

For immediate Release
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Expansive Brook Trout Project Starting this Spring

The Neponset River Watershed Association (NepRWA) is partnering with Greater Boston Trout Unlimited to track the health of the Neponset River's cold-water streams and the trout that call them home.

The project partners are assessing stream barriers, recording water temperatures, and collecting Environmental DNA (eDNA) samples in the Neponset's nine trout streams. eDNA is a cutting-edge technology that uses water samples to identify the wildlife species that live in a stream or pond and allows us to collect data. We are using it to locate the section of each stream that is currently being used by the trout.

This project is the first step in developing plans to protect and restore our rare "urban" brook trout populations.

"We've lost a lot of coldwater streams in Eastern Massachusetts to habitat loss, climate change, and underregulated groundwater pumping. We're teaming up with Greater Boston Trout Unlimited to figure out what's happening in our coldwater streams, identify the threats and pressures that exist, and develop a plan of action to address those issues" said Chris Hirsch, NepRWA Environmental Scientist.

To successfully implement this program, multiple volunteers are needed. Over 30 temperature loggers will be deployed to collect water temperature data every 15 minutes. "Adopt a logger" volunteers are needed to visit 3-5 water temperature loggers once a month and download data through their smart phone. "Environmental DNA samplers" are also needed to help collect water samples as part of a sampling team. There will be four eDNA sampling missions: May 9, May 16, August 22, and August 29.

"This project is the first step to save our trout streams and make sure they remain a part of our natural heritage in the Greater Boston Area. We can't do it without your help," Hirsch continued.

A special thanks to the many generous private donors, Trout Unlimited, Orvis, and The Foundation for MetroWest, for providing the funding that made this project possible.

To become a volunteer, please contact Andres Ripley at ripley@neponset.org

For more information about the eDNA program, please contact NepRWA Environmental Scientist, Chris Hirsch at hirsch@neponset.org

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