Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

Brook Trout Workgroup Fall 2026 Meeting

November 12-13, 2026

In-person location: PA Fish and Boat Commission Office in Bellefonte, PA
(595 East Rolling Ridge Drive, Bellefonte, PA)

Lodging Information: For attendees requiring overnight accommodations for November 12–13, 2026, the following options both offer standard government rates and are very convenient to the office: Tru by Hilton Bellefonte and avid hotels Bellefonte.

Nov 12, Day 1 Meeting Link: Microsoft Teams Link
Meeting ID: 218 369 860 626 045 | **Passcode:** Fe6kn2uB
Dial in by phone: +1 202-991-0477 | **Phone Conference ID:** 134 616 26#

Nov 13, Day 2 Meeting Link: Microsoft Teams Link
Meeting ID: 278 441 147 751 75 | **Passcode:** Th2GG6RC
Dial in by phone: +1 202-991-0477 | **Phone Conference ID:** 353 514 775#
Meeting Webpage link

This meeting may be recorded for internal use only to assure the accuracy of meeting notes. To turn on closed captioning, click on the three ellipses (More actions), then click on "Turn on live captions" (preview). To request accommodations, please contact Kami Lentzsch at Lentzsch.Kami@epa.gov.

Please read the following information carefully, as our meeting policies have changed:

- All meeting attendees' cameras and microphones will be muted at the start of the meeting.
- To request access to the microphone and camera, all meeting participants will be required to use the raised hand feature on Teams. Once access has been granted by the meeting organizer, you will then be allowed to unmute your mic and turn on your camera. Unless instructed otherwise, once a participant has microphone or camera access, they will have this permission for the remainder of the meeting.
- Access to chat will be provided as well. Should it be necessary, the Q&A feature on Teams will be utilized to field participant questions.

Compromised Meeting Plan: If the meeting's privacy is compromised, the meeting staffer and coordinator will send an email to all Members, alternates, staffers, coordinators, and interested parties. Within the email, you will find a new meeting link, instructions on sharing this information with external partners, and any necessary adjustments to the meeting schedule. Please do NOT share this information publicly or post it to the Chesapeakebay.net webpage.

Purpose: The main purpose of this meeting is to review recent progress and strategic updates, align on new data and monitoring infrastructure, and coordinate technical strategies for brook trout restoration within the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Day 1 Agenda

I. Welcome, Roll Call & Introductions (9:00 – 9:10)

BTWG Chairs will welcome meeting participants and give an overview of the two-day agenda and objectives. A brief review of meeting protocols will be provided.

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chairs Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting) and Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: Non-decisional; discussion only.

1. Meeting participants to provide name and affiliation.

Materials: N/A

**Everyone place individual lunch order from Troy's: https://www.troysphilly.com/
*** Be sure to add "Brook Trout" as part of your name when placing order

II. Accomplishments since Spring 2026 or earlier (9:10 – 9:20)

Participants will hear updates and announcements since our previous Brook Trout meeting, which include:

- New workgroup outcomes underneath the Thriving Fisheries, Habitat, & Wildlife Goal
- **Brook Trout Outcome:**
  - Protect and enhance brook trout within the Chesapeake Bay watershed by increasing occupancy, abundance and resilience to changing environmental conditions.
    1. By 2040, increase brook trout occupancy by 1.5% (233 miles) in watersheds supporting healthy populations while achieving no net loss in other watersheds.
    2. By 2040, increase abundance at 10 long-term monitoring sites.
    3. By 2040, reduce identified threats by 15% to increase brook trout resilience in watersheds supporting healthy populations.
- Brook Trout Abundance Monitoring (BTAM) network
  - BTAM Network state summary and BTAM mapping portal
- 2025 STAC Report: "Blueprint for Building Partnerships and Recommendations for Scaling Brook Trout Restoration in Stronghold and Persistent Patches"
- Chesapeake Bay Program Webpage Brook Trout Workgroup Updates
- Brook Trout Extirpation Guidance Document
- First data call for Habitat Tracker from Emily Young in 2025
- Brook Trout Management Strategy DRAFT (9.08.26)

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chairs Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting), and Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: Non-decisional: discussion only.
Materials: Linked above.

III. New Chesapeake Bay Program Structure / Governance (9:20 – 9:30)

Participants will be updated on the new structure and governance of the Chesapeake Bay Program, and how that affects the Brook Trout Workgroup and membership.

Leads: Chris Guy (FWS), Workgroup and Goal Team Coordinator, Kevin Schabow (NOAA), Thriving Habitat, Fisheries, and Wildlife Goal Team Co-Chair
Requested Action: Non-decisional: discussion and presentation only.
Materials: CBP Structure/Governance Updates Presentation

IV. BTAMS Discussion: Long-term Monitoring Sites, Maps, and Data Collection (9:30 – 9:50)
Finalize Brook Trout Abundance Monitoring (BTAM) sites. Discuss fisheries and habitat assessment survey SOP.

Decision Requested: After review of the Brook Trout Abundance Monitoring Sites (BTAMS), BTWG members will be asked to support the final list of BTAMS locations in each state (NY, PA, MD, VA, WV).

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chairs Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting) and Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: ***Decisional***.
Materials: BTAM Network state summary
Interactive BTAMS Map

V. STAC Report: (9:50 – 10:20)
"Blueprint for Building Partnerships and Recommendations for Scaling Brook Trout Restoration in Stronghold and Persistent Patches"
Participants will discuss the recent STAC Report and recommendations for future action items.

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chairs Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting) and Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: Non-decisional: discussion and presentation only.
Materials: STAC Report

VI. Break (10:20 – 10:30)

VII. Resiliency Target Data Update (10:30 – 10:45)
Emily Young will share a summary of the resiliency target data provided by partners in 2025, and will introduce the process and timing for the 2026 data call.

