

A scenic photograph of a forest stream. The water flows over a small waterfall in the foreground, creating white foam. The banks are covered in lush green moss and fallen brown leaves. The background shows a dense forest of tall trees with green foliage.

EASTERN BROOK TROUT JOINT VENTURE

# Steering Committee Meeting

December 17, 2024  
1-3pm ET

## Roll call and establishment of Quorum

Quorum was reached, with 19 SC members present. Additionally, there were several alternates and several guests, with a total attendance of 27.

- Lori Maloney
- Jacob Rash
- James Miles
- Eric.M.SabeanJr
- Steve Perry
- Lee.Simard
- Jud Kratzer
- Gregory Kozlowski
- David Thorne
- Corey Pelletier
- Matt Kulp
- Matt Lawrence
- Jerrod Parker
- Matt Fairchild
- Nat Gillespie
- John Magee
- Stephanie Chance
- Josh Kocik
- Jason Detar
- Will Duncan
- Dwayne Shaw
- Karli Rogers
- Brad Fink
- Dan Goetz
- Jaime Masterson
- Jenn Fair

Jacob Rash asked Lori Maloney to run through introductions and an icebreaker. The question asked participants to mention something either personal or professional that was a newer item of interest or a technique or topic that they wanted to learn more about.

- Geology (2)
- History/land use legacy (2)
- Mapping old-growth forests
- Genetics (2)
- Birding
- Tailwater management
- Local non-profits
- E-fishing catch rate standardization
- Self-sorting/placing wood and SWA
- Extracting NHD Data in ArcPro
- Acoustic telemetry, lake sturgeon (2)
- Clay pot throwing
- Process-based restoration
- Deer behavior
- Cast netting
- Entomology
- Human anatomy/neurology
- Freshwater mussels, particularly outreach
- Foraging mushrooms/fungi identification

## Approval of minutes

The EBTJV steering committee approved the summary of the September 2024 meeting.

<https://easternbrooktrout.org/groups/steering-committee/conference-call-notes/2024-steering-committee-meeting-files/december-17-2024-sc-meeting-files>

## Introduction:

Dwayne Shaw,  
Downeast Salmon Federation



In September 2024, The Downeast Salmon Federation became the EBTJV's newest Steering Committee member organization. Dwayne Shaw, DSF Executive Director, is the DSF's rep to the EBTJV. He spoke about DSF and its current work, fish passage projects, advocacy, research, and community engagement.

Some points he highlighted:

- DSF is 42 years old, with 12 staff.
- DSF has =assets valued at over \$6M including riparian lands, endangered salmon hatcheries.
- Operates a small lab focused on water quality and biomonitoring.
- Experience with salmon, smelt and other co-evolved species is a natural nexus to brook trout.
- Applying lessons learned from salmon restoration worldwide and in Maine, "seeing across the silos" and leveraging the sea-run components for additional funding.
- Narraguagus River is an 'index' river for Atlantic Salmon.
- DSF is looking for ways to monitor fish movement.
- Removing tidal gates limiting tide to salt marsh and 4-5 streams.
- Hatchery has had issues last two years with a disease, Infectious Pancreatic Necrosis (IPN).
- Dwayne talked about how climate change is a significant stress; and causing accelerated evolution. He asked, is there a logical way to help move fish to a new normal?

contact: [dwayne@mainesalmonrivers.org](mailto:dwayne@mainesalmonrivers.org)

## Presentation:

Stephanie Chance

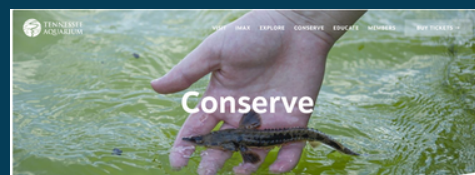
Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute

The Tennessee Aquarium became an EBTJV MOU partner in July 2024. We invited Stephanie Chance of the Tennessee Aquarium to introduce the Aquarium and give a presentation about Laurel Dace recovery efforts and other conservation work including Brook Trout.

