**THE CHARLOTTESVILLE FLY FISHERMAN AND COLDWATER CONSERVATIONIST**

**THOMAS JEFFERSON CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED**

**SEPTEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER**

**VISIT US ON OUR NEW WEBSITE AT: thomasjeffersontu.org**

**SEPTEMBER MEETING REPORT**

The September meeting was held this past Thursday Sept. 28, 2017 at 6 pm at the Northside Library which was our first time using the space there.

The room is large enough to seat 80 at tables, has a built in screen, projector, podium with microphone and all the needed wiring to easily set up slide presentations.

We’re set to use the room going forward in October, November and January of 2018 and hope is with the added space in an easily assessable location we’ll add some things to meetings such as fly tying for the **Fly of the Month** at each meeting.

We just need someone to take on leading the session at each month’s meeting, so if you’re interested please let me know. It would work well if like with We also would like to get the **Fish with a Member Program** going again as well. The way we worked this in the past members would sign on to lead a group to the stream of their choice at a set date and each participant would put in $5 towards a till that would grow until years end when everyone who went on a trip and contributed would be entered in a drawing that would pay out a cash and or merchandise prize. The more times you sign up and contribute the more chances you have to win.

The leader each month would submit his stream choice providing a short right up describing the stream he plans to fish, what he likes about it, what the plan is and what you should expect while fishing.

It can also be set up that the lead person wants to learn about a particular stream and have an experienced member show them the ropes. It’s all about having a great time out fly fishing for trout, learning more about the sport we love and getting to know other members.

After the trip has occurred the leader would send in a short description of the day for posting on the website and give a short talk about it at the next meeting.

**Andrea Terry of the Rivanna Water and Sewer Authority** was guest speaker at the September Meeting last week and gave a great presentation with slides and info about the Moorman’s River Watershed.

Of course we are all interested in what’s happening below the dam out there and we learned some interesting info about releases and what dictates the release regiments we see occurring on the river.

Since the old gauge on the North Fork Moorman’s is not in use the releases from the reservoir are based upon a formula derived from the flow rates on the Mechums River under similar scenarios allowing for the differences in stream size and other factors.

For example the inflow to the reservoir on Sept. 28, was calculated to be 1.1 million gallons so the release from the reservoir was at that same level for the day, 1.1 mg.

Another interesting fact we learned is that once inflow to the Sugar Hollow Reservoir from the North and South Forks Moorman’s drops to a certain level during the late spring or early summer water is no longer pumped from Sugar Hollow Reservoir to Ragged Mountain. This year the last day that water was pumped to Ragged Mtn. was May 24.

Andrea also stated the existing pipeline from Sugar Hollow to Ragged Mountain is old and leaky and in need of repair and or replacement and with the plan to build a pipeline from SF Rivanna to Ragged Mountain in the route study phase it will still be a few years before we see anything happening. It is coming as part of the original plan which included the now finished new Ragged Mountain Dam.

The original plan was to route this new pipeline along the right of way of the now scrapped western bypass plan which now is not an option. The new routing plan will take some effort to bring to the construction phase as it will need approval from the county and other regulatory sources and the acquisition of the right of way to get there.

Knowing how things work in this community I wouldn’t think this will happen anytime soon as everyone that can will do all they can to drag it out as long as possible. The new pipeline would put Sugar Hollow in the status of a back-up reservoir and unless something drastic happened water would no longer be pumped from there.

Those millions of gallons of water pumped from Sugar Hollow each year would then flow down the course it historically had taken towards the SF Rivanna. Since the transfer of water from Sugar Hollow to Ragged Mtn. ended on May 24 if you’ve been out to Sugar Hollow you probably would have noticed that the reservoir has been nearly full all summer which is a good thing as we don’t get muddy runoff from storms and warmer water at too low or too high pool levels on the reservoir.

Back in early August under good flows we found stream temperatures in the Flat Pool at 63 degrees which is about ¾ of a mile below the dam which is well within the tolerable range for trout. At other times under lower releases it would get up near 70, still ok but we’d rather see the latter numbers if given a choice.

The pipe at the bottom of the dam releasing water is taking it from down below the surface at a level that has cooler water so we are getting somewhat of a tailwater effect on the TJTU Section under the current standards.

