



Tennessee Council, Trout Unlimited

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Minutes of meeting held July 27, 2013, at Longbranch Campground below Center Hill Dam, near Cookeville. This gathering was preceded by a 9 a.m. meeting with representatives of TWRA and the Army Corps of Engineers in the Ranger Office near Center Hill Dam, with presentations from Jim Habera and Jason Henegar on TWRA's coldwater activities and from Allen Robbins on the Trout Hatchery Funding Working Group.

Chapters present: **Appalachian**, Steve Fry; **Cherokee**, Allen Robbins; **Clinch River**, Steve Brown, Dick Geiger, Clayton Gist, Frances Oates, John Thurman; **Cumberland**, Dick Davis, Roger Hamiter; **Great Smoky Mountains**, Rick Murphree; **Little River**, Mike Bryant; **Overmountain**, Jim Austin. **Also present:** Bill Coyne, regional coordinator for the Tennessee Valley, Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing; and Kyle Tessler and Summer Kapanka, participants in the 2013 trout camp.

Chapters absent: **Delta, Hiwassee.**

The council meeting was called to order at 10:44 a.m. by chairman Rick Murphree, who thanked Roger Hamiter for his work in organizing the day's meetings, to be followed by fishing on the Caney Fork River.

Minutes of the Feb. 2 meeting were unanimously approved on a motion by Hamiter, seconded by Dick Geiger.

A proposed Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation General Permit for Recreational Metal and Mineral Prospecting was discussed, with concerns expressed for potential damage to coldwater habitats that might result from the use of chemicals and mechanized methods. Recreational hand panning for gold was not considered to be a hazard. Murphree will get more information from Jim Herring, fisheries biologist in Cherokee National Forest, and circulate to council members a draft comment to be sent to TDEC, opposing mechanical and chemical prospecting but not opposing hand panning.

U.S. Senate Bill 1294, "to designate as wilderness certain public land in the Cherokee National Forest," doesn't seem likely to affect Trout Unlimited, according to Steve Fry. Murphree said he is inclined to support the bill, but will discuss it with Herring to make sure possible effects are well understood.

Rechartering is required now for all Tennessee TU chapters except Delta, which is not due for rechartering until 2015. All the chapters except Appalachian have passed new bylaws reflecting the new national model; Fry said Appalachian's new bylaws are being held up only by a technical issue. Strategic planning, a process which complements the new bylaws, was discussed by Steve Brown and Dick Geiger, who presented Clinch River Chapter's plan and the process used to develop it. On a motion by Geiger, seconded by Robbins, the council voted unanimously to send to the organizational committee of TU National a request to recharter all the chapters except Delta.

A total of \$32,458 from TU license plate funds is available for conservation projects, Dick Davis said. He added that the state requires an auditor's report on these funds and a CPA is needed for that purpose. Murphree said he will look for a firm that specializes in audits of nonprofit organizations.

Robbins described a Trout in the Classroom program funded by Cherokee Chapter for 22 children who were in Johnson City as cancer patients at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The TIC program was organized by the children's teacher and held at Bristol Motor Speedway, where her class meets. The students, ages 3 to 14, raised trout fingerlings and released them in North Indian Creek, Unicoi County, where the children picnicked, watched the released fish, then toured the nearby federal hatchery. The teacher reported results to the chapter in the spring, Robbins said, and it was the first time he'd seen his members cry.

Davis was unanimously reelected National Leadership Council representative, on a motion by Brown, seconded by Jim Austin.

John Thurman reported on the Great Smoky Mountains Trout Adventure Camp, for which each chapter gets at least one slot. Two of the 2013 campers, Kyle Tessler and Summer Kapanka, told the council how much they had enjoyed the experience and what they learned from it.

The council has provided grants to keep camp tuition below \$500; in 2014, Thurman would like to make available an alumni position to be filled by a former camper. The charge from Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont would be \$125 to bring in the alum, a new cost in the budget. On a motion by Murphree, seconded by Robbins, the council voted unanimously to provide \$4,000 to keep tuitions at \$495, add the alumni position and provide the camp for a minimum of eight and a maximum of 12 campers.

Thurman also discussed a pilot program under which TU in Kentucky had agreed to cooperate in running the 2013 trout camp. The program did not work out well, and he suggested dissolving the agreement but inviting Kentucky TU to continue having students apply for camp admission. The council agreed (no vote was taken).

The national TU meeting is set for Sept. 26-29 in Madison, Wisconsin, Murphree said; he encouraged others to attend.

Concern was expressed by Brown and Fry that agencies including TVA, Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Forest Service, formerly represented at the twice-yearly coldwater meeting hosted at TVA in Knoxville, did not attend this meeting. Through the coldwater meeting, TU has helped broker cooperation among the agencies, Fry said. Hamiter said the changed format was his idea, hoping to encourage younger people to participate by adding something to make the trip worthwhile and moving around to see other places. Thurman commented that it was a good idea that can be tweaked; Brown added that one of the council's strengths is the ability to pull all the partners together.

Bill Coyne said Project Healing Waters is excited to have three Tennessee chapters now, including Johnson City, Chattanooga and Knoxville.

On a motion by Geiger, the meeting adjourned at 1:25 p.m.