

NEWS CASTER

Overmountain Chapter

Trout Unlimited Ron Harrington, Editor

omtuinfo@aol.com

Visit our Web Site at omtu.org

Volume 12, Issue 5

May, 2007



CONTENTS

Coming Events:	1
Watauga River Cleanup	1
Rocky Fork Meeting:	1
President's Corner:	2
Mercury Warning Article:	2
TN Bottle Bill Reintroduced:	2
Moving Ahead on the Environment:	3
God's Earth:	3
SETU Rally Summary:	4
Little River TU Troutfest:	5
T.A.'s Polywing Sulfur:	5
Celebrating Earth Day:	5

COMING EVENTS

BOD: 05-03-07
 Regular Meeting: 05-10-07
 BOD: 06-07-07
 Regular Meeting: 06-14-07

The May 10, 2007 Meeting

will be held at Sunny's Cafeteria, 601 Spring Street, Johnson City, TN. A buffet dinner begins at 6:00 p.m., followed by a short business meeting. The program usually begins around 6:30. Our speaker this month is Jim Habera, TWRA, who will give us an update on stream surveys in the region. Be sure to attend this interesting and informative presentation. You'll be pleasantly surprised at the findings.

Trout Unlimited is North America's leading Coldwater fisheries conservation organization, with more than 150,000 members dedicated to the protection and restoration of trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds.

WATAUGA RIVER CLEANUP SET FOR SATURDAY, MAY 19, 2007

The 19th Annual Watauga River Cleanup, sponsored by the Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce and the Overmountain Chapter, Trout Unlimited, is set for Saturday, May 19, 2007, 9:00 a.m. until noon.

- Assemble at the Covered Bridge Park in Elizabethton
- Dress appropriately: bring boots, waders, insect repellent and sunscreen
- Conservation/educational exhibits
- A drawing for prizes will be held for all those who participate immediately after the cleanup
- Trash Bags and Gloves will be provided by TVA

Plan now to participate in this very important OMTU project. For more information contact Bob Fondry at (423) 772-3236 or the Elizabethton/Carter County Chamber of Commerce at (423) 547-3850.



TAKING A BREAK AT THE SOUTHEAST TU RALLY 2007

Jim Monfort (left), Hiwasse Chapter, TU, is joined by Linda Good and Perry Rindfleisch of OMTU during a break at the SE TU Rally, held at Hungry Mother State Park, Marion, VA on April 27-29. See page 4 for more info.

Representative David Davis Meets Regarding Rocky Fork Funding

By Perry Rindfleisch, President

On Saturday, April 21st, Representative David Davis met with representatives of local government and private groups to hear our concerns about preserving Rocky Fork for future generations. Perry Rindfleisch represented our chapter along with Mayor Greg Lynch or Erwin, Mayor John Lynch of Unicoi County, David Ramsey, Dan Mahoney and other community leaders.

Congressman Davis was a good listener and agreed to pursue Federal options to support local groups in finding common ground for this pristine piece of real estate. "I am sure we can preserve this valuable resource while increasing the taxable base for Unicoi County" representative Davis said.

Stay tuned for more about Rocky Fork.

FY 2006 OMTU Board and Officers

Officers:

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

Board Members:

- Marcia Carter
- Bill Beazell
- Bob Fondry
- Charles Martin
- T. A. Smith
- Ron Harrington

Tennessee Bottle Bill Reintroduced in Legislature

Senate bill # 1408 and House bill # 1829 have been reintroduced in the TN Legislature, according to our March meeting speaker, Marge Davis, labeled "Tennessee Deposit Beverage Container Act of 2007". This will be acted on in either the 2007 or 2008 legislative sessions. Please watch this newsletter or your local newspaper for more information with names of local legislators whom you can contact expressing your support for this legislation and a cleaner Tennessee.

You can contact Marge Davis at www.tnbottlebill.org.

WANT TO BUY OR SELL PROPERTY?

Call Dempsey Shell, Shell & Associates Real Estate, (423) 547-9377. 10% of net will be donated to OMTU.

The President's Corner

Fellow Overmountain Chapter Members

It is now May and your chapter is off to a fast start with a number of items taking place.

Ron Harrington, Linda Good and I represented our chapter at the annual S/E Rally at Hungry Mother State Park this past weekend. Please see the separate article on this very informative event.

John Dollard represented us at a regional Scout event last weekend to drum up excitement for merit badges in fly fishing. John was also telling the story of the Watauga River Cleanup on the 19th. Thanks John for carrying the load with Scouts.

Your board of directors will meet with our Hampton Creek partners at the site on May 16th to finalize the actual design of the barrier we will be building this coming summer. We will get drawings made so we can publish them in the next Newscaster.

