



Eastern Brook Trout
JOINT VENTURE
A Fish Habitat Partnership

EBTJV WORKPLAN (2024)

The purpose of this document is to set targets for activities of the Coordinator and key volunteers and contractors with the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. Activities are organized according to their fit under one of four “Conservation Goals” as outlined in the 2018 Action Strategies document.

The vision of the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture is to ensure healthy, fishable wild Brook Trout populations throughout their historic eastern U.S. range.

Outline: EBTJV's Conservation Goals in bold guide the organization of work elements, which are shown in small letters.

1. **Conserve, enhance or restore wild Brook Trout populations that have been impacted by habitat modification, non-native species, and other population level threats.**
 - a. NFHP funding/annual RFP
 - b. Assist partners in finding funds from other programs
 - c. Promote EBTJV priorities to other funding programs
2. **Encourage partnerships among management agencies, researchers, and stakeholders to seek solutions to regional environmental and ecological threats.**
 - a. Support existing partnerships
 - i. Other FHPs
 - ii. Chesapeake Bay
 - b. Seek opportunities to create new partnerships (Delaware)
3. **Develop and implement outreach and educational programs to raise public awareness about the challenges that wild Brook Trout populations are facing.**
 - a. Create communications plan
 - b. Use outlets
 - c. Mini-grant program
4. **Develop support for program implementation to perpetuate and restore wild Brook Trout populations throughout their historical eastern U.S. range.**
 - a. Catchment dataset
 - b. EBTJV operations/ committees/meetings
 - c. Strategic priorities (and revisions)
 - d. Funding/fundraising
 - e. Training (managers/scientists)

Items with an * need more attention and/or are aspirational. Items highlighted in yellow are immediate priorities

Goal 1: conserve, enhance or restore wild brook trout populations that have been impacted by habitat modification, non-native species, and other population level threats.

Task	Timeline	Funding	Who
Objective 1: Promote, assist awarding of, and track EBTJV/NFHAP funding			
Revise project funding process and RFP to reflect EBTJV and NFHAP priorities.	August-October	Operational	Coordinator EBTJV review team
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Promote RFP and conservation priorities via email and regular e-newsletters through fall and winter	October-January	Operational	Coordinator
Promote RFP and conservation priorities via social media and website	October-January	Operational	Coordinator
Assist applicants with process of applying via EBTJV website, answer questions, and refer to additional resources	October – January	Operational	Coordinator
Meet with applicants to review their project fit prior to applying	October – Jan (with a cutoff date)	Reviewer time match in-kind	State and federal points of contact
Review and rank EBTJV-NFHP proposals	Completed March 6	Operational, Reviewer time match in-kind	Coordinator and EBTJV review team

Write EBTJV operational funding application including use of up to \$125k	Budget drafted 3/1, DB entries done	Operational	Coordinator
Approve EBTJV project list including operational funding	March SC meeting		SC, Chairman
Goal 1, objective 1 (continued): Promote, assist awarding of, and track EBTJV/NFHP funding			
Submit project list to NFHAP	31-Mar	Operational	Coordinator
Grant Solutions support/ FWS agreements	Early-mid summer, late fall	FWS leverage	FWS
Communicate with project applicants and awardees with status of awards.	Mar-Jun	Operational	Coordinator
Request annual project status updates from awardees	Nov, Feb	Operational	Coordinator, FWS reps
Goal 1 (continued), Objective 2: Assist partners in obtaining funds from other avenues (e.g., help groups like local watershed groups identify funding opportunities and support their applications where appropriate)			
Share regional and national funding program RFP, priorities, dates, etc. via email and website	Ongoing	Operational	Coordinator
Write support letters for partners	As needed	Operational	Coordinator

Goal 1 (continued), Objective 3: Promote EBTJV priorities to other funding programs			
Communicate with NFWF to ensure EBTJV priorities and knowledge are utilized	Generally, fall prior to winter/spring RFP season	Operational	Coordinator
Goal 2 encourage partnerships among management agencies and stakeholders to seek solutions to regional environmental and ecological threats.			
Task	Timeline	Funding	Who
Objective 1: Support existing partnerships			
Contribute to Chesapeake Bay Partnership (CBP) Brook Trout Workgroup discussions and goal setting	2 meetings/yr	Operational; team member in-kind time	Coordinator and state contacts from MD, PA, WV, VA, and NY
Support tracking of the CBP Brook Trout Outcome	Dec 2022-March 2024	Currently, GIT funding via TU (\$10k)	Coordinator
Write up report components on stakeholder engagement and cross-GIT collaboration	Mar-24	Currently, GIT funding via TU (\$10k)	Coordinator
Support work of adjacent FHPs*	Ongoing	Operational	Coordinator
Maintain and update lists of MOU signatories and partners. "Maintain relationships"	Spring 2024		

