

TROUT UNLIMITED
SOUTHEASTERN MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 6 , 2021

ZONING CHANGE THREATENS TO DESTROY SALTER BROOK TROUT POPULATION

Wareham, MA ---- The Southeastern Massachusetts Chapter of Trout Unlimited announced its opposition today to a proposed zoning change in Wareham that will harm an environmentally sensitive drinking-water aquifer and severely threaten or possibly eliminate a population of Sea Run, or “Salter” Brook Trout in nearby Red Brook, whose headwaters flow out of the same aquifer.

The Wareham Planning Board voted 3-1 on February 22, 2021 to recommend the creation of a 963-acre “Hospitality, Recreation and Entertainment District” on undeveloped parcels of pine barren habitat which protect Red Brook’s headwaters. The Planning Board recommendation now goes to a special Town Meeting for a vote by Wareham residents on April 10, 2021.

The Notos Group, a Quincy development company whose executives are responsible for Marina Bay and the 27-hole Granite Links golf course and facilities center, both in Quincy, drafted the zoning by-law for the Planning Board and lobbied for the change. Notos is looking to develop 275 acres within the proposed district, which itself sits on top of an existing town Ground Water Protection Overlay District.

Notos presented the proposal and the Planning Board voted on the creation of the Hospitality, Recreation and Entertainment District with no specific development plans put forward by Notos. In earlier proposals Notos presented plans for a casino, racetrack, hotels and multi-family housing units.

“Red Brook is one of only a handful of tidal streams in Massachusetts that support Salter Brookies” said Matt Hoagland, President of the Southeast Chapter of Trout Unlimited. “It’s a gem, and only here because of collaborative efforts by Wareham residents, local non-profits and government agencies.”

“It is an inspiring story of diverse partners and communities coming together to restore a vibrant resource that was born when the glaciers that shaped Wareham’s landscape began retreating,” Mr. Hoagland continued..

"Salter Brook Trout, along with other migratory fish such as eels and river herring that move back and forth between fresh and salt water, depend on clean flowing water all year around. The system simply cannot withstand further water removals than currently exist nor can it handle additional loads of pollution. Both can be expected once the first domino (this zoning change) falls."

The Hospitality District abuts land to its east Red Brook's headwaters are located. It also sits on top of the town's primary drinking water aquifer. Red Brook enters Buzzards Bay at the Theodore Lyman Reserve, owned by The Trustees of Reservations.

The Southeast MA Chapter of Trout Unlimited, along with the Massachusetts/Rhode Island Council and the National Trout Unlimited, Inc. have spent 30 years working to restore Red Brook, improve and enhance its habitat working with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife and The Trustees of Reservations. Close to \$4 million and tens of thousands of volunteer hours have been spent to date on the entire restoration project.

The restoration of Red Brook has garnered national recognition and awards for its successful restoration of Red Brook's Sea Run Brook Trout. While there are still viable Salter Brook Trout populations in Maine, development and deteriorated water quality have extirpated Salter Brook Trout populations over much of their former U.S. range between Long Island and Southeast Massachusetts.

Trout Unlimited in Massachusetts has 4000 volunteer members. Nationwide, TU has 300,000 members and supporters.

For More Information Contact Warren Winders at

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