



Massachusetts/Rhode Island Council Trout Unlimited

October 24, 2008

Secretary Ian Bowles
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Secretary Bowles:

The Massachusetts-Rhode Island Council of Trout Unlimited is please to write to support the nomination of the Upper Housatonic River as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern.

The Upper Housatonic River ACEC nomination encompasses 12, 280 acres of rich biodiversity; including to 21.5 river miles of Cold Water Fisheries supporting reproducing populations of eastern brook trout. It is Trout Unlimited's mission *"To conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds"*. This ACEC designation will help protect the watershed supporting coldwater habitat of the eastern brook trout as well as the unique habitat for seven endangered species listed under the Massachusetts Endangered Species Act.

The eastern brook trout is a true native to our Massachusetts cold waters, "the brookie" inhabits the cold clean waters of Mill, Ashley, Sackett, Washington Mountain, Yokum and Roaring brooks within the delimited ACEC area; tributaries to the Housatonic River. Wild brook trout populations are considered strong biological indicators of a healthy ecosystem. A decline in *"the brookie"* population can indicate the ecosystem and watershed of the Upper Housatonic River is stressed.

The Massachusetts - Rhode Island Council of Trout Unlimited is confident you will give your fullest consideration to designate the Upper Housatonic River an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Paul W Knauth
Conservation Chairman

Cc:
Massachusetts - Rhode Island Council of Trout Unlimited
Green Berkshires, Inc.