

News Release



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Eastern brook trout habitat restoration funded

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture are investing \$347,000 in eight habitat restoration projects this year. This funding, matched with an additional \$1,448,471 from partners, will enhance or restore water quality and habitat in 19 miles of stream and remove 14 fish passage barriers to provide access to more than 26 miles of stream.

Four of the projects selected for funding occur in Maine, and Massachusetts, West Virginia, Georgia and Tennessee each have one project. The work will address several of the partnership's management priorities including restoring fish passage by removing barriers such as culverts and dams, improving water quality, and protecting eastern brook trout populations by removing competing exotic fish. These projects will also serve to strengthen local partnerships that work to conserve brook trout habitats and populations for future generations.

Brook trout are native to the eastern U.S., and live only in cold, clean waters. Often considered indicators of watershed health, eastern brook trout populations have

declined greatly and are now primarily found in scattered headwaters streams. Restoring stream connectivity is essential to restoring populations of eastern brook trout.

From 2006 through 2011, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has provided more than \$2.3 million to the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture for brook trout projects. An additional \$10 million in matching funds has been provided by partners including multiple local chapters of Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Project SHARE, the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service, and many state agencies. All together, 61 projects in 14 states have been funded resulting in 67 miles of enhanced stream habitat, 41 miles of enhanced riparian habitat, 112 restored upland acres, and the reconnection of more than 79 miles of stream habitats.

The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture is a unique partnership of state and federal agencies, regional and local governments, businesses, conservation organizations, universities and private citizens. The joint venture is a geographically focused, locally driven, and scientifically based effort to protect, restore and enhance aquatic habitat throughout the range of the eastern brook trout. To find out more, visit them on the web at www.easternbrooktrout.org, or follow them on facebook at www.facebook.com/ebtjv or on twitter at www.twitter.com/ebtjv.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more

information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

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