I was talking with someone who had been swimming out there this summer and they commented on how cold the water was and how it was somewhat uncomfortable to swim in. Maybe that’s why the place seemed cleaner and less traveled along the banks back on the Day of Caring a couple of weeks ago.

To finish up Andrea’s report to the chapter she also showed us some maps that were of great interest to everyone that showed the location of property lines and the owners of all the property surrounding the TJTU leased section. This revealed some interesting facts and further discussion led to some better understanding between TJTU and RWSA about the areas the chapter mainly uses and their locations on the map relative to those property lines.

The current lease TJTU has with RWSA on the Moorman’s below Sugar Hollow Reservoir states the section starts at the last bridge over the river and reaches upstream to the base of the stilling pool wall a distance of 1.25 miles has been in effect since 1995 and is in need of review and updating to clarify questions that have arisen over the past few years.

RWSA will work on the revisions and meet with us again soon to review them so we can have a better understanding of the rights and responsibilities of TJTU in managing the stream section going forward.

Once we have some definitive answers and direction on the updated lease we’ll pass along the info when we get there. It is a work in progress so we are hopeful that’ll we’ll soon reach the point of having everything set for the near future on our project stream.

The discussion with Andrea was very interesting and raised several good questions that were addressed or held over until further details emerge so we’ll plan to have Andrea back again before the summer season next year or by next September anyway.

We’ll keep you informed as things come about and be on the lookout for upcoming meeting announcements and possible future meeting programs about the Moormans’ River.

Many thanks to Andrea for coming out to talk with us and letting us know that the RWSA appreciates our efforts out on the Moorman’s and wishes to continue our partnership and work together on issues concerning the Moorman’s River Watershed.

**More thoughts and interesting stuff concerning the Moorman’s River Watershed**

Good things are happening out on the Moorman’s as we speak, trout have now held over through the summer in the TJTU section for at least 7 years now and although we have seen evidence of trout spawning in the section we’re not sure how successful the attempts have been and even if it occurs each year.

Some years redds have been quite noticeable in the preferred places along the stream section and other years visible evidence is absent or occurring in places we can’t observe as well.

The good thing is they are able to hold over if the right conditions fall into place over the course of the year and hopefully Mother Nature allows the rain and snow to fall in the appropriate amounts year after year and we’ll keep good flows throughout every summer to come.

Getting back to spawning evidence, another piece of evidence that speaks for natural reproduction along the TJTU section is the size of some of the Rainbows that are caught there.

Many times we catch a Rainbow out there that’s hand sized, 7 or maybe 8 inches, has large fins with white edges and good body coloration and markings. Wild fish maybe? Could be as we only stock the standard stocking class which is what is called 10-12 inchers which turns out to be mixture of Rainbows that run 10 to 15 inches with a few 16 inchers thrown in too.

At this time the supplier we get our trout from only offers the 10-12 inch class as stated above for stocking and the large trout which tend to be 16 inches and larger weighing anywhere from 1.5 to 4 pounds depending upon how fast they grew that year.

Point is these smaller, high quality looking Rainbows are likely wild or may have come upstream from areas downstream that are stocked as we know there are at least 2 other places below the TJTU section that are stocked and have been for the last few years consecutively.

Also in past years we knew of 2 other sections that were stocked as well so the reach of trout in the Moorman’s River by the time summer arrives in years past was all the way from Sugar Hollow to the confluence of the Mechum’s and Moorman’s River where the South Fork Rivanna River has its’ beginnings.

Most anglers don’t realize this but it is true the Moorman’s River carries trout throughout its length each year in the late spring and where do they go if they do hold over is not known but its known that they have places where springs enter the river that could hold over small numbers through the summer.

Several years ago someone caught a fish they couldn’t identify in the Ivy Creek branch arm of the SF Rivanna Reservoir on a crankbait while Bass fishing. The fish was a washed out Rainbow Trout well over 20 inches and weighing a few ounces over 7 pounds.

The only way a trout reached that size in SF Rivanna River watershed was by holding over at least 1 or 2 years as it was probably stocked by one of the known sources at somewhere between 10 and 18 inches in length and weighing less than 4 pounds.

