

## Wallacks Branch Receives Long List of Conservation Enhancements in 2010

12/30/2010 Author: Carolyn Itle-Sherry

The summer of 2010 saw the fruition of efforts from WPC's Watershed Conservation Program on Wallacks Branch of Bob's Creek in Bedford County. The 2,100' section of stream received habitat enhancement and bank stabilization structures, in addition to six aged structures that were modified or removed.

The Wallacks Branch of Bob's Creek is a picturesque section of stream that meanders through Blue Knob State Park in Bedford County. The streambanks are lined with eastern hemlocks and hardwoods and the cold mountain water rolls over sandstone cobbles. Wallacks Branch is noted as a high quality coldwater fishery (HQ-CWF) by the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. In addition, Bob's Creek, which Wallacks contributes to, was recently recognized by the National Fish Habitat Action Plan as one of 10 "Waters to Watch."

Seventeen structures were implemented on Wallacks Branch from the mouth at Bob's Creek to the 2,100' section upstream. These structures included single log vanes, multi log vanes, J-hook log vanes, root wads, randomly placed boulders, and a 60' long log-faced sawtooth bankful bench. Structures were implemented to enhance habitat for macroinvertebrates and fish and will aid in the reduction of erosion and sedimentation.



***Before*** ***After***  
***Karl Lutz of the PFBC Habitat Division and WPC's Carolyn Itle-Sherry during the design of the 60' log-faced sawtooth bankful bench site***

Additionally, six previously constructed structures were removed or modified to aid in fish passage and remove debris jams along the length of the stream. Banks along these structures were armored with shingled rock in order to prevent erosion and sediment shift downstream.



***Looking downstream at a single-log vane j-hook structure and root wad structure on the right bank***

Chemical sampling of the water and biological monitoring of fish occurred prior to and after the implementation of the structures. Chemical monitoring of the water found little change in the excellent values initially monitored. Biological data revealed a 340% increase in the quantity of trout analyzed during the catch and release monitoring survey.

This series of conservation enhancements and protection work were made possible through a grant from the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. Design work was completed through a partnership with the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Habitat

Management Division. Many hours of research, data collection and processing, and habitat implementation were completed through WPC's Watershed Conservation Program, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission's Habitat Management Division, Blue Knob State Park, Bob's Creek Stream Guardians, and other volunteers.

***Young-of-the-year native brook trout***

***Adult non-stocked brown trout***



***Biological monitoring of the fish species before and after the implementation of structure***

The successful implementations of these conservation efforts that protect as well as enhance streams, like Wallacks Branch, epitomize the goals of the Watershed Conservation Program. We look forward to further opportunities to continue this work with our excellent partners