

NEWS CASTER

Overmountain Chapter

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Visit our Web site at omtu.org

Volume 15, Issue 4

July August, 2010



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The July meeting, set for Thursday, July 15, 2010 at 6:00 pm, will be held at the Firehouse Restaurant, 627 West Walnut Street, Johnson City, TN. **(Please note the change in location from the House of Ribs)**

Our speaker will be **Mark Hutchinson**. Mark, a straight line fly-casting instructor, will use power point to show us some neat casting techniques. Mark holds a Master Fly-casting Certification from the Federation of Fly Fishermen. This should be a very informative and interesting program.

Rocky Fork Update – TU Leadership Tour Report

By Damon Hearne
SE Land Protection Coordinator
Trout Unlimited

As the federal funding process continues to grind on, TU has been working to increase Rocky Fork's visibility within the region. Several weeks ago, I coordinated a tour of the property for 12 TU grassroots leaders including chapter presidents from some more distant chapters such as Winston-Salem and Charlotte as well as a good representation from Tennessee.

OMTU member Gary Barrigar welcomed the tour to his home water, and the group heard from other hosts including representatives from The Conservation Fund, US Forest Service, and TWRA.

Local Rocky Fork expert David Ramsey generously gave his time to lead the tour. Starting at the bottom gate, we piled into several 4x4s and drove up along the creek and took the 'high road' all the way up to Buzzard's Rock – a trip of about 1.5 hours. From Buzzard's Rock we took in the view of the entire watershed, and I spent some time talking about TU's land protection efforts for Rocky Fork and other properties.

We descended along the rougher 'Valley Road' and several cars stopped along the way to allow time to sample some of the upper regions of the Rocky Fork's wild trout water. Those that fished did very well – with several people catching 8 to 10 fish in an hour and a half.

There was sincere excitement about the place and the folks that do not have home water were especially impressed. Hopefully, this tour and other outreach I have been doing in the last few months will help increase our response rate to advocacy alerts and other appeals as we push to complete the funding for the Forest Service's purchase of Rocky Fork.

Thanks for continuing to support this project, and thanks especially to Gary Barrigar and David Ramsey for their time and effort. You can email me any time with questions at dhearne@tu.org.



Invasive species threatens area watersheds

Japanese knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*), an invasive species introduced in the U.S. from Asia in the late 1800s, is beginning to show up on the environmental radar. According to Lisa Carol Huff, Natural Areas Manager, TN Natural Areas Program, Resource Management Division, TN State Parks, TDEC, it is posing a threat to the Roan watersheds right now. She describes this plant as a "true beast and if we don't act now, and continue acting, it will change the watersheds of East Tennessee forever."

OMTU member Gary Barrigar echoes these concerns, reporting that on a recent fishing trip to Wilson Creek in NC, he found it dominant along sections of the stream.

The plant is a frequent colonizer of temperate riparian ecosystems, roadsides and waster places.

Japanese knotweed is very difficult to control and eradicate. Lisa stated, "control will require vast cooperation from all public and non-profit entities as well as cooperation from private landowners. In short, it will require true believers, a lot of education, and a lot of hard work and some money!"

Lisa is attempting to put together a strategy for eradicating/controlling this weed in the Roan watersheds and is asking for help. For more information, call (865) 594-5601 or e-mail Lisa. Huff@tn.gov.

FY 2010 OMTU Board and Officers

Officers:

- Rotating Presidents
- Vice President: T.A. Smith
- Treasurer: Randall Rogers
- Past President: Perry Rindfleisch
- Secretary: Bob Sherill

Board Members:

- Bob Fondry
- Ron Harrington
- Dempsey Shell
- Gary Barrigar
- Ernie Walker
- Dale White

Board meeting dates changed

Your OMTU Board now meets the second Tuesday of the months in which we do not have a regular meeting. Here are the dates for the rest of this year:

August 12, 2010
October 14, 2010
December 9, 2010

South Holston Tail-water Cleanup set for August 14, 2010

Time: 8:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Place: Register at the Weir Dam or the Boardwalk area in Bluff City.

Bags and gloves will be furnished.

Free food, music and door prizes are available at the celebration beginning at 3:30 p.m. Place: Observation Knob Park

Plan now to take part!!

A View from the Riverbank

Ron Harrington
Editor

It is easy to become discouraged and frustrated by the constant onslaught of environmental challenges. Often they seem overwhelming and insurmountable. Sometimes I wonder how—and even if—one person can make a difference.

My spirits were recently lifted when I read a great explanation of the phenomenon known as “The Butterfly Effect.” Ben Talley, Bristol native, author, and an elementary school teacher, summed it up best in his latest book, **Bristol Stories: Schoolyard Yarns, Nature Tromps and Jail Tales:**

“Those familiar with The Butterfly Effect know it as a wonderful example of the interconnectedness of all things. There exist many apt analogies, but one goes something like this: because a single butterfly chooses to flap its wings just one more time today in China, then, by a wondrous web of cause and effect, it leads to a thunderstorm halfway around the world next week, in Central Park.

