

Officers:
Aaron Monroe
President
330-637-9009
amonroe@neo.rr.com

Dick Natoli
Secretary
330-545-4576
dnatoli@peoplepc.com

Jeff Kremis
Treasurer
724-588-4378
bentley48@neo.rr.com

Directors:
Bill Fay
724-588-8222
wlfay@nauticom.net

Bud Hanselman
330-545-1906
scottshooks@sbcglobal.net

Jim Mondok
724-981-4513
mondokjj@pathway.net

Richard E. Rickert
724-588-7074
rerblr@svol.net

Bob Shuey
724-533-3212
bob@ncflyshop.com


Youth Coordinator:
Richard E. Rickert

Watershed Coordinator:
Jeff Kremis

**Newsletter Editor &
Banquet Chairman:**
Nick Loprire
330-638-2982
steelhd789@aol.com

Membership Chairman:
Tom Jochman
330-544-2507
tejochman@sbcglobal.net

**Munnell Run
Nursery Coordinator:**
Pete Anthony
724-662-2271
gpanthony@pathway.net



CLEARWATER GAZETTE

A Publication of Neshannock Trout Unlimited Chapter 216

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 1362
Hermitage, PA 16148

Website:

www.neshannock-tu.org

Membership Meetings:

Are announced in the newsletter and on the website.

Board Meeting:

Board Meetings are held at VFW Post 6166 in Hermitage. See the web site for dates.

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December 2005

Editors Notes

I must be getting older. The weather is nothing like I remember it, with regards to the outdoor pursuits. The spring was so wet that early trout fishing was a real crap shoot. The stream conditions were very predictable, high and higher. Later in May the weather calmed and the trip to Potter County on June 3 provided fishing and days that were nearly perfect. As the crew and I descended the mountains that Sunday to return home, the sun warmed us to 77 degrees. By the time we got to I-90 it was 83 and when we hit Youngstown it was 88degrees on June 5th. That was the beginning of the hottest, driest, summer in many a year and with that the end of summer trout fishing.

The lawn went from too soggy to rock hard ruts (from the soggy period). August conditions showed up in early July and the +8 inch rain surplus was soon history. What the heck is going on with the weather? It's fall now and in mid October the leaves are still mostly green, and there in no appreciable rain forecasted for the remainder of the month. Fall steelhead is just starting with
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*Working to conserve, protect, and restore
North America's coldwater fisheries, and their watersheds.*



Editors Notes cont.

cont. from pg. 1

some rain at the end of the month. The bow hunters were losing weight sweating in their tree stands and it is almost November. To add to the misery and aggravation, everyone's local college team has lost "the big game".

Deer are finally beginning to chase and with a little rain at the end of October we may be getting back to normal. Let's hope.

If you have any stories or articles from your past adventures please submit via email to tjochman@sbcglobal.net or steelhd789@aol.com and we will let our readers in on your exploits.

Lost your copy of the last newsletter, interested in helping at the next workday, want to find out about fishing in a certain area or creek, then check out our website www.neshannock-tu.org.

Cabin Fever and Spring Banquet

R. Natoli

It may seem early to mention but what the heck, I just did mention it. Mark those new calendars and plan to join us. Dates will be in late January and late March for the banquet. More Details in the January issue.

Workdays and Stream Improvement

Jeff Kremis

If you are interested in helping next year contact me at 724-588-4378 or bentley48@neo.rr.com to volunteer. Think how much better the waters around us can be if we had more volunteers.

Munnell Run Trout Nursery 10 Years Old

(Sponsor: Neshannock Chapter TU)

The men responsible for stocking some large feisty fish over the past 10 years.

Pete Anthony	Joe Benes
Shawn Hedglin	Don Garrett
Rich Knauff	Ray Magensky
Jim Noble	Chuck Rohrer
Ken Tarczy	Jim Williams

Past Members:

Rob Daugherty • Jesse Garner • Ed Wilcox

Background History

The first nursery to be sponsored by the Neshannock TU Chapter was located on Mercer County Career Center grounds. It was abandoned in the fall of 1996 because of logistics & potential water problems.

The current nursery was approved by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission in January 1997. Restoration of the old slaughter house building commenced in early spring of 1997. Fish commission delivered the first trout the end of

June 97. First stocking of trout from the Munnell Run Trout Nursery was in November of 97. Since becoming operational, an average of 2,000 trout per year have been raised & stocked in Fish Commission approved trout streams that are accessible by the public.

The Munnell Run Trout Nursery staff is very appreciative of the support of the Neshannock Chapter of Trout Unlimited board of officers, & its membership, & many non-TU members. The reality of the nursery could not have been possible without their support & generosity.

Once again the crew at the MRTN has a good problem. This year's crop of trout is out growing their living quarters. Pete and the guys will be forced into some early stocking. This year the crop is some brookies but most are brown trout. They should present some good dry fly fishing this spring.

Anyone interested in joining the team or helping with the stocking program, please contact Pete Anthony at 724.662.2271, or email GPANTHONY@PATHWAY.NET, or Ken Tarczy at 724.662.5765.



Joe Morris - WCO of the year 2004

N. Loprire (Excerpts from PA Boat & Angler)

What a year for Joe Morris. He received the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission 2004 Officer of the Year Award on April 19, 2005, during the annual conference of the Northeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

Joe was lauded for his outstanding knowledge of the Fish and Boat Code, his expertise in investigative work, and his engaging in a fair, effective and productive law enforcement program.

