

Merrimack River Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited

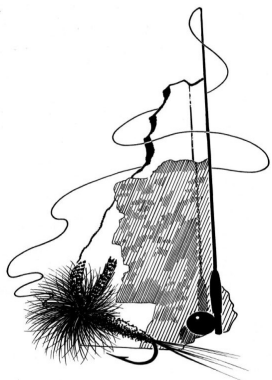
MAY 2011

Volume ix Issue 4



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President's Message

As we closed out the year with our last meeting I am excited about what lies ahead for our Chapter. We've had a successful year with all of our events and projects, but we've got some challenges ahead of us with the Milford Dam Project, Piscataquog River Project, McQuesten Brook, and the need to support NH Fish and Game and our other partners as they struggle to restore and protect our cold water fisheries with reduced funding.

I would also like to thank our retiring board members Gerry Crow, Jeff Lindberg, and Dave Magnon for their service to our Chapter over the years and welcome Ed Boyle, Alan White, and Joel Kasper who have been recently elected to the Board of Directors and have accepted their appointments.

We've had a lot of new guests and potential new members at our recent meetings and these members were made aware of TU as a direct result of their involvement in the Let's Go Fishing Classes and Fly Tying Classes.

We thank all of our volunteer instructors and members who put in many hours for these classes. One thing we would like to do to expand on this program is to start a mentoring program where members would volunteer to take one or two of our new students fishing for a couple hours one evening or a few hours some morning or afternoon. We have a list of about 30 students that have signed up for this program and anyone interested in helping our new students can contact me at RMHamel@comcast.net or call me at (978) 835-8857. I can arrange for you to work with students that might live in your town or live close by.

Don't forget our last major event of the year is coming up at the end of June; this our Chapter Trip and BBQ! I hope to see a lot of members and their guests at the BBQ as this is always a good time to close out our events for the year.

Tight lines and enjoy the fishing season!

Ron Hamel

Brook Trout and the Piscataquog River Watershed ~ Burr Tupper

The Piscataquog River watershed is being studied for its capacity to support viable and self sustaining populations of Eastern Brook Trout. The South Branch has the forested hills and cold water necessary for brook trout thrive.

Sponsors of this study are the TU chapters of Basil Woods and Merrimack River Valley, New Boston Conservation Commission, NH Fish and Game, The Russell Foundation and Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission

The first year of the project has been one of data gathering from the field. Professor Barry Wicklow of St. Anselm College biology department, summer student interns and numerous volunteers have performed the field work and data analysis.

The summer field work session of 2010 has accomplished several tasks.

- Surveyed culverts and their effects on fish passage to and from the main stem river
- Assessed the riverside habitat and vegetation
- Monitored water temperatures and the water quality of 11 tributaries of the South Branch
- Brook Trout and other fish from 15 streams were counted, measured and weighed. DNA samples from wild trout were taken to determine if they were offspring's of native brook trout or stocked fish.

The findings to date show few structures that impede fish passage to migrating brook trout. Some tributaries are fed by cold ground water and pass through intact forest, providing es-



This mature brook trout is smaller than a stocked trout from a hatchery. Note the gloved hand under the net.

sential summer "thermal refugia" for brook trout.

The DNA tests will be completed soon. When in hand the DNA results will be compared with genetic data from the brook trout's range. This will tell us if we have populations of indigenous brook trout or if they are off springs of hatchery fish. An intriguing early indication is that the hatchery fish and the native brook trout spawn at different times which may mean we really have native brook trout with us. If funding permits, the study will continue with its stream monitoring, including the abundance and condition of the wild brook trout after last year's hot, dry summer.

All brook trout that are stocked in 2011 will be fin clipped in order to discern from wild stocked or native brook trout. There will be plenty of opportunity for volunteer work which will include electro shocking, water quality analysis, temperature monitoring, critical habitat identified and on going public education.

2011 Conservation Banquet and Grand Raffle

Our Annual Conservation Banquet held on April 30 was a big success again this year thanks to the efforts of Mike Croteau and the other members of the committee. We had a great meal and a lot of our guests went home with some nice prizes.

We would also like to send a special thank you to all of the sponsors and contributors who supported the event, and to all the members and guests who purchased tickets and took part in this event.

Our Grand Raffle was again a huge success thanks to the efforts of all of our members who bought or sold tickets for our annual fundraising event. We sold over \$3,300 worth of tickets which exceeded last year's efforts. This year's winners are listed below:

2011 Grand Raffle Winners

First Choice Winner

Mike Douglas

Milford, NH

Chose the Ruger M77 Hawkeye Rifle

Second Choice Winner

Frank Powers

Acton, MA

Chose the Tall Timbers Lodge Package

Third Choice Winner

Don Tata

Worcester, MA

Won the Orvis Rod and Reel Package

Chapter Trip Volunteer Opportunities!!!

This year on our Chapter Trip up to Coleman State Park, we will be doing some volunteer work with Joe Norton, Project Coordinator for the Home Rivers Initiative on the Upper Connecticut River. Joe was a guest speaker at our April meeting and we were able to witness some of the valuable restoration and conservation work being done in the Upper Connecticut River area. Now we have an opportunity to make a small contribution to those efforts.

We are planning to get a group of volunteers to meet up early afternoon on June 23rd so that anyone coming for the weekend will have the morning for travel. After our work is done we can enjoy the remainder of the weekend fishing, camping, and socializing at the Saturday evening BBQ. Details are being finalized and will be available soon. Please contact Ron Hamel at (978) 835-8857 or via e-mail at RMHamel@comcast.net to sign up for this volunteer opportunity.

Chapter Trip and BBQ~ June 23-26, Coleman State Park

The Chapter Camping Trip/Barbecue is June 23 – June 26, at Coleman State Park, 1155 Diamond Pond Rd, Stewartstown, NH 03576. This is a wonderful chance to fish all the great ponds, streams and rivers in this area including the Little Diamond Pond, Androscoggin, Connecticut and Mohawk Rivers. The campground has running water, flush toilets, and hot showers for the “city campers” who don’t like the rustic outdoors.

To reserve a campsite call the N.H. State Division of Parks and Recreation Reservations at (877) 647-2757 or visit the website at www.nhstateparks.org. The price for a three-night stay is \$84.25 per site and a two-night stay is \$59.25.



The fantastic steak and chicken barbecue is Saturday, June 25th at 5:00 PM, and cost \$15 per person. The BBQ is open to all member or guests staying in the area and you DO NOT have to be staying at the campground to take part in the BBQ.



To make reservations for the barbecue (choice of beef or chicken) contact Burr Tupper, at burr@hotmai.com or call 603-487-5498. Send him a checks made out to MRVTU for \$15 per person. Burr Tupper, 47 River Rd., New Boston, NH 03070. In the event of rain there is a sheltered recreation hall for us to still hold the event.

If anyone interested in helping with cooking for the BBQ we need some “grill masters” . Please contact Bob Morrison to volunteer at carnivora1@comcast.net or give him a call at (603)303-1441.

The chapter will be planning activities throughout the weekend including working with Joe Norton on his restoration projects in the area on Thursday afternoon, June 23rd. If you would like to volunteer for tree planting with Joe contact Ron Hamel, rmhamel@comcast.net, or (978) 835-8857.

MEETINGS ARE HELD THE SECOND TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH (SEPT-MAY) AT THE SWEENEY AMERICAN LEGION POST, 251 MAPLE STREET MANCHESTER NH.

DIRECTIONS: ELM STREET TO VALLEY STREET TO MAPLE STREET (1ST LEFT AFTER STADIUM)



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