While the butterfly does not ‘cause’ the thunderstorm in the sense of providing enough energy, it does ‘cause’ it in the sense that the one extra flap of its wings is an essential part of the initial conditions ultimately resulting in the thunderstorm, and without that one extra flap that particular thunderstorm would never have existed.

The crux of the matter is this: even seemingly insignificant events lead to profound consequences...if only we could see the ‘big picture.’

In short, nothing that ever happens is insignificant. It only appears to be so to us, due solely to our extremely limited frame of reference in the physical world.”

Those little things we do for conservation can make a big difference in the long run. Just think of how much gasoline (and ultimately oil) we could save by driving slower. Just driving at the speed limit helps.

(continued on page 3)

It is time

“America must be freed from her addiction to fossil fuels. It is time for us to grow up, be more respectful of our water, our air, our planet, and our fellow human beings. It is time to move on to the future of energy production. It is time.”

Kathy Selvage, Wise, VA

Source: Bristol Herald Courier, Friday, June 11, 2010



OMTU receives Trout Specialty Plate funds

OMTU has received \$1,069 from year one distribution of the TU Conservation License Plate Revenue. This is approximately two thirds of the total expected from the initial sale of the plates. There were 74 plates sold in our area, which amounts to 7.33 percent of the total sold through out the state, which was 1009. Starting the second year, each club will receive \$17.50 for each plate sold in the area served. However, this only begins once the Cumberland Chapter is fully reimbursed for funds donated from its conservation fund to initiate the process.

This revenue must be used for conservation purposes. The Tennessee Secretary of state will require an audit trail for non-profit organizations to show how the money is used.



Volunteers still needed to help with Boy Scout Merit Badge program

TU member David White, who is with Boy Scout Troop 285 in Mt. Carmel, TN, is seeking help to conduct a fly-fishing merit badge program. For more information, contact David at dwhite1957@charter.net or call (423) 343-9646.

Help prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species

Preventing the proliferation of aquatic nuisance species (ANS) is central to TU's mission to conserve and protect North America's trout and salmon fisheries. The impact of ANS to native species is substantial, second only to loss of habitat, and is responsible for causing losses in biodiversity, changes in ecosystems, and impacts on economic enterprises such as agriculture, fisheries, and international trade. The costs of preventing and controlling invasive species are not well understood or documented, but estimates indicate that the costs are significant.

To this end TU has asked the manufacturers of wading boots to stop producing felt soles by 2011.

For more information about invasive species and what anglers can do to prevent the spread of ANS, go to www.tu.org.

(A view from the riverbank, continued from page 1)

But traveling at 55 mph will give you up to 21% better mileage when compared to 65 mph and 70 mph. Unfortunately most folks on the interstates seem to exceed the posted limits.

We can reduce ozone in the air by mowing our lawns late in the day, car pooling, or by simply filling up the gas tank at night, and not overfilling it. Pick up some trash along the stream each time you go fishing. Recycle. Reuse. Take part in a cleanup or a stream improvement project. Take steps to reduce erosion. Use less herbicides and pesticides—if at all. Plant a tree. Introduce a young person to the wonders of nature. Take a kid fishing. Eat grass-fed beef. Report stream pollution. Contact your legislator about a piece of important environmental legislation. Attend OMTU meetings and let your voice be heard—the list can go on and on.

I have been impressed by some of the “small” efforts by folks dealing with the oil spill in the gulf—folks dipping up oil with hand-held skimmers, or siphoning oil with shop vacuums. Seems futile in the grander scheme, but at least they're trying. They must know about the “Butterfly Effect.”

Every little act, taken alone, may not seem like much, but the cumulative effect could change the world...forever.

OMTU Board meeting minutes

6/17/2010

Submitted by Bob Sherrill

-Tour of Rocky Fork-Gary Barrigar gave an update on the Rocky Fork tour by area leaders set for June 25. The tour will be lead by David Ramsey. A good turnout is expected.

-Bottle Bill-Gary Barrigar and Bob Fondry will travel to Knoxville to have a “strategy” meeting with other interested TU groups about the Tennessee “Bottle Bill”.

-Membership- 5 new members in May. 14 memberships expired and not yet renewed. Current membership is around 270.

-Financial- Approx. \$2775 in bank. More money from sale of license plates due to be received.

-River's Way Fly Fishing Expo- Chapter will operate a booth at the Expo on both days. Volunteers are being lined up.

-Donation-The Board voted to give \$100 to the Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy (SAHC). OMTU is a member.

-Litter Signs-Efforts will be made to encourage people to display the TU/Boone Watershed Alliance litter signs along local waterways.

-July Chapter Meeting Speaker- July speaker will be Mark Hutchinson, a local fly casting instructor. Mark will present a power-point presentation on casting techniques.