Stephanie's background is freshwater mussels, and working with rare species for USFWS. She currently works with nongame species including Laurel Dace. She gave an overview of the Conservation Institute work:

- TA is a nonprofit aquarium near Chattanooga TN. Mission is about connecting people to water and wildlife and empowering them to make important decisions. The CI is a research branch of the aquarium, works with USFWS, TWRA, etc.
- Cumberland and TN River and Mobile Basin have over 400 species, 1.4% of land area but 48% of species diversity.
- Laurel Dace are on the ESL and now exist only in two rivers in northern part of the range. Threats/issues include disease, barriers, farm ponds, predators, siltation, yellow grub, and extreme drought.
- Extreme drought in July-September 2024 "only puddles remained". Working with Univ. of GA to raise alarms, work with TWRA, FWS, help the dace by rescuing fish. Rescued >200 dace over two streams and brought to facility. Some were also brought to a FWS hatchery.
- The CI raised \$90K on a Giving Tuesday campaign ("Race to Save the Laurel Dace") during a gap between grant timelines, for the recovery effort. Working with USGS on stream flow, sampling for dace, genetic diversity studies from the 2 streams, diversity of broodstock, forming an advisory group, and establishing an arc population at the Institute.
- Work with Auburn U. to document yellow grub life cycle.
- NRCS RCPP funding for farmers in 7 counties for best management practices focus on Laurel Dace, also species like mussels, crayfishes.
- Lots of outreach. Laurel Dace day on May 17!
- Southern Appalachian Brook Trout - Cherokee National Forest.
- Released over 300 lake sturgeon since 2000. Lots of partners. Raise sturgeon from Warm Springs hatchery and bring public in to help release them in the fall.

[sac2@tnaqua.org](mailto:sac2@tnaqua.org)



## Member updates

- Will Duncan (USFWS) acknowledged that transitions bring uncertainty, but wanted to reassure everyone that the FWS is positioned well to move from one administration to the next. The upcoming budgets are yet unknown. Ultimately, FWS remains committed to its mission, and to manage for resiliency in the long term. They may lean on partners a lot over the next few years.
- Jenn Fair (USGS) - working with a co-op grad student on coldwater patch and seep monitoring on small streams. They have seen some “pretty crazy refugia-seeking behavior”. Longitudinal mapping, also a mesh of loggers to map the contraction/expansion of refugia. They are also looking to get time series images data of cold water seeps and patches to map where fish are operating in extreme drought conditions. Jenn also described the use of a customizable microprocessor, Raspberry Pi.

## NFHP update

Steve Perry gave an update on the National Fish Habitat Partnership. Current NFHP Chair Robert Boyles (SCDNR) is retiring, and AFWA has selected PFBC Executive Director Dr. Timothy Schaeffer to succeed him.

Next NFHP meeting is hybrid, Jan 28-30 in Las Vegas, NV.

ACE ACT (provides structure and funding for Fish Habitat Partnerships)

The reauthorization bill, with minor revisions, passed House on 12/3/24. A consensus version needs to happen. The most noteworthy changes include NFHP board inclusion of the Bureau of Land Management, who had not been included in the past. Also, an addition of marine fisheries. The biggest change is that the nonfederal share of all projects, across the portfolio from each FHP is 1:1, a change from the requirement that EACH project bring 1:1 match.

## 2025 Meetings

- February 18-21: Southern Division AFS Asheville, NC
- April 21-24: NEAFWA - Bretton Woods, NH (FHP symposium)
- September 23-26: Wild Trout Symposium (EBTJV meeting on 1st day)  
Holiday Inn, West Yellowstone WY
- October: - SEAFWA - Mississippi



Northeast Association of  
Fish & Wildlife Agencies



## Funding Updates

Lori reviewed the funding process through NFHP and the FWS.

The FY26 RFP was released on November 26, and all applications are now requested via online form, including a new pre-application. The deadline for pre-applications and coordination with state agencies is January 14, and the final deadline is February 14. Information is on the EBTJV website, however if you are newer to the EBTJV please feel free to ask Lori for a meeting to review the process and what is asked of the state contacts. We might expect 4-5 projects to be funded.

The review team is comprised of Jake Rash, Matt Kulp, Peter Ten Eyck, Merry Gallagher, Mark Staley, Adam Kautza, Brad Fink, Jaime Masterson, Stephanie Chance, and Lori Maloney.

Steve Perry noted again that EBTJV's FY25 package was the highest scoring of all 20 FHPs, which reflects the work of the review team through the years.



