

# TIGHT LINES February 2006 Newsletter of the

## Rabun Chapter (522) of Trout Unlimited

Editor – Doug Adams [edadams1@alltel.net](mailto:edadams1@alltel.net)

*"Work is for people who don't know how to fish."* Anonymous

### THE CHAPTER MEETING PLACE

**Clayton Presbyterian Church (Located behind the Post Office) - Clayton, GA**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the Month 6:30 pm – Social & Yarn Spinning 7:00 pm – Program & Meeting**  
(you don't have to believe the yarns - - if you don't want to)

At every regular chapter meeting there will be a raffle for fishing or camping items to help pay the cost of mailing the newsletter to members without E-mail. Bring an item to donate and a dollar or two for raffle tickets - you might win something.

*"There's a fine line between fishing and standing on the shore like an idiot."* Steven Wright

#### "FORWARD CASTING" Important Dates - See you there!

**Feb 4 (Sat) Annual Planning Meeting**, 8 am, Breakfast Meeting at the Dillard House

**Feb 7 (Tues) Fly Tying**, 7 pm, with Terry Rivers at his home near Persimmon; Call or email for directions (706) 782 7419 [tr1121@alltel.net](mailto:tr1121@alltel.net)

**Feb 14 (Tues) Valentine's Day** You decide which activity for today will be best for your 2006 fishing season.

**Feb 21 (Tues) Chapter Meeting**, 6:30 pm, Clayton Presbyterian Church  
**Program:** Mike Crane - *Explaining the Plans for User Surveys on the Upper Chattooga River*

**Feb 28 (Tues) Board of Directors** meeting, 7 pm, followed by **Fly Tying** at Terry Rivers' house.

**Mar 4 (Sat) GA TU Council Meeting**, 9 am, Location TBD

**Mar 7 (Tues) Fly Tying**, 7 pm, with Terry Rivers at his home near Persimmon

**Mar 11 (Sat) Hoot on the Hooch**, 6:30 pm, Black Bear Dinner Theater off Hwy. 75 between Helen and Cleveland; Bar-B-Q, Bluegrass, and more

**Mar 14 (Tues) Fly Tying**, 7 pm, with Terry Rivers at his home near Persimmon

**Mar 21 (Tues) Chapter Meeting**, 6:30 pm, Clayton Presbyterian Church  
**Program:** Kyle Burrell & Duane Stalnaker – *Small Stream Tactics*

**Mar 28 (Tues) Board of Directors** meeting, 7 pm, followed by **Fly Tying** at Terry Rivers' house

**REMEMBER - GEORGIA TROUT CAMP! June 11-16th!**

We need you to mentor our campers – put it on your calendar!

#### FLY OF THE MONTH

by Terry Rivers



GOLD RIB HARES EAR

This fly will represent the March Brown mayfly nymph. Pounding the bottom with this pattern can provide constant action from mid-morning into the early stages of the hatch. However, nymphal color tends to adapt to the color of the streambed. During February, March, and early April have some of these tied up from a light brown to almost black.

**Hook:** 12 to 14 Std nymph hook

**Tail:** Deer hair or squirrel tail

**Body:** Rabbit dubbing – color of choice

**Abdomen:** Same as body or shade darker

**Wing Case:** Turkey tail – burn ends with lighter

*"Fortunately, fly tying is a craft that has not been overtaken by the machine and computer age. The individual is still important in fly tying."*

Helen Shaw

## February Hatches

<u>The Bugs</u>	<u>Time of Month</u>	<u>Time of Day</u>	<u>Suggested Flies</u>
Winter Black Stone	All Month	L am to M pm	18-20 Black Elk-hair Caddis or Griffith's Gnat 16-18 Black Stone Nymph or Pheasant Tail Nymph
Small Dun Caddis	Late	L am to M pm	18 Brown Elk-hair or Deer-hair Caddis 18 Hair's Ear Nymph
Blue Winged Olive & Blue Quill	Late	L am to M pm	16-18 BWO, Blue Quill or Adams Parachute 16-18 BWO Nymph or Pheasant Tail Nymph
Quill Gordon	Late	L am to M pm	12-14 Quill Gordon 12 Quill Gordon Nymph
Midges	All Month	All Day	18-22 Griffith's Gnat 18-22 Midge Pupa

**TU Chapter 'Website-of-the-Month':** <http://goldrushtu.org/>  
(Take a look at their 'photos')

### Q & A

(Continued from January Issue)

Q. What do you mean by "River Ecosystem Conservation - Wildlife and Resource" as an Upper Chattooga user group?

A. Butch Clay of South Carolina ForestWatch expressed this very well in his written comments to the Forest Service:

Part 2 of a 3 part Series (Editor's note: Our thanks to Butch Clay for permission to reprint here.)

Message Subject: Recreation Use Form, Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River

Resource conditions: (i.e.: an understanding of environmental settings, characteristics, and potential impacts.)

With all due respect to all parties, to my mind what is getting lost in all this talk about "visitor capacity" and "use" is, precisely, the resource itself. It was a unique, probably unrepeatable combination of historical, topographical and managerial factors that bequeathed to us the rare treasure that is the rugged, wild, upper Chattooga. It's wild and fine to this day only because it has been mostly hard to reach. Say what you want to about this boater initiative, it will throw the baby out with the bath water. If the boating initiative goes through, the wilderness and solitude are substantially compromised for all "users."

The beginning of ANY discussions of possible Limits of Acceptable change to that unique resource should rightfully begin with the possible changes in the wild river resource itself that ANY increase in floater use would bring about. That's paramount, in my view, to considerations of an understanding of environmental settings, characteristics, and potential impacts.

In other words, though this discussion so far is being mostly framed as an issue of possible "user conflict" and the "allocation of resources" across user groups and stakeholders, we should nevertheless not lose sight of the fact that the Chattooga headwaters area has value in and of itself as a unique natural watershed that is far wilder and more intact than most rivers of its size and proximity to urban centers. First consideration of acceptable changes to this state of affairs must be: What makes the Chattooga headwaters unique, how did it get this way, and what will happen to those unique values under even a partial implementation of this new initiative.

Lastly, I believe that we should look closely at the changes brought about in the lower reaches of the Chattooga by steadily increasing float traffic, building over the years. If this measure goes through, a similar if admittedly less intensely intrusive regime of human pre-occupation will become established above Highway 28, just as it has below. The result will be a changed—and substantially diminished—ecological "carry capacity" in the headwaters.

