

**Minutes of the  
AFS Southern Division Trout Committee Meeting  
Marriot Hotel, Chattanooga, Tennessee  
February 25, 1999**

The 1999 Southern Division AFS Trout Committee met at the 1999 Southern Division AFS Midyear Meeting in Chattanooga, TN. Committee Chair Jim Habera (TN) called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. A quorum was present and a motion to proceed with the meeting was passed. The minutes from the previous meeting at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville, AR (April 23, 1998) were reviewed and approved. John Stark (AR) reported that the treasury balance is approximately \$5,000. John will hold on to \$1,000 to pay for printing of the proceedings of the 11<sup>th</sup> International Trout Habitat Improvement Workshop.

**Old Business**

Pat Flebbe (USFS; [patfle@vt.edu](mailto:patfle@vt.edu), 540-231-7202) continues to maintain and improve the operation of the Trout Committee list server. New committee members need to provide Pat with an e-mail address.

Larry Mohn (VA) reported on the status of the East Coast Trout Culture and Management Workshop III as Chair of the Program Committee for this meeting. East Coast III will be held in June 2000 at Frostburg State University in western Maryland. The Maryland Dept. of Natural Resources is generously providing \$10,000 to host the meeting. This money will not be available until after East Coast III, however there is currently money available for expenses incurred prior to the meeting. Money does not appear to be a problem; therefore it may be possible to offer a rock bottom registration fee. Although there is no longer a Northeast Division Trout Committee, Tom Green and Marty Marcinko (PA) will represent the Northeast. Layout, printing, and mail outs will be handled by Duke Power Co. Joint sponsorship by the Southern Division AFS, Duke Power, and MD DNR was discussed. Other interests may be approached to underwrite the cost of East Coast III as well (TVA, TU National and the state councils). Larry Mohn is looking for a representative from the trout culture community. The meeting theme will be something like Y2K: Trout Management in the New Millennium.

**New Business**

Jim Habera (TN) proposed writing an article in a popular fishing magazine on electrofishing at the last meeting. Spencer Turner wrote an article for *Outdoors Unlimited* and Jim wrote an article for *TroutSouth*, but both have limited distributions. Jim would like to see a similar article in *Trout* (TU's publication).

Similarly, the Nielsen article (Dec 1998, *Fisheries*) which bashed electrofishing was discussed. The committee agreed that the article was misleading and counterproductive. Lee Keefer (GA) felt this was the latest in a general undercurrent against management. Lee pointed out that this is an emotionally driven controversy generated by a few academics to stir up research funding. Steve Moore (USFS), Jarrad Kosa (KY) and others noted that this needs to be countered in the literature. John Stark (AR) suggested that we join with the Fisheries Management Section to create a position statement. Jim Habera (TN) proposed that the committee craft a rebuttal. Jim Borawa (NC) motioned that a rebuttal committee of Jim Habera and Frank Fiss (TN) be created to craft a response for *Fisheries* and this was approved by the members.

Steve Moore (USFWS) requested that the members of the Trout Committee consider submitting papers for the Wild Trout Symposium. The organizers are considering holding the meeting at the Old Faithful Inn in Yellowstone, MT in September 2000.

Larry Mohn motioned to hold the next Trout Committee meeting in conjunction with the East Coast III meeting at Frostburg, MD in June 2000 in order to increase the ability of committee members to attend East Coast III. This was approved by the members.

## Elections

Larry Mohn nominated Lee Keefer (GA) to be the next Secretary/Treasurer. This was seconded by Jim Borawa and Steve Moore followed by an unanimous vote for Lee Keefer to be Secretary/Treasurer. Jarrad Kosa (KY) succeeds Frank Fiss as the Vice Chair and Frank Fiss now succeeds Jim Habera as the Trout Committee Chair for 1999-2000.

## Round Table Discussion

**Jim Habera (TN):** Jim is now employed by TWRA and he continues to work with wild trout in TN. Jim finished his work with brown trout scales and otoliths. A paper he submitted to NAJFM on electrofishing injury in large trout has been accepted. Jim continues to be involved in removal of non-native trout from streams managed for native brook trout.

**Frank Fiss (TN):** Tennessee has several ongoing tailwater projects. Natural reproduction was documented in the South Holston. This has complicated a perceived snagging problem there. TWRA is now dealing with this issue. A resolution was passed at the meeting in AR to support improvements in dissolved oxygen. The Army Corps of Engineers projects are suffering the worst, especially Center Hill and Dale Hollow. There is a dewatering problem being dealt with at Percy Hill.

**Larry Mohn (VA):** The delayed harvest program has been well received and VA plans to expand this program. Two new trophy areas are being established. Special regulations were extended on the South Holston. Liming activities are being done at St. Mary's River. Recently 150 pounds of lime sand were flown in to the upper reaches by helicopter. It is expected that this will be done every 5 years. Brook trout are now being typed from the New River and other streams south of this drainage to look at the distribution of native stream fish. VA is still not stocking fish in the area where the king's rights controversy developed and very limited natural reproduction is occurring there. A few landowners adjacent to the river are beginning to waver in their positions due to the sudden lack of fish in the river.

**Lee Keefer (GA):** An evaluation of the one-mile stretch of delayed harvest water was completed at South Park. Approximately 300-400 anglers/month used the area and an average of 7 trout/trip were caught. Approximately 90% of anglers rated their trip "good" or "excellent". GA is working with SC to develop a delayed harvest area on the Chatooga River. GA is adjusting their stocking based on fishing pressure counts. Brook trout are being typed by the Auburn University. A couple streams had pure strains and some were mixed. The typing technique was re-calibrated in order to make the data comparable to TN. This will allow for a much better understanding of the distribution of native southern strain brook trout. Thirty to 35 populations in GA have been examined thus far.

