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ROLAND D. MARTIN  
COMMISSIONER

September 14, 2010

Nancy Sferra  
The Nature Conservancy  
14 Main Street, Suite 401  
Brunswick, ME. 04011

Dear Nancy,

I am writing this letter in support of the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Proposal submitted by The Nature Conservancy entitled: "Enhancing Connectivity in the Ash Bog Stream-Black Rock Brook sub-basin of the West Branch of the Narraguagus River.

The crossing locations that are targeted for replacement through this project have been inventoried and assessed by our Bangor Office through the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture Program. The culverts were found to be problematic and fish inventories found cyprinids and centrarcids. We also resurveyed Myrick's Pond and found suckers, sunfish, hornpout and minnows as well as very poor water quality for over summering salmonids. Black Rock Brook still has good numbers of wild eastern brook trout despite being influenced by the warm surface water inflow from Myrick's Pond. This is due to good spring water inflow and the brook's canopy providing cooling shade to the stream.

I feel that Ash Bog Stream and its tributaries still may hold brook trout and feel that this system's trout population can be bolstered by reopening connectivity between Black Rock Brook and its upper watershed. Currently some brook trout migrate into Myrick's Pond from Black Rock Brook in the fall and spring when the water flow is higher and some over-winter in the pond. The cool headwater tributaries that will become accessible through this project are where these fish should be able to find summer refugia habitat. Having fish passage opened back up will allow brook trout to re-colonize and strengthen the resident populations that are already present. In addition, this project is located within a large area of permanently protected conservation land that borders streams supporting Atlantic salmon spawning and rearing habitat.

I wish you all the best with this important project and please let us know if I and my staff can help in any way.

Sincerely,

Greg Burr  
Regional Fisheries Biologist

