

Minutes of Chattahoochee Nantahala Chapter TU692

DATE OF MEETING December 12, 2024

TIME 4:00-6:00 PM

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Steve Banakas

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Steve Banakas, Harold Hogan, Bill Sturgeon, Bruce Marchette

TOTAL NUMBER IN ATTENDANCE: 23 Members

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the last regular meeting were approved as posted on our website.

TREASURER REPORT:

Bill reported that we donated \$500 to UGA. We currently have \$105 petty cash and \$4868.46 in our checking account. The treasurer's report was approved.

PRESENTATION

We had an informational presentation by fellow TU692 member Michael Conner. He related his experiences flyfishing in South Florida. Micheal is and has been a content provider for numerous sport fishing magazines and televised shows. He showed us some of the flyfishing rods, reels, flies, and techniques he has used to catch tarpon, snook, redfish, spotted seatrout, dolphin fish, mackerel, and other species in various locations along the Florida peninsula. He ties his own flies and even has copyrights on some of them. His presentation included many photographs and videos of his exploits. The presentation was enjoyed by all.

OLD BUSINESS

- Social Media: Hal was not in attendance and therefore was unable to give his usual report. However, our Public Group Facebook Page now has 338 members down from 339 last month and our Private Page currently has 805 followers up from 770 last month. Our public Facebook page is **Northeast GA Trout Unlimited #692** and our private Facebook page is **Northeast Georgia Trout Unlimited Ch. #692**
- Meeting Location, Date, and Time: We will continue to meet on the 2nd Thursday of each month from 4 to 6 PM at the North Georgia Technical College (Room 414). The street address of the college is 121 Meeks Ave., Blairsville, GA 30512
- Fly tying will take place on the Saturday following our monthly meetings until further notice. Members interested in tying flies or would like to see how its done are encouraged to attend. Time and venue are 10:00 am to 12:00 pm at the Mountain Valley Country Store (2nd floor fishing dept). The address is 670 NC-69, Hayesville, NC 28904. The store is one of the few around that carries fly tying supplies.

NEW BUSINESS

- We voted on a motion to make a contribution of \$500 to the North Georgia Technical College's scholarship fund. The donation is part of the deal we made with the college for the use of the meeting room. The motion passed unanimously.

- Harold Hogan reported on a Georgia TU Counsel meeting that he attended in Gainesville on Saturday, December 7. Among the items that were discussed were:
 - Dream Trip ticket sales - Everyone is encouraged to buy tickets for a chance to fish the Henry's Fork in Idaho in addition to numerous other prizes – some of the proceeds go to Trout Camp
 - Stream Access – There is continuing controversy regarding private landowner's efforts to prevent the public's access to historically accessible streams and rivers in Georgia. Governor Kemp in 2023 signed Senate Bill 115 into law. (The Governor's signing statement is attached to these minutes). A subsequent Bill sponsored by Waycross Republican Rep. James Burchett is a follow-up measure to a bill that passed along party lines last year that gave a landowner exclusive rights to a popular fishing area on the Flint River. Burchett's proposed bill allows the public to fish, hunt, or float navigable waters unless the landowner has a pre-1863 land grant. All appears stalled for the time being as various committees study the issues.
 - The Counsel is setting up a database of speakers who have spoken at various chapters in the state.
- No Fishing Day has been scheduled.
- Club Picnic: No club picnic has been scheduled.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The 38th Annual Rabun Rendezvous is scheduled for January 18, 2025 at the Rabun County Civic Center located at 201 West Savannah Street in Clayton, GA. Doors open at 4:00 pm. There will be music, raffles, and silent auctions. A buffet-style dinner will be available with food provided by the Blue Hound Barbeque. Cost is \$40 for adults and \$25 for those 15 years old and younger. The event raises much need moneys for a number of our interests including: Trout Camp, Conservation Education Programs, Helicopter Trout Stocking, among many others.
- The \$100 prize when we have 20 or more members in attendance at our meetings continues to be on hold until further notice

FISHING REPORTS

- If you want a detailed, up to the minute, which areas are best, and what they are biting report, you need to come to the dang meetings.
- Stocking Reports (streams in our area):
 - North Carolina – The week of December 2-6 (Big Snowbird Creek, Fires Creek, Nantahala, Tuckasegee River)
 - Georgia – Opened November 1, 2024 through to May 14, 2025 – Toccoa River, Amicacola Creek, Smith Creek, and Chattooga River (check the Ga DNR website for exact locations and regulations).

PRIZE WINNERS

- Door prizes: Lots of door prizes were awarded including a decorative box, a Christmas ornament, and a blanket.
- Bugs & Bucks, won by a lucky member

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:50 pm

NEXT MEETING

Next Year! January 9, 2025 – Same time and place

GOVERNOR BRIAN P. KEMP
2023 SESSION OF THE GEORGIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY
SIGNING STATEMENT FOR SENATE BILL 115

SIGNING STATEMENT 1

Senate Bill 115 seeks to ensure sportsman have use of Georgia's navigable rivers. My office has received many calls both in support of and some in opposition to this piece of legislation. After careful analysis, I have signed Senate Bill 115 for the following reasons.

One, the state has invested millions of dollars collected through license fees to establish fisheries and boat ramps and to manage recreational fishing populations in our rivers. Two, this legislation does not affect non-navigable rivers or streams or change the definition of navigability. The definition of navigability is codified in a different subsection of this statute: O.C.G.A. § 44-8-5(a). Three, this legislation does not impact the use of water by adjacent landowners in navigable rivers. Four, this statute does not create a private right of action. Any implied private right of action is abrogated by statute. *See* O.C.G.A. § 9-2-8.

This bill allows for the public to hunt, fish, and transit the navigable waters of this state – an embodiment of the principle of *sic vos non vobis* and a privilege that has been assured Georgians for generations. To the extent some believe it stands for more, House Resolution 519 establishes the House Study Committee on Fishing Access to Freshwater Resources. This study committee will meet between legislative sessions this summer and is the appropriate venue to receive suggested amendments to the language in Senate Bill 115.