



The Arkansas Trout

Newsletter of the Arkansas Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Chapter 514

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EXCITING NEWS FOR THE NORFORK/WHITE RIVERS!!!

CONSENT DECREE SIGNED MARCH 15, 2007

Circuit Judge Gary Isbell of the 14th Judicial District has signed the consent decree which seals an agreement between the state of Arkansas and Homeport Land Company. The lawsuit that was filed in August by the Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ), with the Arkansas Council of Trout Unlimited subsequently filing for and accepted in the case as Intervenor. Attorneys Bob Estes of Fayetteville, and Gregory W. O'Neal of Memphis were instrumental in assisting with the case in support of the state in their roles as attorneys for the Arkansas Council. They were supported in their efforts by our own Ray Smith, Fayetteville attorney and Arkansas Chapter Board Member. Along with the Consent Decree, an Amended complaint was entered with regards to three other developments underway by Homeport Land Company.

This agreement resolves a critical conservation crisis on and around the Norfolk and White Rivers, and avoids a potential prolonged and costly legal battle. And, very importantly, based on this case and preceded by positive rulings limiting gravel mining on Crooked Creek, signals that ADEQ plays a serious and positive role in preserving exceptional and valuable water resources. The fact that the judiciary is upholding these enforcement actions can also be seen as encouraging news.

Without going into detail regarding the 19-page document that represents the decree and exhibits (we will make every effort to post this to our Chapter website), a summary of the results are as follows: The developer must retain a Registered Professional Engineer to oversee and certify the installation and implementation of all erosion control measures at the Overlook Estates site. There are very specific requirements and rigid timelines specified for all four properties being developed by Homeport Land Company to include proper permitting, stormwater pollution prevention plans, and physical barriers. Erosion Control structures are detailed in quantity/size/quality to include sediment basins, spillways, diversion ditches, erosion blankets, geotextile fabrics, rip-rap, silt fences, and check dams. This is to all be accomplished prior to the end of April. Assuming that these actions are completed to the satisfaction of the state and the court with regards to adequate stormwater and sedimentation controls, then a hearing will be set to discuss possible Natural Resources Damage Claims/Civil Penalties that may be necessary to provide resources for restoring the North Fork River. Clean-up of the North Fork below Norfolk Dam is required as part of the agreement.

Failure of Homeport Land Company to comply with this decree will result in contempt charges and further development at any of the four sites would be halted until compliance is demonstrated.

Thanks to ADEQ, Trout Unlimited, individuals who called and wrote, and a very vocal and supportive media throughout the state, for working towards this very positive result.

I think most will agree that development is inevitable due to the attraction of our natural resources - but we must remain diligent in ensuring that it is done responsibly. As Bob Estes implored at our annual Banquet, we must stay active in our efforts to achieve a proper balance between economic growth and preservation of our treasures.

APRIL CHAPTER MEETING

Monday, April 2nd: AQ Chicken House, Springdale

Our April program features the UofA Research team that has been studying the trout movements, diets, etc. on the Bull Shoals and Norfork tailwaters. Aaron Cushing, Jon Flinders, and faculty sponsor Dr. Dan Margoulick will present a program regarding their findings to-date. This is the team that our chapter has assisted with funding and manhours.

Hope to see you there between 6:00-7:00 pm for a little socializaing and dinner (optional). The program will begin around 7:15 p.m. We are very informal and friendly, so if you haven't joined us before, come and see what we are all about. And bring a friend.



Chapter Meeting of January 8, 2007

Brian Harris of White River Angler, Steve Dally of Beaver Dam Store, Ken Richards of Just Fishin' Guides, Scott Branyan of Ozark Fly Flinger, were our presenters for the January meeting.

Guide's night is an annual event where we invite our favorite and most qualified guides to give us tips on any topic related to fishing. Each of them made a short presentation of their choosing, followed by a question-and-answer session.

Brian, Steve, Ken, Scott, Michael and Todd from McLellan's Fly Shop (not able to make this meeting) are always quick to respond to our invitation to provide advice on topics ranging from drift boating (they all do it!!), best/favorite places to fish, favorite flies, best techniques, photography, fishing for different species, and any other area of interest for our members. And they always respond with a great program that is informative, professional, and often filled with humorous asides to keep us eagerly looking forward to their next visit.

LEARN TO FLY FISH, PART II

Another successful day of mentoring aspiring fly-fishers was conducted by our Chapter on January 20th. Our luck has not changed regarding the weather for these events. But in spite of the cold, blustery weather, the participants and instructors showed up in force at Lake Atalanta in Rogers for our second session this calendar year. Thanks again to all of our members who assisted these budding fly-fishers. Because this outreach has been so well received, please watch for announcements for our next season and step forward and volunteer to ensure we have adequate instructors for all attendees.

ARE YOU THE RIGHT PERSON FOR THIS JOB???

Webmaster needed

Our chapter seeks a computer geek (term used affectionately and respectfully), fly-fisher, lay conservationist that is interested in new challenges. The remuneration is inadequate if viewed in simply economic terms: in fact the pay is zero dollars. However, the intangible rewards are quite satisfying and will earn you respect, awe, and genuine appreciation should you be accepted for this position. We are in need of an appropriately qualified, motivated, and all-around likeable person to help upgrade, update, and maintain our chapter website. Our chapter is on the move and attendance and interest is growing rapidly. One of our goals is to improve our communications thru the website so that it will provide a timely, interesting, and informative venue that you will want to visit often.



2007 RIM SHOALS OUTING

As can be seen by the top photo, we had a great turn-out for this year's week-end outing to Rim Shoals (this is only about 1/2 the group). Gary and Paula Flippin and crew are the hardest-working, most cordial and accommodating hosts you could hope for - not only that, they know a thing or two about fishing and are experts when it comes to turning a big load of groceries into special meals for the group. Of course the weather could have been more cooperative, but I'll bet you won't find a single soul that would tell you they didn't have a great time. Judging by the response this year, you better sign up early the next time around

The Arkansas Trout is published bimonthly for members of the Arkansas Chapter of Trout Unlimited (Chapter No. 514). Membership in the national organization entitles the member to an assignment to a local chapter and its newsletter. When you join TU, you may request assignment to a specific local chapter or accept the default geographical assignment. Requests to renew membership, change chapter assignment, or update your mailing address or membership information should be sent to the national organization (contact listed below). Other questions or comments may be addressed to the Secretary/Editor. Recent past issues are available on the chapter's webpage.

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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS!!

December - January - February

*Mr. and Mrs. Carlon Chipman, Marmaduke
Dr. Gary Thomas, Fayetteville
Mr. Travis Faught, Elkins
Dana L. Moreton, Rogers
Jarod Morrison, Fayetteville
Mr. Allan Davis, Bentonville
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Mr. Mark A. Betts, Gravette
Ruth Ann Wisener, Elkins
Mr. Peter Grundl, Fayetteville
Mr. Matt Hicks, Rogers*



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 2nd: The research team from the Uof A will present the findings from their study on the Norfolk and White Rivers. Our chapter provided a portion of the funding for this project - come see what it's all about.

May 7th: AGFC commissioner Sonny Varnell will pay us a visit.

June-August: Summer vacation - no mtgs.

Chapter meetings are held on the first Monday of each month, but are subject to change due to holidays, etc. Stay posted by checking our chapter website or calling one of the board members - info is on page 3. Unless posted otherwise, we meet at AQ Chicken House in Springdale. Arrive around 6:30 if you want to order dinner and/or enjoy a nice visit with other members. We usually start the meeting around 7:15. We have excellent programs lined up for this upcoming year, to include some special surprises that you will be hearing about later!