The final segment will be in the next issue of TIGHT LINES:

**"Social conditions:** The upper Chattooga as a wild "sanctuary" and as a place of wilderness instruction."

***"When I go fishing I ... want to get away from it all, for it is silence and solitude even more than it is fish that I am seeking ... As for big fish, all is relative. Not every tuna is a trophy."***

William Humphrey

## The Sixth in a Series:

### Stream Habitat Protection and Enhancement

#### Q. What is Large Woody Debris (LWD) and why is it important to trout waters?

**A. The Forest Service defines LWD as any piece(s) of dead woody material [e.g., dead boles (the main stem of trees), limbs, and large root masses] on the ground in forest stands, or in streams.**

The below explanation was written by Andy Dolloff, Ph.D in Fisheries and Wildlife. Andy is a researcher with the USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station at VPI. This summary is from an article titled: *Large Woody Debris - the Common Denominator for Integrated Environmental Management of Forest Streams*. (Reprinted with Dr. Dolloff's permission) For more info, click on: <http://www.riparianbuffers.umd.edu/manuals/dolloff.html> or [http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/ja/ja\\_flebbe002.pdf](http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/ja/ja_flebbe002.pdf)

A variety of aquatic species depend on the natural accumulation of trees, branches, and root wads known as large woody debris (LWD). LWD slows the flow of water, dissipates energy, traps sediment and organic matter, and creates microhabitats for fish and macro invertebrates. LWD in the form of overhanging logs, debris jams, and especially root wads forms pools and provides complex cover. Removal of LWD typically results in habitat simplification and fewer, smaller fish. Habitat simplification resulting from timber harvest and subsequent decreases in residual LWD loading and input has been linked to long-term changes in the species composition of fish communities. LWD is a major feature of refugia across a multitude of habitat types and spatial scales.

Most LWD enters streams from a relatively narrow band on either bank. Debris can be introduced from more distant sources on floodplains and hill slopes, however, when transported by floods or debris torrents. Rates of LWD input vary depending on factors such as size of receiving stream, age, species and health of trees in the surrounding riparian zone, and historical land use. The greatest inputs of LWD can usually be traced to specific catastrophic events.

The particular arrangement of instream LWD is influenced by the dynamics of the addition process, stream size, and geomorphic characteristics of the site. Once in the channel, LWD may persist only until the next high flow or for hundreds of years. The highest loads of LWD usually are associated with coniferous forest types in undisturbed riparian zones adjacent to streams in the Pacific Northwest. Estimates of LWD loading tend to be lower in southeastern streams, owing in part to the long history of settlement and land clearing in the East.

Centuries of forest and river management worldwide have changed the composition and appearance of most forested watersheds so that it is difficult for most people to appreciate the importance of LWD. As was true in other parts of the country, log driving and splash dams were common in parts of the southern Appalachians.

Riparian zones are now being managed for their ability to sequester nutrients, filter sediments, grow specific agricultural and forest crops and provide recreation as well as LWD. Criteria for LWD management should be based on input from many different disciplines, including morphology, hydrology, silviculture, and engineering. Management of LWD will be most effective when approached from an entire watershed rather than an individual reach perspective.

Engineered stream and direct additions of LWD can be effective stream improvements but are costly in both labor and time. Many disturbed riparian areas if allowed to recover on their own will regain the ability provide LWD, given enough time. A mix of techniques is necessary to address both specific current conditions and long-term goals for natural LWD recruitment.

The diversity of riparian zone functions and values suggests that advocates for LWD must compete for their future raw material (trees) with components of other uses. Width of streamside management zones (SMZs) should be based on objective criteria including the probability of LWD recruitment. Because of the different values associated with individual tree species, riparian species composition can be manipulated to meet specific management objectives.

Large woody debris is an effective model for implementing integrated environmental management.



All Pictures of Upper Chattooga – Above the Iron Bridge (Bull Pen Rd)

photo credits – Joe Gatins

#### Editor's note:

Excerpts from an American Whitewater (AW) article states: “Logs are the predators of paddlers and we treat them how our ancestors in this country treated wolves and mountain lions. They are generally disliked, their importance to the ecosystem is completely misunderstood, they are removed whenever possible, and if one is ever implicated in the injury or death of a human it is ceremoniously destroyed.” The AW article goes on to explain “that logs have incredible ecological importance in many river systems.” AW urges boaters to let “rivers functioning up to their potential.” For the complete AW article: [http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Wiki/stewardship:woody\\_debris](http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Wiki/stewardship:woody_debris) Unfortunately, some otherwise environmentally ethical boaters don't agree with this AW stream stewardship position. A few boaters believe they are performing a “volunteer service” by removing LWD from headwater streams such as Overflow Ck, Holcomb Ck, Big Ck and Green River narrows in NC after natural input (i.e. wind, ice, fire, & disease).

## On the Other Hand

Forest Service streams are managed in a manner that emphasizes and recruits LWD. The desired condition is approximately 200 pieces of LWD per stream mile (Sumter NF L&RMP, page 3-41). During 2005 alone, Rabun TU volunteers worked in 5 different NE Georgia trout streams enhancing habitat and making direct additions of LWD. All of the LWD additions were designed by fisheries biologists and installed under the supervision of the USFS and/or GA DNR professionals.

**Editor's note:** Rabun TU volunteers have never installed, anchored, relocated, or removed LWD and/or rocks in designated "Wilderness" areas nor in the "Wild" or "Scenic" sections of the Chattooga or West Fork Rivers. In these areas the management is focused on protecting the Outstandingly Remarkable Values of the river and preserving the natural environment and natural processes from human influences. By law, the landscape character in these areas is naturally evolving. Disturbance is primarily caused by natural process (floods, wind storms, insects, diseases, ice, and fires) or prescribed fire. The hemlock woolly adelgid and the southern pine beetle should provide additional natural LWD recruitment for these streams.

## Watershed Restoration - *Embrace-A-Stream*

Reprinted from the National TU website <http://www.tu.org/site/pp.asp?c=7dJEKTNuFmG&b=1063941>

**Embrace-A-Stream (EAS) is the flagship grant program for funding Trout Unlimited grassroots conservation efforts that advance TU's mission of conserving, protecting, and restoring coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.**

Overseen by a committee of TU volunteers and administered by its national office, Trout Unlimited annually raises money from TU members, corporate and agency partners, and foundations to distribute as small grants to local TU projects. Since its inception in 1975, EAS has funded 812 individual projects for a total of more than \$3 million in direct cash grants. Local TU Chapters and Councils contributed an additional \$5.4 million in cash and in-kind services to EAS funded projects for a total program investment of more than \$8 million.

