

**EBTJV Steering Committee Meeting Summary**

**March 16, 2021**

Participants:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Present=X |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Beauchene, Mike | x | Eltz, Brian |  | Habera, Jim |  | Maloney, Lori | x | Rash, Jake | x |
| Baker, Sarah |  | Erikson, Glenn | x | Kautza, Adam |  | McMunigal, Callie |  | Sell, Matt | x |
| Curley, Keith |  | Faulkner, Steve | x | Kozlowski, Greg | x | Palmer, Eric |  | Rummel, Shawn |  |
| Geoff Day |  | Fink, Brad | x | Kulp, Matt | x | Pelletier, Corey |  | Shramko, Ross | x |
| Detar, Jason |  | Gallagher, Merry | x | Rankin, Dan |  | Perry, Stephen | x | Simard, Lee | x |
| Reeser, Steve | x | Gillespie, Nat | x | Magee, John | x | Timmins, Dianne | x | Thorne, David |  |
| *Other* |  |  |  | Bill Pastuszek | x | Paul Doscher | x |  |  |

This video conference meeting was called to order by Chair Nat Gillespie at ~1:00 p.m. on June 15th. The first order of business was for the Chair to establish a quorum (≥10 SC members), which was achieved as 16 Steering Committee (SC) members participated in the meeting.

The following notes summarize the business conducted during the meeting held on **June 15, 2021**:

* Nat Gillespie introduced himself to any new members and mentioned that EBJV had a nice virtual send-off for Steve Perry a few weeks prior.
* The Steering Committee voted to approve the summary of the[**March 16, 2021 Steering Committee Meeting**](https://easternbrooktrout.org/groups/steering-committee/conference-call-notes/2021-steering-committee-conference-call-summaries/march-16-2021-steering-committee-summary/view)
* Jason Coombs presented the progress to date on the web-based catchment updater**.**

The 2005 occupancy modeling was done at sub watershed level, HUC 12. The next iteration used NHD+ catchment level for finer resolution and was completed in 2015. We now need a new update with recent data. Jason has been working on an update that will allow states to make updates themselves – they can classify based on their data or best judgement – and update the map. He shared a live view of the updater, including how to register, manually add catchment layers, upload data, and fill out database fields. Once completed the website will include a tutorial to walk through features and a user manual. Members agreed this is a huge step forward. Q&A surrounded uploads, making fields editable/manually overriding values (and storing a history of edits), whether a history of changes is stored, troubleshooting, and outputting data from various iterations.

* The group watched the TU Land Conservancy Video. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/h0liqrgyfonnvs6/Cold%20Water%20Fund%20V5.mp4?dl=0>

Paul Doscher, TU Trustee and Bill Pastuszek, who leads the Land Conservancy Workgroup at Trout Unlimited, and Paul Doscher, TU Trustee, described the program.

The [Coldwater Land Conservancy](https://www.tu.org/conservation/conservation-areas/land-management-and-development/land-trust-partnerships/land-conservancy-fund/) Fund is a matching grant program administered by the National Office of TU along with the Land Conservancy Work Group. This program is designed to provide grants for land protection projects that result in conservation easements or land trust or agency ownership of important properties that protect native and wild salmonid habitat. Funds are available up to $5,000, must be matched 1:1, and are intended to help with direct costs (such as legal fees, or surveys) associated with the purchase or donation of land or conservation easements on priority coldwater fishery watersheds.

Funds are awarded to TU Chapters and Councils in partnership with land trusts and conservation agencies for coldwater fisheries protection. Guidelines are available [here](https://www.tu.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Land-Conservation-Fund-Application-Guidelines-2021-2.22.21.pdf).

Please visit or email Bill Pastuszek (billp@shepherdnet.com) or Paul Doscher (padoscher@comcast.net) for more information. Also, please think about possible land trusts that might have a project or the potential for one.

* Lori Maloney gave an update of the FY21 FWS-NFHAP funding

EBTJV was awarded a "level 3" performance level for 2021 by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. This is the highest of three funding tiers and allows EBTJV $85,000 for operations and $173,333 across three habitat projects:

Improving Connectivity for Reintroduced Native Brook Trout in Trail Fork of Big Creek, Cocke County, TN - TN Wildlife Resources Foundation.

Alarka Headwaters habitat connectivity and sediment reduction project – Trout Unlimited SE

Henderson Brook Culvert Removal and Stream Restoration, Brownville, ME - Appalachian Trail Conservancy

* Steve Perry gave an update on the NFHAP board/FY22 funding and allocation process.

Each FHP was evaluated by 2 teams of 5 people in a review subcommittee. FHPs were scored in one of two tiers with scores based on several factors including average of the last 5 yrs of FWS scores, project components, nonfederal match. EBTJV received the highest tier of funding. Because of uncertainty in the federal appropriations cycle, the review team suggested a lower level of funding across all FHPs than what is allowed by the ACE act, however, this amount may change. EBTJV will likely have three or four projects supported but we will not know a final decision for many months. (In May, EBTJV had proposed five on the ground projects, stable operating support, and an additional mini-grant project). NFHAP will vote in a week to move the recommended allocations forward to the DOI in July.

* Lori Maloney initiated a discussion on ‘information sharing workshops’

This is intended to allow members to share stories of what restoration activities have worked and which have not been as successful, and why. Importantly, native restoration and invasive extirpation projects have been done in some areas but not in others, what are the hindrances to that kind of work? This will lead into the 2022 analysis of how EBTJV progress towards range-wide goals and objectives. These workshops will be virtual and would happen between upcoming SC meetings.

* The SC voted to approve the 2021-2022 website contract with Ferguson Lynch for $5,500.

The website will be important to the increased focus on outreach, communication, and fundraising.

* Lori Maloney introduced a discussion on outreach and communication

Lori put out a call for new members.

Lori explained that committee members help in large part by outlining broad areas for communication, and the coordinator comes up with a plan ie what types of products to go out which months and messaging, and return to group to double check that the messaging works for everyone- all members, states, federal entities etc.

What are communications needs? The group discussed a possible brochure for landowners, on managing streamside property using best management practices for brook trout.

* Upcoming dates:

Lori reminded the group about the STAC genetics workshop September 28-29 and the EBTJV SC meeting September 21. The group discussed dates and locations for a Spring 2022 EBTJV annual meeting. There was interest in meeting in WV/MD area, and in March. Lori will follow up.

* Other business

Nat mentioned some recent news articles about brook trout.

Steering Committee members gave updates from their regions.

The EBTJV Steering Committee meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.