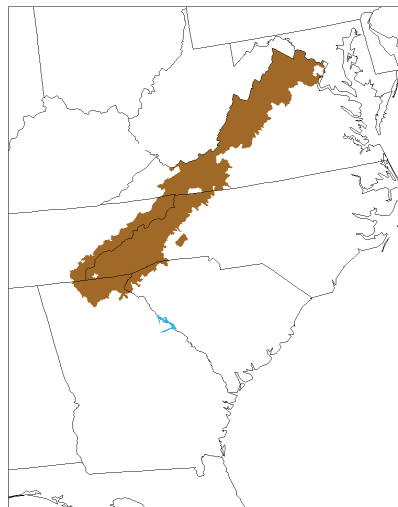


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The Eastern Brook Trout
Newsletter:
South Eastern Division

*A partnership between
Trout Unlimited And the
Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture,
Together with all who value
Brook Trout And its Habitat*



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Important:

Your Response Needed!

In response to grassroots feedback, future issues of this newsletter will be directly emailed to TU members and agency leaders.

This method puts this information to the hands of brook trout leaders and volunteers directly .

You must respond to an upcoming email request to sign up for direct distribution.

Due to spamming ethics, only one request will be sent.

South East Rally

HUNGRY MOTHER STATE PARK, MARION

APRIL 27, 28, 29, 2007

The sixth annual South East Rally took place in Marion, VA the last weekend in April, 2007. Over 50 TU leaders came together to discuss the current issues affecting the status of cold water fish, be with their buddies, and provide "how to" strategies for fundraising, advocacy, partnering, and education for the benefits of the public and the TU team. TU members were joined by TU staff members Steve Moyer, Dave Rogers, Sally Armstrong, Jennifer Dron, Stephanie Davison and Gary Berti. Trustees, Kirk Otey, Rick Murphee and David Armstrong were present, as well as NLC members from Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia. Back the Brookie coordinators from GA, SC, NC, VA, & WV, and most Council Chairs were also present.

Beginning on Friday night the meetings began at dinner. There were two separate dinners so that the Council Chairs could all meet and discuss their common issues, while the BTB Chairs and NLC Brook Trout Workgroup met on Brookie issues. Later, Larry Puckett, VA's Conservation Chair gave a well prepared discussion of the ample fishing op-

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portunities in the area.

Saturday's program began with an introduction by Marcia Woolman, NLC-VA and chair of the Eastern Brook Trout Work Group. Marcia's presentation was designed to take the mystery out of the role of TU's Back The Brookie program and the EBTJV's Conservation Strategy (Gary Berti). Several funding opportunities were discussed for project funding; Embrace A Stream (EAS - Sally Armstrong and Larry Puckett), Farm Bill Opportunities (Steve Moyer), EBTJV programs and funding opportunities, (Gary Berti and Maureen Gallagher of the USFWS) ,and individual Chapter efforts like the TN state license plate. One highlight was the Little River Chapter's contribution of \$12,000 for conservation in the Smoky Mountains. Marcia outlined how every chapter can play a role in Conservation, Education, Advocacy or Development with regard to brook trout.

The afternoon session began with TU's Strategic Plan: Building For Our Mission presented by Trustee Rick Murphee and NLC Chairman Kirk Otey describing TU's strategic direction, organizational and conservation goals, and soliciting input from members regarding conservation needs and resource requirements at the state by state levels. The presentation was followed by robust discussion between the members and the presenters.

One of the highlights of the weekend was Linda Goode's presentation of the newly completed TN education video on the conservation of brook trout. Not only was the product outstanding but the presentation was compelling. Linda's work on this video was moving and the professionalism and quality of production is fabulous.

Then the Georgia leadership team took the stage to explain their philosophy of working together with agencies, sportsmen, and legislators to build consensus and work through obstacles in delivering TU's conservation interests. The answer lies in building trust between interests and networking.

The meeting broke up at 4 o'clock to allow for some fishing.

The Saturday evening BBQ from 7 to 10 allowed for late fishing, but most of the attendees listened to a fabulous presentation of the natural history of Appalachia by Dr. George Constantz. Dr. Constantz was followed immediately by the Wolf Creek Sessions Band.

The weekend was rounded out by a great breakfast at the Lodge with a presentation by NLC Chair, Kirk Otey on the future of TU and how do we see it?

Everyone was so pleased with this facility, the food and the location, that we unanimously decided to return here next year again on the last weekend in April.

Pencil in the date for next year's South East Rally. It will be held April 25th through the 27th, at the Hungry Mother State Park in Marion, once again.

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GEORGIA

Report from Kevin McGrath, BTB chair

Advocacy:

Advocacy Alerts. GA TU partnered with the Georgia Wildlife Federation (GWF Camouflage Coalition www.camocoalition.com) on several issues this past legislative session:

- Funding for Georgia's Wildlife Resources Division
- Land conservation purchases
- A legislative update concerning conservation and sportsmen's issues

Conservation:

Interns. GA Back-the-Brookie will partner again this summer with GA DNR and the USFS, to employ a team of summer interns pursuing fisheries studies and careers to work on brook trout projects in Georgia. Their work will continue and expand water sampling, fish sampling, stream habitat mapping, and stream enhancement work on brook trout streams that was started last year.

Stream Projects. Several Chapter stream enhancement workdays scheduled with GA DNR and the USFS.

Mapping Software. Purchased topographic mapping software for use by GA DNR and the USFS to plot locations of brook trout populations, stream barriers and other important data.