So that trout had to find a way and that means cool water with lots of oxygen and as in a typical warm water environment the dissolved oxygen level needed to sustain Bass for instance is much less than needed by cold-water fish such as trout to survive.

So how did this occur? Well I’d think that since it originated in the river far upstream somewhere between Sugar Hollow and Free Union he traveled a long way to get to where he was and somewhere in between there was enough of the necessary ingredients to sustain a trout and he found it.

In the colder months the area the trout was caught in would have been cold and oxygenated enough to hold trout but what about the hot, sunny summers with the sun glaring down on the water over a large expanse heating it up at least down several feet from the surface.

That trout wasn’t stocked at that size, I’m sure so he lived there wild for a time, where did he spend the summer? Out deep in the river channel of the SF and cruising the shallower points during the in between times? Or did he migrate back upstream to cooler, moving water somewhere the environment was less marginal and had just enough of the right stuff?

I’d guess no one really knows but I also wonder if anyone ever deep trolls out there through the channel between the bridges over the upper reservoir downstream along that right side headed toward the dam?

My Dad and I did back in the 80’s many times in search of Walleye which we caught along with some nice Bass and Catfish too. We took up chasing Walleye in area waters back in those days after I had went to Ontario fishing for them and Pike several years before.

We never caught any trout as we trolled and jigged the deep points and channels along the area. Armed with only the late 1970’s sonar and a good knowledge of terrain and seeing it underwater by following the contours from the adjacent shore into the depths we blindly plowed the depths that gave up some good fish but no trout.

Not knowing about where trout were stocked in the Moorman’s River system below Sugar Hollow Dam in those days I have no idea if the possibility of trout living deep within the SF Rivanna Reservoir even existed then or not.

Trout may exist there today as we know they have been in the area so who knows, I guess anything is possible. Kinda makes me wish I was young and able enough to take on the task of finding out.

Sounds like a good quest for the young kayak angler to investigate the lower Moorman’s to its confluence with the Mechum’s and the beginnings of SF Rivanna and check those likely looking spots in April when flows are good and the water is still cold.

Or maybe it’s the Bass angler trolling deep running crankbaits and spoons along the deep channel of the upper reaches of the reservoir down along the east side bluff below the Earlysville Road bridge? I’d jig deep too with a blade bait along those drop offs and run it through large fish located on the depth finder to find the elusive Rivanna Trout if he even exists.

**Join us at the Northside Library on Rio Rd West Charlottesville, Va.**

**NEW MEETING SPACE FOR TJTU FALL MEETINGS!!!!**

**NORTHSIDE LIBRARY RIO RD. WEST**

**Thursday October 26, 2017 6 pm Program to be announced**

**Thursday November 16, 2016 6 pm Program to be announced**

**Thursday December 14, 2017 Christmas Dinner Social Location to be determined**

**Later on down the road………**

**Next Year!**

**Thursday January 25, 2018 Northside Library 6 PM**

**Feb or Mar? 2018 Westminster Canterbury of the Blue Ridge Meeting with Speaker details coming soon.**

Parking at the library is limited out front but there is a bigger lot in the rear of the building and a well-lit entrance as well. Northside Library is quite busy so if either of these lots are full there is more parking along the side of the building. The rear entrance has a long set of stairs to the main level but there is an elevator for those of us that need it.

The large meeting room is just off the main corridor through the center of the building directly across from the main room of the library. The room will have a sign on the door, can’t miss it.

We’ll have more info on the fall meetings coming soon.

The December meeting will as usual be our Christmas Dinner Meeting. We’ll start the discussion about possible locations in October so we can finalize our location well ahead of time.

We’ll continue to send email notice out to our chapter email list which contains close to half of our membership so no one misses our notices. We’ll also likely do a postcard mailing to the chapter roster this fall to make sure everyone knows we have the new website up and a Facebook page as well.

As we’ve asked in the past please send us any news that you feel is important to pass on to the chapter to be included in these new avenues of communication.

Please pass the word on about our efforts to those you think would be interested.

**UPCOMING EVENTS AND NEWS OF INTEREST**

**Day of Caring Work Day Wednesday September 20, 2017**

Again this year to continue what began as Zach Andrews Eagle Scout Project back in 2008 we just completed our 9th year if I’m not mistaken of being a included in the Day of Caring Project and having a work crew help us out on the Moorman’s Special Regs Section.

