



SMITH RIVER TU NEWSLETTER

March 2023

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 8th – Kid’s Fishing Field Day in Stuart, VA. Meet at the Mayo River Rail Trail Picnic Area. We will assist as kids fish the stocked Mayo River.

Trout in the Classroom fish releases – multiple dates. If interested please contact Jeff Deering jdeer76@yahoo.com

April 15th – River/Road clean up. Assemble at 8:00 am at the Bassett Canoe Access. 271 Trent Hill Dr. Lunch at Papa’s Pizza provided after with fishing after lunch. Contact Matt Tuggle for info matt.tuggle@henry.k12.va.us

April 29th – Introduction to Fly Fishing – SRTU will be hosting a class at King’s Grant. To register contact Jeff Deering jdeer76@yahoo.com

May 5th-7th Grayson Highlands Camping/Fishing Trip – Great fishing trip with multiple locations nearby. Camp out at Beartree Campground.

In this issue...

Pg 2

President’s Corner
Recent Chapter Events

Pg 3 Trout in the Classroom Release

Pg 5 SE Regional Rendezvous Recap

Pg 6 Philpott Dam Repairs Update

Pg 8 June Chapter meeting raffle prizes

Pf 9 Intro to Fly Fishing Class

Announcement

Chapter Officers and contact information

PRESIDENT'S CORNER



Welcome to Spring! Although our winter this year was very mild it's still good to start seeing the trees and flowers blooming. The chapter activities are starting to ramp up and we have activities and events to match anyone's interest. Community trash pickups, camping and fishing trips, youth education and more. But none of these can be successful without your help.

Please check out our calendar of events for all the opportunities available. Hope to see you soon.

-Jeff Deering



Recent Chapter Events



March 1st – 1st Quarter Chapter meeting was a great success. Chris Powell from the Army Corps of Engineers provided an update on Philpott Dam repairs

March 10-12 – TU Southeast Regional Rendezvous. Eric Tichay and Jason Collins joined fellow TU members from throughout the country in Asheville, NC for a weekend of fishing and seminars. Topics included talks on entomology, climate change, conservation and more.

Trout in the Classroom Trout Release 2023

by Eric Tichay

On March 21, SRTU Chapter assisted Dan River Basin Association (DRBA) in the first trout release of 2023 for Hope Academy Greensboro 6th graders. The release was held at the Smith River Great Road Canoe Access, Fieldale, Virginia.

Hope Academy is a private, community-funded, non-profit school serving South Greensboro, NC. The academy enrollment is for kindergarten thru 8th grade.

After arrival at the release site, students participated in a group search for aquatic invertebrates, crustaceans, mollusks, and fish using a kick-seine net.



Krista Hodges, DRBA Education Outreach Manager, gives students an informative and entertaining presentation on the Smith River's aquatic residents and trout food.



Each student is given a cup with fingerling trout to release. Trout are given names by the students and gently released into the river. After a few minutes acclimating to the 45 degree water temperature, trout zoom off for deeper safer waters.



Thanks to Adam Hubert, Hope Academy teacher (back row grey hat) for giving his students the fun and educational opportunity to experience the Smith River and trout release.



Want to help with the next release? Patrick Henry Elementary is the next school scheduled for a trout release on April 13, 10:30 a.m. at the Great Road Canoe Access, Fieldale. Contact Jeff Deering to volunteer jdeer76@yahoo.com.

Southeastern Regional Rendezvous 2023 Asheville, NC March 10-12 **By Eric Tichay**

As described on the TU website, the Southeastern TU regional rendezvous was an occasion to be inspired – by the work of TU staff, lessons from volunteer leaders, and conversations with friends. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to discuss the issues facing the region as well as a chance to network and build relationships with fellow TU volunteer leaders and TU staff.

The weekend was packed with informed guest speakers at eight “all attendee” sessions and on Saturday, eighteen smaller breakout sessions. Presentation topics varied from conservation practices to Chapter level strategic planning. For example, the Saturday morning welcome address topic was about the Great Smokey Mountain National Park Partnerships in Brook Trout Restoration.

The author attended the following Saturday breakout sessions:

- An overview of Native Brook Trout Conservation Efforts in North Carolina
- Creating Effective Business Partnerships and Hosting Fun Events
- Ten Years of Native Trout: Learning how to Conserve and Restore Brook Trout in the Southern Appalachians
- Working at a watershed scale – the Alarka Headwaters Project, NC
- A Look at Private Land and Water Conservation Through the Eyes of a Young Steward

Saturday evening was filled with an auction, raffle, and dinner with Keynote speaker Reynolds Wolf from The Weather Channel. Reynolds is an avid fly angler fishing at least once a week. He packs a fly rod wherever he travels and takes advantage of the weather forecast to choose prime fishing days. He praised and thanked TU staff and volunteers for our conservation efforts.



