

Winchester Trout Unlimited

(June 6, 2024)

The meeting was called to order by Gene Lewis, at approximately 7:10pm in Rachel's Kitchen meeting room of the Shenandoah Lodge at Lake Frederick. A total of 17 were in attendance. There were no first-time guests.

LAST MEETING MINUTES: The May minutes were approved with a motion and as second by Rod and Phil.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Members Mike Smith and Mike Makufka presented a Power Point presentation on the VA Priority Waters initiative. Their entire slide presentation is included at the end of the minutes.

TREASURS REPORT:

Dave Juth reports that the Chapter has a balance of \$10,465.72 as of 6/1/2024. A short discussion occurred around suggested line items in the budget and how they should be funded if at all including TIC monies and the process for funding this project. If the chapter has budget monies, they can be used to upgrade equipment. Mike Makufka indicated that VA state TU has funds for this statewide program and grant monies can be applied for by our chapter.

The FY 2025 was approved with a motion and second by Rod and Mark. This budget is subject to revision with approval by the membership.

PROJECTS:

Red Bud Run—Bud reports that the monthly work session will be held on Saturday June 8th at 9 am pending any rain events. As usual, he will inform the work crew of last-minute changes on Friday evening June 7.

Priority Waters— See above and below

EDUCATION / OUTREACH:

Project Healing Waters___ See the full report attached.

Bar Fly___ The next Bar Fly meeting will be on Wednesday June 19th at 7pm at the Escutcheon Brewery. As a reminder, this regular gathering has been moved to the 3rd Wednesday of each month.

TIC—There was only one fish released into Red Bud on May 10th by Sherando High School students. Fred was present for the release and thanks to Dave for clearing the grounds for a safe walk to the stream.

ONGOING BUSINESS:

Fish With a Member (FWAM) was discussed and 13 members of the 17 in attendance indicated they would be interested in being on an email distribution list for future outings. Fred will develop a group email list and send it to all interested members.

NEW BUSINESS:

There was no additional new business.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:35 pm.

Submitted by:

Fred Boyer, Secretary



Winchester Program Update

6 June 2024

Status: The program now has **30 active participants** and **45 registered volunteers**.
Volunteers include three Ambassadors (Participant & Volunteer status)

Our next meeting is Wednesday, 10 July 2024 in Rachel's Kitchen, Shenandoah Lodge, Lake Frederick, **6:30-8:30 p.m.** This is tentatively a casting and station training.

Recent Activities:

2-4 May – Virginia Region 2024 Spring Back Creek Outing. Warm Springs, Va.
PHW Winchester is serving as event co-coordinator with PHW Fredericksburg.
Christina and Christian Nelson participated. Christine Erin guided Christina.
Wayne White served as one of the event directors.

8 May – Fly-tying and casting clinic at the program monthly meeting.

9 May – Lake Frederick Veterans Association Presentation at Shenandoah Lodge.
Outreach event/meet and greet with the members of the association.

21-23 May – Virginia Region 2024 Spring River Bound Outing. Lebanon, Va.
Erwin Casto attended and Bill Campbell, PHW Va Regional Coordinator will guide.

23 May – 4th Annual Winchester Rotary Club “Healing Field of Honor” opening ceremony at Handley High School kicking off the Memorial Day Weekend. Thanks to Winchester volunteers Mark Zimmerman, Ken Seroka, and Dave Matthes for their attendance and support of our outreach activities.

31 May – 2 June – National Mossy Creek Invitational – Charles “Doc” Smith participated.

Planned Activities

11-15 June – PHW National Trip #14 to Oak Heart Lodge, Newaygo, MI. Phil Stevens is the trip lead

12 June – Cool Spring Fishing Outing and Social at Cool Spring, Shenandoah River, Shenandoah University campus. No meeting at Shenandoah Lodge that day.

29 June – Fishing Outing at USGS Science Center Hatchery, Leetown, WVA.

10 July – Program Monthly Meeting. Agenda TBD.

16-20 July – PHW National Trip #9 to Freedom Ranch, Wise River, Montana. Wayne White is the trip lead.

23-27 July – PHW All Women's National Trip to Freedom Ranch for Heroes, Wise River, Montana. Winchester Participant Heather Wright will attend.

14 August – Program Monthly Meeting. Agenda TBD.

20-24 August – PHW National Trip #14 to Freedom Ranch, Wise River Montana. Winchester Ambassador Erwin Casto will attend.