The goal of EAS is to conserve coldwater fisheries through innovative grassroots conservation projects. Successful projects are based on sound science, benefit the resource, strengthen the local TU chapter and council, and help build the constituency for protecting trout and salmon. TU volunteers are actively involved in project work and are expected to provide matching funds. An Embrace-A-Stream Committee comprised of TU volunteer representatives and scientific advisors evaluates all proposed projects.

In the most recent 2005 grant cycle, EAS provided approximately \$170,000 for 32 projects. Native trout were clearly the winners in this round with the most number of awards. Golden trout in California, sea-run brook trout in Rhode Island, and Gila trout in Arizona all benefited from TU chapter efforts. Stream habitat restoration from North Carolina to the state of Washington also made a strong showing, as did several research and public education efforts. [Click here](#) for a list of all projects funded by Embrace-A-Stream in 2005.

The program has undergone a number of changes in the last two decades. For the 2006 grant cycle, the EAS program will continue to focus on projects that address issues outlined in the National Conservation Agenda and 2003-2008 Strategic Plan, while allowing TU chapters to use their judgment and creativity to design projects that have the most impact locally. Any changes or additions to the program are detailed in the Memo to 2006 Applicants and 2006 Instructions and Application forms.

**Editor's note:** In the past, Rabun TU has received two EAS grants for "challenge cost-share" projects with the Forest Service for in-stream trout habitat enhancement projects (including installing LWD in tributaries of the Upper Chattooga River).



## Letters to the Editor

Readers write in response to the essay in January issue titled *Visitor Use Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River*

### Inspired To Post Comments To Forest Service

I just want to say that your essay in the January newsletter was superb. It inspired me to post my comments to the Forest Service. Thank you for taking the time to so eloquently create the end result of public boating in our little piece of heaven.

Don Thomson - Marietta

### Taken Out of Context

"Fishermen and women, hunters, hikers and backpackers complaining that there [sic] solitude will be lost. - - Little selfish if you ask me!" - - They used one sentence to portray a negative image of boaters, when if they would have used the comment as a whole it would have put a different perspective on the whole thing. (Excerpts from a posting on the Sumter NF Bulletin Board by Brian from Winston Salem on 1/11/06).

**Editor's notes:** To read both original postings in their entirety, click on: [Bulletin Board](#) Scroll down to posting by carolina yaker on Dec-03 05 titled *Compromise??? or lack there of!!!* The other posting was by Brian on Jan-11 titled *opening up the whole can of worms!* And below Brian writes to the Editor:

### These Activities Do Not All Coincide

I would like to discuss the ongoing debate over the headwaters. I am not representing any group other than myself. I believe with a little cooperation by all parties involved can lead to a better understanding of each other and maybe deflect some of the animosity towards each other's different views.

These Activities Do Not All Coincide (Continued)

I am an outdoorsman; I enjoy the entire outdoors as a whole. I fish, hunt, hike, ect. And I also like to boat on whitewater. These activities do not all coincide with each other. Mother

Nature does not see fit to give us enough rain anymore to do much boating during the better of the three seasons. Without the dam-controlled rivers that are dispersed throughout the area, there would be little boating during these said seasons.

I look forward to hearing from you, and hope that you can make it to the "cleansweep" on the 29th of this month. Thanks for your time. Sincerely, Brian Sutphin (a.k.a. carolina yaker) - Winston Salem

### **If You Know Any Paddlers Like That**

If you know any paddlers like that I will choke them for you: away from the river so as to keep down noise pollution. Your strong interest in keeping paddlers away from the area is justifiable for the authenticity of nature, but by classifying all paddlers as inconsiderate pricks is a little overboard.

I also understand that you probably didn't write the story, but since no one's name is tagged below it: you're the person that gets the fodder. This story has remarks that are irresponsible and spread a contempt of groups that should share the beautiful river. The power of two groups working together have more political power than splitting the groups into one that "has what they want" and another that "wants what the other has." By doing this, it becomes a battle over one river.

By combining the interest to see all rivers restored to their natural value, maybe the Tallapoosa in Alabama will one day see the dams that stopped up beautiful waterfalls. The massive shoals that once lended their names to Muscle Shoals will be undamed. It's my [groups] interest as well as your [groups] interest to free the many strangled rivers of the United States.

Please, instead of mud slinging, extend a hand to paddlers. There are folks on both sides that we would care not to deal with, and the best thing to do is keep them within the natural order of things.

Thanks for listening. Good day, Christopher Winslett - Birmingham (I am not a representative of the entire paddling community, just a single paddler.)

**Editor's comments:** I don't know them, but I have encountered them. Should boaters gain unrestricted access (as American Whitewater is requesting), both 'experienced' and 'non-experienced' boaters would likely put-in at Burrell's Ford.

During medium to high water level conditions I've had backcountry encounters with groups of obviously experienced boaters "poaching-a-trip" with all the proper safety equipment, whom I'm sure also practice good stewardship towards the environment. However, the brief passage of these boaters conflicted with fishing experiences, the sense of remoteness, and invaded personal "envelopes of solitude."

The views of "easy water" from the bridges at Burrell's Ford and Highway 28 are deceptively inviting for the non-experienced "Bubba Boaters." During low to medium water level conditions I've encountered two guys (one wearing only shorts, a cowboy hat, and cowboy boots) dragging their aluminum canoe (with a beer cooler inside) over the rock ledges of The Steps. They wouldn't listen to reason, so the rescue squad had to go in and get them out the next morning. I've seen several aluminum canoes busted or wrapped around rocks in the Rocky Gorge. I've seen a piece of a fiberglass canoe lodged underwater near Salt Trough. I rescued two doctors below the Sims Fields in a K-Mart plastic raft, after dark, wearing only wet shorts, tee shirts and flip-flops. I've encountered a wooden johnboat with 3 occupants between Big Bend Falls and the Sims Shoals.

(Note: User trials would not represent the true social impacts without these Bubba Boaters. The good news is that Bubba Boaters don't do it in the winter months, -- and they usually don't do it a second time.)