During the original project the accessible trails initiative was begun and the erection of the banner/bench kiosk at the Flat Pool and the four sided info kiosk just below the dam were completed.

Part of an Eagle Scout Projects requirements states that the project must have a long term effect on the targeted proposal entity and continue after its inception to be something that stays a valuable asset to the goals it helped achieve and keeps it paying forward.

Each year since its inception we’ve used the work day to do just that carry forward the accomplishments of Zach’s Project to install new trails and maintain existing trails and fishing access spots along the section. These accessible trails now connect the stream sections from the Flat Pool all the way up to the base of the dam.

We also keep the trails trimmed, perform litter clean up along the stream banks and roadsides through the section and even have worked on installing the weirs you see in the upstream kiosk section which are being added to and even changed by others at times. The work we’ve done on these pools through here has gradually helped form a stepping down stretch of pools through there.

Some of the original stream enhancement efforts through the chapter in this section started back around 2004 where rock weirs were anchored in a roll of chicken wire and staked into the stream bottom that formed the base for what is seen there now.

Now with a large part of the trail work done we have other plans in the works and hope to start some new efforts out there next year. Look for updates in coming months.

Many thanks go out to our member and partner Mark Andrews and his Therapeutic Adventures for lining this great yearly event up for us yet again.

This year we had a group from the UVA Hospital that wanted to return again this year as they really enjoyed working with us and helping our cause on the Moorman’s River.

A total of 29 volunteers, 5 TJTU, and 24 from UVA put in a total of 151 hours this year along the stream section. Thanks again to all who came out this year!!!

**Trout Unlimited National Meeting** **was this past week September 27- 30 in Roanoke / News from this great yearly event will be passed on in next month’s newsletter.**

**Garth Run Project Assessment Summer 2017**

Summer assessment has been done. Info gathered will be assessed and a report presented at a meeting to come.

**Trout in the Classroom Programs:**

TJTU has 6 area schools set up and ready to receive their Brook Trout eggs this fall as the Trout in the Classroom Program gets underway again. The eggs are usually ready for distribution to schools in the TIC program during the first week of October and the date is approaching fast! Turns out I’ll be picking up the eggs Wednesday morning October 4, 2017 to deliver them to our local participating programs.

Each class receives 200-250 Brook Trout Eggs of which the majority will hatch with an end result in a good scenario of 50 left for stocking in April averaging 3- 4 inches in length.

Of those that are stocked at an average of 3 inches in length only about 5% will survive to reach adulthood in the wild and hopefully get to spawn at least twice in a lifespan of 4 years.

Typically at the point of egg delivery to the schools the eggs are about 5 to 7 days from hatching and have pronounced eyes and after being acclimated to the aquarium water temperature the eggs are placed in an egg basket suspended from the tanks sides at the top for easy access.

This egg basket keeps the eggs concentrated in a place that makes it easy to keep an eye on them, where dead and diseased eggs can be easily recognized and removed to keep the tank clean and water quality at the proper levels.

The filter system in the tank set up has variable settings that dictate how fast the water circulates through the tank environment and with a constant flow circulating oxygen rich 54 degree water over them the viable eggs are easily recognizable upon delivery and allows students and staff to see the process of hatching unfold over a few days.

The eggs as said upon delivery are just days from hatching and becoming alevins, big eyes, an egg sac and a long whip tail wiggling together in a mass of little Brookie’s for all to see in their first days of life.

After it’s evident all of the eggs that will hatch have hatched the remains are removed and the alevins will then live off their egg sacs until nearly absorbed in the egg basket when they’ll next begin to look up to the surface for food and become distinguishable as a trout.

About 1 inch long at this point the little trout can then be released to swim freely in the tank with the flow speed at a rate that doesn’t work them too hard and they’ll grow over the next six months to an average of 3 inches when release dates come up next April.

TIC has become an important and well used tool in the VEA’s environmental sciences curriculum that is helping recruit the environmental scientists, biologists, conservation officers and other conservationists of tomorrow.

Each TIC setup initially has a one thousand dollar price tag that limits numbers of participating classrooms although once you have the set up the only year to year costs are for miscellaneous supplies which amounts to fifty dollars or less in each following year.

