



STAR Brook Trout Indicator Action Team Conference Call Minutes

Tuesday, September 25, 2012

2:00-3:30 PM

Chesapeake Bay Program Office, 305A

Annapolis, MD

Participants: Peter Tango (Co-Chair, USGS/STAR Coordinator), Katie Foreman (Co-Chair, UMCES/Non-Tidal WG Coordinator), Hannah Martin (CRC/Habitat Staffer), Jennifer Greiner (FWS/Habitat GIT Coordinator), Jeff Horan (FWS/Habitat GIT Chair), John Wolf (USGS/GIS Team Leader), Howard Weinberg (UMCES/GIS Specialist), Steve Faulkner (USGS), Mike Fritz (EPA/Healthy Watersheds Coordinator), Anna Stuart Burnett (CRC/Healthy Watersheds Staffer), Nita Sylvester (EPA/Indicators Coordinator), Tai-Ming Chang (FWS), Scott Stranko (MDNR), Anne Hariston-Strang (MDNR), Callie McMunigal (EBTJV), Sally Clagett (USFS/Forestry Coordinator)

Action Items:

- Callie will send data CD to Hannah Martin and Jeff Horan. Jeff will have GIS specialist, BJ (FWS), look at it. Hannah will wait to distribute until distribution list has been finalized and approved.
- Steve Faulkner will share Leetown Brook Trout meeting minutes once available.
- Co-chairs Peter and Katie will determine date for Phase I meeting in October.
- Peter and Callie to explore venues for November Phase II meeting.
 - Peter and Steve will work offline to share potential agenda and logistics in order to start planning November meeting if held in Leetown.
- Nominate individual to lead the November Phase II meeting planning and logistics.

Announcement: Staffer change from Amanda Pruzinsky (CRC/STAR) to Hannah Martin (CRC/Habitat GIT). Contact: martin.hannah@epa.gov

Status of the Data: A meeting was held on September 20, 2012 at the Leetown Science Center in West Virginia on developing a 5 year science plan for Brook Trout in the Chesapeake. Mark Hudy was present and handed a CD copy of his Brook Trout data over to Callie McMunigal. Copies of the data CD will be sent to the Chesapeake Bay Program as well as Jeff Horan at FWS for review and to use to translate the indicator to a catchment level.

- The Appalachian LCC is assisting the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture (EBTJV) by allocating staff support to review the data and make it accessible to the public via the LCC website. There is no projected date as to when the data will be available online and it will not be available to the public for downloading purposes from the website.
- Callie will review the data CD and send out copies. EBTJV requests that the only current public sharing of the data is to be on the LCC website. The data CD may not contain the correct type of metadata (GIS metadata vs. documentation metadata).

- Anne Hariston-Strang requests targeting data for potential riparian buffer locations.
- Mike Fritz requests to include questions about data to support protection of healthy brook trout populations in their respected watersheds.

Phased Approach for Future Meetings:

- **Phase I:** An internal meeting to review the data with the intention of understanding the data and how to use it has been suggested for the last week of October (Oct 25-30).
 - Explore the available data to frame up key concrete options that support monitoring needs, geographic targets, indicator needs to present to larger audience that includes researchers and state partners.
 - Get materials ready as well as options for people to respond to at the Phase II meeting to develop outcomes and objectives.
 - Explore website being developed by LCC.
- **Phase II:** A larger-scale meeting has been proposed for November 29, 2012. The purpose of this meeting is to present the data in order to elicit feedback from USGS researchers and state partners.
 - Phase II will be a “working meeting” with the hope of having a product at the end of the meeting as well as an opportunity to train people and bring awareness to the several data layers that have been put together (occupancy, fish blockage, temperature, forest buffer, presence/absence, etc) that provide support for targeting and management. This will be beneficial as well to the Bay Program to develop the indicator.
 - Present concrete options and key questions for discussion and action from state partners and USGS researchers.
 - Mark Hudy is available to attend meeting and possibly give a guided tour of the data.
 - Possible Locations: Leetown Science Center, NCTC

Translating the Indicator:

1. In order to start translating the indicator from a subwatershed level to a catchment level, it is necessary to revise the primary goal statement.
 - Original Goal Statement: Restore naturally reproducing brook trout populations in headwater streams by improving 58 sub-watersheds from ‘reduced’ classification (10-50% habitat loss) to healthy (less than 10% of habitat loss) by 2025.
 - Revised Goal Statement: Restore naturally reproducing brook trout populations with an 8% increase in total cumulative brook trout patch area by 2025 in headwater streams of the basin by appropriate management options and actions.
2. Spatial Metric
 - Increase 8% in cumulative brook trout patch area.

- 58 subwatersheds (taken from original goal statement) is representative of 5.5-10.7% (refer to 2012BrookTrout_goalrevision, Tango) reduced watersheds in the basin. Midpoint is approximately 8% (part of the revised goal statement).
 - Taking the 8% conversion and calculating into effort per unit time, essentially the effort is to increase about one patch of area per partner, per year over 10 years to get the 8% increase. Brings to a total of 213,600 acres of occupancy restored with the assumption of no loss of current intact populations (refer to 2012BrookTrout_goalrevision, Tango).
 - Indicator based on an occupancy acreage goal with tracking both losses and gains in these patches, hopefully with a significant net gain.
3. Restoration and Protection Components
- Assumptions: Some habitats are destined to be lost, not all current intact patches will naturally remain healthy and functional. Intact patches are not necessarily protected patches.
 - Must make an effort to preserve acres that are in good health to prevent net loss while attempting to increase and restore the brook trout patch areas.
 - Restore Outcome and Protection Outcome: potential coupled, yet separate outcomes
 - Determine an acreage goal for maintenance as well as a separate goal for gained acres through restoration. Target management actions could then be based on protection activity vs. restoration activity.
 - Focus on restoration for 8% and track the net gain. There will be acreage loss. The area to focus on for restoration and protection are those areas that are most resilient to climate change. Prioritize locations and determine primary resilient locations.
4. Targeting Component
- Fashion an indicator that targets Brook Trout patch restoration using a thoughtful, strategic approach.
 - Determine a way to prioritize locations, taking into account those locations that would exhibit resiliency to climate change and other factors.
5. Monitoring and the Verification Components
- Measure success through the Five Year Reassessment managed by EBTJV that assesses occupancy at catchment level.
 - Need to determine a complimentary metric that can be measured on an annual basis or as a two year milestone that can support the EBTJV Five Year Reassessment.
 - Complimentary metric could be based on management actions. Necessary for the indicator to include a monitoring component that can be populated on more regular basis than just the five year reassessment in order to know that the indicator is effective in reaching the 2025 goal.
 - What are the management actions for both protection and restoration that can be measured on an annual basis that will support the process to reach the 2025 goal?

Brook Trout Indicator Progress/Updates:

- Action Team formed
- Designated Co-Chairs- Peter Tango (USGS/STAR Coordinator), Katie Foreman (UMCES/Non-Tidal WG Coordinator)
- Monthly conference calls
- Obtained Data
- Planning phased-approach meetings with a proposed large meeting/webex in November that will include researchers and state partners
- December2012/January2013- target date for revised outcome based on November meeting