Deceptive view of 'easy water' above Highway 28 Bridge

### **Essay Underestimated the Long-term Effects**

Your article on the Chattooga River significantly under estimates the long-term effects of creek boating to all visitors of the headwaters.

Just thirty-five years ago the total number of floating trips down the lower Chattooga was less than a few hundred. Today, the frequency of boating trips is approaching 100,000 trips every year.

Advancements in boating equipment helped fuel the growth in white water boating. These advancements will continue to increase floater frequency far beyond the simple rate predicted by population expansion. First, imagine the effect of 10,000 headwater-floaters in a few years then imagine 100,000 floating trips in thirty years. This will be the effect of opening the Chattooga Headwaters to boating without strict controls or monitored limits. Boating has slowly displaced fisherman from the lower Chattooga and the lower Nantahala. The long-term effects of boating are very clear from recent history.

A day will arrive when the last few anglers are fishing a mud puddle remembering the good old days. Their boots will be splashed by some kid on the latest water riding gizmo. Don't react. Don't say a word. It is his right to also use that puddle. Mike Bamford - Cashiers

### **Together We Can Make a Better Stand**

There has been conflict in the past between the different user groups of the Chattooga Headwaters. In my opinion, although it may not be very credible, the different user groups are not the greatest threat to the Chattooga River. In fact, the threat the different user groups pose to the Chattooga River is insignificant compared to the amount of damage poised through development often called sprawl. We should refocus the direction of protecting the Chattooga by investigating the building and development of the surrounding areas to determine the impact of those things on the river rather than spending so much of our resources on resolving a solution between user groups. If the user groups can be focused on one common goal like protecting the resource, we can make a better stand. By this, I mean we should ban the user groups together to restrict development of the area. Apparently, golf courses are the biggest contributors with their pesticides, weed killers, and the like. One place that we can see the devastation of development and building is Florida. I am aware of many situations in which this has occurred and research will show this ultimately. Another such area is the Metro Atlanta area close to the Chattahoochee River. Sincerely, Roger Huff - Kennesaw

### Must Work Together to Address the Real Threats

Your story of kayakers destroying wilderness solitude is a well-written, mix of truth and biased fantasy. But let's deal with reality. Kayakers and fishermen must work together to address the real threats to the Chattooga head waters. The threats are 1) Overuse by all groups 2) Poor Forest Service management and 3) Encroaching development. Both kayakers and fishermen appreciate wilderness and water quality. But, uncontrolled camping along the river, litter, random use trails, loud music, free roaming dogs, untended fires, trail/campsite erosion, human waste, dish washing and bathing in the river, heavy use, etc. are increasing yearly. Poorly planned developments and weak, erosion control laws in the watershed are lowering water quality and adding users. Watching the Chattooga turn into another muddy, polluted river is a very sad experience for all. With continued growth, problems will get worse without a comprehensive watershed management and user plan that includes private, city, county, state and federal involvement and cooperation. Fighting over use rights while the river dies is pointless.

One kayaker question, your thermometer says trout don't bite in winter when paddling is good (that section is too low in late spring, summer and early fall). Can there be a boating season and a fishing season? (kayaks do scare trout) Is there another

approach? There are some great minds out there. Surely there is a solution.

And Doug, from a former scoutmaster, when has a Boy Scout troop ever been tranquil in the woods except when sleeping?

Take care and catch your limit! Marshall Wilson – Atlanta

### Good Fences Make Good Neighbors

I wanted to let you know how effective your essay was for me. Prior to reading your essay, I had difficulty in supporting our (GA TU Council) position. You have eloquently shown how not just fishermen but many other groups as well as the environment are affected by brief encounters with boaters. What is more important is that you accurately represent what actually happens, not what the boaters and everyone else wishes or hopes would happen when one group's activities are intruded upon by another. I know from personal experience that regardless of how brief the contact the negative effect and hard feelings last. I may be wrong, but I believe it was Robert Frost who wrote, "Good fences make good neighbors". After reading your essay I realize that the Highway 28 Bridge has been a good fence for 30 years and has served all interested parties well and should continue to do so into the foreseeable future.

Bruce Rickey – Marietta

The essay and previous issues of TIGHT LINES can be read "on-line." Go to: <http://www.rabuntu.com/> Or click on: [Tight Lines](#) . If you have an opinion on the essay or any other subject published in TIGHT LINES, we invite you to submit your "Letter to the Editor" (250 words or less) or an op-ed (up to 1000 words). E-Mail [edadams1@alltel.net](mailto:edadams1@alltel.net) ; PO Box 65; Rabun Gap, GA 30568-0065

## CORRECTION

The following somewhat misleading statement appeared in the January issue of TIGHT LINES under **Excerpts from the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act** as an Editor's note: "The W&SRA directs the Agency (in this case the USFS) to protect and enhance the values which caused the stream to be included and the primary emphasis shall be given to protecting its aesthetic, scenic, historic, archaeological, and scientific features (it did not say recreational)."

Actually the "VALUES" which are to be protected and enhanced are the Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORV) that caused the river to be included in the W&SRA in the first place. For the Chattooga, the ORV includes geology, biology, scenery, recreation and history. "The recreational values of the river and corridor are outstanding along its 57-mile course. The river offers a wide variety of activities in a high-quality setting. Activities range from swimming to hiking and horseback riding with spectacular scenery, to excellent trout fishing and nationally recognized white-water rafting opportunities. Other activities include backpacking, photography, and nature study. Most of these activities take place in largely unmodified natural surroundings, with many opportunities for remoteness and solitude." (Quote from page 3-52 of the Sumter NF L&RMP.)

Protecting the aesthetic, scenic, historic, archaeological, and scientific features is to be done in the context of administering the ORV. [Definition: aesthetic - Features or qualities that are pleasurable (as contrasted with the utilitarian features of a resource) such as opportunities for remoteness and solitude.]

