

**Minutes from Tennessee Council of Trout Unlimited Conference Call
June 12, 2019, 8:00 – 8:45 pm**

Members on the Call

Frances Oates – Chair

Mike Bryant

Jim Herrig - Responsible for these minutes

Steve Brown

Tony Gregg

Dick Geiger

Steve Fry

Agenda Items:

* **STREAM Girls:** Jeff Wright has offered to serve as point person to get STREAM Girls going in TN. TN Aquarium Conservation Institute and the Girl Scouts are very interested. We could do a license plate grant for startup costs (waders, fly rods, tying equipment, patches, housing costs, TU memberships for participants); to pay for TU staff time, we probably would need funding from another source. The full text of Jeff's email to Max Worthey, Steve Fry and me is pasted below:

Max, Steve, and Frances,

I am reaching out to you all to talk STREAM Girls and potentially bringing this program to Tennessee. If you aren't familiar, [STREAM Girls](#) is a partnership with Girl Scouts USA where scouts go through multiple sessions to observe a stream, collect flow data, sample macroinvertebrates, and learn about fly fishing and tying. This is delivered in either a weekend or multiple Saturday format. TU provides volunteers and equipment for the sessions and Girl Scouts provide volunteers to manage the girls and handle any overnight component.

I'm writing you three as the potential to host one or more of these event in Chattanooga has become very real over the past couple weeks. I mentioned the program to Meredith Harris from the Tennessee Aquarium Conservation Institute and she went all in immediately. She is willing to volunteer TNACI staff to assist with stations and trainings and may be able to get us access to the TNACI facility as a host site. The Girl Scouts have been interested since I first approached them in 2016 as an OMTU volunteer and would love to see this happen. I think this program fits well with the new Council Strategic Plan and may be a way to get more female involvement in both Trout Camp and also in local chapters.

My current plan for STREAM Girls in TN is to:

- Serve as point for the initial project with the intention of transferring ownership over to the chapters or council for future events.
- Open the discussion with the Girl Scouts and navigate the paperwork process to get the TN Council or chapters certified as a partner organization.
- Apply for a grant from a Chattanooga based foundation to cover program start-up costs. These cost would include supplies such as waders, fly rods, tying equipment, patches, housing costs, TU memberships for participants, and also TU staff time for the trainings. I envision the equipment belonging to the TN Council to be used for future STREAM Girls events or other youth activities.
- Identify potential locations in the Chattanooga area that could host the event and complete the necessary paperwork required.

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The biggest component missing from this plan are the volunteers needed to run the sessions and that is where I'm hoping to engage the Appalachian Chapter and Hiwassee Chapter. Your chapters would serve as the volunteer base to run the program. Together, we would promote the volunteer need to you chapter membership and secure participants. STREAM Girls has actually been able to attract new, female volunteers to chapters in other parts of the country and I believe we might see the same with your chapters as well.

I wanted to run this all by you prior to moving too far forward. Please let me know your thoughts when you have time. If everything sounds agreeable, we can setup a conference call sometime to talk through details.

Jeff Wright
Southeast Volunteer Coordinator

Discussion about STREAM Girls and a kickoff event:

- All agreed that before beginning, we need dedicated leaders to ensure that this is a continuing project.
- Steve F. – license plate grant money could be used for equipment; Council fishing rods are probably at the Clinch River Chapter; staff time may not be paid.
- Frances - Ask Jeff to work up a budget; Council will put in a grant request.
- Steve F. - Tn Aquarium could host the event.
- Jim – Trout Camp is a similar program with many training sessions already tried and tested.
- Other Chapters, besides Appalachia and Hiwassee, need to help with STREAM Girls.
- Jim – Don Denney (Hiwassee Chapter) is a counselor at Trout Camp this year; I will talk to him about the STREAM Girls program.

* **Grants:** Frances emailed all chapter leaders (including executive committee, chapter officers, board members, committee chairs) with the grants program summary, application and scoresheet, hoping to stimulate applications from all chapters. She asked: What would you think of sending the same information to Jim Habera (others at TWRA?), the new USFS fisheries biologist (name?)—and who else? I could easily do a press release as well. For a sample of what it might say, see <http://tctu.org/conservation-grants.html>.

Discussion on grants:

- Promotion is needed this year (~\$100,000 available this year)
- Possible grant proposals: Tellico Brook Trout Hatchery – intern; Hiwassee or Appalachian Chapter could apply. (Frances will talk to the Hiwassee Chapter)
- Frances needs the contact information for the US Forest Service Fisheries Biologists – Matt Grove and Marcia Carter; Jim will send that information

* **Scholarships:** John Reinhardt suggested at the May council meeting that we emulate North Carolina in providing college scholarships (\$1,000 per year?) for college students going into fisheries or other professional fields related to trout. He suggested a foundation that could be self-funding once a \$25,000 goal is reached; Jeff Wright wondered if an endowment could be set up using license plate funds. Caleb Abramson was funded by the NC program; Brett Winchel

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applied for it. Note: The grants program summary prohibits grants to individuals; if we wanted to provide scholarships, would have to address that (send money directly to the college/university).

Discussion on scholarships:

- Deposit funds into a trust and use interest for an endowment or scholarship; Rufus King is a TU member who is also a banker and could assist with setting up an endowment. (Mike will contact Rufus.)

*** Other topics:**

- Need replacements for Council Secretary and National Leadership Coordinator in the near future.

Conference Call ended 8:45

Respectfully submitted by Jim Herrig