Joe also continually devotes much time and effort to the protection of his district's aquatic resources. During 2004 he investigated 12 reportable environmental incidents, and fines from these prosecutions totaled nearly \$13,000. Environmental pollutions in Mercer County have been on the decline largely because of Officer Morris's vigilance and networking with other conservation/law enforcement agencies.

Joe earned a bachelor's degree in education from Canadian Bible College, and he's completed post-graduate work at Slippery Rock University. Joe is also an NRA firearms instructor for the F&B Commission. In 2004 Joe was named TU's State Coldwater Conservationist of the Year. Joe had always been there for our chapter and I'm sure he does the same for all groups he contacts.

Joe was recently moved but when the officer for Mercer County was ordered over seas, Joe returned to cover Mercer and Lawrence Counties. Joe deserves this award and we hope that he is successful through out his career.

Joe has been very involved with our chapter and has been very helpful in assisting us with projects over the years. He has been a very visible part of the fishing community in the Mercer area and for that and all he has done we are extremely grateful.



You are TU

Duncan Blair (Trout Spring 05)

Do you volunteer? Are you active in your local TU chapter? Are you a coach for your kid's sports team? Do you volunteer at your church or local community center? About a third of you probably answered "yes" to one of these questions. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that 29% of Americans volunteered during 2004 and that those people volunteer an average of 52 hours a year. TU relies on this spirit of volunteerism to support its network of active local chapters. But perhaps you are included in the 71% of the population that hasn't volunteered yet. Why should you get involved in TU?

TU appreciates your financial support but perhaps there is something even more precious to give: your time. Finding the time to volunteer is hard, even for the nation-wide average of an hour a week. We are busy with our jobs, our families and the general demands of life. Most people barely find enough time to fish. So why volunteer?

Because volunteering with TU is rewarding. TU members have increased their volunteer hours an average of 13% every year for the last five years. Members who take the first step and attend a TU restoration project, teach a TU youth education program or even help organize a meeting or banquet really enjoy it. You get to meet and spend time with like-minded anglers. You get to do something fun like rolling rock in streams (Ed note: that is only fun for so long) or teaching kids how to identify bugs they find under rocks. And best of all when you are driving home after spending time with a TU chapter; you know that you have given back to our precious coldwater resources in a very personal and important way.

Editor: All I can say is try it and I'm fairly sure you will like the time you spend on chapter activities. Drop a line to any of the board members and indicate the type of involvement you might like to try. We will do the rest.

Good Bye Old Friend

N. Loppriré

The slow easy days of summer lead into the frantic fall. This is the time for football, hunting, projects delayed due to hot summer weather, fishing, leaf raking, apple picking, the list is endless. So many things to do at this time of year one must be selective to maximize the enjoyment of this sometimes short season. Personally, in the past it was a tough decision between bow hunting deer and extending my fly fishing season by chasing steelhead. After several years the love of the steelhead fishery won out and I gravitated to 80% steelhead fishing, 20% bow hunting. I really loved the fall colors, the cool bright days, the sparkling water of the creeks, especially the Pa creeks that ran so clear. I remember a secret spot I found about 8 years ago, where if the conditions were “right” I could catch a fall steelhead on a dry fly. I would watch the flow and weather conditions and when just right I would take a day off just for a chance at a steelhead on a dry fly. If that didn’t work out I would still have a wonderful time walking the stream and working various runs, riffles and pools with egg patterns. During the week days you could expect to find all the water you cared to fish within a mile from your car. It was nice running into the occasional fisherman along the way to swap lies, and pleasantries. The creeks were like old friends that you may not see for a while but always remain in your thoughts. Each fall I found my mind wandering over all the areas I had fished and picking where I would make my first trip. You knew the river was waiting for your visit...like an old friend.

Sadly I believe I have lost that friendship. It’s not that I haven’t visited; it’s just that the friends have changed. In the last few years the steelhead madness in the fall has all but wiped out any hope of a personal visit on any day of the week. The national magazines have pumped enough verbiage about the PA steelhead streams to cause a fanatic interest the likes of the 1850’s gold rush. I have seen license plates from Alaska, and Oregon and practically every other state. A spot to fish is all that you can hope for on the weekend. It is absolutely absurd to think that you might find “a stretch” of water to yourself.

I know of a guide who had a client last year that booked him for four straight days. This client knew every access point on the creeks and the timing of the runs and such. You might say that it wouldn’t be unusual but this client was here from Japan. He had followed the fishing in Pa waters through magazines for several years and booked his trip. Let’s face it; the prime waters of Pennsylvania are not able to support that amount of human loading in the fall.

Too many people for any reason will cause problems. Statistics will tell you that as the number of people fishing an area increases the number of inconsiderate slobes that will abuse the area goes up. There are more places being posted against fishing every year due and that worsens the crowding. The access areas are true combat fishing and the websites tell of people getting to “their spot” by 4:30 or 5:00 am and waiting for sunrise. Once in your “spot” you are held prisoner. If you leave you lose. I have walked two miles looking for a spot to fish. Once there, I knew that it was most likely beat to death for the last two hours by the hordes around me.

The bait shops love what is happening, but no one else. I for one have lost hope for this depressing situation to change. Worse than that, I can’t conceive how it can be made better. It is so broken it can’t be fixed. When the snow flies there is some relief. But to catch a bright fall run fish and be able to leave your hole to carry the fight and return to fish that hole is nothing short of fantasy.

Now to further commercialize the area, there are mega dollar tournaments to entice even more people to the area in hopes of prizes and more income for the profiteers.

We all know that rivers change as do most things in life and it is time to bid farewell to friends that have changed and to hold on to the fond memories of what used to be.

Telephone 588-3012

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