## MAKIN' MEMORIES

My most enjoyable experience of the fishing season happened on the way up to Gaylord to meet Don and Doug (Atkinson - both Charter Rabunites) for a few days of bow hunting at the Northland Ranch. I stopped in Grayling (MI) on the AuSable River for about an hour and a half because I was a little early (good planning). It was noon, crystal clear bright sunny day, low clear water with the air temperature at eight-five degrees. By all rights a really bad time to be trout fishing, but I thought if nothing else I'll get some casting practice and enjoy the beautiful day. There wasn't a sign of anything on the surface so I put on a no-name nymph that looks exactly like nothing, but resembles everything. It most resembles a hex nymph though so it seemed like a pretty good choice at the time and it is always fun to catch a fish on your own creation right? I had my lightest rod, which is a little three weight with a fairly heavy tippet; I'm guessing 2#. I came upon a deep hole under a log where the current ran fast and deep. I let the fly swing down into the deep run and when the line tightened I thought I was hung up. Only for a split second though. The snag began to thump and I knew I was into a good

fish. I never thought for a minute that I would ever land him though. My three weight and my two-pound tippet were just not going to give me the muscle I needed to bring such a good fish to the net. I had brought only my little nine-inch net thinking that I might catch a few little guys. I didn't even bring the camera; knowing that there wouldn't be anything worth photographing. Boy was I wrong.

I played the fish very carefully with the little rod straining under the weight of the beautiful brown. It seemed like an eternity before I even saw her. Seeing the fish made my heart race even faster. No way was that fish going in my net and there wasn't even any slack water that I could get into other than where I was standing and that was, at that point, almost in the log pile that I took her out of. I tried to be as patient as I could and each time a lost and then regained line I felt more confident. I knew I was only going to get one chance and I had better not blow it. I figured I could get her head and, perhaps, a little more than half of her body in the net so as soon as I thought I had a shot at it I pushed the net under her head and lifted as hard as I could. It is

what we all dream of every time we cast a fly on the water. I wanted to tie her off somehow and run to the truck and get the camera, but it was in a no-kill section of the stream that is open year around. I was worried I might get in trouble for holding the fish captive instead of releasing her right away so I took a mental

photo, marked her length on my rod and let her slip from my hand. When I measured the mark on the rod it was just over twenty-three inches, my personal best for a stream trout.  
Tight Lines, Dave Schmidt - A Rabunite, Charter Member - Petersburg, MI

**"Catch and Release fishing is a lot like golf. You don't have to eat the ball to have a good time."** Unknown

### Another "Where's Frank?" Story

Rabunite Frank Tolbert had a holiday from work on a recent Monday and he felt the Chattooga backcountry calling. Martha Gail worries about Frank when he goes off alone and she doesn't know exactly where he has gone. So Frank promised to call Prez Rivers' house to let them know where he would be and to call again when he got back out of the woods. Frank walked about an hour into the backcountry with his gear in a backpack. He fished until about dark before he reeled it in. It had been another wonderful day on the Upper Chattooga. It had begun to rain and was getting dark. He climbed out, hung up his vest, changed out of his wading attire into hiking shoes, loaded his pack and walked for an hour by flashlight back to his vehicle.

It was a dark and rainy night in Clayton. Terry was gone to a TU meeting in Athens and Emmilyn was beginning to worry, "Where's Frank?" He should have called in already. Well, when Frank got to his vehicle, he discovered he had left his fly vest hanging in a tree back where he changed. So another hour "in" to retrieve the vest and another hour back "out", in the dark and in the rain, makes Frank about 2 hours late calling. This time he had some explaining to do to both Emmilyn and Martha Gail!



"You know, between Prez Terry and me, - - I think we could invent a ZINGER for retrieving my fly vest!"  
(Caricature by Tom Landreth)

**"Flailers share one thing in common: They rarely raise, much less ever catch, a trout. Watching one at his devotionals swiftly reveals why. After resolutely stomping up to the water he will so shortly rid of all trout, your typical flailer strips out line like an overworked barber whipping up a cold lather. Then suddenly he braces himself and lifts the accumulated mass and blindly flings it out yonder as far as he can. Then, before his fly has fairly landed, he retrieves the whole whirling mess and whales her out again. This goes on all day."**

from "TROUT MAGIC" by Robert Traver

### "BACKCASTING"

**Jan 13 (Fri) Doug Watson's USFS Retirement Party** at Jaemour Farms in Alto was attended by 15 Rabunites. Jeff Durniak has said "If any of you has enjoyed the fish and wildlife resources on National Forest lands in northeast Georgia, join me in thanking one of the folks who likely helped make your forest trips better. After 32 years, US Forest Service Wildlife Technician Doug Watson of Clarkesville is retiring. Doug was the first FS staffer I met when I started for GA DNR, and he's always been among the best, one of those folks who could always, always be counted on. He maintained wildlife openings on non-WMA forest lands, shocked the Chattooga and mountain streams with us, collected brook trout genetics samples, installed thermographs, helped with copter trout stocking, started and maintained the two-decade-old tradition of the Nancytown Lake Kids Fishing Rodeo, and built one heck of a lot of trout stream structures! We will miss his smile and his productivity. "



Jeff Durniak made a presentation from GA WRD



Tom Landreth made a presentation from Rabun TU



Kathy Breithaupt made a presentation from GA TU Council

Jimmy Harris said "Doug Watson has had as much if not more effect on the quality of trout fishing in north Georgia than any other one individual I know of. It was great to see over 120 people in attendance at his retirement party last night and I'm proud to know him. As someone said last night, he's the epitome of a conservationist. Foothills TU is also proud to claim Doug as a charter member and a driving force behind the Soque River Outdoor Classroom." Tom Landreth said "After 31 years with the Forest Service he will now be able to enjoy some of the fruits of his labor....silt free streams, improved turkey and grouse habitat, and, yes, time to stop and smell the wild flowers. Thanks, Doug. You have made a difference."

**Jan 16 (Mon) Program for Oconee River Chapter** (Athens) – Doug & Eedee Adams, Charlie Breithaupt and Terry Rivers attended. Doug presented the program at their Chapter meeting. Subject: *Visitor Capacity Analysis, Upper Chattooga River*

**Jan 17 (Tues) Chapter Meeting** - About 23 folks attended the monthly Chapter meeting. Charter Rabunite Jeff Durniak presented a memorable program that kept everyone totally entertained, -- and we also learned a lot. Jeff told us **WHERE, WHEN, & HOW** to catch the really big'uns in GA. I took lots of notes but they may be a little scrambled – here they are, I'm sure you can figure it out. "IDBIS #1; Big and ugly deep; Low and Clear; Nov, Feb-Apr; Nightcrawlers, crayfish, crickets & camera!; Chuck and duck like that Yankee boy's been a-preach'n; IDBIS # 2; Troll lures or drift bluebacks 40 feet deep near dam; After floods; DH Waters; Follow Tom on wildflower walk and use that itsy bitsy fly that Kyle gave you for fixin' his plumbing last year; IDBIS #3; Aug, Sept; Spawning; Lake Lanier Tailwater; Loaf Bread, fished from one of Ray's folding stools & Nixon's Pond!" **Raffle:** There were 10 super neat items for the bucket raffle at this meeting, including two fly assortments and a double draw for Frog-Hair strike indicators. A couple of strange things happened, Lea didn't win the flies! And Doug won another hurricane lamp! The raffle raised \$129. A special 'thank you' goes to those members that contributed items.

