



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

June, 2011

Rod Raffle

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

September Meeting

President Woodard asks that members plan to discuss their favorite over-the-summer fishing trips.

Summer Hiatus Over

TCTU resumes its regular scheduled meetings on September 6th!

September Menu

The grub Committee for the September meeting had not been announced at the time of this publication.

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:
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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. Guest are invited to join us at no charge.



House approves bill to undercut the Clean Water Act

H.R. 2018 puts nation's waters, fish and wildlife at risk.

Washington, DC – The U.S. House of Representatives voted July 13th to approve sweeping, harmful changes to the nation's bedrock water-quality protecting law, the Clean Water Act. In a 239-184 vote, the House passed H.R. 2018, a bill that will adversely affect waterways across the nation.

H.R. 2018, dubbed the The Clean Water Cooperative Federalism Act of 2011, purports to strengthen "cooperative federalism" by giving the states more control over the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Clean Water Act oversight. In fact, the bill undermines the federal-state partnership on which the Clean Water Act is based. Introduced less than four weeks ago, the House of Representatives held no legislative hearings on the bill and rushed to approve it, apparently to avoid giving it the scrutiny it deserves.

"For 38 years, the Clean Water Act has provided protection for our nation's waters," said Steve Moyer, Vice President for Government Affairs at Trout Unlimited. "The Clean Water Act has led to immense progress nationwide on cleaning up our waters, restoring fish habitat, protecting drinking water sources, reducing wetlands loss, and developing water-based recreational economies. This bill weakens the

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power of the Clean Water Act and puts our lakes, rivers and streams at risk,” Moyer said.

U.S. waters sustain the activities of 40 million anglers who spend about \$45 billion a year, and about 2.3 million people spend \$1.3 billion per year hunting ducks and other migratory birds. Sportsmen conservationists strongly oppose HR 2018 and urge the U.S. Senate to do a more thorough job of assessing the impacts of HR 2018 on the nation’s waters before taking any action on this harmful bill.

The goal of the Clean Water Act is to “restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation’s waters,” was written at a time when lakes and rivers served as wastewater treatment plants and as dumping grounds for toxic, flammable chemicals. H.R.

2018 undermines the Clean Water Act’s goal, and by extension, threatens to return our waters to the deplorable conditions of the past.

“This bill would undermine the use and enforcement of water quality standards, and allow our waters to become dumping grounds,” said Jan Goldman-Carter, wetlands and water resources counsel for the National Wildlife Federation. “Not only would our country’s waters be at risk, but fish and wildlife would become collateral damage of this dangerous legislation,” Goldman-Carter said.

“This bill would create a hodgepodge of water quality standards around the country,” said Scott Kovarovics, Conservation Director, of the Izaak Walton League of America. “Some states will adopt stronger standards while others will choose weaker standards, while the waters of states with stronger standards may be polluted by water flowing from adjacent states with weaker standards,” Kovarovics said.

H.R. 2018 attacks two critical components of the Clean Water Act: enforcement of water quality

standards; and protection of waters from discharges of dredged and fill material.

H.R. 2018 undermines the use and enforcement of water quality standards, the Clean Water Act’s engines of water quality improvement and wildlife habitat protection.



H.R. 2018 would also limit the federal government’s ability to compel states to implement or improve their water quality standards to deal with pollution and habitat-destroying activities.

The bill would also block the EPA from objecting to individual permits that fail to comply with water quality standards. For bodies

of water that span multiple states, like the Great Lakes or Chesapeake Bay, federal oversight is needed to ensure one state’s weaker standards do not undermine progress in reducing pollution across the body of water.

The bill will next move for a vote in the U.S. Senate.

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The Tuckaseegee Chapter has a web presence at:

<http://www.orgsites.com/nc/tctu/>

FORMER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR RECEIVES WILDLIFE CONSERVATION HONOR



Photo courtesy NCWC

Richard Hamilton (left) accepts the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award from Gordon Myers, executive director of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission.

RALEIGH, N.C. (Aug. 25, 2011) – Richard Hamilton, who served the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission for 37 years, most notably as the executive director from 2004 to 2007, was honored with the Thomas L. Quay Wildlife Diversity Award at the agency’s business meeting today.

Gordon Myers, executive director of the Commission, presented Hamilton with the award, along with a framed print and plaque.

“The Quay Award recognizes individuals who make outstanding contributions to wildlife diversity in North Carolina and who are leaders in wildlife conservation,” Myers said. “Recipients are not recognized only for a single contribution but rather for a series of contributions that reflects a dedication to their vocation and their passion for conserving all species of wildlife in their natural habitats. They are also characterized by their mentorship of others and this year’s recipient, Richard B. Hamilton, embodies all of these qualities.”

Study: Changing Climate Could Cut Western Trout Habitat In Half

Native cutthroat trout could see 58 percent decline in suitable habitat

BOISE, Idaho — A new study shows a changing climate could reduce suitable trout habitat in the western U.S. by about 50 percent over the next 70 years, with some trout species experiencing greater declines than others. The results were reported by a team of 11 scientists from Trout Unlimited, the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station, Colorado State University, the U.S. Geological Survey and the University of Washington Climate Impacts Group.

The study, published Aug. 15 in the peer-reviewed science journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, predicts native cutthroat throughout the West could decline by as much as 58 percent, while introduced brook trout could decline by as much as 77 percent. Rainbow and brown trout populations, according to the study, would also decline by an estimated 35 percent and 48 percent respectively.

The study notes that the decline of cutthroat trout is “of particular

significance,” because cutthroats are the only trout native to much of the West and a keystone species in the Rocky Mountain ecosystem.

“The study advances our understanding of climate change impacts by looking beyond temperature increases to the role of flooding and interactions between species,” said TU’s Dr. Seth Wenger, the paper’s lead author. “The study also is notable in scope, using data from nearly 10,000 sites throughout the western United States.”

Wenger was quick to point out that, while the predictions are indeed dire, there is hope. By restoring and reconnecting coldwater drainages and by protecting existing healthy habitat largely located on public lands in the West, some of the decline in trout populations can likely be avoided.

“Essentially, Trout Unlimited is already protecting remaining strongholds and restoring degraded habitat — exactly the kind of things that need to be done to reduce the impact of a changing climate on coldwater fisheries in the West,” Wenger said.

“This report is a wake-up call,” said Chris Wood, the president and CEO of Trout Unlimited. “The good news is that we’re already working to protect high-quality trout habitat, such as backcountry roadless areas on national forests. We’re reconnecting tributaries to mainstem rivers, and we’re restoring degraded habitat. It is imperative that we accelerate the scope and the pace of that work if we are to have healthy trout populations and the irreplaceable fishing opportunities they provide through this century.”

Wenger and his fellow researchers used an “ensemble” of climate models to arrive at the study’s findings. Some models predicted more warming than others, but under even the most “optimistic” model, cutthroat trout populations in the West could decline by 33 percent. Scientists note that cutthroat trout populations are already in trouble — some subspecies have been removed from 90 percent of their historic native range and are listed under the Endangered Species Act. Declines from a changing climate would impact native cutthroat trout beyond the impacts they’ve already suffered.

“This study validates the work TU is doing in the West and all across the country to protect, reconnect, restore, and sustain trout habitat,” Wood continued. It also reinforces the danger in congressional proposals that would remove protection from backcountry roadless areas and cut funding for state and federal natural resource agencies.”

The study can be read in its entirety [here](#), or at [Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences website](#) when it publishes Aug. 15.

The research was funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the U.S. Geological Survey and the U.S. Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station.



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