

# TIGHT LINES



NEWSLETTER OF THE RABUN CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

FEBRUARY 1998

## FEBRUARY MEETING

The Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited will meet on Tuesday, February 17th, in the Rock House Community Center, Clayton, Georgia. The fellowship hour begins at 6:30 PM and will be followed by a business meeting and program at 7:00 PM. Plans for the coming year, Rendezvous report and other news concerning the chapter will be covered. Kyle Burrell and Henry Williamson will demonstrate useful knots to use on your favorite trout stream.

## 1998 RENDEZVOUS

The 12th Annual Rabun Rendezvous is now history. One Hundred Sixty members and guests gathered at the Dillard House Conference Center to enjoy great food, fellowship, Leroy Powell's humor, the Foxfire Boys making good bluegrass music, tall tales and the chance to take home some prized item from the bucket raffle or silent auction table. And the trout of northeast Georgia were the beneficiaries! According to first accounting, the Chapter raised approximately \$4200 to fund it's activities on behalf our cold water fisheries and their watersheds. Thanks to all the members, visiting chapters, prize donors, the Foxfire Boys, Leroy, and the Dillard House, the affair was a success.

Already, some members are discussing ways that the Chapter can make 1999's Rendezvous a bigger success.

## TIGHT LINES SHARON

Rabun Chapter member and newsletter editor for the past several years, Sharon Wilson, has laid down her pen, so to speak, only to pick up another in the pursuit of a degree in Law. In her own words - **"A Short Note To the 'Rabunites'** Young women seem to grow restless when they stay in one place too long; so it's time for this one to move on. By the time you receive this edition of *Tightlines*, the moving van will have been loaded and heading north. It has been my pleasure to be a member of this chapter (I plan to remain a member) and to be the Editor of *Tightlines*. I have enjoyed your friendship, admired your fishing prowess, and had many a **yuk yuk** over your stories and embellished lies. This chapter is active and it does good things! I leave knowing that the rivers and streams of Rabun County are in capable hands.

A special note to my fishing buddy and good friend Kyle; the times we have spent knocking about have created very special memories that I will always remember!

Hope to see many of you west of Hiawassee and **'tightlines' Sharon "**

As the interim Editor of this newsletter, I know first hand of the job Sharon has done for us. I'll miss seeing her regularly and join the rest of the Chapter in wishing her well and extending a big THANK YOU FOR A JOB WELL DONE!

## RABUN RENDEZVOUS T SHIRTS STILL AVAILABLE

We still have Large & X Large, Hanes Beefy T's available. The shirts feature a Brook Trout painted by Tom Landreth, chasing a "Yaller Hammer" fly across the front, with "Rabun Rendezvous - Rabun Chapter of Trout Unlimited". Call or write and we'll send you one or more for \$12/each, plus \$1 for mailing. They look great and the money goes for a good cause - trout! Call Tom Landreth at (706) 746-2295 or Charlie Breithaupt at (706) 746-3379.

## NEWS FROM THE FOREST

### MAJOR OVERHAUL OF THE U S FOREST ROAD SYSTEM

Mike Dombeck, Chief of the U. S. Forest Service, has proposed a major overhaul of the forest road system including *a proposal to halt all road construction in roadless areas on National Forests.*

Dombeck pledges to work with the public, Congress and the scientific community to develop a forest transportation system that meets the needs of local people while minimizing, and reversing, environmental impacts such as erosion, landslides, and **degradation of wildlife habitat and water quality.** He goes on to report that of the estimated 373,000 miles of authorized roads and an additional estimated 60,000 miles of unplanned and unmanaged roads, only about 40% are maintained to the safety and environmental standards to which they were designed. It is estimated that a \$10 million backlog exists in *needed road reconstruction and maintenance.*

"Forest roads help fulfill many social, economic, and environmental objectives," said Dombeck. "However, of all the things that we do on National Forests, road building leaves the most lasting imprint on the landscape. Roads are a long-term financial commitment, *once built they must be maintained year after year*"

This proposal will be announced in an Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking published in the Federal Register and will be available for public comment for 60 days. TU National will be involved in this comment period.

### PRESCRIBED BURNS PROPOSED BY THE TALLULAH DISTRICT

The Tallulah Ranger District and all other ranger districts are planning more fuel reduction prescribed burns. Russell Burken has already been asked to give Rabun TU's comments on 3 burns in the John Teague Gap (West Fork) Area. There are 3 more fuel reduction prescribed burns on the current district schedule of proposed actions: Camp Creek, Stonewall and the *3000 acres Reed Creek Burn* (from the Burrells Ford Road to the edge of the River, from Shirley Shoals to the mouth of Reed Creek).

