Subject: Project Report No. 1- TU-Dartmouth Trout Research Project

**Greetings to all who are supporting and are interested in the TU-Dartmouth Trout Project.  After several delays due to the bad spring weather and water levels, and some technical problems with tracking antennae and equipment, we began field operations on 7/23/17 and have so far captured about 600 small trout, mostly juveniles, and have tagged 307 fish through 7/31/17. Sponsors have been assigned to these fish and we are now beginning to track them.**

**But let me back up a bit.  We raised $10.150 from the NH Council and 4 TU Chapters in NH, from 5 TU chapters in Maine, from 2 sportsmens’ groups (Rangeley Guides and Sportsmens’ Association and NE Federation of Fly Fishers International, and from several individuals.  NH Fish and Game, in additional to providing the services of biologists Dianne Timmins and Andy Schafermeyer, is providing equipment and a $13,000 Heritage Grant, so the total cash raised to date is just over $23,000. Dartmouth College has provided the services of 2 graduate students who are working on their PhD’s, and a summer intern, plus lodging, accommodations, equipment, and other services. We also have two students from other institutions (Southern Maine Community College and Iowa State University) who will be working on the project.  Quite an impressive showing of interstate support for this effort.**

**Using the money and in-kind services listed above as “matching” funds, we have applied for an Embrace A Stream Grant to the Trout Unlimited national organization seeking just under $10,000 for this two year project. Grants will not be awarded until October 2017.  There is significant competition for a limited amount of available money, but we feel we have an excellent proposal.  Thanks much to Ammonoosuc Chapter which stepped in and sponsored the application after Sebago Chapter was unable to act as sponsor due to another application.**

**After many weeks of delay due to bad weather, high water, and technical problems with equipment, some of which had to be built from scratch, we were able to begin tagging operations on July 23, 2017.  As of 7/31/17, over 300 young trout have been captured and tagged near the mouth of Loomis Brook where it meets the Dead Diamond River.  Sponsors have been assigned, and the attached Excel spreadsheet will give information about the fish that have been tagged and the sponsors to whom they have been assigned.  (More fish and additional sponsors will be assigned as the season progresses.)  I am also attaching a photo of the tagging site at Latitude N 44-55-18 (degrees-minutes-seconds), Longitude W 71-05-36.  You can also find this location on Google Earth. To determine where your fish was caught and tagged, just go upstream the number of meters listed in column E on the spreadsheet.  YOUR FISH’S UNIQUE IDENTIFICATION NUMBER is its Pit Tag Number.  Tracking of tagged fish will get under way shortly.  If this fish is located again, its movement will be identified by reference to its Pit Tag Number.  Please keep in mind that this project is designed to tag and track very small fish. Doing so is often very difficult, so it may be some time, if at all, before there is further tracking information available for the fish assigned to each sponsor. Indeed, with some of the very small fish we are trying to use, we are breaking new ground in terms of getting the right equipment and developing proper techniques.  Also, because of the large number of fish that will be tagged ( at least 500-600) and tracked, tracking information will be accumulated and sent out periodically only when sufficient information from several fish is available.  In short, it may be a while before you get any further tracking information, and it is possible that some fish will not be located again.  Tracking will continue late into November, however, and will then resume again next spring.**

**I also want to send a word to the several people who volunteered to help with the project.  Due to our late start, we were not able to get folks involved this spring.  However, now that we are under way, we will be calling volunteers. Thanks again for volunteering and for your patience, and we do hope to get you involved.  Please call if you have any questions.**

**Finally , if anyone would like more detailed information about the project and its goals, let me know and I will send you a copy of our EAs application which spells it out in great detail.  My number is** **207-831-9232****, rjpiampiano@** [**gmail.com**](http://gmail.com/) **or** **rpiampiano@comcast.net****.**