3-7 September –PHW National Trip #16 to Oak Heart Lodge, Newaygo, MI. Wayne White is the trip lead.

11 September – Program Monthly Meeting. Agenda TBD.

Thanks to the Winchester TU members and all our volunteers for their commitment and support to our mission.

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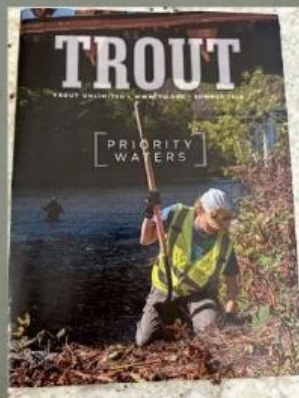


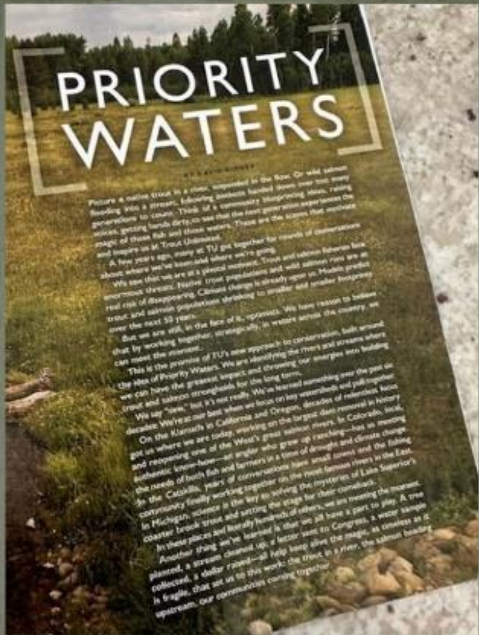
Priority Waters

A new opportunity for the Winchester Chapter
... and YOU

In the summer of 2023

TROUT Magazine unveiled a new approach to
addressing and combating the effects of climate change
on our remaining wild trout and salmon fisheries





"We say 'new,' but it's not really. We've learned something over the past six decades: We're at our best when we focus on key watersheds and pull together."



What can the Winchester Chapter do to support and advance this national endeavor?

- Step 1 was to simply explore the possibilities – do we have trout waters within our geographic membership area that align with National TU's priority regions?
- Step 2 was to narrow our focus to publicly accessible waters.
- Step 3 was to assess how we could best partner with a public resource agency.

Shenandoah National Park or George Washington National Forest?

- Opportunities for proactive instream habitat work are greatly limited by the historic NPS policies regarding human intervention in natural processes.
- Most Shenandoah Park waters exhibit stable to improving habitat conditions. Only a few Park waters (e.g., the Rapidan) face human-caused perils at present.
- The George Washington & Jefferson National Forest has a long track record in stream habitat restoration efforts.

The chapter's ad-hoc Priority Waters team visited two potential National Forest project streams in April ...

- Mill Run at Veach's Gap is a tributary to Passage Creek. The Forest Service and DWR successfully created a restoration brook trout population here in 2005.
- Little Passage Creek, also a Passage Creek tributary, has been limed seven times since 1987. It was deemed suitable for brook trout restoration in the 1990's.



Which one to select?

- Your input will be valuable.
- Both streams are within an approximate one hour drive from Winchester.
- Both have existing, sustaining wild trout. Both have reasonably stable habitats.
- How should we proceed? What resource goals should we discuss with Forest Service?
- How long will our commitment be? And what will “success” look like?

Consider this reach of Mill Run ...

- Is it “broken”?
- What is the *stream* telling us?



Meanwhile,
at Little Passage Creek ...

- Clearly, some habitat work has been undertaken in the past.
- What worked? What lessons were learned?



To be sure, opportunities for habitat remedies are present on each stream ...



A commitment to either will require long-term effort ... throughout the seasons.



Some likely tasks may include...

- Placement and maintenance of temperature data loggers
- Photo documentation of habitat changes throughout the seasons
- Water quality sampling
- Documentation of other fish species (including notations about possible invasives)
- Moving rocks, moving logs, identifying existing sources of large woody debris (LWD)
- Close coordination with resource biologists ...

But the rewards could be abundant...



Helping to restore and preserve a native coldwater fishery
... that's an important role we can play. Together.



“The major aim of habitat management could be termed ‘health of the stream.’ Health is defined as ‘the capacity [of the stream] for self repair.”

-- Guidelines for Management of Trout Stream Habitat in Wisconsin
by White & Brynildson, 1967