Create year end list of who we did communicate directly with and work within that prior year.		Operational	Coordinator
Communicate with NEAFWA and SEAFWA*		Operational	Coordinator
Present EBTJV overview to NEAFWA meeting in a NFHP segment	April 23 2024	Operational	Coordinator
Goal 2(continued), objective 2: Seek opportunities to create new partnerships			
Participate in scoping for a Delaware Brook Trout Work Group	Ongoing as of March 11, 2024	Operational/ seek DWCF funding?	Coordinator
Goal 2 (continued), Objective 3: Promote EBTJV priorities to other funding programs			
Communicate with NFWF so they may integrate EBTJV priorities and data into their business plans*	Generally, fall prior to winter/spring RFP season	Operational	Coordinator
Goal 3 develop and implement outreach and educational programs to raise public awareness about the challenges that wild brook trout populations are facing.			
Objective 1: Create a communications plan.			
Task	Timeline	Funding	Who
Define target audiences, outline pitch language	Completed Feb 2024	Operational; team member in-kind	Communications Workgroup
Develop initial outreach messaging (catchment update)	Completed Feb 2024	Operational; team member in-kind	Communications Workgroup

Goal 3 continued, Objective 2: Maintain and improve EBTJV website			
Convene monthly to discuss sections of the website	June-Nov 2023	Operational; team member in-kind	Website 'team'
Add content regularly as needed (e.g., project data, partner bios, funding programs)		Operational	Coordinator
Prepare and submit report on statistics on site visits and usage	annually	Operational	Ferguson-Lynch
Goal 3 continued, Objective 3: Utilize e-newsletters, social media, and other media outlets			
Respond to media inquiries	As needed	Operational	Coordinator
write articles or support partners in writing articles. Target 2/yr	As needed	Operational	Coordinator, members
Send ≈10 e-newsletters per year* target minimum 30% open rate	Monthly	Operational	Coordinator
Submit ≈1 post/month to Instagram and Facebook	Monthly	Operational	Coordinator
Goal 3 Continued, Objective 4: Manage EBTJV Coldwater Stewardship Mini Grant Program			
Communicate with awardees to ensure they are requesting reimbursement and properly documenting activities and expenses	~Monthly in 2024	NFHP funding FY22	Coordinator, CVI staff

Ensure awardees are making progress towards their stated goals and EBTJV meets its deliverables	~Monthly in 2024	NFHP funding FY22	Coordinator
Project reporting and financial reporting at close out	Nov-24	NFHP funding FY22	Coordinator, CVI staff
Goal 4 develop support for program implementation to perpetuate and restore wild brook trout populations throughout their historical eastern U.S. range. (Build Internal, support external capacity)			
Goal 4, Objective 1: update ebtjv catchment dataset			
Task	Timeline	Funding	Who
Provide support to data stewards on use of catchment tool	Jan-Dec	Operational (\$13K in 2023)	Science and Data Committee, w/J. Coombs
Collect, compile, QAQC, upload data to catchment tool	Mar-24	Varies, use as match if allowed	Federal and state data stewards
Run patch algorithm and output essential range wide statistics	Mar-April 2024	TBD or match	J. Coombs
Update public facing data site	April -May 2024	TBD or match	SDC and J. Coombs
Analyze and write up results	2024-2025	TBD	Science and Data Committee
Goal 4 continued, Objective 2: maintain EBTJV business operations			
Set quarterly meetings and agenda	Mar, Jun, Sept, Dec	Operational	Coordinator, Chairman

Plan/execute an annual meeting with at least 30 participants	September	Operational	Coordinator, team?
Ensure committees are operational and support their meeting structure (see appendix A)		Operational	Coordinator, Committee chairs
Maintain list of science and data needs	Ongoing	Operational	Science and Data Committee
Complete and share out revisions to workplan	11-Mar	Operational	Coordinator, Exec. Team
Approve annual workplan	19-Mar		SC, Chairman
Prepare and submit grant and financial reporting	Per grant agreements		EBTJV, CVI
Goal 4 continued, Objective 3: review and update strategic priorities (See appendix C)			
Identify process for updating strategy*	By June 30	Operational	Coordinator
Ensure the Conservation Strategy remains current, relevant, and realistic and is representative of available data and information.		Operational	Coordinator

Determine whether there is a need to revise the range-wide habitat objectives, particularly in the context of the catchment scale assessment that is underway		Operational (outside funding might be needed)	Coordinator and SDC
Goal 4 continued, Objective 4: Ensure EBTJV remains a functioning Fish Habitat Partnership under the National Fish Habitat Partnership			
Engage with NFHAP through board meetings	ongoing	Operational	Coordinator and S. Perry
Engage with NFHAP through committee work	ongoing	Operational	Coordinator and S. Perry
Provide annual report of accomplishments to NFHAP	31-Mar	Operational	Coordinator
Provide application to NFHAP for EBTJV operations, data projects, and partner projects	31-Mar	Operational	Coordinator
Keep EBTJV's project data up-to-date on the NFHAP project database (specific: Complete process of adding all FY22 and 23 project data to NFHP portal)	Completed as of March 6	Operational	Coordinator

