**Brook** **Trout Workgroup meeting**

Monday, September 28, 3:00pm-5:00pm

<https://www.chesapeakebay.net/what/event/brook_trout_workgroup_meeting>

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| Julianna Greenberg (CRC) | Steve Reeser (VA DWR) | Steve Faulkner (USGS) | Chris Guy (FWS) |
| Katie Omblaski (NFWF) | Alan Heft (MD DNR) | David Thorne (WV DNR) | Than Hitt (USGS) |
| Peter Tango (USGS) | Justin Shapiro (CRC) | Matt Sell (MDR) | Gina hunt (MD DNR) |
| Dan Getz (MD DNR) | Jason Detar (PA FBC) |  |  |

***Action Items:***

* **Alan Heft and Dan Getz will share patch analysis with the WG when it is approved for distribution (Expected late October)**
* **Workgroup will discuss what data will be most relevant for a conservation and restoration tracking tool over email.**
* **Steve Faulkner will follow up with EBTJV on potential tracking tool options**
* **Steve Faulkner and Julianna Greenburg will follow up with CBPO on staff support**
* **Contact Than Hitt directly with any comments or questions about opportunities for involvement with karst stream monitoring program**
* **Alan Heft will share coldwater education tool with Julianna who will distribute to the workgroup**

***Introductions and announcements – Steve Faulkner (USGS)***

* Introduction of Chris Guy as new Habitat GIT coordinator
* Currently planning for Fall Habitat GIT meeting, please send any topics of interest to Julianna Greenberg

***Developing a conservation and restoration tracking system – Steve Faulkner (USGS)***

* Trying to monitor trajectory towards the Brook Trout outcome
	+ 8% increase in occupied habitat by 2025, measured by km2 of occupied habitat
* How to better quantify the restoration and conservation activities
	+ Collect and coordinate the work that you’re already doing
* Restoration activities show up in the assessment reporting. What are our NGO partners doing?
* Similar effort being done for the Stream Health indicator (ChessieBIBI)
	+ Data is assimilated and collated through the Bay Program
	+ Set up data call and ask for specifically what information you want
		- Have the staffer maintain a spreadsheet for BTWG and model after ChessieBIBI data calls
* Peter Tango (USGS): Habitat connectivity data should be included in our tools tracking and recording
	+ Information about dam removal
	+ Steve Reeser (VA DWF): How should that data be recorded? Latitude and longitude?
* Additional data to include could be about conservation easements placed within a brook trout watershed
	+ Location data, latitude and longitude coordinates
* Who will be coordinating data collection per geographic area? Who in each state will be responsible for collecting that information?
* Where does new population discovery fit in to this tool?
	+ EBTJV has been documenting lots of streams that they have never looked at before.
	+ VA and PA have both documented new streams
	+ Alan Heft (MD DNR): Probably do need to leave it out of a conservation and restoration dataset because it is not a conservation or restoration activity.
* Alan Heft (MD DNR): We are developing a new conservation plan for MD. We have already started with an initial patch analysis
	+ Conservation plan could serve as a blueprint for how we record some data of interest
	+ **Alan and Dan will share patch analysis with the WG when it is approved for distribution (Expected late October)**
* Matt Sell (MD DNR) – The best point of contact for data collection depends on what kind of data that you want to include. Can blow up very quickly.
	+ Will be difficult to coordinate everyone who is doing this. Already noticed it in the development of the MD conservation plan
* Benefit of the patch assessment is that we can look at missing criteria as well and advocate for ways to improve it
* Steve Faulkner (USGS): We could take a tiered approach. First look at how to quantify actual activities and projects in terms of stream miles and patch areas, at the end of the day what the Bay Program is looking for is a way to track our trajectory to meeting that goal. Then start to look at other suggested metrics
	+ Start with the low hanging fruit – Katie Omblaski (NFWF) and Steve have had some initial conversations, TU conversations as well.
* Would be the responsibility of the staffer and the chair(s) to reach out and identify POC annually
* **Continue this conversation over email and attempt to come up with possible types of data and potential sources over the next few months**
* EBTJV is coming up with a new web based tool – reached out to them and there may be some opportunities to automate some of this as well for joint venture partners
* Katie Omblaski (NFWF) – NFWF uses Field Doc and collects data from all grantees. Just a matter of coordinating the request
* Jason Detar (TU)– Currently, TU has the data set up so that if individual states want to update their BT Assessment data more frequently they can do that, but at a range-wide level, the data will be updated every 5 years
* One of the biggest challenges we’ve had over time is what the non-state agencies are doing. A useful outcome that would benefit managers would be a way to coordinate the non-state agency groups (TU chapters, conservation districts, etc) Capacity to be reaching out is something that most states don’t have