The Chapter will have a knowledgeable person to come and address this issue in the very near future so that we may make an informed response during the scoping period. tions of these effects. *"Without going into great detail, it is important to highlight some of the key effects fire has on watershed resources, primarily soils, water quality, water quantity, runoff timing and the interactions of these effects. This will set the stage for later discussions on how prescribed fire interacts with the Clean Water Act. Most of the available literature deals with the effects of wildfire on physical watershed resources. Little is written on the legal aspects of prescribed fire and CWA. The following effects summaries are generalizations. Effects tend to increase with fire intensity and extent, although one can find exceptions to any generality. By their very nature, most effects of prescribed fire will be substantially reduced from wildfire levels. Fire managers play an important role in minimizing unwanted effects."* .... *"Practices of particular concern include construction and rehabilitation of fire lines, buffer placement adjacent to water bodies, staging areas for equipment and personnel, cumulative impacts of burning within a watershed, distribution of fire in watersheds of concern, and burning in wetland areas..."*

-RUSSELL A. LAFAYETTE, WATER QUALITY LIAISON TO USEPA, USDA FOREST SERVICE

Mr. LaFayette's paper raises several concerns and questions regarding prescribed burns and we need to explore these issues thoroughly before expressing the Chapter's position.

## CHATTOOGA RIVER CREEL SUMMARY 1991-1996

Below is a summary of the data collected on all those cards you have filled in and dripped in the survey boxes on the Chattooga. The Forest Service crunches all this data and hopefully gains more insight as to the management of the fishery. Data not collected is the relative expertise of each trout fisherman and their knowledge of the river.

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996*
Creel Cards	575	868	632	882	677	333
Hours Per Trip	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.5	4.9
Rainbow Trout Caught	2868	3856	2825	3705	2180	1408
Catch Per Hour	1.17	0.99	1.21	0.87	0.72	0.87
Brown Trout Caught	1837	2193	1634	1570	1536	464
Catch Per Hour	0.77	0.54	0.57	0.37	0.51	0.29
Trout Caught	4705	6049	4459	5234	3718	1872
Catch Per Hour	1.94	1.53	1.15	1.23	1.22	1.15
RBT Creeled %	33	36	24	25	31	36
BNT Creeled %	22	30	19	20	29	30
RBT Clipped %	34	36	36	32	22	21
BNT Clipped (%)	48	44	34	20	21	15
Bait Fishing (%)			33	28	28	33
Lure Fishing (%)			24	26	26	23
Fly Fishing (%)			43	46	46	44
RBT > 10"			660 (18%)	90 (16%)	385 (18%)	150 (11%)
BNT > 10"			390 (25%)	62 (13%)	183 (12%)	59 (13%)
Redeye Bass Caught			364	26	308	107
Bream Caught			212	11	126	72
Average Rating			6.6	6.5		

\*(Data available for boxes 2-6 only in 1996)

### DELAYED HARVEST ON THE CHATTOOGA - WELL, MAYBE

Our friends in South Carolina have proposed a delayed harvest section on the Chattooga River that would run from Hwy 28 downstream to the Forest Service Canoe Launch. In the proposal, both positive and possible negatives were offered:

#### PLUS FACTORS

- ⇒ Large enough to fly fish
- ⇒ Support from anglers
- ⇒ Close to SC population ctrs
- ⇒ Support from SC DNR
- ⇒ Good access for stocking
- ⇒ Good access for anglers on SC side
- ⇒ Good access for SC Law Enforcement
- ⇒ Delayed Harvest could be set to take advantage of fishable season
- ⇒ Requires law changes in both states due to reciprocal agreement
- ⇒ Low cost to GA DNR

#### CHALLENGES

- May not be wadeable during rainy season
- Some opposition from harvest oriented anglers
- Far from GA population centers
- Fish may move to harvest areas (?)
- Far from usual Georgia patrol areas
- Poor access on Georgia side
- Poor access for Law Enforcement on GA side
- Possible conflicts with boaters at times
- First DH area for both states. Is it the most likely to succeed? Failure could hurt DH concept
- Poaching potential

**DATES TO REMEMBER**

**FEB 17TH.....CHAPTER MEETING AT THE ROCK  
HOUSE IN CLAYTON...6:30 PM**

**FEB 21ST.....GEORGIA COUNCIL WORK PROJECT  
SMITHGALL WOODS/DUKES CREEK**

**MAR 17TH.....CHAPTER MEETING AT THE ROCK  
HOUSE IN CLAYTON**

**APR 24TH.....CAMPOUT AND MEETING UPPER  
REED CREEK**

**APR 25TH.....CHAPTER WORK PROJECT  
UPPER REED CREEK**

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