Maintain 'board buddy' relationships	Ongoing	Operational	Coordinator
Goal 4 continued, Objective 5: Ensure adequate funding for other EBTJV priority initiatives			
Maintain EBTJV budget	Ongoing	Operational	Coordinator
Approve EBTJV budget	June		EXEC team or SC
Goal 4 continued, Objective 5 continued: Ensure adequate funding for other EBTJV priority initiatives			
Scope out and prioritize unmet funding needs of the EBTJV	Present to SC at June meeting		Coordinator; fundraising team
Seek private and foundation funding*			Coordinator; fundraising team/Vedra
Communicate with current individual donors (keep up with thank yous and cultivating relationships)*			Beyond the Pond; Coordinator; Steering Committee
Determine best uses of the current private donor funds*			Coordinator; fundraising team; SC
Objective 6: Support training and communication needs of managers and biologists			
Task	Timeline	Funding	Who
Lunch n learn series*		seek funding	
Develop list of communications and training needs*	Ongoing	Operational	Coordinator

Appendix A

Organizational Structure

Guided by EBTJV's Charter/By-Laws, the Steering Committee is a self-directed group of its members interested in achieving the partnership's vision of healthy coldwater systems with fishable wild brook trout populations throughout their historic eastern geographic range. It has no authority beyond those of its individual members. Participation on the EBTJV Steering Committee is voluntary. The Steering Committee is the decision-making body for the EBTJV partnership and has oversight responsibility for all EBTJV activities. The Chair and Vice-Chair positions are 2-year roles by election of the Steering Committee. A quorum (10) is needed to pass votes. The activities of the Steering Committee directly support the Eastern brook trout Action Strategies and Eastern brook trout Roadmap to Conservation. The Steering Committee meets quarterly by webinar and annually in person.

Workgroups currently include:

- Project Review Team : to revise and release the annual project RFP, and to review, score, and rank proposals for consideration by the EBTJV Steering Committee and the NFHP Board.
- Science and Data: To facilitate applied research directed to answer questions relative to brook trout conservation actions and the establishment of a centralized, web-based, data management system. This committee also oversees the assessment data and products and has a workgroup dedicated to disseminating the results of the 2023 update to the range-wide assessment.
- Outreach and Communications: To engage partners for the purpose of seeking solutions to regional and ecological threats, raise awareness of brook trout conservation outcomes among the Eastern brook trout Joint Venture's community of support, and communicate the partnership's accomplishments to targeted audiences. This team has two sub groups: EBTJV website and 2023 update to the range-wide assessment.
- Fundraising: this team is not formally included yet in the EBTJV organizational structure, but has been working to develop a fundraising workplan since mid-2023. It interacts with the Outreach and Communications group to craft effective messaging.

The EBTJV also formulated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that confirms the intent of state, tribal, and federal fishery resource agencies, as well as interested non-governmental organizations, to participate in and support our Fish Habitat Partnership with its efforts to conserve wild brook trout and their habitats in the eastern portion of the United States. As of December 2019, 38 organizations have signed the EBTJV's MOU.

The Steering Committee is supported by a full-time Coordinator who has many duties including running the business operations of the EBTJV, promoting the value of EBTJV's work and partners' work to conserve brook trout habitat, ensuring the committees are running

effectively, writing and reporting on grants, convening meetings, responding to inquiries and requests, communicating with partners, and overseeing the annual conservation project RFP. The Coordinator also participates on the national level via the NFHP Partnerships and Science and Data Committees.

The EBTJV's operations are supported by the Canaan Valley Institute, a 501c3 non-profit organization based in Davis, WV, that works to create healthy communities, vibrant economies, and clean watersheds across Central Appalachia. Beginning in 2021, CVI has held grants for EBTJV operations, primarily NFHP grants but also include smaller outside awards for the Coordinator's time. CVI supports the Coordinator's position (payroll, benefits); makes payments to vendors and contractors, tracks finances and and submits reports for the operational grants, and otherwise ensures its operations sufficient to maintain its status as a 501 c3 non-profit eligible to receive federal funding. Under the FY22 grant, it has also supported disbursement and management of grant funds as sub-awards to four organizations for the Coldwater Stewardship Small Grant Program.

Beyond the Pond, the 501 c3 arm of NFHP hosts our individual giving platform. BTP has also held several Multi-State Conservation Grants that have benefited EBTJV.

