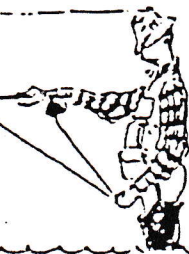


# TIGHT LINES



NEWSLETTER OF THE RABUN CHAPTER  
TROUT UNLIMITED

MAY 1990

## MAY MEETING POSTPONED TILL JUNE

Due to activities of a piscatorial nature, the Rabun Chapter will not hold a regular meeting in May. This being prime trout fishing time and due to other commitments we will catch up in June. If you are near the river, you might stop by Double Bit Camp - someone may be encamped there.

On a personal note, I'll be up in North Central Pennsylvania trying to sell a little artwork and trying my hand on the trout streams there and down around Carlisle.

## RECAP OF THE APRIL MEETING

We had a good turnout at the library in Clayton on April 17th. We were joined by visitors Mike Cavender of Highlands (Mike wants to start a TU Chapter up there); Jim Blair of Tiger; and John Howard of Persimmon.

A new precedent was set when Jim Kidd did not win a single thing in our raffle. But, winners we did have: Jim Harris won a much needed Orvis fly fishing guide; the Orvis pen went to Jim "Who's a Yuppie Now" Nixon; a dozen flies tied by Henry Williamson ended up with Jim "Meppes Slinger" Blair; and to go along with his rubber ducky, Doug Adams won a cute little trout shaped flashlight!

POPCORN CREEK - The State Fish and Game Department is monitoring the activities of the DOT on US 76 and the effects they may have on this stream.

TUCKELEGE CREEK - The Chapter decided to embrace this stream and take erosion control steps whether or not the USFS closes the road. Jeff Durniak, will be asked, as penance, to coordinate this effort with Frankie Green USFS.

CHARLIE CREEK - The USFS will notify us as to when they can re-schedule the road work to be done along Charlie.

GEORGIA POWER COMPANY - They have asked our help in doing some work on a wash area in one of their right-of-ways on Warwoman Road.

CHATTOOGA RIVER PROJECT - Boxes will be installed at several locations to receive creel survey forms. This work will be done by the USFS and the Chapter will donate \$50 towards printing costs of the survey form.

NO RAINBOW FINGERLINGS FOR NOW - Someone has decided that we should not backpack the rainbow and brown fingerlings upstream from Burrells Ford Road Bridge. Apparently, Rainbows, who use to live there in great numbers, would spoil the wilderness experience! YONAH SHUNGA!

TROUT DAY - will be celebrated at the DNR sponsored activity, Moccasin Creek State Park; and at the Tallulah River, sponsored by the USFS. Some members have volunteered there help when the exact dates in June are known.

GEORGIA OUTDOOR NEWS - editor, Steve Burch will join us at our campout at Double Bit in April. Burch is researching for an article and would like our input.

NELL JONES - Congratulations to chapter member, Nell Jones, who has been named Forest Conservationist of the Year by the Georgia Wildlife Federation. Nell is also President of Friends of the Mountains.

TREASURERY AND MEMBERSHIP - As of April we ad a little over \$2300 in the till and our membership stands at 81, several of which are family memberships.

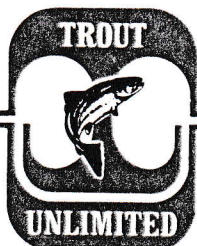
#### CAMP OUT/WORK PROJECT AT DOUBLE BIT

The usual early bunch arrived at camp on Thursday the 26th of April, while others filtered in during the next two days. Early comers were rewarded with some fine fishing dispite meager to non-existant hatches on the river.

As anticipated, we were joined by Steve Burch, GEORGIA OUTDOOR NEWS, who fished, camped and told lies with the rest of us as he collected data and listened to our views and concerns over the river. He seemed to understand that our concern is not hiding our "fishin' hole" from public spotlighting; but, with the impact such publicity has on a fragile resource such as the Chattooga. He tabbed us the "mongrel bunch" and we thanked him!

Now for the work project - our plans had to be changed when Saturday broke overcast and soon followed with the monsoons that seem to follow the "mongrel bunch" wherever we go. Undaunted, we did put on the ponchos and slickers and installed silt fence and other silt control devices on the creekside of Burrell's Ford Road. Our USFS partners has turned out dispite the weather and we got a good bit of work done. Some logs were put into place for future structure work.

It was a most successful trip for my brother, Walt, who caught his first trout on a fly with his new rod. It was a twelve inch rainbow and it couldn't have provided more of a thrill if it had been twice as big. Next time, though, Walt, keep him in the water until he's come to net!



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# Putting Trout Back into a Trout Stream

These TU members put muscle and blood where their mouth is. With logs, chain saws and sledge hammers and slit fence and shovels they have turned cold wet sand pits back into trout habitat.

By GON Staff (STEVE BURCH)

Earth Day served to raise both questions and public awareness concerning our environment. But it has yet to bear fruit. Frankly, I figured as much.

Yes, I am a cynic when it comes to media events producing results to any measurable extent. But I believe that things have got to get better. And perhaps the best example of a group that has made a difference is the Rabun County Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Now Trout Unlimited, at least at the national level, has a reputation of being a rich, elitist Orvis-clad crowd who react snobbishly to any other type of fishing.

Happily, this mongrel group of Rabun County TUers falls far below national standards. Amazingly, this group actually kills and eats trout occasionally.

Two weekends ago under heavy rain, light hail and a tornado watch, this group donned



Bill Kelly is kneeling on a deflector he helped build. It runs from the near bank out to Bill and shoots water against a cover log on the far bank. Last year this was just a flat, sandy pool devoid of cover or food. Now it has a gravel bottom and fat, native trout.

ponchos and rain suits and sallied-forth to do battle with a road. The road had killed a trout stream. They are trying to restore the stream.

