

Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture

Strategy Session, November 2, 2023

Approximately 25 members of the Steering Committee of the EBTJV met (in-person and online) on November 2, 2023 at NCTC to develop a strategy for approaching funding and other needs over the next three years. Prompted by a visioning exercise, the group was charged with beginning the process of developing a set of strategic initiatives and an “elevator speech” which might be applied toward expanding funding and general promotional opportunities in support of the organization’s work.

The process began with some pre-meeting work, inviting each member of the group to imagine and envision EBTJV’s future as they’d like to see it unfold by October of 2026. These Individual Visions were then shared across small teams, with the group looking for alignment in their thinking and/or really interesting divergent ideas, bringing their Individual Visions together into a sense of Collaborative Vision. Group by group, these Collaborative Visions were shared with the full assembly which was encouraged to listen for Emergent Themes . . . concepts/ideas that exist within each group’s future thinking. From these Emergent Themes, the foundation for a set of strategic initiatives would begin to take shape.

The Emergent Themes, along with the visioning elements from which they emerged, identified through this process include:

1) Funding

- Target both shorter and longer-range needs
- Develop diverse funding streams: Federal \$\$, private partnerships, business/industry aligned with mission . . . not necessarily trout but clean water, etc.
- Work toward strong operational budget . . . \$1 million!!

2) Expanding the EBTJV Community

- Seek broader representation on the EBTJV Steering Committee
- Engage non-anglers and non-fish-focused partners
- Develop value-added opportunities to serve EBTJV partners, outside of on-the-ground projects

3) Increase Public Awareness/Outreach

- Increase visibility in outreach and communications
- Develop an EBTJV branding campaign
- Reinforce/Reinvigorate EBTJV’s standing as the “go-to” group for everything Brook Trout
- Highlight the Story of EBTJV’s efforts and success in Protecting, Restoring, & Enhancing the resource . . . “How we’ve done it.”

3) Increase Public Awareness/Outreach (continued)

- Promote Landscape-Scale Conservation . . . define success across the range
- Host a “Wild Trout” Symposium
- Build more broad and equitable messaging, applying language such as “Beautiful Resources”, “Restoration Efforts”, “Future Generations”, etc.
- Leverage the Brook Trout as an iconic, charismatic species
- Create EBTJV tagline /rallying cry . . . “No Net Loss!”

The three Emergent Themes above were those identified by the group as they reviewed the thinking shared by the Collaborative Vision Groups. One additional theme seemed to emerge as well . . .

4) Maintain Science & Data as EBTJV’s Core / Authenticity / “Bread and Butter”.

- Work toward “better, smarter” regs based on data gathered
- Expand range-wide assessment to the next level
- Publish peer-reviewed articles
- Prioritize / Characterize patches

Next Actions . . .

These Emergent Vision Themes represent a general sense of direction for EBTJV’s future, the beginnings of a path that now needs to come into greater focus. Recommended next actions include bringing together a team to develop these possibilities more fully. Once these themes are more clearly focused, perhaps separate committees or work groups might convene around each vision theme to frame action steps for advancing that theme more specifically.

As noted during the session, the visionary themes identified by the group very nicely “nest” into one another: EBTJV’s strong scientific core lends authenticity to the message the organization is promoting, providing a solid platform for a robust PR/Outreach Campaign to take shape. Such a PR campaign, if targeted correctly, would serve to expand those interested in the organization’s work, leading to engagement with new potential supporters and partners. The group seemed to align around the notion of leveraging the iconic, charismatic nature of the Brook Trout as the heart of EBTJV’s messaging. This obviously makes sense and seems to offer an ideal starting point for brand development and promotion.