**Jan 21 (Sat) 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Rabun Rendezvous** was attended by 251 people that love clean cold water and places where trout live. The Chapter cleared \$11,087 (our most ever) and we all had a fun time doing it! Tom Landreth said "it was another huge success....thanks to a lot of NGTO'ers, TU'ers, DNR and Forest Service folks!!!! If you didn't make it, think about it next year...we will be there!! **Thanks again. Tight Lines!!**" Duane Stalnaker, President of Tailwater TU Chapter, said "Thanks from everyone to the Rabunites for another great Rendezvous! Good food and good friends, can't beat it!" **WHAAaaa WHOOoooo!**

A big Rabunite thanks to our program presenter, **Hannibal Bolton**, a Chief in the US Fish and Wildlife Service.



Bluegrass by The Foxfire Boys



Buck Dancing



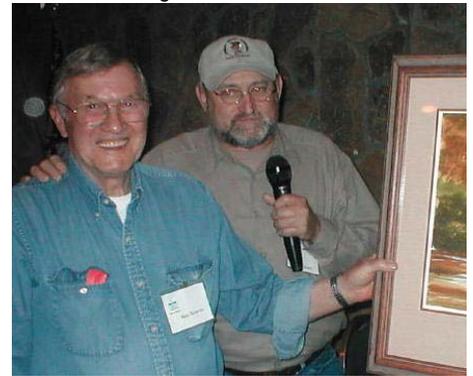
The Dining Room



Bill Kelly, Tom Landreth & Hannibal Bolton



Russell Johnson – Past Chapter Treasurer



Past Prez Ray Kearns & Current Prez Terry Rivers

The Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited proudly presented to

**Jeff Durniak**

Northeast Regional Fisheries Supervisor, WRD, GA DNR

**The 2006 Distinguished Service Award**

For 20 years of outstanding professional service and leadership in the conservation, preservation, and protection of the cold water fisheries in Northeast Georgia.

All 250 attendees at the Rabun Rendezvous gave Jeff a standing ovation.



Prez Terry Rivers & Jeff Durniak

The **Georgia Council of Trout Unlimited** proudly presented an **Appreciation Award** to **Jimmy Harris** "For outstanding contributions and unselfish support of local TU Chapters, the Georgia Trout Camp, and the Georgia Council in the pursuit of the mission of Trout Unlimited." Charlie Breithaupt – Chairman

The Rendezvous crowd gave another "Standing Ovation" to a cell phone.

(Jimmy had left earlier to return to the Atlanta Fly-Fishing Show and he was reached on his cell phone while traveling south on US-441.)



Check-in by Jean, Kathy & Charlie



Pig Pickin' Area



Etching by Patsy Lewis-Gentry

## A BIG Thank You to the 96 Donors for the 2005 Rabun Rendezvous

**Businesses & Organizations:** Hannibal Bolton of US Fish & Wildlife Service, The Foxfire Boys, The Dillard House, Unicoi Outfitters & Jimmy Harris, Reeve's Hardware & Lewis Reeves III, D.K. Littleton Outfitters & Spider Littleton, Orvis, The Fish Hawk, Patagonia, North Georgia Custom Rods & Mack Martin, Atlanta Fly Fishing School, "Blackhawk" Trout Stream, Fly Fisherman Magazine, Dr. Slick, Angler Sports Group, Stackpole Books, Big Green Egg & Eggmania Central, The Hollow Log, Tom Landreth - Artist, Broderick Crawford - Artist, Dick Albertelli - Artist, Patsy Lewis Gallery, Bruce Bunch - Artist & Illustrator, Kelly Albertelli - Artist, Joe Raqucass - Crafter, Valley Drapery & Design, Tiger Mountain Vineyards, Persimmon Creek Vineyards, Rabun County Bank, Regions Bank, Stephens Federal S & L Assn., Kountry Vittles, Valley Café, Cupboard Café, Ingers Fine Foods, Grapes and Beans, Piggly Wiggly, Valley Pharmacy, Amrine's Small Engine, Candy Man, Gregg's Tire & Service Center, Prater's Main Street Books, Mountain Nature & Wild Bird Supply, Splendor Mountain & Chevin Woodruff, Georgia Power Company, Kingwood Country Club, Rabun County Country Club, The Cottage Door, Expectations Family Beauty Salon & Janis Jones, Total Therapy & Donna Marland, Old Clayton Inn, Texaco Express Lube of Clayton, Curves For Women, Gap Graphics & Printing, City Barber Shop, Coosa Valley TU Chapter, and John Gale for National TU

**Individuals:** George Custer, Emily Perry, Pat Landreth Boyd, Garland Stewart, Duane Stalnaker, Don Edwards, Russ Burken, Steve Raeber, Dot & Ray Kearns, Jeff Durniak, Jean & Bill Kelly, Maria Rodeghiero, Terry & Terry Seehorn, Gail & Frank Tolbert, Kathy & Charlie Breithaupt, Jim Nixon, Russell Johnson, Monte Seehorn, Amanda & Brooks Adams, Travis Barnes, Allison Adams, Eedee & Doug Adams, Emmilyn & Terry Rivers, Sandy & Ralph Morgan, Tommy James, Doris & Jimmy Whiten, Jan Uteg, Greg Smith, Betsy Fowler, Barbara & Bill Gary, Russ Tyre, Sammie Stooksbury, Ray Gentry, Trey Barnett, Rick Murphee, John Hoppes, Doug Hickman, June & Tom Landreth, Carolyn & Jim Kidd, and Lefty Kreh



