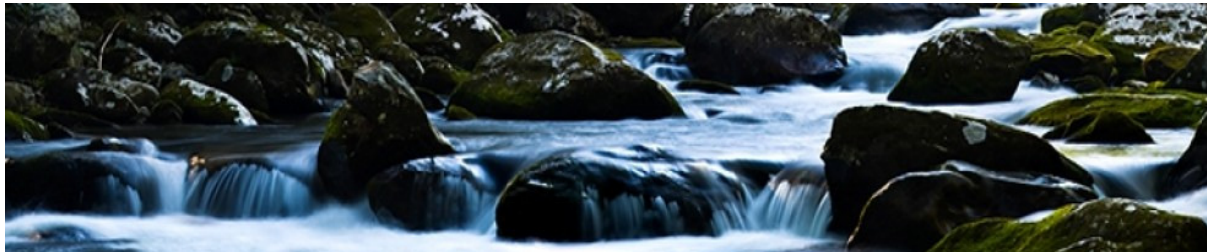


Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited

February 2015 Newsletter



President's Corner

Mike Bryant (mjbryant1954@hotmail.com)

After watching the weather and heavy snow falls up in the Northeast, I realize how fortunate we have been. Having said that, I'm ready for spring. Jan and I will have the opportunity to spend some time in southern Florida. With any luck (and determination), I hope to chase some snook, baby tarpon, and redfish with my trusty 8 weight. When we return, not only will we be gearing up for better trout fishing in the Park, we will also be busy working details for Troutfest, monthly meetings, river clean-ups and new monthly education classes. I can't wait!

Our 2015 Troutfest Banquet & Auction plans are in full swing. The basic format will follow last year's event with several improvements. Check out the article below for additional information. It's important to remember the date, Friday, April 24 and bring a friend. Also check out the new updated website (www.troutfest.org). Many thanks to Joe Hatton for all his time and efforts in updating the website.

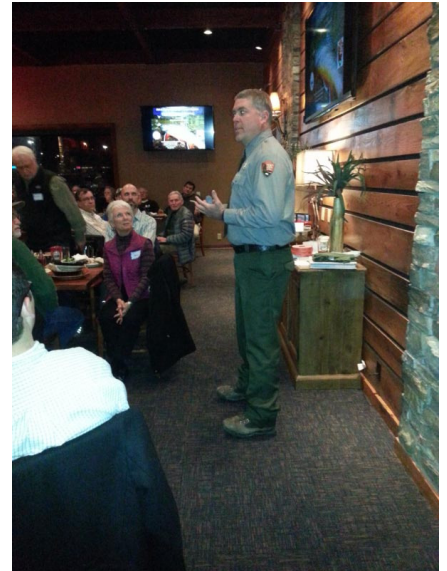
Our Little River Chapter TU Coordinators picked up their trout eggs from the hatchery and all four schools have their Trout-in-the-Classroom programs up and running this winter / spring session. We are off to a great start with the TIC programs this year, and have plans to expand. As I have stated in the past, we have a responsibility to engage our youth with nature and the outdoors. TIC is one of the great ways to connect our kids with the great outdoors. More good things to come!



One request we often hear from our members and visitors is how to fish for trout up in the mountains. We all know how hard it can be to “crack the code” chasing wild trout in the Park. To help with this need, the Chapter is starting a new LRCTU Smoky Mountain Fly Fishing Education Program. You can read more about the program below in this newsletter.



Thanks to Matt Kulp for another great program at the January meeting. We had the largest attendance that I've seen in the last several years with standing room only during Matt's presentation. Matt covered multiple topics regarding activities in the Park including the future opening of Lynn Camp Prong. Also, thanks to Willow for her great review of the TIC program at



Townsend Elementary!

Finally, I hope you will attend the February 26 Chapter Meeting. Alex Bell will be providing a presentation the "Western North Carolina Fishing Trail." This is a great opportunity to learn about new fishing opportunities in our region. So much water, so little time!!

Stay warm, be safe!

Mike Bryant

February Meeting Features Western NC Fishing Trail

Alex Bell will be our speaker at our February meeting. His talk will be on the "Western North Carolina Fishing Trail." This trail of 15 stops in Jackson County, NC, stretches roughly 10 miles from the headwaters near Balsam down to the city of Sylva.

Born and raised in the of Florida panhandle, all of Bell's relatives on his mother's side of the family salt water fished while his dad's side of the family preferred fresh water. Consequently, growing up, he was either on a ball field, in the gym, or on the water. Not a bad way to spend a childhood.

