



Tuck Tales

Newsletter of the Tuckasegee Chapter #373 of Trout Unlimited serving the western North Carolina counties of Haywood, Jackson, Macon and Swain

A Monthly Newsletter

December, 2011

Rod Raffle

The raffle will continue for one of Jim Mill's custom graphite fly rods at the December 6th meeting.

December Meeting

The December meeting will be our annual Holiday diner meeting. No covered dish this year.

Fishing Line Recycling

Should our chapter volunteer to help NCWRC with this interesting program? See the article on page 2

December Grub

Chapter member Ernie Sipler will cater the meal for the December meeting at a cost of \$10 per member.

Email addresses needed

Your editor requests that everyone please provide updated email addresses so we can make certain our data base is up-to-date and you won't miss notification of newsletter and event emails!

Editor's email address:

Send an email to:
craigforrest@sleepyhollowstudio.com

Tuckasegee Chapter of Trout Unlimited meets the first Tuesday of every month, with the exception of June, July and August, in the Community Room at the rear of the United Community Bank of Highway 107 South in Sylva at 6:30 PM. A meal is provided by the Grub Committee at a cost of \$5 per person. Guests are invited to join us at no charge.



Sportsmen Criticize Senate Measure Weakening Clean Water Act

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Barrasso-Heller amendment would undermine Army Corps authority to enforce Clean Water Act, eroding water quality and diminishing valuable fish and wildlife habitat.

WASHINGTON — As the U.S. Senate debates the budget for the Army Corps of Engineers this week, prominent sportsman-conservation groups roundly criticized an amendment that would defund the administration's work on Clean Water Act guidance that is crucial to sustaining wetlands and waterways.

Ducks Unlimited, the Izaak Walton League of America, the National Wildlife Federation, the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and Trout Unlimited strongly oppose the so-called Barrasso-Heller amendment, which would block the Army Corps of Engineers from taking agency action toward restoring Clean Water Act protections to streams, wetlands and other waters.

"The language in the Barrasso-Heller amendment will fundamentally diminish America's clean water legacy," said Jan Goldman-Carter, wetlands and water resources counsel for the National Wildlife Federation. "American sportsmen unite urging the Senate to reject this and any measure that would block agency action to secure our clean water and wetlands ecosystems."

Over the past decade, safeguards for headwater streams and critical wetlands have steadily eroded, impacting the ability of these ecosystems to recharge aquifers, retain floodwaters, sustain important fish and wildlife habitat and provide clean water for iconic systems such as the Chesapeake Bay, Great Lakes and Puget Sound. As these waters are polluted and diminished, their tremendous ecological and public health benefits likewise are lost.

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"Clean water is the foundation on which enjoyable and productive hunting and angling trips are built," said Steve Kline, director of the TRCP Center for Agricultural and Private Lands. "We can create jobs without draining wetlands and polluting streams; indeed, thanks to sportsmen, wetlands and streams are great job creators. Sitting in a duck blind or floating on a trout stream, sportsmen have the chance to appreciate first-hand just what clean water means. Now we must act as advocates for the conservation of our nation's waters and wetlands until these irreplaceable resources are appropriately managed and conserved."

Proposed guidance issued by the administration in April would more clearly define which U.S. waters are subject to Clean Water Act protections and begin restoring protections for many of the nation's wetlands and waterways left vulnerable since the SWANCC (2001) and Rapanos (2006) Supreme Court decisions. The wording of the decisions left regulators, landowners and manufacturers confused about which U.S. waters are protected by the Clean Water Act.

"Supreme Court rulings and agency guidance issued over the past decade have jeopardized crucial water resources and wildlife habitat, removing protections for at least 20 million acres of wetlands, particularly prairie potholes and other wetlands essential to waterfowl," said Scott Yaich, director of conservation operations for Ducks Unlimited. "Streams that sustain critical fisheries and feed the public drinking water systems for more than 117 million Americans are also at risk."

"As proposed, the administration's guidance increases clarity and efficiency for agencies, farmers and businesses while keeping Clean Water Act jurisdiction well within its historical bounds," said Steve Moyer, vice president of government relations for Trout Unlimited. "Moreover, the guidance does not - and cannot - limit exemptions for normal activity related to agriculture, forestry and mining that have been in the act since 1977. Its importance cannot be overstated."

The total economic contributions of hunting and angling are substantial. In 2006, hunters and anglers accounted for \$95.5 billion in economic activity, including trip-related expenses and equipment costs. Wildlife watchers contributed \$43.5 billion, including trip-related expenses and equipment costs. Altogether, these two groups spent approximately \$139 billion in 2006 alone, breathing life into rural communities and supporting millions of jobs across the country.

"Hunting and angling annually contribute more than \$95 billion in economic activity, and restoring protections for America's waters and wetlands directly benefits citizens, fish and wildlife, and outdoor recreation," said Scott Kovarovics, conservation director for the Izaak Walton League of America. "The amendment by Senators Barrasso and Heller threatens not only water quality and healthy habitat but the hunting and angling economy as well."

Fishing Line Recycling

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, in partnership with the Fayetteville Area Anglers Network, Bass Lake Park and Berkley, has launched a pilot program at three public fishing areas to make proper disposal of used fishing line easier and more convenient for anglers.

The Commission's new fishing line recycling program encourages anglers to recycle their used fishing line by placing collection bins in high-traffic areas at the John E. Pechmann Fishing Education Center and Lake Rim public fishing area, located in Fayetteville, and Bass Lake Park, located in Holly Springs.

The bins, which are constructed of plastic PVC pipes, are attached to posts located near fishing areas and on piers. Signs attached to the bins provide instructions on how to dispose of the monofilament line properly. The line will be collected, packaged and shipped to Berkley, a fishing tackle company that will reuse the line to build fish habitat structures.

Commission staff is monitoring this program through November 2012 and is developing guidelines specific for each type of fishing site. The Commission's goal is to install recycling bins at Commission-owned public fishing areas, education centers, Community Fishing Program sites and fish hatcheries across the state.

During the evaluation period, the Commission is seeking volunteer groups to develop partnerships for developing future sites and providing manpower to empty the bins on a monthly basis and shipping the line to Berkley for recycling.

Tuck Tales

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