



Eastern Brook Trout  
**JOINT VENTURE**  
A Fish Habitat Partnership

***“Conserving the health of your waters”***

*EBTJV Conservation Priorities (2014-2018)*

1. Eliminating anthropogenic fish passage barriers in catchments where habitat fragmentation is the primary threat to wild Brook Trout.
2. Implementing best practices in catchments where poor management of riparian and in-stream habitat is the top stressor for wild Brook Trout.
3. Establishing a long-term monitoring program that tracks wild Brook Trout population trends across its historic eastern range.
4. Raising awareness on the plight of wild Brook Trout among targeted audiences.

*Action Strategies for Addressing EBTJV Conservation Priorities*

Fish Barrier Removal Strategy: Habitat fragmentation can strongly influence the perseverance of wild Brook Trout populations by limiting dispersal, thereby reducing gene flow, and preventing access to critical habitats that support different phases of their life history and provide refugia. The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture will collaborate with key partners to establish a priority list of catchments where anthropogenic fish passage barriers are identified as the primary threat to conserving wild Brook Trout and we will facilitate the elimination of the impassable barriers within these priority catchments by providing support to regional and local groups willing to undertake the work.

Dashboard benchmarks: The number of fish passage barriers removed from priority-designated catchments, increases in patch size that result from fish barrier removal, and development of decision support tools.

Riparian and In-Stream Habitat Improvement Strategy: Poor management of riparian and in-stream habitat is a significant stressor to wild Brook Trout as it can result in warmer water temperatures, higher rates of sedimentation, and greater nutrient loading. The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture will collaborate with key partners to establish a priority list of catchments where poor management of riparian and in-stream habitat is identified as the primary threat to conserving wild Brook Trout and we will facilitate the implementation of best practices within these priority catchments by providing support to regional and local groups willing to undertake the work.

Dashboard benchmarks: Acreage of improved riparian habitat and stream miles of Brook Trout habitat enhanced or restored.

Wild Brook Trout Monitoring Strategy: The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture has identified the need to detect wild Brook Trout population trends across its eastern U.S. range because it provides insights to their proclivity for persistence and resilience. Recent research in the use of patch-based metrics in conjunction with a monitoring framework that combines fixed annual “sentinel” patches and a rotating panel design for other patches has the potential to be a cost effective tool for managers to detect trends in wild Brook Trout populations. The Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture will collaborate with the Chesapeake Bay Program to establish a pilot program that further tests this monitoring protocol in those states that are active in both the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Dashboard benchmarks: Number of states monitoring wild Brook Trout population trends; summary of annual and multi-year wild Brook Trout population trends.

Wild Brook Trout Awareness Campaign Strategy: Building awareness, ownership, and empowerment leads to stewardship behavior. To initiate this building process, the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture will lead an integrated education and outreach campaign that raises awareness about the plight of wild Brook Trout among anglers and outdoor/environmental reporters. We will develop a “state of the species” report and a public “dashboard” that measures the impacts of implementing each of the partnership’s priority conservation strategies.

Dashboard benchmarks: Number of email subscribers; open rate of emails; number of links clicked from email and social media posts; number of news stories about EBTJV-related conservation actions; and, website traffic.