Bucket Raffles



Fly Vest by LL Bean



Custom Fly Tying Desk by Ray Kearns



Culinary Review by Grizzzz



Buffet by The Dillard House



Silent Auctions

## "BACKCASTING" (continued)

**Jan 24 (Tues) Annual Meeting – Chattooga River Coalition** This annual meeting was conducted at the Andrew Pickens (SC) Ranger Station. Attendees represented the CONF, SNF, GA DNR, SC DNR, GA TU & SC TU. The GA TU representatives were Charlie Breithaupt, Terry Rivers and Doug Adams. The items discussed included: Upper Chattooga River Visitor Use Capacity Analysis and overall summary of the boating above Hwy 28 issue; Update on SC Burrell's Ford Paving Project; Impact of the GA reconstruction of Burrell's Ford Road on Reed Creek; Temperature monitoring; Chattooga Anglers Diaries; Stocking update on numbers and species stocked in 2005 in all areas; Discussion of future stocking plans, including West Fork; Funding of helicopter used for stocking; Land acquisition update; King Cr. brook trout restoration project; and Schedule for the 2006 electro sampling of the river (July 11 & 12). Chairman Monte Seehorn will schedule a meeting in March for key people to meet and come up with a draft revised Mission Statement, with 20-year goals and objectives. Monte will issue the minutes of this Annual Meeting.

**Jan 24 (Tues) BOD Meeting** was attended by 9 Chapter officers and directors. Items discussed included: Volunteer assignments for collecting water sampling from 8 brook trout streams in Rabun County (for the "Back the Brookie" program with USFS & GA WRD); The 2006 Rendezvous and what changes could make the 2007 Rendezvous even better; Setting the dates and locations of 5 fishing-campouts in 2006; Upcoming Chapter meeting programs; Rod building sessions in November; and Cancellation of the fly tying session on Feb 14 – Valentine's Day (a wise move!).

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

A Big Rabunite welcome to **3 new members** this month: **Max Holstein**, 1116 Mountain Oak Rd #4130, Ellijay, GA 30536; **Garrett Brumit**, 571 Riverview Rd, Ellijay, GA 30536; **Cecil Beehler**, 616 Cat Gap Rd, Clayton, GA 30525

Thanks for re-upping: **Doug Hickman**, **Virlyn Florence** and **Donald MacLeod**

It is time to renew your membership: **Robert & Martha Engle**, **Hal Northrop**, **Maria Rodeghiero** and **Andrew Wylie**

## **Study Finds the GA Law Allowing Only 50 Feet Steam Buffers is Devastating to Trout**

(With permission, this article is based on an article in the *ajc* on 1/25/06 by Stacy Shelton, GA Environment Reporter - Atlanta Journal-Constitution.)

A University of Georgia study presented to the GA Board of Natural Resources on January 24<sup>th</sup> found the state law that allowed builders to clear-cut to within 50 feet of cold-water streams in the North Georgia mountains destroys the young trout population. Judy Meyer, the study's principal investigator, reported in the more than 35 stream sites sampled, narrowing the riparian vegetation from 100 feet to 50 feet reduced the young trout population between 81 percent and 88 percent. The stark findings "truly surprised us," Meyer said.

Before the law changed in 2000, developers were not allowed to work within 100 feet of the cold-water streams that support trout and other aquatic species. The study found that by cutting the stream buffer in half, the water temperature increased by as much as 4.2°F and increased the amount of erosion, siltation, and in-stream sedimentation. The study determined the impact to be devastating to trout reproduction and long-term survival.

The study estimated that only 9 percent of streams in North Georgia that have 50-foot buffers are likely to support trout reproduction, compared with 63 percent of streams that have 100-foot buffers. After presenting the study results to the DNR board, Meyer said the question for decision-makers is, "Do you want trout, or don't you?"

About two-thirds of the trout streams in North Georgia are on private land, and the rest are on public land. The General Assembly, DNR board, developers, and environmentalists have been grappling with how wide the buffers need to be to protect cold-water streams and rivers. The political pressure has been "on" to give the private property owners full use of their land.

Two years ago the DNR board voted to allow developers to pipe and pave over wet-weather ditches. Environmentalists objected, saying those "ditches" could actually be intermittent streams providing important functions, serving as sediment filters and/or flood control. Meyer reported that streams that run through private property currently have an average buffer of about 79 feet and stream buffers on public lands (i.e. USFS & GA DNR) are more than 100 feet wide.

In another study presented on the same day to the DNR board, James Kundell from UGA's Carl Vinson Institute of Government said there is an insufficient quantity of data about how the state's stream protection laws are working in North Georgia. One example he gave is that while local officials are convinced that small trout streams are being piped and paved over, the builders, developers and landowners are not reporting it. He recommended that the state develop guidelines for enforcement and provide technical assistance to local officials.

Both studies, which cost the state \$300,000, were requested at the time the General Assembly changed the stream buffer law in 2000.

Environmental Protection Division Director Carol Couch said her staff is working on improving enforcement and consistency in stream protections across the state. "This is an active area of public dialogue," Couch told the board. "The system needs to be developed."

For Rabun County problems, call the Marshall's Office: **782-2657**; For elsewhere in GA, the EPD hotline: **404-675-6240**  
<http://www.rivercenter.uga.edu/service/erosion/resources.htm>

## **Georgia Trout Camp Application Process**

Charlie Breithaupt, the Camp Director, is taking applications NOW for the 2006 Georgia Trout Camp.

Twenty-four campers (boys and girls from ages 12 – 15) will be selected for the 2006 Georgia Trout Camp, June 11 – 16<sup>th</sup>.

For details: [http://64.30.174.36/gatu/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=22&Itemid=31](http://64.30.174.36/gatu/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=22&Itemid=31)

Charlie Breithaupt's E-mail [knc615@direcway.com](mailto:knc615@direcway.com) and Ph 706 782 6954

## Weekly Fishing Trip Cancelled

On Saturday morning I got up early as was my usual routine. I put on my long johns. I dressed quietly. I got my lunch made, grabbed the dog and went to the garage to hook up the boat to the truck and down the driveway I went. Coming out of the garage, rain is pouring down; it is like a torrential downpour. There is snow mixed in with the rain, and the wind is blowing 50mph.

Minutes later, I returned to the garage. I came back into the house and turned the TV to the weather channel. I find it's going to be bad weather all day long. So for the first time in years I put the boat back in the garage, quietly undressed and slipped back into bed.

