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Scott Craig
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Maine Fishery Resources Office
306 Hatchery Rd.
East Orland, Maine 04431

Mr. Craig:

I am writing to strongly support the grant application from the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians to the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture for funding the project titled ***Meduxnekeag Watershed, ME instream habitat restoration: A NFHAP project for the EBTJV.***

This is a well thought out project with ample local and wider scale support. The Meduxnekeag supports a popular brook trout fishery and is one of those rare places in Maine with well buffered water quality. By improving overall physical habitat quality and local conditions, we intend to increase the quantity and improve the spacing of deeper water holding areas for brook trout, especially larger sized individuals in this system. As you are aware, Maine's streams and rivers tend to lack in adequate quantity and quality of deeper water pools and holding areas that trout seek during stressful thermal periods. By adding in-stream structure and allowing streams to maintain pool forming processes, we hope to increase the abundance of these critical pools that are so vital for improving brook trout survival, especially of larger sized, older individual fish.

MDIFW is prepared to assist this project with monitoring the fishery and habitat conditions for a minimum of 2 years after project implementation. We heartily support this project and it certainly fits well with Maine's EBTJV objectives and priorities for maintaining and improving 'the best of the best' brook trout habitat.

Best regards,

Merry Gallagher
Research Fishery Biologist
Maine Coordinator for the EBTJV