Philpott Dam Repairs Update

By Jeff Deering

At the March chapter meeting Chris Powell, Philpott Operations Project Manager with the Army Corps of Engineers was our guest speaker. Chris was joined by Steve Jones and Tyler Carter to discuss the current status of repairs to the Philpott Dam power generation machinery.

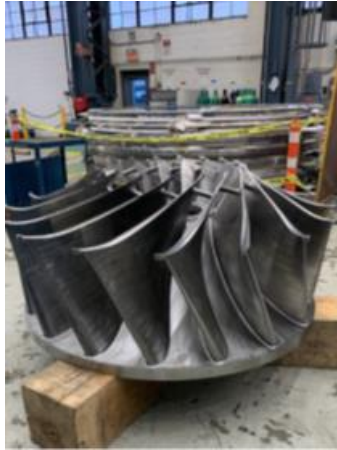
After a week of heavy rainfall in May 2020 a landslide along the slope above the switchgear building caused major damage to the remaining generator and destroyed the switchgear outbuilding.



Since then neither generator has been operational. After a detailed review proposals for repairs to the generators and replacement of the switch building were submitted and have been approved. With federal funding earmarked work has begun moving forward. Initial work has included removal of the existing turbines and generator equipment with replacement equipment already in the process of being built.



NEW RUNNERS BEING BUILT IN CANADA



Photos courtesy of US Army Corps of Engineers

While the new equipment is being built solutions are being reviewed for stabilization of the hillside. This may include large scale removal of dirt down to the rock. Once the hillside is stabilized replacement of the generator equipment can move forward. The new generators currently being built are more efficient with increased flows possible. Chris was able to provide an expected schedule plan for the repairs

Unit 2 Rehab Complete – Spring 2024

Unit 1 Rehab Complete – Spring 2025

Plant anticipated Date of Operation – Fall of 2025, (dependent upon the completion of the hillside repair and the installation of the switchgear building)

We appreciate Chris, Steve and Tyler joining us and being willing to answer questions from the audience. Having them provide these updates in person to our chapter was a great opportunity to hear from those who are most closely involved in the project first hand. Thanks to all who attended for making this meeting such a success.

June 01, 2023, Quarterly Chapter Meeting Raffle

The June 01 quarterly meeting raffle will have a fly tying theme. The featured item for the first ticket number drawn in the raffle is the HMH Standard Bench Vise Pedestal Base, pictured below.

The HMH Standard vise is made from precision-machined and carefully finished stainless tool steels and brass. Each vise is individually hand fitted and tuned for maximum performance. The base price for this vise is a whopping \$425.00!!

In addition, we have three fly tying materials grab bag packages to choose from for the next three ticket numbers drawn. Fly tying materials in these packages have a retail value of about \$100 each.

Donations for raffle tickets will be accepted in person at the June 01 meeting. The raffle drawing will be done at the close of the meeting. Winners must be present at the meeting.



INTRODUCTION TO FLY FISHING CLASS



Free Class Open to All

Come learn the basics of fly fishing from local members of Trout Unlimited.

Class includes:

- Introduction to Fly Fishing Equipment
- Insect basics and fly imitations.
- Safety
- Includes fly rod casting instruction and hands on practice.
- Includes lunch!!

Contact Jeff Deering to reserve your spot today.

Ph: 540-238-1801

Email: Jdeer76@yahoo.com

April 29, 2023 10:00AM-2:00PM
350 King's Way Rd, Martinsville, VA 24112

COMMUNITY CORNER

Have an interesting article, fishing trip photo or some fishing tips you want to share in the newsletter? Please email us at srtuandfriends@yahoo.com. We'd love to hear from you.



Interested in fishing on the Smith but aren't sure where the best spots are? Are they biting on dry flies or nymphs? Call Smith River Outfitters and schedule a full or half day trip. Local guides are ready to put you on some fish.



Smith River Chapter

Trout Unlimited

Smithriver.tu.org

Visit our Facebook group where we share event announcements and photos.
<http://www.facebook.com/SmithRiverTU>



For story suggestions or to share photos from your recent fishing trips please contact us at srtuandfriends@yahoo.com

Smith River TU Chapter Officers

Chapter President – Jeff Deering (jdeer76@yahoo.com)

Chapter Vice President – Jason Collins (jaymcol81@yahoo.com)

Chapter Secretary – Adam Gordon (gordonadam81@gmail.com)

Treasurer – Eric Tichay (erictichay@yahoo.com)

Board Members

Roy Ford

Joe May

Al Kittredge