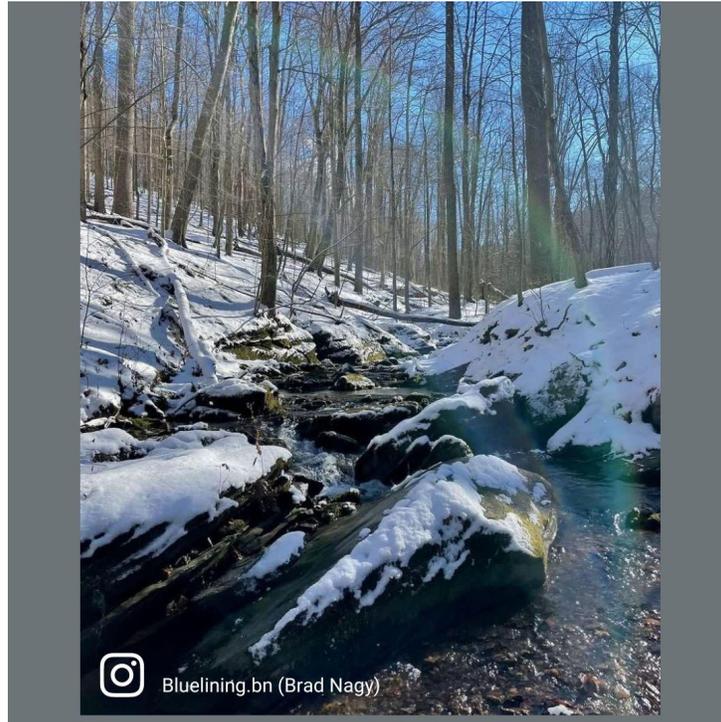




Eastern Brook Trout
JOINT VENTURE
A Fish Habitat Partnership

EBTJV Habitat News



Snow blankets boulders and banks of a stream of the Laurel Highlands, PA, in November 2022. Contributed by Brad Nagy (@bluelining.bn on Instagram). Brad notes "winter fishing has a special place in my heart, especially small mountain streams".

In this issue

- [Leadership change for EBTJV Steering Committee](#)
 - [Nat Gillespie shares his thoughts on the past 6 years of brook trout conservation](#)
 - [FY22 Project Highlight: Culvert replacement in Blue Lick watershed \(Maryland\)](#)
 - In the news: fantastic funding, rising temperatures
-



EBTJV names Jake Rash new Chairman

In December 2022, the Steering Committee of the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture approved Jacob "Jake" Rash as its new Chairman.

Jake is the Coldwater Research Coordinator for the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, where he assists with the coordination of applied research and management of the state's trout resources. He has been involved with the EBTJV since 2010.

Jake has co-authored numerous publications on data-driven brook trout management. When asked about the value of fish biologists, especially fellow EBTJV Steering Committee members, he didn't hesitate to call them superstars: "we're so fortunate to have such a diverse, talented, and committed group of folks working together to help this amazing fish."

Jake succeeds prior Chair Nat Gillespie, who served for six years.

[Keep reading](#)

**Reflections on Brook Trout Conservation over the
past 6 years**
by Nat Gillespie



As I step down from the role of chairman of the steering committee of the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, I want to share some thoughts on the state of brook trout conservation from a perspective that I've gathered over the past 6 years.

There are challenges for sure. There have been small, isolated populations of eastern brook trout that have disappeared. Extirpated, or locally extinct, is the technical term. Human development pushes on in some of our nation's most populated corridors and fastest growing communities, which typically results in the loss of forests and increases impervious pavement. The climate is changing, more so in some regions than others, but generally we are facing warmer summers, more intense and frequent storms, and more severe droughts. Outside of Maine and a few river systems across a handful of other states, brook trout populations exist in largely small headwater populations, in many cases, physically and genetically isolated from other brook trout populations. In all states, brook trout have lost habitat where waters are too warm, are occupied by competing non-native fish, or both. Research indicates that percent forest cover is the most significant determinant of wild brook trout presence, with a threshold of generally 70% serving as the minimum for them to survive in a watershed.

But despite these realities, the **state of the eastern brook trout remains relatively strong, and looking back six years I am relatively optimistic, and here's why:**

Keep reading Nat's letter



FY22 project update: brook trout can move a little freer in Maryland's Blue Lick Run watershed

In the summer of 2022, a collaborative partnership between the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, Trout Unlimited's Western Maryland Initiative, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the US Fish and Wildlife Service successfully completed a major Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) project on a tributary to Blue Lick Run, in the Savage River watershed in western Maryland. Efforts to improve connectivity in the Savage River watershed are important to maintaining population resiliency of Maryland's best brook trout resource.

This project removed two ~20ft. long perched metal culverts which previously blocked access to 1.8 miles of headwater habitat. By removing this barrier and replacing it with a "fish-friendly" open-box culvert design, brook trout and other aquatic species can now access prime coldwater spawning habitat and thermal refugia.

Access to cold tributaries is critical to the natural life history of brook trout- providing both necessary spawning habitat as well as thermal refuge during low flow periods and warmer months.

[Continue reading](#)

“

We are starting to see a shift in mindset with respect to road stream crossings across the landscape. **It's really exciting to be a part of and it just makes sense.** By replacing undersized failing culverts with **larger structures that allow streams to flow more naturally through them**, we are improving the aquatic and riparian life of these systems, but we are also decreasing the risk of flooding on the roads we drive on every day and increasing the lifespans of the structures themselves.

”

- Abby McQueen, Conservation Director, TU Mid-Atlantic and Southern Appalachian Regions

Other news

- [NFWF funds 1+M in brook trout related projects in the Appalachian region](#)
NFWF
- [The heat is on: Warming water threatens aquatic life in Chesapeake Bay](#)

[Region](#) : Bay Journal.

- [Appalachia, "The Chesapeake Tales"](#) by Fly Fisher's International and Braker Brothers: episode 2 features TU's Dustin Wichterman and restoration efforts in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.
- EBTJV is [still taking requests](#) for small numbers of printed copies of the brochure Brook Trout and Healthy Waters: a Win-Win, produced in 2022 with the West Virginia Rivers Coalition.



Lunch n'Learn: Importance of isolation, drift, and genetics for conservation of native Brook Trout Feb 6, noon- 1pm ET

Drs. Kazyak and White from the USGS Eastern Ecological Research Center will review our current understanding of isolation in wild brook trout, with a particular emphasis on how isolation relates to the prospects of wild brook trout.

Registration required - [more info here](#)

About the EBTJV

The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture is a geographically focused, locally driven and scientifically based effort to protect, restore and enhance aquatic habitat throughout the brook trout's Eastern US native range.

Our vision is

Healthy coldwater systems with fishable brook trout populations throughout their historic eastern geographic range. [Learn more](#)

The [Canaan Valley Institute](#) supports the coordination and operations of EBTJV.

We are a member of the [National Fish Habitat Partnership](#). Beyond the Pond is the 501c(3) sponsor for NFHAP and supports the donor platform for several Fish Habitat Partnerships including EBTJV.

[Donate Now](#)

[f](#) Share This Email

[t](#) Share This Email

[in](#) Share This Email

[Unsubscribe](#) gail.berrigan@canaanvi.org

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by lori.maloney@canaanvi.org in collaboration
with



Try email marketing for free today!