

Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Completed Project Report Form

Project Title: Restoration of Native Charr in Big Wadleigh Pond through Maine’s EBTJV Conservation Strategy

Sponsor: Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

- **Partners involved:**

- Clayton Lakes Woodlands Holdings, LLC
- The Natural Resource Education Center at Moosehead
- The Nature Conservancy
- Mountain Springs Trout Farm

- **Project costs:**

1. Total cost: \$172,056
2. Non federal amount: \$64,039
3. Federal amount: \$62,007

- **Funding Sources:**

Partner Name	Contribution In-Kind	Contribution Cash	Federal or Non-Federal
MDIFW	\$21,425	\$10,938	Both
Clayton Lakes Woodlands Holdings, LLC		\$10,000	Non-Federal
Sportfish Restoration Fund		\$40,938	Federal
USFWS	\$5,000		Federal
The Natural Resource Education Center at Moosehead		\$745	Non-Federal
The Nature Conservancy		\$24,000	Non-Federal
Mountain Springs Trout Farm	\$1,000		Non-Federal

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- **Action strategy implemented in the project (according to EBTJV range wide, regional, or state level habitat strategies).**

From the EBTJV Conservation Strategy (Northern Region):

1. Maintain the status, or no net loss, of 493 subwatersheds classified as ‘Healthy’ by 2012.
2. Strengthen brook trout populations in 20 subwatersheds classified as ‘Healthy’ by 2012.

Maintain the status, or no net loss, of healthy pond and lake watersheds, and assess the status of 50 unknown waters by 2012.

From Maine’s Plan for the EBTJV:

- 1.3 Maximize the contribution of wild brook trout stocks to the fishery.

Strategy 5: Prevent, eradicate or control the detrimental effects caused by the intrusion of non-native aquatic species into brook trout habitats.

This project will eliminate non-native smelt that were illegally introduced and known to have adverse impacts on self-sustaining brook trout and charr populations.

3.2 Foster public/private collaborative stewardship of brook trout resources

Strategy 1: Inform the public and encourage interest and participation in addressing environmental issues.

Strategy 2: Continue public education efforts highlighting the permanent ecological repercussions associated with illegal fish stockings.

This project will bring together State and Federal agencies, corporate landowners, land managers, and the angling public. We will continue our public education outreach through all of these connections.

- **Priority score of the sub-watershed where the project took place.** 230234 – Wadleigh Pond. Priority Score = 1.66
- **Describe any additional species of greatest concern or the state wildlife action plan listed habitat conservation goal (s) supported by the project.**
- **Description: project objective(s):**
Project restored a 157 acre native brook trout and arctic charr pond in northwestern Maine.
- **Methods used:**
Adult charr and brook trout were captured and transported to Mountain Springs Trout Farm in 2011 and 2012. These fish were used as brood stock for the restoration of the native strains. Chemical reclamation was completed in the fall of 2012 and the pond was deemed safe for stocking in the spring of 2013. Native fish were reintroduced into Big Wadleigh Pond in fall 2013. The remaining fish will be stocked in 2014.
- **Project outcomes: Describe outcomes and whether or not the objectives were met. If not why? What lessons were learned?**
The invasive rainbow smelt were extirpated during the reclamation process and native fish were re-introduced into the pond. In 2013, we observed native brook trout fry that had survived as eggs in the tributaries during the reclamation. It will take several years before we can document whether the charr have successfully reproduced, but we do not anticipate any issues.
- **What is the Brook trout population response to the project outcome?**

We anticipate a stable fishable population of native brook trout in two years. In 2013 we were able to stock the remaining original adults, yearlings, and we observed fry in the tributaries. Therefore, all cohorts are present.

- **If applicable, what is the number of stream miles and or acres of brook trout habitat?:**

A Protected:

B. Restored/Enhanced: 157 acre pond

- **If applicable what is the number of stream miles and or lake/pond acres of brook trout habitat gained access to as a result of removing a fish barrier. Include the # of fish barriers removed? N/A**
- **If applicable, what is the number of stream miles and or lake or pond acres of brook trout habitat with sediment, phosphorous, or nitrogen inputs that were rehabilitated to within 25% of natural or other desired levels such as numeric state water quality criteria? N/A**

*****Please include before and after photos of the project.*****



Figure 1: Illegally introduced smelt infest Big Wadleigh Pond in 2010.



Figure 2: IFW Biologist Jeff Bagley releases a char implanted with a radio transmitter.



Figure 3: Fisheries biologist Steve Seebach recaptures tagged native arctic charr ready for transport and spawning.



Figure 4: Dispersing powdered rotenone in November 2012.



Figure 5: Fisheries biologist Stephen Seebach and Mountain Springs Trout Farm owner Gary Picard release young charr and brook trout back into Big Wadleigh Pd in November 2013.



Figure 6: One of the original adult charr restocked back into Big Wadleigh Pd in November 2013.