Gary Barrigar will do the “**master minute**” at the July Chapter meeting.

-Stream Cleanup Budget- Bob Fondry prepared and presented the projected budget for all 2011 stream cleanups that the Chapter will support. No action yet taken on the budget or how the costs will be funded.

REPORT FISH AND GAME VIOLATORS!

Call the TWRA “Poaching Hotline at 1-800-831-1174. You can help TWRA game and fish officers with their role of enforcement of the Tennessee fishing regulations by reporting violations to the TWRA Hotline. They need “real-time” information such as nature of violation, date, location, vehicle description, license plate numbers and so forth.

REPORT LITTERBUGS!

CALL TDOT AT 1-877-854-8837

- Tn License Plate #
- Type/make of Vehicle
- Date and time of incident
- Location of incident
- Type of litter

TROUT UNLIMITED'S VISION

“By the next generation, Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters.”

Center for Watershed Protection News

Aquatic Life Declines at Early Stages of Urban Development The Center for Watershed Protection has been collaborating with the US Geological Survey's Effects of Urbanization on Stream Ecosystems research group to help interpret and disseminate the study results to local watershed managers and planners so they can base land use and management decisions on the best available science.

A summary report of the EUSE study findings is now available, along with short video podcasts, as described in the summary below.

A new USGS report explains the effects of urban development on stream ecosystem health. Surprisingly, aquatic insect communities show little, if any, initial resistance to low levels of urban development that were previously thought to be protective of aquatic life. The study showed, for example, that by the time a watershed reaches about 10 percent impervious cover in urban areas, aquatic insect communities are degraded by as much as 33 percent in comparison to aquatic insect communities in forested watersheds.

The USGS determined the magnitude and pattern of the physical, chemical, and biological response of streams to increasing urbanization and how these responses vary throughout nine metropolitan areas: Portland, OR; Salt Lake City, UT; Birmingham, AL; Atlanta, GA; Raleigh, NC; Boston, MA.

Something to remember: The Tennessee Water Quality Control Act of 1977

69-3-102 Declaration of policy and purpose. Recognizing that the waters of Tennessee are the property of the state and are held in public trust for the use of the people of the state, it is declared to be the public trust for the use of the people of the state, it is declared to be the public policy of Tennessee that the people of Tennessee, as beneficiaries of this trust, have a right to unpolluted waters. In the exercise of its public trust over the waters of the state, the government of Tennessee has an obligation to take all prudent steps to secure, protect, and preserve this right.

“We need a commitment from all anglers that says: **‘I pledge to clean and dry my equipment (including watercraft) at each fishing location, every time. I am a clean Angler.’**”

John Randolph
Fly Fisherman, January-February, 2010

Take a Kid Fishing

More than 90 percent of today's anglers fish because they were introduced at a young age. Several studies show that a high percentage of children who participate in outdoor activities such as fishing, attending a TU youth camp or participating in Trout in the Classroom programs are much more likely to become conservationists. Pledge to take a child fishing by visiting www.anglerslegacy.org.

Source: Trout, Summer, 2007



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OMTU is a proud member of
the Boone Watershed Partner-
ship

Food for Thought

Surface coal mining in Tennessee currently employs less than 400 people. Most of these workers are employed in traditional surface mines, not mountaintop removal mines. These require fewer employees. Proponents of the Tennessee Scenic Vistas Protection Act contrast the coal industry with the state's lucrative tourism industry, which employs 177,000 Tennessee residents and generates hundreds of millions of dollars in tax revenues. Mountaintop removal, they say, is a direct contradiction to the very reason why millions of tourists from around the globe visit the mountains of East Tennessee every year.

To date, more than 1.5 million acres of Appalachia have been flattened, over 700 miles of streams polluted and several communities displaced as a result of mountaintop removal. Tennessee currently has at least four active and 13 proposed mountaintop removal sites in Anderson, Claiborne, Campbell, Fentress, Morgan and Scott Counties

Source: Keep Bristol Beautiful, Greater Bristol Chamber of Commerce

Watauga Lake cleanup a success

By Bill Beazell

The first Annual Watauga Lake Cleanup was held on June 26, 2010. Although OMTU was not directly involved, I visited and offered our applause for this new effort to improve and maintain the beauty of the region.

According to co-coordinators Debra Rolleri and Mary Salter, this initial effort was a huge success. Approximately 100 participants collected over 500 bags of litter, including 100 tires and a six-foot oxygen tank. A large barge was used to gather the bags from the different drop-off sites. After the cleanup, participants were treated to lots of food, good bluegrass music, and 97 raffle prizes. Please join me in congratulating these folks for a job well done.



Rocky Fork Tour

Participants, including OMTU member Gary Barrigar (right) pause to take in a wonderful view of the Rocky Fork watershed from Buzzard's Rock during the tour on June 25, 2010. For more information on how you can help, including a sample letter for your congressman, go to OMTU.org.