Leads: Emily Young, Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin
Requested Action: Non-decisional: Members to supply project data following 2026 data call.
Materials: Resiliency Target Data 2025 Presentation

VIII. Trout Unlimited's Chesapeake Bay Focal Watersheds (10:45 – 11:15)
Watershed-scale conservation planning provides a strategic framework for achieving meaningful, lasting benefits for brook trout. This session will explore Trout Unlimited's focal watershed approach within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, highlighting how strategic planning guides restoration priorities, on-the-ground project implementation, and long-term monitoring. The discussion will share how this integrated approach builds watershed resiliency, advances brook trout conservation, and informs future restoration efforts.

Leads: Shawn Rummel, Trout Unlimited
Requested Action: Non-decisional: discussion and presentation only.
Materials:

IX. Large Wood Additions to Improve Brook Trout Habitat (11:15 – 12:15)

Technical presentation followed by panel discussion.

Large wood addition has become a priority practice to improve brook trout habitat throughout their range. In the Chesapeake Bay watershed. USFS, Trout Unlimited, and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy will share successes, lessons learned, implementation challenges, and monitoring results.

Leads: Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting), Dan Goetz (MD DNR), Chad Landress (USFS), Scott Koser (Trout Unlimited), and Eric Chapman (Western Pennsylvania Conservancy)
Requested Action: Non-decisional: discussion and presentation only.
Materials: Large Wood Additions: Presentation, Landress, Presentation, Koser

X. Lunch Break (12:15 – 12:45)

If you placed an order from Troy's during morning introductions, it will be picked up and brought to the PA Fish and Boat Commission Office for lunch.

XI. Field Trip: (1:00 – 4:30)

We will be visiting two culvert replacement and driving surface aggregate (DSA) projects on roads that are in close proximity to and cross over Benner Run in the Moshannon State Forest as well as learn about PA's Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Roads (DGLVR) program that helps to provide funding, training, and technical guidance to local road-owning entities (https://dirtandgravel.psu.edu/**).** This program has substantially benefited PA's wild Brook Trout resources and hopefully information shared during the field trip will be useful to other bay partners.

Leads: Jason Detar, PA Fish and Boat Commission
Requested Action: Non-decisional: discussion only.
Materials: N/A

XII. Optional Happy Hour at Axemann Brewery - 2042 Axemann Rd Suite 125, Bellefonte, PA

Day 2 Agenda

I. Discussion: Tools for planning and prioritizing brook trout projects (9:00 – 10:00)

Participants will review the following monitoring tools and discuss how they could be used or referenced for the Brook Trout outcome.

- Trout Unlimited's Conservation Portfolio (15 min) – Matt Mayfield, Trout Unlimited

  Trout Unlimited developed the Conservation Portfolio approach as a framework for assessing trout population resiliency to environmental change, with the first brook trout-focused portfolio completed in 2017. TU is currently updating the Brook Trout Conservation Portfolio across the species' entire native U.S. range, integrating local, state, federal, and academic datasets, with completion anticipated in March 2027.

- Chesapeake Bay Fish Passage Prioritization Tool (15 min) - Shannon Boyle, Fish Passage Workgroup

  The Chesapeake Fish Passage Prioritization Tool (TNC tool) evaluates and prioritizes dams and other in-stream barriers to aquatic organism passage to help inform aquatic connectivity restoration projects in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. In addition to the TNC tool, the National Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative's Barrier Inventory and Prioritization Tool (NACC) is an essential source for evaluating barrier removal scenarios. The NACC is national in scope, under the National Fish Habitat Partnership, and therefore, not solely focused on the Chesapeake Bay. However, the NACC tool integrates all data from the TNC tool while incorporating additional data that may be useful for project prioritization such as social, economic, and feasibility factors.

- Brook Trout Restoration Prioritization Tool (15 min) - Charlotte Weinstein, Chesapeake Conservancy

  The Chesapeake Conservancy's Conservation Innovation Center is developing a public prioritization tool designed to help natural resource managers find the most impactful stream reaches for different actions that benefit brook trout. Based on the Aquatic Gap Analysis Program's species distribution models, we will provide an overview of the sensitivity analysis and user experience that translates proposed efforts into improvements in brook trout occurrence probability.

- Discussion (15 min)

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chairs Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting) and Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: Non-decisional; discussion and presentation only.
Materials: Trout Unlimited's Conservation Portfolio Presentation

II. 6PPD-Q Research Summary (10:00 – 10:15)

Leads: Rebecca Gorney, USGS
Requested Action: Non-decisional; discussion only.
Materials: 6PPD-Q Research Summary Presentation, Gorney

III. Break (10:15 – 10:30)

IV. State and Partner Member Report Outs (10:30 – 11:30)

Participants are invited to share emerging events, opportunities, and updates. Upcoming RFPs include NFWF, CBSF, SWG, and WILD.

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chair Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: Non-decisional; discussion only.
Materials: N/A

V. Meeting Debrief and Adjourn (11:30 - 12:00)

Workgroup leadership and participants will debrief major decisions and action items from the meeting. Workgroup chairs will provide next steps for future Bay Program activities.

- Review of action items discussed during the meeting
- Brook Trout Workgroup Workplan Development (Winter)
- Spring Brook Trout Workgroup virtual meeting
    - Potential Agenda Items

Leads: Workgroup Co-Chairs Katie Ombalski (Woods and Waters Consulting) and Dan Goetz (MD DNR)
Requested Action: Non-decisional; discussion only.
Materials: N/A