TJTU will supply a 55 gallon tank, the filter system and insulation board /misc. set up supplies to bring down costs about $350 to any school/ class that wishes to participate. If you know any science teachers in our local schools please ask if they are aware of the TIC Program.

**MOORMAN’S RIVER SPECIAL REGS SECTION**

**SEPTEMBER UPDATE:**

Rainbow and Brook Trout have again made it through the summer on the Moorman’s below Sugar Hollow Reservoir making this at least seven years straight this has occurred.

These trout are smart and offer some tough fishing to those who give them a try and get lucky, by being there at the better flow times or early and late in the day when the air is cooler and light is low.

Small Beetle and Ant patterns will take them if you approach quietly and know where these holdover trout like to hold in the stream. A Parachute Ant size 18 with a dropper 12-16 inches long trailing a tungsten head black midge larva size 22 drifted in front of one of these trout will get their attention.

You need to watch closely, the ant pattern on the surface and or preferably the trout as well to see him take. In clear, slow flows and the trout are feeding primarily on small insects such as Midges they can be extremely picky and only look at exactly what they are feeding on and ignore everything else.

At this time of the year you may be able to catch some caddis coming off or egg laying on the stream so keep an eye out for fish taking them. Sneak over and see if you can spot what’s rising and if it looks like a trout throw him a Elk Hair Caddis in the appropriate size and color and see what happens**.**

Out on the Moorman’s and most any other similar trout stream Tan, light brown or even medium gray bodied versions in size 14 and 16 as well as black will work so have a few of each size and color to cover the bases.

Black and medium grey EH Caddis will cover the still prolific Beetles still out on the area streams and the other colors will cover the Adult Caddis. Also on some streams be sure to have a couple of Tan or creamy bodied Stimilators in size 10 and 12 in case you come across some October Caddis which are pretty large.

Under the water as a dropper or fished alone when Caddis are out and attracting the trout a green and or a tan caddis larva and emerger patterns sizes 12, 14 or 16 with the 12 to match the big October version trailed behind a dry and swung in front of the feeding trout will bring many strikes.

Midges as always are the most prevalent food source for trout in the Moorman’s River and from this point on Midge larva and adult patterns will be an ever present trout attractor until late next spring.

In low, slow, clear flows and you see trout feeding on midges you’ll need to taper your 9 foot leader down to 6X and a size 22 adult midge pattern such as a Griffith’s Gnat. I like using fluorocarbon tippet in these cases for adding 4, 5, 6 and 7 X sections in building my leader out and for droppers.

The fluorocarbon yes costs three times much but it is three times better at least. It‘s thinner, stronger and clearer so it produces well and is less likely to spook trout. It holds knots well and you’ll re-tie less too. Kinks can be straightened with the edge of a fingernail and it’s a lot less prone to abrasion saving time and tippet loss on the stream.

The dropper should be a tungsten bead size 22 black, white, or tan midge larva on a dropper of 12 to 18 inches. Most of the trout will take the larva so watch the trout if possible for a quick take before he spits it out. They are very quick so be ready!

Flows are good enough to keep water moving through the section, especially so after we opened up a major blockage on the lower Flat Pool back on the Day of Caring. Flows will vary and if you catch a better release time frame the trout will be more easily approached.

We’ll be announcing the first stocking soon which is coming up quickly to get the Fall season underway. As said flows are slow and clear and although water temps are good the string of cool more fall like weather forecast in the coming week should bring stream temperatures down a little over the next week leading up to the stocking. ……………..Now we just need some rain to fill the streams!

Permits are on sale at the Albemarle Angler and are available upon request by contacting us via our email at [thomasjeffersontu@gmail.com](mailto:thomasjeffersontu@gmail.com)

Thanks for everyone’s continued support!!

**MORE ABOUT THE MOORMAN’S**

If you know me you know how much the Moorman’s River/Sugar Hollow area means to me as it’s where I learned to fish for trout a half a century ago. Fifty years on the water is a long time and looking back it went by way too fast and now it seems time has slowed for me and the poem below came to mind about a week ago, hope you like it.