***Brook Trout Genetics STAC workshop -Steve Faulkner***

* STAC proposal drafted by Steve Faulkner and Dave Kazyak was funded to support travel and logistics of holding a workshop
* The main objectives are to
	+ communicate the importance of genetic information for Brook Trout management
	+ review key conservation genetics concepts
	+ explore available genetics datasets and explain how they can be used to support management
* Created a steering committee (Dave Kazyak, Steve Reeser, Matt Sell are on the SC), had a couple of planning calls
* Consensus is to hold the workshop in April or May
	+ Uncertain about potential to hold in person vs online
* Coming up with a list of the most important topics to cover at this meeting
	+ Working on draft agenda and speakers list
	+ Send feedback to Steve Faulkner or Dave Kazyak

***Improving temperature predictions for karst streams in the Chesapeake Bay watershed – Than Hitt (USGS)***

* Proposal funded through USGS Chesapeake Bay science program
* Gauging streams by June of next year
* Dan Getz (MD DNR)– Is this only looking at Karst regions or comparing potential high elevation areas as well?
	+ Than Hitt (USGS)– there is some variation within the ridge and valley area, but the primary focus is on karst streams with some opportunity to control for elevation.
	+ If there is an opportunity for you to drop a few gauges and return in a month, let Than know! Where are the places that matter for you? We can make precise predictions for those places!
* Citizen science, NGO component?
* **Please contact Than Hitt directly with any comments or questions about opportunities for involvement.**

***Update 2020-2021 workplan – Julianna Greenberg (CRC)***

* Action 1.1.1: DELAYED
	+ USGS Chesapeake Bay Science branch was working on the whitepaper but it has been delayed due to COVID. Pending continuing resolution
* Action 1.1.2: COMPLETED
	+ Coldwater trout education tool has been completed by Maryland DNR.
	+ **Alan Heft will share this tool with Julianna who will distribute to the workgroup**
* Action 2.1.1: IN PROGRESS
* Action 2.2.1: COMPLETED
	+ Summary of invasive species on brook trout developed out of a paper published by Than Hitt. Publication to USGS website has been delayed but work is completed.
* Action 3.1.1: IN PROGRESS
	+ Regional Understanding of population genetic structure is an aspect of a paper by Dave Kayzak. Accepted but not yet published.
* Action 4.2: IN PROGRESS

***Better alignment of BTWG Action Plan with the member activities and needs– Steve Faulkner (USGS), Julianna Greenberg (CRC)***

* Money is less and less likely
	+ States are maxed out at what can physically be done without additional resources.
* Important to learn about work other states/groups are doing, can take some of that back to your own management
* Tracking mechanism that the group could develop and maintain that captures NGO work and restoration
	+ Something that we don’t have at CBPO or the EBTJV
		- Takes more resources than are available for many states
	+ Having that info would also be helpful for other management actions, help with endpoints that CBPO wants
* Sharing of information always a benefit
* Have less information on SRS
* For X money, what would be the increase in data to meet the BT requirement?
	+ Being challenged by Management Board to document how additional money would be a benefit
* State reps advocating for intern programs/something at the Management Board level
	+ Potential concern that within an agency that would not be seen as a positive thing
* Would you find it valuable to find support for an intern or something through another mechanism?
	+ Alan Heft (MD DNR): It would be helpful for Maryland
	+ Dan Getz (MD DNR): Would it be possible to partner with a nonprofit to start an intern program to work with the state?
* Steve Faulkner (USGS) – There are annual RFPs through the bay program, funds contractors to do small short-term 1 year projects.
	+ Could apply for someone to build the restoration and tracking tool, fund a small short-term field crew.
* Peter Tango (USGS): Each year EPA has had a mentorship/summer internship program. Could explore internship opportunities through that.
	+ Working with UMBC NSF program, funds underrepresented students for graduate studies, other institutions might have other similar programs
* Steve Reeser (VA DWR): We don’t necessarily need funding for field work. Could hire a student to develop a tracking tool/database to record restoration/conservation actions
	+ Peter Tango (USGS): Perhaps the tool is developed for one county or one state or one watershed to test drive the approach, get a structure, learn what works or not, then consider scaling up.

**Other new items**

* Alan Heft (MD DNR) is planning to retire at the end of this year.

**Adjourn**