

Minutes of the AFS
Southern Division Trout Committee Meeting
April 9, 1997
Hungry Mother State Park
Marion, Virginia

Sheryl Bryan (USFS), Chair, opened the meeting at 10:10 a.m. Introductions were made, followed by the Chair report. The Trout Committee did not meet at the previous Southeastern or at the Southern Division AFS mid-year meeting. The secretary/treasurer (Jim Habera) reported that the Committee had \$2,800.08 in its checking account and that \$1,000 had been donated to Dr. Gary McCracken (UT) for brook trout genetic analyses as approved during the previous meeting (Clemson, 1996). The minutes from the previous meeting were distributed and reviewed. A motion by Frank Fiss (TWRA) to accept the minutes was seconded and passed.

Old Business:

A motion was made and seconded at the previous meeting to donate \$500 to the AFS 2000 campaign. Although the motion did not pass, the Committee agreed to discuss the issue at the 1997 (current) meeting. Subsequently, Pat Flebbe (USFS) made a new motion to donate \$500 to the AFS 2000 campaign. Discussion of the motion covered what the money will be used for, the amount to donate, and the method of payment (all at once or \$100/year). The motion was revised by amendment to a \$100 donation this year (1997), seconded, and passed.

Details regarding the National Habitat Meeting for 1998 were still undetermined. John Stark and the Trout Committee are the proposed hosts for this meeting (in Arkansas).

The Riparian Forest Buffers Technical Brochure by Dave Welsh (USFS) remains out of print and no action has been taken yet by the Committee (e.g., should the Committee assist with reprinting?). Sheryl will assume responsibility for determining what is needed (e.g., costs) to get reprints made.

Andy Dolloff's old business regarding going into cyberspace (via a list server) with Trout Committee business, information, etc. was reintroduced by Pat Flebbe and discussed at length by the Committee. Pat has the capability to coordinate such an effort and will follow up.

New Business:

Andy Dolloff is on the Program Committee for the AFS annual meeting in Charlotte, NC in 1999. The Trout Committee may wish to organize and sponsor a symposium (e.g., on trout management in the Southeast) there.

The upcoming East Coast Trout Management and Culture Workshop III (in 1998?) was also discussed. Trout Committee involvement will depend upon the level of involvement in the National Habitat Meeting/Workshop. Suggestions were made that a new location further south be considered. Larry Mohn (VA) will follow up by contacting the Northeastern Division (Marty Marcinko) and Steve Moore (NPS).

The Southern Division Midyear Meeting will be held in Lexington, KY in February, 1998. Kentucky representatives expressed a desire to have the Trout Committee meet in Lexington, but concern regarding reduced attendance was expressed among the membership. Larry Mohn moved that the Committee meet some place other than the Midyear in Lexington and a discussion about alternate locations and timing followed. An amendment to hold the next (1998) Trout Committee meeting in early May in West Virginia (Tom Oldham to coordinate) and to tentatively meet in Tennessee in 1999 was added to the motion, which was then approved.

Trout Committee meeting format was discussed and most of the membership seemed to prefer the more informal approach such as that used at the 1997 meeting. The invitation of Steve McMullin to speak in West Virginia in 1998 about human dimension aspects of concern to fish and wildlife agencies around the country was suggested by Pat Flebbe.

Secretary/Treasurer Election:

Larry Mohn nominated Steve Reeser (KY) to fill the Committee secretary\treasurer vacancy and Frank Fiss volunteered his services (an uncommon occurrence in recent years). Steve was elected and entered the line of succession to the Chair. The other 1997-98 officers are: John Stark (AR), Chair and Jim Habera (TN), Vice-Chair.

Round Table:

Stan Todd (AR): Minimum flow/temperature control models, for use in making suggestions to the Corps of Engineers regarding the White and North Fork rivers, are nearing completion. Habitat restoration work on the Beaver River tailwater is continuing; trout are beginning to use restored areas.

Lee Keefer (GA): A trout management plan is in preparation (will include input from law enforcement and game management). An experimental trout stocking project in the Savannah River tailrace is underway. Brook trout from eight additional streams have collected for genetic analysis (at Auburn).

Steve Reeser (KY): Jarrad Kosa, Kentucky's new project coordinator/statewide research biologist, was introduced. Trout Unlimited wants delayed harvest on some streams in Kentucky; the State will work with them on three streams in the Daniel Boone National Forest.

Mike Kruse (MO): Spencer Turner retired as of January 1, 1997. Mike is organizing a collection of letters to wish Spence well in his retirement (send any to Mike). New regulations (12-20" slot, artificial lures only) are in effect for rainbow trout in Lake Taneycomo to produce a put-grow-and-take fishery. Other regulation changes are underway, including Current River trophy-trout area gear restriction; conversion of portion of N. Fork White River to wild trout management, and trout lure definition refinements. Delayed harvest is now being used in urban impoundments.

Matt Kulp (NPS): Matt now has a permanent position at Great Smoky Mountains National

Park. Monitoring of acid deposition in Smokies streams is continuing and cooperation with other agencies further up the Appalachians is being considered. About 75% of high-elevation streams have a pH of 6.0 or less. Nitrates, not sulfates, are the major contributor and seem to be a peculiarity of old growth forests. Information is being compiled for the Sams Creek Environmental Assessment to evaluate the use of antimycin-A. Brook trout restoration efforts are complete on Lost Bottom Creek and the second rainbow trout removal effort has been completed on Mannis Branch.

