable of significant natural reproduction.
2. Determine growth rates and age structure for Temiscamie hybrid brook trout in these ponds.
3. Determine the condition of brook trout through water content analysis.

These objectives will allow us to further assess the fitness of this strain of brook trout and determine if changes should be made to the current stocking policies and allow us to better manage towards self sustaining pond populations. Assessment of age, growth and fitness will allow us to adjust stocking rates to provide quality fisheries.



by Jim Daley



Canasawacta Creek

Carl Schwartz of the US Fish & Wildlife Service has continued his extensive Rosgen based stream restoration on the Canasawacta Creek near Norwich, NY (mid state). Working in collaboration with DEC Region 7 Fisheries, he has been installing 116 habitat devices (log vanes, cross vanes, J hooks, root wads) on stream sections that had been severely impacted by prior channelization. Given the extremely poor condition of this stream, work was continued through the winter. It is gratifying to report that long absent brook trout continue to repopulate all areas of restoration. TU chapters have been assisting with revegetation of the riparian zone.

John Braico



Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Surveys

Coldwater Unit Leader, Jim Daley, and biologists R. Preall and E. Zollweg met with representatives from three TU Chapters to review survey work done by TU volunteers in 2008 and to plan for the 2009 season. The Clearwater and Adirondack TU Chapters conducted 46 surveys of streams in four Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 11 watersheds in Washington County where information concerning the status of wild brook trout populations was lacking. The volunteers collected physical and chemical data at survey sites and angling was mainly used assess brook trout presence. Brook trout were found in two of the four HUC's assessed in 2008. Volunteers also evaluated threats to brook trout survival. Among the problems found were bank erosion, sedimentation, perched culverts and constricted stream channels. For 2009, three HUC's in the Saratoga area, two HUC's near Plattsburgh and three HUC's along the Canadian border will be surveyed. If all the planned work for 2009 can be accomplished, there will be only one unknown HUC left in Region 5. This has been a highly successful collaborative effort between TU and DEC.

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