We are actively seeking a new location for our monthly meetings. A number of members have told us the noisy environment at Sunny's makes it hard to hear speakers so we will find another place that offers a private room and good food. Stay tuned for an announcement.

I represented you at a breakfast meeting with Congressman David Davis on April 21st to voice our concern about the future of Rocky Fork. Congressman Davis heard a diverse group express the need to find a common ground for this pristine piece of real estate and he committed to help. Meanwhile the state of Tennessee and non-profit groups continue talking about options to buy this property. Something good is going to come out of all these discussions.

Funds have been received from TU National for our Hampton Creek project. All we need to do now is gather the volunteer hours to make it happen. We will look to all of you for this critically important portion of the project.

Thanks for all you do for our chapter.

“Human beings have used more raw materials since World War II than in all previous recorded history.”

Mark Matousek, AARP, May&June 2007

Mercury Warning Article Could Be Misleading

An article, which appeared in the Friday, April 27, 2007 issue of the Bristol Herald Courier, entitled “Mercury warning issued for fishing,” started off the first two paragraphs with the following: “Precautionary fish consumption advisories have been issued for the Holston River and South Holston Lake. The public should avoid or limit consumption of fish in these waters because of high levels of mercury, according to an advisory from the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation.”

Unless you read the rest of the article carefully, you could jump to conclusions and interpret this to mean that trout caught in the tailwaters are no longer safe to eat. I spoke with Tisha Calabrese-Benton, Deputy Communications Director, TDEC, who confirmed that the advisory does not apply to fish in the river below the dam. The TDEC advisory pertains to the following fish species and/or areas only:

- Because of Mercury pollution, a precautionary advisory for largemouth bass has been issued for the Tennessee portion of the South Holston Reservoir.
- Because of Mercury pollution, a precautionary advisory for all fish has been issued for that portion of the Holston River from the mouth of Poor Valley Creek embayment upstream to the confluence of the North and South Forks of the Holston River near Kingsport. This also applies to the portion of the North Fork Holston River that flows through Sullivan and Hawkins Counties.

Sometimes busy folks don't read beyond the headline or the first paragraph or two. The rest of the article did include specifics and contained good information about the effects of Mercury on the human body and who should avoid even small amounts of this chemical.

For more information visit the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation at www.tdec.net/wpc/publications/advisories.pdf.

Ron Harrington
Editor

Moving Ahead on the Environment

The U.S. Supreme Court, in two decisions handed down in early April, has made it clear to the Environmental Protection Agency that it is responsible for “protecting America’s air, water and climate instead of promoting policies of the current administration.” In one decision, involving global-warming, the court ruled that California’s tougher automobile –mileage standards can now be implemented. In the other decision, it ruled that Duke Energy was responsible for upgrading scrubbers at its older coal-fired plants.

Apparently the EPA, under pressure from the Bush administration, has not been carrying out its mission of protecting the environment. First it was refusing to apply federal law to regulate emissions of climate warming gases; and second, it was arguing that the states had no authority to implement tougher standards. In the case of Duke Energy, the EPA, despite the ruling, is in the process of re-writing rules so that they comply with Duke’s wishes!

Two recent lower-court rulings that also stopped administration attempts to reinterpret federal law in ways injurious to the environment are also encouraging:

- One court ruled against Appalachian coal-mining rules that would have allowed mountaintops to be strip-mined.
- The other stopped plans to expand commercial logging in national forests.

“The American people and their state and local governments are moving ahead on environmental protection. Let’s hope the recent court decisions persuade the administration to join them.”

Source: Winston-Salem Journal (As printed in the Bristol Herald Courier, Monday, April 9, 2007)

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.”

GOD’S EARTH

By Bill Beazell

On Saturday afternoon, April 21, 2007, approximately twenty people, including six from our church—Deven and Maggie Johnson, Tammy and Isaiah Cox, and my wife Norma and I—attended the Stream Ecology Seminar & Stream Walk at the 28th Annual Spring Nature Festival, held at Warrior’s Path State Park. This “hands on” presentation took place on Fall Creek, a small stream that empties into Patrick Henry Lake.

This event turned out to be very special and meaningful for it taught us a way of knowing, through examining aquatic life, the quality of water in a particular stream. OMTU member Gary Barrigar, retired high school ecology teacher and present chair of the Boone Lake Watershed Alliance, along with Mark Odom of the TVA, showed us through seining and identifying how to use a “separation of species” method to determine the water quality of a stream. The number and kinds of species will vary according to each one’s water quality needs.