Development:

Fund Raising. GA Back-the-Brookie has received financial support from: Georgia Power/Southern Company. 2007 marks the second of three I Installments to support general activities of Back-the-Brookie.

Rabun Chapter TU. We received money for the second consecutive year supporting our intern program.

Upper Chattahoochee Chapter TU. Donated additional funds to complete a brook trout educational project at Smithgall Woods-Dukes Creek Conservation Area.

NORTH CAROLINA

Report submitted by Sam Ogburn - NLC Representative and acting BTB Chair

NC is finally getting some things together. Sam Ogburn is serving as interim BTB chair. The NCTU Excom.& Gary Berti held a teleconference last Thurs. with Penn Cox. I now have the BTB license plate info in hand. We have found two artists and a graphic designer to put the plate together and have TU and NC License bureau specs for the BTB tag. Our tag has been approved by the legislature.

The focus of the meeting was to determine the Councils participation in the NC Brook Trout Conservation Strategies,& the role of the interim committee. I plan to hand out copies of the Tennessee education video that Linda Goode prepared. A copy will go to all the BTB committee members so we can get it in the schools as soon as possible. We are in the process of assigning sections of the state to different committee members or chapter presidents to help "get the word out".

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North Carolina, cont'd

Sam visited the Stone MT. chapter weeks and gave his first BTB talk. It promoted a great question and answer session. He also has contacted Fred Harris, Fisheries Chief, to get his thoughts on NCTU's role in the "strategy".

Our next BTB meeting is scheduled for June30.

SOUTH CAROLINA

In South Carolina, a strong partnership has developed between TU and the SC Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the SC Wildlife Federation.

Projects that have been initiated thus far are listed below:

- a. Southern Appalachian strain brookies have been restored to King and Crane Creeks. These are projects partially funded by Embrace A Stream monies.
- b. Brook trout reproduction following stocking has been found in King Creek, and is expected to be found in Crane Creek this summer
- c. Wild mixed strain brookies have been stocked in Carrick Creek in Table Rock State Park, where no trout existed in recent past
- d. Wild mixed strain brookies have been stocked in Tamassee Creek, where they once existed
- e. Public awareness has been raised through articles, presentations, public radio interviews, website creation, videos, etc.

Our goals for Phase II are:

- a. Publicize brook trout restoration program in SC by completing articles in various outlets (SC Wildlife Magazine, Trout, SC Out-of-Doors, etc.).
- b. Work with SC DNR and SC PRT to develop an educational brochure about brookie restoration for Table Rock State Park. Use Carrick Creek as the focal point of the brochure.
- c. Build partnerships with private landowners who own property along brook trout streams by informing them about the current status of the brook trout and efforts to restore the species. A meeting will be held with these owners and a field trip to a restored stream will be offered to educate them about the brookie.
- d. Invite leaders of conservation/environmental organizations to a field trip where they can learn about the partnership's efforts to restore the brook trout. This is planned for the fall when they will be able to see wild brookies in spawning colors in a restored stream.
- e. TU will assist DNR in monitoring restored populations of brookies in King, Crane, and Carrick Creeks and help them make supplemental stockings in these streams to build sustainable populations of wild brook trout.
- f. Investigate the potential of a brook trout license plate and other avenues to increase exposure of the brook trout program.

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TENNESSEE

The Tennessee Aquarium is writing a proposal to develop propagation techniques for southern strain brook trout. It is a little premature to be discussing it in the newsletter but I thought some folks might want to be made aware of it.

Linda Goode, who has been working tirelessly on the development of a video and curriculum for Senior High School Science classes that address the plight of brook trout and the problems they face, gave the opening viewing at the SE Rally amid a standing ovation. Not only did Linda pursue the development of this material but also managed to find the funding for it. The video is now available to other states as well as TN. It will be finding its way into schools immediately.

VIRGINIA

Report by Larry Puckett, BTB Chair

Virginia has had a very active spring. Our Embrace a Stream project on Dismal Creek, located along the Appalachian Trail in Giles County was funded and has already begun with replanting of a degraded section of riparian zone along the lower section of the stream. Additional work will include flow, temperature, and stream chemistry monitoring in 2007 to determine why brookies are no longer present in the lower reaches of the stream. This is a joint effort between our Clinch Valley and New River Valley chapters.

A final analysis of fish, aquatic invertebrate, and stream chemistry data has begun for our Grayson Highlands State Park project. The chemistry data indicates that although periods of acidification occur and produce elevated concentrations of toxic aluminum in the upper reaches of Big Wilson Creek, dissolved organic carbon in the stream ties it up and renders it nontoxic to the fish. Alkalinities were found to be in the danger zone for damaging acidification in upper Big Wilson and Cabin Creeks. A final report with recommendations will be produced over the summer.

Since January we have been working with our Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to develop a brook trout conservation plan as part of the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. The plan has been developed and a list of potential project streams is being finalized in meetings between TU chapters and state fisheries biologists. These streams will then be the focus of future EBTJV projects in Virginia.

The Virginia Council partnered with Dominion Power to provide a \$25,000 grant to purchase equipment required to produce triploid trout for stocking. Triploid fish are sterile and therefore will not breed with native or wild fish. In addition, this will prevent establishment of new populations of non-native fish which may compete with and exclude brookies. Virginia is planning to convert their rainbow and brook trout stocking operations to 100% triploid fish in the next 2-5 years.