Bell ended up playing his senior year at Western Carolina University in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina. He fell in love with the region, and more importantly, the people. "I have been blessed to spend a 30 year career in public

education in Jackson County, retiring as a high school principal in September of 2007", he says.

He was asked to attend a meeting with Julie Spiro, the executive director of the Chamber of Commerce to come up with ideas to promote the county to anglers. "We came up with the WNC Fly Fishing Trail & Map. The first fly fishing trail in the country", he explains. To date, this effort includes distributing more than 100,000 maps and Bell's speaking to over 1000 fly fishers at TU and fly fishing clubs in nine different states. The trail covers 15 spots in Jackson County covering big rivers, small streams, and everything in between.

Along this journey he became an Adaptive Fly Fishing Practitioner, meaning he teaches and certifies others to teach fly fishing/tying to people with disabilities. The Fall Semester of 2013 he taught a class as an adjunct professor on the therapeutic benefits of fly fishing to students in the Recreation Therapy Department at Western Carolina University. Bell is a professional guide who runs AB's Fly Fishing Guide Service. His web page address is: <http://www.abfish.org/>



Please join us Thursday, February 26, 2015, at Calhoun's Restaurant, located at 751 Watkins Road in Maryville, TN. We meet at 6PM for dinner and fellowship. We have a brief meeting at 7pm followed by our speaker.

CONGRATULATIONS CHARLIE!

One of our members received a national honor recently. Charlie Chmielewski was cited as a CONSERVATION HERO by Field & Stream Magazine. We know the work that Charlie puts in and it's nice that he received recognition for this on the big scale.

From Field and Stream article: "When the Park Service approached our chapter in 1993, asking us to help monitor acidity of streams in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, the impacts of acid pollution on native brook trout weren't proven," says Chmielewski, an avid fly fisherman who has helped organize the volunteer effort for the past 21 years. "Now, the data is pretty definitive, and because of our efforts, one operator of coal-fired power plants in the area has committed to discharging only one-tenth of the sulfur they once did." He also helps with a project to relocate brookies into the Lynn Camp Prong using electroshocking equipment and aerated tank back packs."



The Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited invites you to attend the 2015 Troutfest Banquet and Auction. Our annual fund raising event will be held on the evening of Friday, April 24th at the Hilton Knoxville Airport located in Alcoa, TN.

Last year's event was a fun and entertaining evening, and a great success in raising funds to support the LRTU mission of *Protecting & Restoring Cold Water Resources and Watersheds in and around the Great Smoky Mountains National Park*. In addition to our continued donations to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park Fisheries Department, the 2014 banquet launched a new chapter initiative, the Steve Moore Youth Education Fund. Donations to this fund allowed us to introduce the Trout in the Classroom program to four area schools. Interest in expanding this program are high, and our goal for 2015 is to generate funding which will allow us to expand this exciting hands-on youth education program and other new programs.

We are very pleased to announce that 2015 Troutfest tickets are now on sale and may be purchased online through a secure link on our website www.troutfest.org. This new feature will make ticket purchases, or donations for those unable to attend, but who still want to support the event, much more convenient.

For additional information and updates on Troutfest 2015, or the Little River Chapter of Trout Unlimited and ongoing events and news, please visit www.troutfest.org or www.lrctu.org.

Be sure to mark your calendar for Friday, April 24th, purchase your tickets today, and help us spread the word! We hope you will be able to attend and help support the Park and youth education needed to build tomorrow's leaders.

*The Hilton Knoxville Airport is providing a special rate of \$95 / night for Troutfest (April 24th). Rooms with King Beds or two Double Beds are available. To register a room at this rate, contact Tiara Giles at 865-970-4300. Parking at the Hilton is free.

Help Still Needed for Water Sampling!

Volunteer Meeting Coming Up February 28

A number of people have responded to the call for help with the water sampling program but we still need 4 - 6 more volunteers for another successful year. We sample 6 times a year but you don't have to sign up for that much. We are looking for volunteers who can go at least for two samples. The following explains the importance of continuing the program.

Your help is needed in 2015. Our Acid Deposition Sampling Program that began in 1993 will add another sample route on the Tennessee side of the Park (Middle Prong Little Pigeon River).

Why is the Program Important?

- Because of our data and other air policy, over the past three decades, TVA and other eastern U.S. power producers, have decreased sulfate deposition by 57% and nitrate deposition has decreased by 23%.
- However, there is a puzzle to be solved. Stream acid levels at most elevations have not improved as expected and brook trout continue to lose habitat, so more study is needed.
- Air regulators and policy makers would like to see additional stream response data across the park and how park plants and animals respond to the improving air emissions.

Why is Another Sample Route Being Added?

