

Eastern Brook Trout JOINT VENTURE



THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE EBTJV

MAY 2010

Southeast Division



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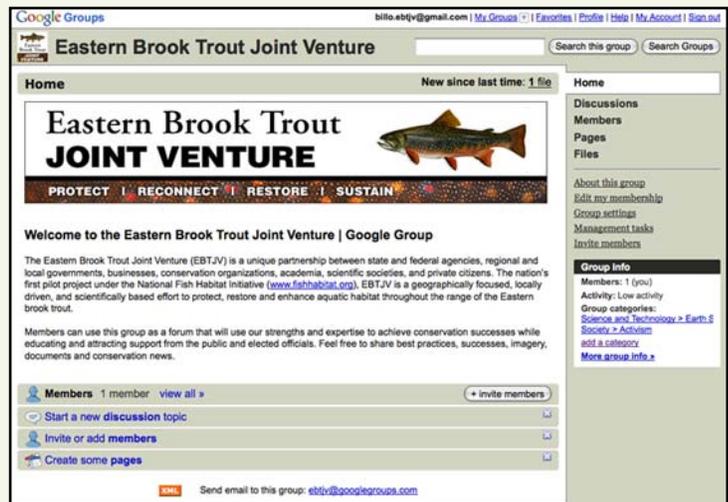
Editor's Notes

Welcome to our Spring edition of the EBTJV newsletter. Our local biologists and TU chapters are proceeding with this year's efforts. This newsletter outlines the great work planned for 2010 and reviews our 2009 brook trout endeavors.

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 at 154. There are quite a few folks that are interested in our native brookies so please take the time to submit articles.

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.

Our EBTJV Google Group membership continues to grow, but only in small increments. It's a site where we have a forum for discussions, a place to upload and post files/documents/newsletters and send reminders to the entire group. Hopefully this opens up broader lines of communication throughout the EBTJV. You can easily join by clicking the tab on the right side of <http://groups.google.com/group/ebtjv>. I urge you to visit it often... It's a very useful tool for the EBTJV and a place where you can download newsletters from all EBTJV regions.



Please Note that we've opened up discussions on Google Group, so if you're interested in commenting or have great ideas, feel free to share them with us. Enjoy the Newsletter and our Google Group — Tight Lines!

by Bill Oleszczuk

Eastern Brook Trout JOINT VENTURE



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Georgia

More Money, More Restoration

For brook trout in Georgia waters, more habitat improvements are on the way, thanks to \$25,000 in recent funding through the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. Georgia TU, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Forest Service are planning restoration work on 10 stream miles, including stretches on Big Net Creek, Upper Chattahoochee River, North and South Fork Moccasin Creek, Flat Branch, Tate Branch and Walnut Fork Creek. In past work, volunteers and partners conducted genetic sampling, removed non-native trout, tested water quality, mapped, “drought-proofed” streams by creating deeper pools, and constructed barriers to keep native brook trout populations sequestered from invasive fish. The new efforts will expand on previous work to restore brook trout populations in the southernmost part of their native range. Trout Magazine Winter 2010.

Trout Unlimited Embrace-A-Stream

Trout Unlimited awarded a \$9,000 Embrace-A-Stream grant to the Georgia Council of Trout Unlimited for a native brook trout recovery program in the Chattahoochee National Forest of north Georgia. The council is partnering with the U.S. Forest Service, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and other agencies to continue work begun in 2005 in Georgia as part of TU’s Back-the-Brookie initiative. The Embrace-A-Stream grant will enable the Georgia Council and project partners to restore about 18 miles of brook trout habitat by constructing 88 habitat improvement structures, such as pools and woody debris, in 13 existing brook trout streams. Trout Unlimited Press Release.

Off Road Vehicles (ORVs)

Georgia TU partnered with the Georgia Wildlife Federation to pass HB 207 banning operation of ORVs in streams during the recently concluded General Assembly. Operation ORVs has become a property rights issue with operators trespassing, jumping stream banks and destroying property; a potential safety issue with anglers in streams; and a water quality issue with siltation



caused by ORVs in streams and over stream banks resulting in erosion. In North Georgia near Clarkesville, the Moates Knob ORV Trail crosses Raper Creek. ORVs have departed from the established trail and travelled up Raper Creek to its headwaters and Chastain Branch damaging the stream bed. Chastain Branch is Georgia’s first Southern Appalachian Brook Trout restoration. Silt, especially during rainfall, reaches down Raper Creek into the Soque River.

