

### “Lunker” Project on North Branch of Wiscoy Creek Progresses

#### NEW YORK

This year, the Western New York Chapter began what is their most ambitious project ever. Working in cooperation with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Region 9 Fisheries Unit, the DEC Saratoga Nursery, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District, Wyoming County Highway Department, Wyoming County Fairground, the Elm Research Institute of New Hampshire and New York Department of Transportation, TU volunteers assisted in the construction and placement of 57 “lunker” structures at several sites on the North Branch of Wiscoy Creek. Also taking part in the project were other branches of the DEC from Region 9, as well as Dave Derrick of the US Army Corps of Engineers, based in Vicksburg, Miss.

The 8-foot wooden “lunkers” created 456 feet of deeper water and overhead cover for wild trout in the Wiscoy system.

In addition, two different types of log structures were installed to narrow the stream where needed and to provide additional habitat in the way of overhead cover. Funding for the program came



primarily from a \$38,000 grant from the Great Lakes Habitat Restoration Initiative. The local TU chapter also spent nearly \$2,000 on materials for the project.

The first major on-site work involving WNYTU took place on May 7, 2011 when 20 volunteers joined Scott Cornett of the DEC and planted approximately 1100

trees. Then, before lunker structure placement was undertaken, several days were spent clearing alders from the construction sites. The next phase took place on June 18 and 25 when 24 TU volunteers joined

Scott and Marie Schrecengost of the USFWS and built 48 of the “lunkers”, nine having been previously constructed for practice and to get a sense of what is entailed in building them. Construction required 126 hours of volunteer time. On July 1, the “lunkers” were transported to the stream site. Actual placement in the North Branch took place in late July. Over the course of the two weeks, 19 different people put in a total of just under 300 hours of labor installing them.

On Sept. 6, volunteers added logs to the stream, for diversion and habitat purposes.

In the spring of 2012 there will be another major planting of trees. By the time the project is completed, the volunteers will have invested well over 700 hours of labor in the project.