The purpose of Trout Unlimited is to protect and enhance cold water fisheries," says Doug Adams, a member of the group. "That is what we try to do."

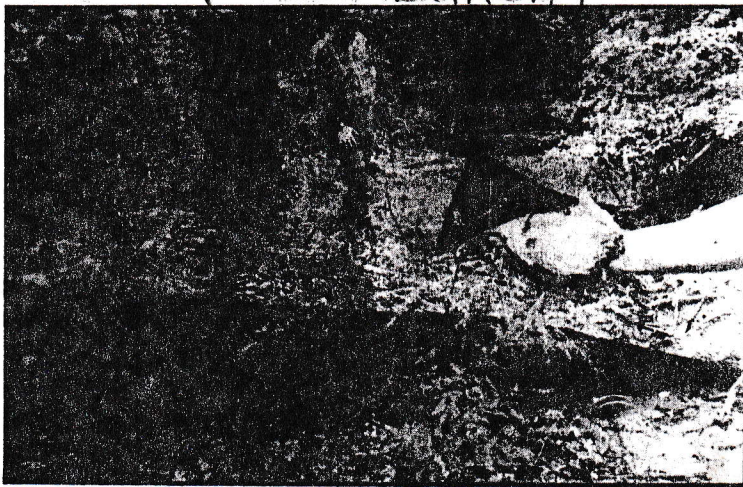
Dirt roads pushed through the mountains produce silt and sand. This silt settles out on the bed of the stream covering the small stones and pea gravel with a suffocating blanket of muck that alters everything natural to the stream.

Sadly, many North Georgia

streams can no longer support native wild trout for exactly this reason. To trout, muddy water is a pollution death knell.

This group of TUers has worked in a number of areas but perhaps none is more striking than to actually see the amount of silt that HAS NOT hit a creek because of their efforts. Working in conjunction with the US Forest Service and the state Fisheries section, the troop has erected silt fences along areas where the runoff occurs. The plan is to keep the silt from reaching the stream.

Standing in the rain that Saturday morning, the creek upstream of the road was barely



Doug Adams stands among the silt fences chain-linked from the road down to the creek. These two-year-old fences are about ready for rehabilitation. If this silt gets to the stream, the stream can no longer grow trout.

stained while below the road it became a muddy red streak. The existing silt fence had filled and broken under its load. A new fence was installed behind the old one and in less than a minute the creek began to clear.

But stopping the silt from entering the stream is only half the rehabilitative chore. How do you remove the silt that is already in the stream choking the natural life out of it?

"You flush it out," Doug Adams said; and then he showed me.

These mountain men have become log wrestlers. They have gone into the streams and created

flow diverters and constrictors. By forcing the water to run through a narrow gap between the logs, the resulting increased current is enough to move the silt.

The results have been outstanding. In one stretch of stream, the Forest Service shocked the stream before work began two years ago. In 2,200 feet (nearly a half mile) of what most of us would consider good looking trout stream, they found only eight trout; and only was more than six inches long!

Two years and countless volunteer hours later, the stream was again shocked; this time yielding 58 trout including eight harvestable size native trout. It is clear that this stretch of stream is on its way back.

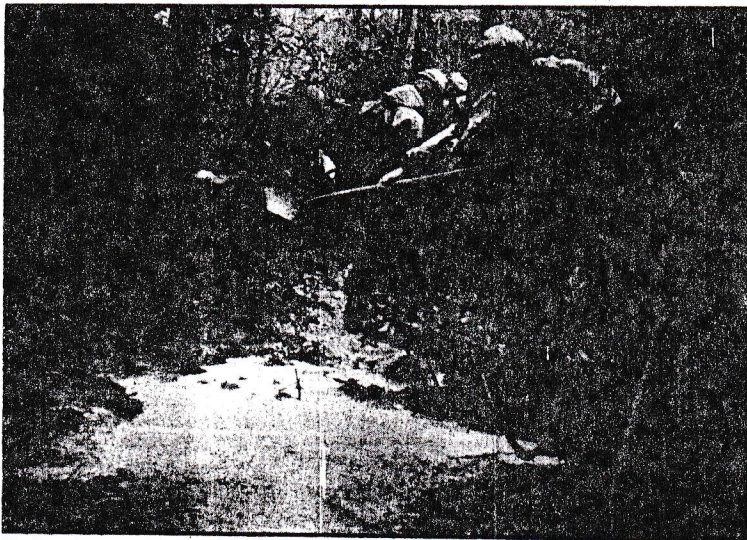
This group was invited to write the job description of the new Rabun County Erosion Control officer. They have won

the prestigious Silver Trout Award, national recognition from Trout Unlimited. They were the first and only group ever to obtain Fish America Foundation money to be spent in Georgia. They have effected water policy in North Carolina and they have left their mark all over Rabun County.

But they don't do it for awards or ink in some outdoor fish-wrapper. You can see why they do it as they slip down one of these streams and spy a native brown lying behind a cover log; a stream-bred trout living in a place that couldn't feed or shelter a trout two years ago. And then they show it to one of their kids.

They set an excellent example for us all. And if Earth Day is ever to really mean anything it will be because of groups like Rabun County Trout Unlimited.

GON



The first goal is to stop the silt from getting to the stream. The old silt fence had stopped more silt than it could hold and silt was running over the top. Saturday a week ago in a downpour, Rabun TU members and Forest Service personnel installed a new fence. The muddy creek cleared immediately - dramatic evidence of what just one road can do... and what can be done about it.



Most of us would consider this a good mountain road. But this road has destroyed 4 1/2 miles of a native trout stream.