**Hugh Barwick (Duke Power):** A radio telemetry study was completed at Jocassee Reservoir in northwest South Carolina. There was concern that a narrow epilimnion in the reservoir did not provide adequate habitat. They found that trout stayed close to the shoreline in standing timber. Little movement (<0.25-0.5 mi) was observed throughout the summer. Fish remained concentrated in 3-4 areas of the reservoir. No upward movement was observed at night. Spatial overlap seems to occur between both trout species and blueback herring. Fish were using areas with lower temperature and DO than expected. Of 18 rainbow trout and 31 brown trout tagged, over half were caught by anglers.

**Jeanne Riley and Sheryl Bryant (USFS):** Much time is spent responding to public comments and data analyses. Currently they are working on an aquatic ecosystem classification to relate stream conditions to a NEPA analysis of forest activities. The USFS is also working on the use of off road vehicles on trails issue. It is hoped that Mike Dombeck's push to bring water quality and fisheries issues to the forefront that there will be a ripple effect resulting in more funding.

**John Stark (AR):** Minimum temperature controls are being worked on for the tailwaters in the White River system. This will include the Table Rock and Taneycomo tailwaters as well. A minimum flow of 800 cfs

during periods of no generation has been set on Bull Shoals. Similarly, a 500-cfs minimum flow was set on the Norfolk River. There is concern over how much cold water storage is available. Some tailwaters are now being designated catch-and-release only. Delayed harvest has been instituted on two tailwaters (they are being called "trophy areas"). Tagging studies are ongoing and AR is now using a fluorescent grit mark. They were adipose clipping but now they can do 30,000 browns (6") in two hours. The equipment is available through the DayGlo Corporation in Cleveland, OH. AR has found that particle size "ZQ" works best. There are 20 colors available but about 4-5 of them are distinctly different. Two co-op unit studies are in place: competition between sculpin and brown trout and another on predation on brown trout eggs and fry. John is concerned about the effect of low DO on the health of trout and is seeing severe effects from manganese.

**Mike Shingleton (WV):** Activities to counter stream acidification are ongoing. Using similar methods to VA, lime sand is being flown in by helicopter. Special angling regulations have been established in the areas being treated. TU is donating money to support these projects. Delayed harvest regulations are not being received as well in WV as they are in other states: there were three areas and they cut back to one delayed harvest stream. Two new special regulation streams are being proposed for 2000. Currently there are several fly-fishing only streams. The Timber Company has approached WV about becoming involved with stream restoration projects.

**Matt Kulp (USFS):** Matt is currently working with two ongoing studies. He is looking at the potential reabsorption of OTC marks which will hopefully address the issue of aging with scales vs otoliths. Also, he is examining multiple removals to restore brook trout streams.

**Steve Moore (USFS):** Brook trout are being restored to Silky Creek. It is believed that this stream had brook trout prior to 1910. Water quality is ideal in this stream. He is looking at similar streams to do reintroductions on next year. An EA is being done on the potential for using anamycin to restore streams that cannot be electrofished. They are looking at re-opening brook trout streams to angling which were closed in the 1970's; it now appears that there are enough populations of unique strain brook trout to show that they are not endangered. Several streams were identified in the GSMN Park which experience acid deposition problems. The National Park Service has \$8 million available to set up national water monitoring and fisheries enhancement programs.

**Jarrad Kosa (KY):** Five streams will be managed under delayed harvest regulations beginning in 2000. A study to evaluate changes in size structure and over-wintering of October-stocked trout begins this year. The final report of the Lake Cumberland tailwater movement study is nearly complete. It was found that there was less overall movement of stocked fish than expected. A trout angler phone survey was completed. The evaluation of fingerling stocking in tailwaters is on going, as is an evaluation of the 20" size limit/one brown per day regulation on the Cumberland tailwater. Preliminary data analysis shows a doubling in the number of brown trout and a 450% increase in 10"-13" brown trout. Extensive natural reproduction of rainbow trout was observed during 1998: approximately 45% in fall 1998 samples were juvenile rainbows. This coincides with abnormally consistent spring flows. KY has been working to get the Corps to address serious DO and flow fluctuation problems. The Corps is considering remedies for the DO problem but has refused to address the flow issue. A deal was made with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to avert them from turning Wolf Creek National Hatchery (KY's only trout hatchery) over to the state. KY will pay for 30% of the operation which covers the cost of fish destined for non-mitigation waters.

**Jim Borawa (NC):** Delayed harvest regulations are now in effect on 15 streams. Over 130,000 additional fish are being stocked with 20% of these fish being stocked as catchables. These are additional trout are coming from upgrades at the hatcheries. NC is starting the third year of creel surveys on their trout streams. This information will be used to improve the catchable trout program. They will be looking closely at the angler survey for the angler expectations and desires. Over 150 populations (25%) of brook trout have been typed. NC is archiving sampling data and using GPS to mark trout survey sites. They have had problems with the hydrologic data layer. There are questions concerning the accuracy of coding stream reaches and the accuracy of USGS data. The use of the Clean Water Management Trust Fund to address sedimentation of a stream flowing into the Lake James tailwater is being examined.

**Rick Bivens (TWRA): Delayed harvest regulations were proposed for several streams and were shot down by district personnel and law enforcement officers citing low stream access. The Cherokee tailwater was added to the stocking list during cold months. Brook trout restoration at Sycamore Creek has been completed; trout abundance is extremely high (50-60 kg/ha).**