Based on this method, we were able to conclude that the water quality in the section of Fall Creek that we sampled was only “Fair.” This is most likely due to contamination from farm animals in and along the stream.

If you have never attended some part of this three-day event, which brackets Earth Day each year, your God’s Earth Committee hopes that you can attend next year, and take advantage of this opportunity to learn more about “nature’s wonders.”

“Food” for Thought

According to TEDEC, approximately 123,314 reservoir acres and 260 river miles in Tennessee are currently posted due to contaminated fish. The contaminants most frequently found at dangerous levels in fish tissue are PCBs, Mercury, Chlordane, and other organics.

REPORT LITTER-BUGS!

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

REPORT FISH AND GAME VIOLATORS! Call TWRA Hotline at 800-332-0900

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.

Renew your Trout Unlimited membership today!

Become an active member by attending meetings and participating in OMTU activities such as stream cleanups and those aimed at promoting conservation of our wetlands and streams.

As of March 1, 2007, we had 210 members assigned to OMTU

TU Holds S/E Rally at Hungry Mother State Park

By Perry Rindfleisch

Seven Southeastern states were represented at the TU rally on April 25-27, 2007 at Hungry Mother State Park. Ron Harrington, Linda Good and Perry Rindfleisch represented our chapter along with 55 others, including 7 people from TU National in Arlington VA. Two members of the National Board of Trustees were also present for an agenda that ranged from State and local issues to national advocacy planning.

Linda Good presented the new "Back the Brookie" educational module for high school environment and conservation teachers that got rave reviews from all in attendance. Our Gary Barrigar was instrumental in getting this module created and, while it is specific to Tennessee, it can also be used by neighboring states because of its overall focus on why the Southern Appalachian Brook Trout is important to all of us. Linda deserves our kudos for her tremendous effort in getting this project completed in very professional form. We're proud of you Linda.

This was a very informative meeting for our chapter leaders with lots of information that will make us stronger and more focused. In the late afternoon we attended a Tennessee Council meeting that was also productive and informative.



The 2007 Southeast TU Rally was held in the beautiful Hemlock Haven Convention Center, Hungry Mother State Park. The park is located about five miles north of Marion, VA on HWY 16.

STREAM CLEANUP SCHEDULE

Here are the dates for the stream cleanups that are planned for 2007:

Watauga River: 5/19/07

South Holston River: 8/11/07

Doe River: 9/29/07

Mark your calendars now and plan to participate in these important club projects. Details will be included in the *NewsCaster* edition just prior to the cleanup.

Bob Fondry, OMTU Cleanup Coordinator



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!™

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
Particularly waders/boots.

www.ProtectYourWaters.net



T.A.'s Polywing Sulfur

Tail: Ginger hackle fibers

Body: Orange or yellow dry fly dubbing

Hackle: Ginger

Wing: Poly yarn

Comments: This pattern really works for sulfur hatches on the Tennessee tailwaters. It is easy to tie and has great visibility on the water. It is a good fly for those with "older eyes."

Submitted by T.A. Smith

LITTLE RIVER TROUT UNLIMITED TROUTFEST SET

The 2007 Little River TU Chapter's Troutfest is set for May 19th & 20th, 2007, at the Townsend Visitors Center, Townsend, Tennessee. This is an arts and crafts festival supporting native brook trout restoration and watershed conservation in and around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. A banquet and auction are set for Friday, May 18th, starting at 7:00 p.m. This is located in the Valley View Lodge, Townsend. For more information go to www.troutfest.org.

Artist—Crafters—Photographers—Food—Live Music—Fly Tyers—Rod Builders—Guides & Instructors—Education Tent—Demos and Presentations about Trout & Their Environment

- Saturday: 9:00 a.m. —6:00 p.m.
- Sunday: 10:00 a.m.—6:00 p.m.

Celebrating Earth Day

"Thirty seven years ago, American rivers were still catching fire and city dwellers had to choke through a pall of smoke just getting to work.

Fed up with unregulated pollution, millions of Americans joined together on Earth Day and demanded that air and water pollution be cleaned up. The environmental movement was one of the most successful in history, and it produced a national consensus that has become a bedrock political fact of life.

An overwhelming majority of Americans now believe that environmental protection and conservation is a top priority, even at the expense of domestic energy development or unemployment. In a March 2007 Gallup poll, for example, a representative sample of Americans were asked which should be given priority: energy production at home or environmental protection? Energy came in at only 34%, and environment was a strong 58%.

Yet in Appalachia, the coal and utility industries have yet to learn the consequences of flying in the face of public opinion. When the balance sheets are tallied up, a price will be paid by industries that have forgotten the people."

Source: Editorial Board, [Appalachian Voices](#), Spring 2007