

Minutes of Chattahoochee Nantahala Chapter TU692

DATE OF MEETING

September 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: 22 Members + 2 guests

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

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

TREASURER REPORT:

Bill reported that we received \$560 at the August meeting and now have \$5,055.46 in our checking account. The treasurer's report was approved.

PRESENTATION

Club member and local fishing guide Pug Wallace gave informative presentations on ongoing efforts to restore brook trout populations in the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina and the upcoming renovation of the Selzer Hatchery in North Carolina. Brook Trout are widely distributed in North Carolina. He stated that the boundary between the Northeast strain of brook trout and the Appalachian strain is the New River in North Carolina. All fish stocked in North Carolina are sterilized prior to release to protect native species of brook trout. The Selzer Hatchery is scheduled to undergo major renovations planned for the beginning of 2025. He said all remaining fish in the hatchery will be released by the end of December to make way for the renovations which include expanding the number of runs, installing roof and fence systems (to prevent predation and keep the water cooler), and upgrade filtration and oxygenation systems. If all goes according to plan, the hatchery will be fully operational in late 2026 or early 2027.

OLD BUSINESS

- Social Media: Hal reported that the Public Group Facebook Page now has 306 members up from 274 last month. He also reported that the Private Page currently has 61 members. For those who haven't checked them out, 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 (with the exception of December) at the North Georgia Technical College (Room 414). The street address of the college is 121 Meeks Ave., Blairsville, GA 30512
- Fires Creek Recreational Dams: Steve stated that he checked with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission regarding our chapter plans to remove the recreational dams constructed by campers and other visitors on Fires Creek. When queried about it, the NCWRC representative said approval for the removal of the dams would have to be given by the Hydrology and Fisheries Department experts. The earliest we may hear back from them is sometime in November

NEW BUSINESS

- Chapter Projects: Steve asked those of us in attendance if we had any ideas for Club projects. Any ideas can be brought up at the next meeting or emailed to any of the Club officers (if you're worried you might forget about it before the next meeting).
- We also discussed the possibility of getting guest speakers for up-coming meetings. Harold stated that Dr. Jay Shelton from UGA may do a presentation at our November meeting.
- Steve said he has arranged for Fly Tying one Saturday per month (most likely the Saturday following our meetings) from 10 am to noon at Mountain Valley Country Store located at 760 NC-69 in Hayesville, NC. Tying would take place on the 2nd floor in the Store's fishing Department.
- Due to inclement weather, casting instruction by Pug Wallace was postponed to our next meeting (weather permitting). **Bring your rod to the October meeting if you want to participate.**
- No Fishing Day has been scheduled.
- Club Picnic: No club picnic has been scheduled.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / SAFETY TIPS

- Stream Safety (1): Steve stressed how important it is to be careful and safe while fishing remote mountain streams, many of which are outside cellular coverage areas. A serious injury may require outside help from friends or local first responders. Therefore, it is important to notify someone (who can organize such a response) of your plans prior to embarking on a remote stream expedition. If you do not return at your expected date and time, they can organize help for you.
- Stream Safety (2): When fishing a remote mountain stream, it is critical to identify both entry AND exit locations prior to beginning to fish a new area. Sometimes, the entry and exit area will be the same location. It is very important to leave time for yourself and your partner (you should never be there by yourself) to make it back to where you got in. If the exit point is other than where you got in (typically somewhere upstream) you must make sure it is not too far from the entry point and that it is easy to locate from the stream. An acceptable method is to place brightly colored marker tape on a tree or other landmark near the streamside (making sure it is readily visible from the stream) where you can get out and back to the trail or road. Once this is accomplished, you can go back to the stream entry location and start fishing. The distance from entry to exit should be based on your physical abilities and how extensively you plan to fish the stream. For example, about 0.25 miles of Fires Creek takes about 3 hours for 2 people to fish if you are taking your time. Also, keep in mind that the distance along the stream may be longer than the distance along the nearby road or trail.
- Stream Safety (3): Pug Wallace reported seeing lots of baby copperhead snakes lately and we should all be on the lookout. These babies can be more dangerous than the adults as they tend to inject poison when performing a defensive bite whereas the adults may not always do so.
- We are still looking for a volunteer to be Vice President whose supposed only function is to stand in for the president when he is not available.

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.
- Delayed Harvests: North Carolina - Opens October 1, 2024 through to June 6, 2025

Georgia – Opens November 1, 2024 through to May 14, 2025

PRIZE WINNERS

- Door prizes: Lots of door prizes were awarded including a decorative wooden placque, T- and button down shirts, numerous books, beer glasses, and a portable cooler.
- Bugs & Bucks, won by a lucky member
- We had more than 20 members in attendance. However, some of the officers (to go un-named) decided that the \$100 prizes is curtailed until the winter months

The Meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:38 pm

NEXT MEETING

Date: October 10, 2024, Time: 4 PM – Place: North Georgia Technical College, 121 Meeks Avenue, Room # 414, Blairsville, GA 30512