- To solve the puzzle, NPS plant, soil, and stream experts are working together and expanding their joint efforts to collocate sites around the park as well sample all elevations. This means we are setting up an additional watershed where soil, plant and stream samples are taken.

How Do I Sign Up to Learn More and To Help?

A meeting has been scheduled for **Saturday, February 28, 2015** at 9:00 AM at Park Headquarters.

- To sign up contact Charlie Chmielewski at charlieflyfish@gmail.com mobile phone 865-661-7325.
- A free breakfast will be provided, so please notify Charlie ahead of the meeting so enough food will be available.
- At the meeting, we will provide up to date data results, show the routes, conduct training, organize the sample teams, and develop the schedule for the next year of sampling.

Upcoming Local Fishery Meetings

On Saturday, March 7, two meetings are planned in Knoxville that will interest anyone who's committed to conserving, protecting and restoring Tennessee's coldwater fisheries.

* **The first, in the morning, is the Coldwater Meeting**, which was a regular event for many years but has been in abeyance since 2013. Participants at the Coldwater Meeting will include representatives of TU, TVA, TWRA, the National Park Service and the U.S. Forest Service. This is a great opportunity to learn what the agencies are doing that affects coldwater habitat.

* **The second meeting, after lunch, is the Tennessee Council TU meeting.** There, representatives of the eight TU chapters in Tennessee will be discussing recent projects and future plans. If you'd like to know what's going on—and to add your comments—you are welcome to join us.

Both these gatherings will be at Lawson McGhee Library, 500 W. Church Ave., Knoxville. The library opens at 10 on Saturdays; the Coldwater Meeting will start about 10:30. After the Coldwater Meeting, TU members will have lunch before proceeding with the council meeting.

Space in the meeting room is limited to 69 people. Because this message is being distributed to the entire membership of Tennessee TU, **RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE IN ADVANCE TO ASSURE YOURSELF A SEAT AND A SANDWICH!** We also welcome suggestions for agenda items.

To reserve a seat, and to suggest discussion topics, please respond to me at tncounciltu@gmail.com .

Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you on March 7,
Dick Geiger

Little River Clean-Up – Saturday, May 2

Plan to be a part of our annual Little River Clean-up on **Saturday, May 2**. This is an important part of our mission to preserve and protect watersheds in the Park. You can support this mission by donating several hours of your time. All are invited. We will meet at the Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area. Plan to be there by 9:00 am. Matt Kulp will lead the cleanup efforts. After the clean-up, we'll provide a great lunch prepared by Outdoor Chef Extraordinaire Mike McKinsey around 12:00. There will be plenty of fishing opportunities and fellowship in the afternoon.

Trout Camp

We have a higher number of applications for this year's Trout Camp than in the past, so if you have considered sending a kid, you need to act quickly. Trout Camp 2015 is designed to give kids an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the importance of our nation's aquatic resources with an emphasis on conservation, protection and restoration of coldwater ecosystems. Participants will learn about stream ecology, brook trout restoration, stream physics and water chemistry, fishing etiquette and aquatic entomology. They will fish with fly fishing pros, learn how to tie flies with fly tying experts; and they will enjoy many other activities including hiking, learning how to cast using a fly rod, and learn essential fly fishing knots. Swimming, basketball and other activities will also be available.

Trout Camp 2015 will begin on Monday afternoon, June 15, and end at noon Saturday, June 20. Boys and girls 12 to 15 years old as of June 15 are eligible to apply. The Camp is limited to 14 kids.

Announcing a New LRCTU Education Program

In response to many requests for help in fishing for wild trout in our region, the Chapter will be rolling out a new educational program – **LRCTU Smoky Mountain Fly Fishing Education Program**.

The purpose of the program is to provide basic introductory training on a variety of topics pertinent to fishing in the mountains. Our intent is to provide a different topic each month. We are in the planning stages and will have a steep startup curve, but we intend to rollout the first class in either April or May. Here are some of the classes we are working on:

- General Fly Fishing Class
- Safety Class
- Basic Entomology / Flies Class
- Basic Casting Class
- On the Water Class
- Dry Fly Tactics Class
- Brook Trout Class
- Fishing With a Buddy
- Nymph Fishing Techniques Class

All classes are free. Be aware of these important opportunities.

The Little River Chapter Trout Unlimited Newsletter is produced for current members. Please ensure that you have a viable email address on file with your membership information at Trout Unlimited. You can add an email address or update your current email at www.tu.org or call 1-800-834-2419.

Note: Anyone with news, such as an event or account of a fishing trip, etc., please send it along to newsletter editor, Dave Ezell ezop@charter.net

Also, keep up with current events and find valuable information sources at our website www.lrctu.org