## Funding update - ATBC awards

Lori gave an update on recent awards through the America the Beautiful Challenge Grant. Awards were announced on 12/2/24.

- **Building Capacity for Coldwater Habitat Conservation in the Delaware River Watershed** (NJ, NY, PA) Awarded to NJDEP, builds on a collaboration between states, FWS, NEAFWA, EBTJV. \$3.5M. Jake Rash noted that in addition to congratulating the states on the award, this was an important collaboration that EBTJV is assisting.
- **"Monitoring and Outreach for Supporting Adaptive Restoration of Aquatic Resources in the southeast National Forests."** Colorado State University - \$605K
  - The program will monitor aquatic restoration (both AOP and channel complexity/SWA). Not all will be brook trout, but there will be plenty of work on native fishes.
  - Matt Fairchild noted that it will be a 4 year effort to monitor restoration in BACI design, they will be reaching out to local partners to select locations. They are excited and will be working to prepare for the first field season.
- Collaboration across Cultures and Generations to Reconnect Relations in the Penobscot River Watershed (ME) (Penobscot Indian Nation) - \$5M

## Funding - other opportunities (awareness)

- NOAA [Transformational Habitat Restoration and Coastal Resilience Grants](#) - Deadline April 16, 2025
- NOAA's Office of Habitat Conservation and Rec Fish Initiative - Deadline 4/15/2025 - see EBTJV website under Funding
- DOT funding (<https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/protect/discretionary/>)

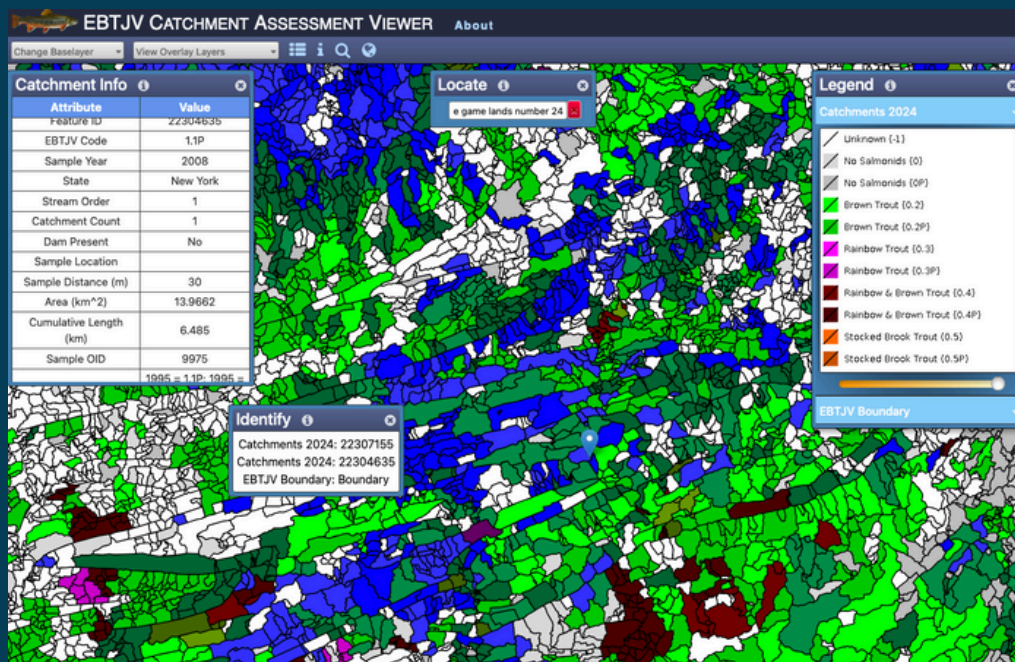
# Science and Data Committee/ Assessment

Lori gave an update from the Science and Data Committee. We are excited that Jenn Fair (USGS) is the new co-chair with Jason Detar (PFBC)

Jason Coombs has created a new public viewer at [assessment.ebtjv.de](https://assessment.ebtjv.de). This displays data from both 2024 and 2016 assessments.

Downloads of geodatabase available will be available via web form (to come) in order to track who is requesting the dataset.

Please provide feedback on the catchment information available to the public (email Lori)



Meeting adjourned 3pm ET