

BLACK BROOK project is an ambitious one

EMBRACE - A - STREAM is Trout Unlimited's flagship grant program for hands-on fishery resource, research and education work by chapters and councils.

In 2001, the program provided \$200,000 for 41 projects that included habitat conservation activities such as watershed assessment and planning, native fish recovery, riparian reforestation and stream channel restoration.

Since its beginning in 1975, 413 different chapters have conducted 667 individual projects for a total of \$2,531,467 in grants. Those grant awards have been matched by more than \$3.75 million in local funding and in-kind contributions.

Trout Unlimited

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The Merrimack River Valley Chapter has submitted a grant request for Black Brook, which runs through Manchester, Goffstown and Dunbarton. The proposal seeks funding to support a multi-year initiative to restore fish passage and Atlantic salmon habitat in Black Brook.

Black Brook provides habitat for various resident and migratory fish, including two miles of Atlantic salmon habitat. Black Brook has been stocked with Atlantic salmon fry for nine years and is an index site for the New

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Hampshire Fish and Game Department's Atlantic salmon restoration program.

Past gravel-mining activities, concrete processing operations, and the presence of Maxwell Pond Dam have degraded or destroyed fish habitat and decreased water quality in Black Brook.

Phase one will initiate the restoration of Black Brook. Two culvert crossings pose a barrier to fish passage and migration, the vertical drop is too high for fish to navigate. Likewise, Maxwell Pond Dam is impassable by fish.

This prevents their movement upstream and full utilization of available habitat in Black Brook and its tributaries. There are 7.7 miles of perennial stream habitat upstream of the Maxwell Pond Dam that will be connected by this project.

Phase one will be completed in 2002. During this phase, several tasks will be completed. Existing culverts will be removed and replaced with a Con-Span bridge structure. A topographic survey will be conducted and data will be gathered about existing conditions. Designs of channel restorations and re-alignments will be prepared.

Replacement of the culverts

riers for fish, permit downstream transport of debris, preserve access to the far side of the brook, and minimize maintenance. This innovative approach to addressing a habitat connectivity problem is the first of its kind in New Hampshire and can serve as a model for similar projects throughout the country.

A topographic survey will be developed for the Black Brook corridor. Aerial topographic surveys will be supplemented with ground surveys. This data will be used to generate a map showing the effect of the removal of the Maxwell Pond Dam, and to prepare construction designs for stream channel realignment.

The project is being carried out by a strong coalition of partners including the New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services, the New Hampshire River Restoration Task Force, Trout Unlimited, and the property owners. Trout Unlimited staff is providing project management and channel survey work and members will participate in the restoration activities including riparian planting, stream surveys, electrofishing and water quality data collection.