There I cuddled up to my wife's back, now with a different anticipation, and whispered sweetly and softly, "The weather out there is terrible." To which she sleepily replies, "Can you believe my stupid husband is out fishing in that!?"

(Our thanks to Rabunite Steve Raeber for sharing that one with us)

## BOD Sets 2006 Calendar - You Don't Want to Miss These

Annual Planning Meeting on Sat 8 am (2/4) with breakfast meeting at the Dillard House where we set our budget and planned expenditures for 2006.

Fly Tying Sessions on Tuesday evenings in Feb and Mar (5 sessions total - 2/7, 2/28, 3/7, 3/14 & 3/28).

Hoot-on-the-Hooch on Sat evening (3/11) where the 2006 Dream Trip winner will be named.

Camping, Fishing & In-Stream Work Day with USFS leading work on Heddon Creek and camping at Double Bit from Thurs – Sat (4/20 – 4/23).

Betty Creek In-Stream Clean-up in preparation for GA Trout Camp on Sat (5/6).

Annual Spring Family Cook-out at Indian Lake on Tues evening (5/16) with the Boy Scout Troop as our guests.

Camping & Fishing the Upper Chattooga backcountry Wed – Sun (5/17 – 5/21) with camping at Cherry Hill Campground.

Annual Kids Fishing Event at Tallulah River with USFS on Saturday morning (6/3).

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Georgia Trout Camp from Sun – Fri (6/11 – 6/16) We need all the help we can get for this.

Annual Chattooga River Electro-fishing with USFS, GA & SC DNR on Tues & Wed (7/11 & 7/12) and campout at Cherry Hill Campground on Mon & Tues (7/10 & 7/11).

Annual Summer Family Picnic at Kelly's Waterfall Park on Tues evening (7/18).

Campout & In-Stream Work Day on a "Back the Brookie" stream, Ramey Creek. Work to be lead by USFS & GA DNR along with the 2 Summer Interns that Rabun TU sponsors - Fri & Sat (8/4 & 8/5).

Waters Creek In-Stream Workday with USFS, GA DNR, NGTO & TU on Sat (9/16).

Outdoor Adventure Day with GA DNR at Unicoi State Park on Sat (9/23).

Camping & Fishing with camp at the Blackwell Place and fishing in the West Fork watershed from Wed – Sun (9/27 – 10/1).

Rod Building Sessions on Tuesday evenings in Nov (3 sessions).

Camping & Fishing with camp at Long Bottom and fishing in Chattooga DH and backcountry from Wed – Sun (11/ 8 – 11/12).

Annual Family Christmas Dinner at Dillard House on Tues evening (12/12).

20<sup>th</sup> Annual Rabun Rendezvous on Sat (1/20/2007).

Plus Regular Chapter Meetings with Programs on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues evenings: 2/21, 3/21, 4/18, 6/20, 8/15, 9/19, 10/17, 11/21 & 1/16/07.

## What's New?

**Dunn Land Exchange** (USFS): Exchange three tracts totaling 170 acres for three tracts totaling approximately 170 acres. One tract is a total in-holding in a wilderness area and another will provide endangered species protection. The exchange also involves portions of 3 trout streams: Dicks Creek, Frogtown Creek, and Etowah River. The lands are in Lumpkin and Union counties. The proposal is supposed to go out for public comment by the end of February.

**Highway 28 (Russell) Bridge Replacement** (GA DOT): Construction is scheduled for 2006/2007.

**Bull Pen/McCall Road** (USFS & NC DOT): Improvements are proposed on 4.9 miles of Bull Pen/McCall Roads in the Upper Chattooga watershed. NC DOT has proposed widening, paving and improving drainage on the FS roads.

## Rabun TU Officers & Directors

**President - Terry Rivers**, PO Box 371, Clayton, GA 30525

**Vice President - Ralph Morgan**

**Treasurer (w/Newsletter) - Doug Adams**

**Secretary - Tom Matthews**

**Past President (w/Membership) - Ray Kearns**

**Director (w/Programs) - Bill Kelly**

**Director (w/Website) - Kathy Breithaupt**

**Director (w/Campouts & USFS Work-outsings) - Charlie Breithaupt**

**Director (w/Publicity & Hospitality) - Tom Landreth**

**Director at Large - Jimmy Whiten**

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*"In every species of fish I've angled for, it is the ones that have got away that thrill me the most, the ones that keep fresh in my memory. So I say it is good to lose fish. If we didn't, much of the thrill of angling would be gone."*

From "The Armchair Angler" by Ray Bergman



## News from the President..... Terry Rivers

Hi All,

I just want to thank everybody for attending the Rendezvous and all your support and help. It was another GREAT SUCCESS. I also want to thank the people that donated items for the silent auction and bucket raffle.

Just want to remind everybody about the planning meeting schedule for Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>. If you have any suggestions to improve meetings, fundraisers, camping, etc., e-mail me and I will bring it up at the meeting.

Don't forget that we need your support at the meetings this year in backing the Forest Service zoning of the Upper Chattooga as a "no boating" area. Notices will be posted in the newsletter and on our web site.

For everybody that wants to learn to tie flies, we plan to have those sessions at my place again this year. We welcome all newcomers if they are just getting started. Also, if you just want to come and just socialize, that's fine.

Don't forget Trout Camp this year. We need all the mentors we can get. If you have never attended one, it is very rewarding.

Also, want to remind everybody to check their e-mail often, we update frequently on things that we are doing.

Great dry fly fishing is just around the corner; so, if you need to learn to tie that fly, be here at my place Feb. 7th at 7:30. If you need directions, just call me 706 782 7419.

*Terry*

Have a great day - Hope you catch a lot of fish!

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For pictures and more info, visit the Rabun TU website: <http://www.rabuntu.com/>

Georgia TU Council website: <http://georgiatu.org/> or National TU Website: <http://www.tu.org/index.asp>

We would love getting your suggestions, stories, articles, and questions for our panel of experts in the Q & A section, or your comments about our Website and Newsletter.

Send them to: [edadams1@alltel.net](mailto:edadams1@alltel.net) Or to: Rabun TU, PO Box 65, Rabun Gap, GA 30568

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Please tell us if you have E-mail, it will save the chapter \$1.09 per newsletter mailed:

E-Mail [edadams1@alltel.net](mailto:edadams1@alltel.net)

RABUN CHAPTER of TROUT UNLIMITED

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