Jim Borawa (NC): Brook trout genetics work is continuing; 16 populations/year have been sampled for the last several years and Auburn is doing the analyses. A Western Carolina University group is using cellulose acetate gel electrophoresis on some populations. Brook trout distribution surveys are also underway. Evaluation of delayed harvest regulations with creel surveys has shown them to be extremely popular. Creels will be used on hatchery-supported streams to learn more about the characteristics of these fisheries and the anglers using them. A trout stream map booklet, color coded for regulations, is being produced.

Frank Fiss (TN): No whirling disease has been detected at the State's hatcheries. Sycamore Creek (Tellico River tributary) is still being considered for a brook trout restoration project (more baseline sampling to be conducted this year). Another brook trout restoration project, in cooperation with TU, is planned for L. Prong of Hampton Creek (on a State Natural Area in Carter County). The fish barrier for the Hampton Creek Project will be constructed this summer. Radio-tracking of stocked trout in the Hiwassee River will be conducted in July (in response to problems with warm water). Habitat restoration work on the Caney Fork is underway with the Corps of Engineers and a re-regulation dam is being considered to improve minimum flow. The first delayed-harvest area was established in Gatlinburg following the City's request. A biological assessment regarding stocked trout harming native species (especially those with threatened or endangered status) has a four-year time limit and may require some research.

Jim Habera (UT/TN): A brook trout distribution survey and inventory was completed; 101 populations outside GSMNP were identified, of which about 60% were classified as southern Appalachian. No evidence of a net loss in distribution (including streams where rainbow trout are sympatric) relative the last survey (1978-1984) was detected. A study of electrofishing injury to large brown trout (35% had spinal injuries, none involved fractures or separations of the spinal column) was also completed. Another study comparing otolith and scale ages of brown trout is underway.

Sheryl Bryan (USFS): New USFS Chief Mike Dombeck has a fisheries background. North Carolina timber sales are generating several water quality/aquatic biota concerns. A recent train derailment spilled >100,000 gallons of crude soybean oil into a wild trout stream, but only two dead fish were found.

Pat Flebbe (USFS): Discussed the Southern Appalachian Assessment and a major effort (6 years) on stream woody addition study (Andy is doing similar study on Jefferson National Forest streams). Also working in the Shenandoah National Forest doing fish and habitat surveys.

Monte Seehorn: A brown trout telemetry study (Kyle Burrell) showed very little movement

in the Chattooga River (GA/SC), although one fish moved 4 miles during spawning season. An assessment of sediment sources in the Chattooga River pointed to gravel system roads, not timber roads. Another assessment of temperature suggested that the maximum a stream reaches diurnally is not as important as the minimum it falls back to at night (problems for trout arise if not <70°F).

Larry Mohn (VA): Three delayed-harvest streams were added (one outside D.C.) to Virginia's regulations. The year-round trout program (fall and winter stocking) is in its second year and seems to be working well. Three major storm events in the last three years have left much stream reclamation work to be done. The acid deposition study is in its 12th year. Gypsy moth defoliations have a major impact on stream acidification for first few years after infestation; however, populations have crashed. The first major stream (St. Marys River) appears to be about to go acidic. The possibility of liming (even though wilderness is involved) is being evaluated and will be the largest to date. Wild rainbow trout populations are being checked for whirling disease; some have tested positive, but there have been no outbreaks.

Tom Oldham (WVA): Pressure for delayed-harvest areas is increasing. West Virginia has 17 or 18 catch and release areas now and the number will likely increase (with emphasis on populations in wilderness areas, etc.). A trout stamp fee increase is being considered. Currently, the Department of Natural Resources has no director (new governor). Floods have impacted brook trout populations and anglers are being asked to release them.

M E M O

To: AFS Southern Division Trout Committee
From: Jim Habera, Vice-Chair
Date: 14 January 1998
Re: Minutes of 1997 meeting, 1998 meeting update, etc.

Dear Committee member:

Enclosed is a copy of the minutes from our 1997 meeting in Virginia and a summarization of the round-table discussion. Please note that details regarding some of the items have changed since last April and the status of others has been updated. These changes and updates are as follows:

The 11th International Trout Stream Habitat Improvement Workshop, which the Committee is helping to host, will be held in Fayetteville, AR during 20-22 April 1998. For planning purposes, John has requested that all Committee members advise him of their intentions regarding attendance ASAP. John can be reached at 870-424-5924 (phone), 870-425-7883 (FAX), or arktrout@centuryinter.net (e-mail). Registration fees have been reduced to \$160 before 1 April 1998 and \$190 after 1 April. Lodging at the Hilton remains \$56/night for single or double occupancy.

Our 1998 meeting will be held in Fayetteville on 23 April (following the TSHI Workshop), provided that a quorum is present. John would like some feedback regarding the acceptability of the date. Keep in mind that there will not be enough time to meet during the Workshop and the day before (19 April) is a Sunday. As things currently stand, we will not meet at the Southern Division Midyear in Lexington, KY or in West Virginia in 1998. However, if a quorum is not present in Fayetteville, new meeting plans will need to be made quickly. Again, please let John know whether you will or will not be going to Fayetteville.

Thanks for your cooperation and we hope to see you in April.