The EBTJV is grateful for the continued support of the USFWS and its Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices (FWCO) in Regions 4 and 5. These offices are critical to the habitat project funding process. Most importantly, they administer the funds that allow EBTJV/NFHP projects to happen (writing grant agreements, working with applicants to execute all steps, reviewing and approving reports, distributing fund draws, and tracking short and longer-term project success). In addition to these duties, biologists also spend time assisting applicants with project generation, partnership formation, provide technical assistance, and outreach.

Appendix B, MOU Signatories, 2019

Organization Date MOU Signed

American Fisheries Society 11/9/2006
American Fly Fishing Trade Association 11/3/2010
American Sportfishing Association 1/2/2007
Bureau of Land Management 8/17/2009
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection 5/23/2007
Downeast Salmon Federation 9/11/2015
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians 4/8/2014
Federation of Fly Fishers 2/22/2012
Georgia Department of Natural Resources 11/28/2006
Izaak Walton League of America 2/8/2007
Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife 11/13/2006
Maryland Department of Natural Resources 10/30/2006
Massachusetts Division of Fish and Wildlife 1/25/2007
National Park Service 12/6/2006
Native Fish Coalition 12/31/2018
New Hampshire Fish and Game Department 10/27/2006
New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Fish and Wildlife 12/15/2006
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation 12/13/2006
North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission 11/30/2006
USDOI - Office of Surface Mining 5/27/2008
Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission 12/1/2006
Protect RI Brook Trout 12/2/2018
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management 3/28/2007
Sea Run Brook Trout Coalition 12/14/2012
South Carolina Department of Natural Resources 3/14/2007
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency 3/7/2007
The Trust for Public Lands 4/17/2007
Trout Unlimited 1/18/2006
US EPA 11/7/2011
US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 5 1/29/2007
USDA Forest Service, Eastern Region 12/14/2006
USDA Forest Service, Southern Region 11/21/2006
Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife 12/13/2006 Virginia Department of Game and Fish 1/29/2007
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy 12/7/2012
West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources 2/15/2007
Wild Trout Flyrodders 2/22/2012
Trout Power 12/1/2019

Appendix C. EBTJV Strategies

EBTJV's purpose is clear: coordinated conservation to ensure fishable populations of wild brook trout for future generations.

Brook trout have been lost from many of the watersheds they once inhabited, because of factors including logging, sedimentation, elevated temperatures, and non-native species. The EBTJV was established in 2004 to collaboratively address this alarming decline.

Our operational priorities fall into three core areas:

- 1) recruiting and supporting fish habitat conservation projects that address priority wild brook trout conservation needs;
- 2) developing and maintaining a range-wide salmonid assessment that is used in conservation planning; and
- 3) serving as a communications hub for brook trout science, management, and outreach.

Our Strategic Plan further outlines priorities:

Conservation Goals
Conserve, enhance or restore wild brook trout populations that have been impacted by habitat modification, non-native species and other population level threats.
Encourage partnerships among management agencies and stakeholders to seek solutions to regional environmental and ecological threats.
Develop and implement outreach and educational programs to raise public awareness about the challenges that wild brook trout populations are facing.
Develop support for program implementation to perpetuate and restore wild brook trout populations throughout their historical eastern U.S.range.

Key Conservation Actions
Increase recreational fishing opportunities for wild brook trout
Conserve and increase habitats that support robust wild brook trout populations
Restore and reconnect suitable habitats adjacent to robust wild brook trout populations
Conserve genetic diversity of wild brook trout populations
Minimize threats to wild brook trout populations (e.g., degraded water quality, invasive species, altered hydrologic regimes)
Conserve unique wild brook trout life history strategies (e.g., lacustrine populations, large river populations, and coastal populations)

Range-wide Goals and Objectives, supported by EBTJV assessment.

GOALS	OBJECTIVES (by 2022)
Increase the average size (km ²) of wild brook trout patches, which is currently 19 km ²	Increase the size (km ²) of 30 wild brook trout patches.
Restore wild brook trout to catchments where they were extirpated	Establish wild brook trout in 15 extirpated catchments.
Maintain the current number of wild brook trout patches (i.e. no net loss)	-Retain at least 6,022 allopatric wild brook trout patches (1.1) across the EBTJV geographic range.

	-Retain at least 3,838 sympatric wild brook trout patches (1.2, 1.3, and 1.4) across the EBTJV geographic range.
Increase connectivity within and among wild brook trout catchments	Complete Aquatic Organism Passage projects within 45 wild brook trout catchments.

The EBTJV works in all habitats for wild brook trout including streams, rivers, coastal rivers, lakes, and ponds, in all or portions of the following states: CT, GA, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NH, NY, NC, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, VT, VA, WV. This encompasses the historic US eastern range of brook trout, except the Midwest. The causes for brook trout declines within this region are similar. Also, by functioning at this large geographic scale, the EBTJV is better positioned to secure adoption of policies favoring brook trout habitat conservation while maximizing the energies and expertise of existing partnerships.