Brook Trout Interns

The Georgia Council Back-the-Brookie intern program began the 2010 season in April by hiring eight college interns to work on brook trout streams in Georgia. Under GA DNR and USFS supervision these interns and TU volunteers will be sampling brook trout streams, restoring brook trout populations, building habitat improvement structures, and gathering data for evaluation of progress made. The work is being funded by EBTJV grant funds, TU Embrace-A-Stream grant funds, GA TU Council and Chapter funds, and donations from the Atlanta Fly Fishing Club, Atlanta Women’s Fly Fishers, and North Georgia Trout Online.



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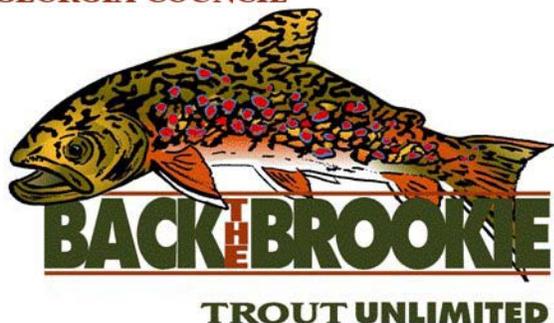


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Georgia *continued*

GA Trout Unlimited Back-the-Brookie on Facebook

GEORGIA COUNCIL



Back-the-Brookie's Facebook Page has continued to grow in popularity with 560+ fans. Our fundraising effort was chronicled on Facebook; workdays announced; legislative news posted; and brook trout news published. To view our Facebook page go to www.companies.to/ga-tu-btb/.

Photos and articles by Kevin McGrath



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South Carolina

Conservation

The South Carolina Partnership's efforts to restore brook trout throughout its original range were concentrated during this quarter on: 1) habitat improvement in a stream where the southern Appalachian strain of brook trout had been established in the early phases of the restoration project (Crane Creek), 2) learning habitat evaluation techniques for streams yet to be restored in the Jocassee Gorges area, and 3) collecting water quality data from streams that are under consideration for brook trout restoration.

South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and U.S. Forest Service personnel conducted habitat enhancement on the portion of Crane Creek below Hwy 107 in March. Trees were directionally felled into the stream to provide cover and increase pool habitat for the vibrant population of brookies that have been restored to the stream.

Personnel from South Carolina and Georgia DNR and the U.S. Forest Service attended a training session on the Basin Visual Estimation Technique (BVET). BVET is used to inventory stream habitats to determine if streams are suitable for brook trout restoration. The training was provided by Collin Krause of the USFS Coop Unit out of Virginia Tech's Center for Aquatic Technology Transfer.

SC DNR technicians placed recording thermographs in 20 streams in the Jocassee Gorges this month. An additional 20 thermographs will be deployed in the next 2 weeks. These thermographs will provide data to determine if water temperature in these streams is suitable to support brook trout. The Jocassee crew will be collecting water samples for analysis, providing additional data as to the suitability of streams for brook trout restoration.

SC DNR recently purchased a 4X4 Polaris Ranger to aid in traversing the ~50,000 acres of Jocassee backcountry where the brook trout assessment project is taking place.

Two members of South Carolina's Back the Brookie Committee met with representatives of the Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Department at Table Rock State Park in March to discuss future management of Carrick Creek, a stream that was stocked with wild mixed strain brookies a few years ago. It was agreed to have a meeting with DNR, PRT, and Trout Unlimited representatives a little later in the month to finalize future management plans for Carrick Creek. On March 31, reps of DNR, PRT, and TU hiked the trail along the creek and decided that the stream would be used for educational purposes to enlighten the public about the century-long decline of the brook trout and efforts to restore the species and that fishing would not be encouraged, at least until the brookie population had reached a sustainable level.

A mixed-strain wild brookie was stocked in Carrick Creek three years ago. The Partnership has detected three age classes of brook trout in the creek. Carrick Creek is in one of the most popular state parks and has the potential to be an especially important brook trout educational resource as it flows beside one of the most heavily used trails in the park. TU volunteers have recently developed a brochure describing the restoration efforts in the creek.

Education

A brochure was developed by the South Carolina Council of Trout Unlimited, with input from DNR, PRT, and the U.S. Forest Service, about the status of brook trout restoration efforts in Carrick Creek. The brochure will be distributed at the Table Rock State Park Visitor Center.

*Photos and article by David Van Lear
SC BTB coordinator*