**A MESSAGE FROM THE PLANTS, ANIMALS, BIRDS, FISH AND ALL THAT CALL THIS PLACE HOME**

**“Footprints on the Trail”**

**Along this river via the trees, trails, sky and currents pass the many creatures of the mountains and rivers**

**Some pass by night and some pass by day,**

**Some will pass as we go about our ways**

**While some will pass just beyond our sight**

**Some when seen can cause a fright**

**The rise of a trout, the call of an eagle**

**Sounds that quickly fade away**

**Footprints on the trail the only mark they leave**

**How is it that mankind finds this so hard to perceive?**

**Enjoy the time you’re here and wonder at its wonders**

**But as you pass by be like those that call this place home**

**and came to be here first**

**And pass quietly and harmlessly as you would in your own home and little piece of the Earth**

**Please don’t litter or destroy the trees and plants**

**Let the rocks lay where the Earth and stream put them as you fish, hike or play**

**Build no dams to block the streams flow, leave it all as it lay**

**So you may find it that way when you return on yet another day**

**Clean up after yourself the kids and pets too**

**A trout stream with trails and seats with a view is no place for glass, trash and smelly doggy poo**

**Take time to listen to the rivers song and please take away the things you brought along**

**Please leave nothing lying about**

**But your fading voices and footprints on the trail.**

**PLEASE DON’T LITTER**

**MANY THANKS**

**THE RESIDENTS OF THE WOODS AND WATERS OF SUGAR HOLLOW**

**James “Chubby” Damron**

**September 2017**

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**SEPTEMBER TROUT FISHING UPDATE**

Mountain Streams:

Stream flows went from good at the beginning of the month to terribly low in just a couple of weeks with the warm, breezy weather we have been having lately. With tropical storm systems in the Gulf of Mexico and off the east coast warm, humid air has been moving over our area for the last couple of weeks although it has brought us very little in the way of rainfall.

Nights are getting longer and cooler especially in the higher elevations so stream temperatures are good but flows not so good unfortunately for those who like fishing the mountain streams.

Should by miracle the sky’s open up and get the streams running good soon Fall Caddis will be a prevalent insect around the streams and a medium gray or tan size 14 Elk Hair Caddis would do the trick. And if you’re somewhere that sees the October Caddis a size 10 will work better to cover them over the next few weeks until the end of October when nights become noticeably cooler.

I’m thinking of a place right now I’ll have to go check in a couple weeks or so and see if a few come off in the late afternoon and early evening.

Terrestrials are a still a huge part of a trout’s diet and will be on up until a heavy frost occurs and it’s cold enough to knock the vegetation down. That can still be a month or more away so throw what you see out there at them if there’s water to throw them in and if you do it all right you’ll catch trout.

Summer like stream flows are low and clear so using 9 foot leaders tapered to 6 x and Beetles in size 14 and 16 and Ants in sizes 16/18/ and 20are a good bet. Inchworms and other terrestrial insects such as bees are prevalent along the streams too and the trout will be on the lookout for whatever comes their way.

You’ll need to be quiet and approach carefully watching the water ahead in these conditions. Walk the banks rather than wading and sloshing around and don’t clank the rocks along the bank either as you sneak up to make a cast.

Keep your profile low and try not to get too close to the water you are targeting. Trout at this time of year are hungry but smart and spooky. Be like a ghost, you’ll catch the most!

**Stocked Streams /Special Regs Water**

The fall stockings by VDGIF will get underway again on Monday October 2 under low water conditions as what seems to be the normal anymore for this great time of year for being in the outdoors whether you’re trout angler or not.

Sugar Hollow Reservoir, Mint Springs middle and upper lakes and Lake Scottsville will likely be among the first places to receive stockings as many area streams are low and may be delayed in getting stocked on the typical first round as the program gets underway.

Besides these Albemarle County lakes nearby the Robinson River in Madison County, The South in Waynesboro (Harvest section north side) and Sherando Lake are places likely to get stocked the first week.

Special Regs/ Delayed Harvest streams are usually stocked the first week too, one of their typical three yearly and the only that is announced.

Keep an eye on the stocking page on the VDGIF website starting this coming Monday October 2, 2017 after 4 pm to see where the trucks hit that first day and those to follow.

More trout fishing options are about to open up for us trout bums, the weather is getting back to normal, fall will soon be in the air and it’s starting to show in the trees …………..please just let it rain!

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