



## WE ARE WORKING THE MARCELLUS EVERYDAY

By Phil Clem



Max Robertson and Ralph Douglas

In February of 2014 several members of the Ernie Nester Chapter of Trout Unlimited met with members of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition and other interested parties in the South Charleston Public Library for a workshop on stream monitoring. The workshop was a partnership between Trout Unlimited, the West Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited, the Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited, and the West Virginia Rivers Coalition. The program was funded by the Appalachian Stewardship Foundation. The purpose of the program was to train a network of interested individuals that would serve as “stream stewards” to conduct stream monitoring and routine inspections of stream conditions and to report problems to the appropriate agencies.

The expansion of drilling activities that are needed to harvest the gas from the Marcellus Shale Formation are what prompted Trout Unlimited to initiate the monitoring program. Drilling activities dis-

turb the land, not only at the drill site, but also for access roads, pipelines, and compressor stations. This can lead to sedimentation of local streams unless a control plan is in place and properly used. The well pads are used to store barrels or tanks of volatile, hazardous chemicals known to cause fish kills. Between two and eight million gallons of water is needed to fracture each well. This water may be withdrawn from nearby streams and depending on their size can have a major impact on the flow of those streams, especially during the summer months. Discharge water containing various chemical compounds is stored in containment ponds or tanks at the well site. Unfortunately this water may be a source of strong odors and presents a hazard of stream spills. Natural gas can also leak into the soil and waterways if a pipeline or well casing springs a leak. All of these can have a drastic effect on the aquatic life of our streams.

The workshop was about six hours in length and the participants were shown what type of conditions to look for, how to locate well locations using Frac-tracker (computer program showing location of permitted and active gas wells), and how to use the monitoring equipment to collect data on the streams.



Phil Clem on Powell Creek

Following the workshop, interested participants selected streams in our local area for monitoring based on proximity to well sites, presence of trout in the stream, driving distance, and personal interest. We had one field training session on Loop Creek in March as a final test and from that point we began monitoring. The data is typically collected about once a month on each stream depending on the local conditions. A GPS location is entered for each site and an initial water sample was collected for analysis. Members also measure air and water temperature, conductivity, turbidity, and pH. In addition a stream profile is completed each session that uses the velocity and cross-sectional area to approximate stream flow. At home this data is then entered into Citsci.org, a website that was designed for volunteer groups to manage and analyze collected data. By collecting this data we are obtaining baseline information on these streams which will make it easier in the future to see if anything is out of bounds from their normal conditions.

Members of the Ernie Nester Chapter that are participating in this project are Max Robertson, Ralph Douglass, Larry Orr, Brian McClung, Phil Clem, Paula Clem (Shale Gas Coordinator), and Jerry Gladwell. Since last March when we began, 77 stream samples have been conducted in 14 streams; Birch River, Davis Creek, Hopkins Fork, Laurel Creek of Cherry River, Laurel Creek at Quinnamont, Longbranch, Loop Creek, Paint Creek, Panther Creek, Powell Creek, Rich Creek, Sandlick Creek, Tenmile Fork, and Brushy Fork.

Beginning this spring a benthic macro-invertebrate sample will also be added to the analysis. This will only be done once per year but it will provide an additional and very important tool to monitor the health of these streams. The benthic macro-invertebrate community provides a better picture of the overall health of the stream than the chemical analysis because it is more indicative of long-term stream health. So far, I am happy to report that no spills or discharges have been found on these streams that are being monitored by ENCTU but that does not mean that they have not happened in the state. A quick look at Fractracker will reveal just how wide-

spread these proposed well sites are.

In addition to this activity a few of the members participated in Snapshot Day on August 2. This was a statewide effort to sample as many streams as possible in a single day. We met at Shaver's Fork near Elkins and approximately 25 individuals managed to sample 73 sites in the Monongahela Forest. Another snapshot day is in the planning stages for 2015.

As with every sub-group within ENCTU we are short-handed. Seventy-seven samples on 14 different streams in a 12 month period will show you just how busy we have been. We can't expand our effort much beyond this without additional help. We would welcome anyone who enjoys getting out on a trout stream on a regular basis. If you have a favorite stream that you enjoy fishing on a regular basis, another 30 minutes would let you do a sample without making an additional trip and it would provide a huge benefit to the sampling effort.

So the next time you see the Television Commercial that the title of this article is based on just remember that members of the Ernie Nester Chapter are working the Marcellus as well. Maybe not every day but at least once a month.



*"Try not to watch the clock. It'll only make your fishing trip seem that much farther away."*

## ERNIE NESTER CHAPTER MAKES DONATION TO TWIN BRANCH AMERICORPS PROGRAM



Larry Orr presented Dorothy Horne of the Twin Branch Environmental Stewardship Americorps Program in McDowell County with an ENCTU check for \$500 at the annual Elkhorn Creek Cleanup on April 18. The monies from this donation will be used to purchase waders to be used by youth in their program during stream cleanups and surveys. The youths are being trained in stream monitoring and have participated in the Twin Branch Stream Cleanup for the last two years, and some have participated in the Elkhorn Creek Cleanup.

This year they are planning, and recruiting community volunteers and local high school students to add an additional stream cleanup to their efforts; the Dry Fork that flows into the Tug River at laeger, and waders are particularly needed in this effort.

## COME AND MEET THE NEW WVDNR DIRECTOR AT MAY'S MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin announced the appointment of Robert A. Fala to serve as the director of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources, effective January 1, 2015. Fala will fill the vacancy created by the recent retirement of previous DNR Director, Frank Jezioro.

"I'm grateful for Frank Jezioro's longstanding commitment to our state and his years of service to the people of West Virginia," Governor Tomblin said. "Bob Fala's professional background not only demonstrates his commitment to ensuring the protection and upkeep of both land and wildlife, but his working knowledge, training, years of experience and interest in a variety of critical issues facing our state's Division of Natural Resources are exceptional. I look forward to working with him in the new year."

A graduate of Pennsylvania State University, Fala began his career in the Pennsylvania Game Commission as a Wildlife Conservation Officer. He has remained an active member of the wildlife community for many years through his work as a Wildlife Biologist in numerous states and as a Mine Manager in West Virginia. For more than twenty years, Fala worked as Coal Land Reclamation/Lead Agency Wildlife Biologist for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (WVDEP). Over the past three years, he has served as a Contractor/Wildlife Biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and in August 2014 was appointed by Gov. Tomblin to serve on the WVDNR Natural Resource Commission.

## 2015 ELKHORN CLEANUP

BY LARRY ORR



2015 ELKHORN CLEANUP VOLUNTEERS, SANS SWCTU, WHO MISSED THE PICTURE BUT NOT LUNCH!

The eighteenth Annual Elkhorn Creek Cleanup was held on April 18, 2015. The weather was excellent, but the creek was high. We had 61 participants, which is less than past years. Princeton Walmart provided lunch, but only had four people participating in the cleanup. We cleaned up areas in Elkhorn Station, Maybeury and Ashland, Four dumpsters were filled with trash. There was less trash than in previous years, and the area seems to be a little cleaner each year. Some of the residents take advantage of the dumpsters being there and bring trash that they have been trying to get rid of.

A little annoying at first glance, but at least it does not end up in the creek.

Josh and Amanda Parks provided barbeque at Buckwheat Holts' campfire on Friday evening and Buckwheat served breakfast and a dinner of venison stew on Saturday. There were a number of wild stories told around the campfire, with some of them actually

## LOOP CREEK SPRING S.O.S. SURVEY

BY LARRY ORR

being true. The cleanup date for next year will be April 16. Come join us in this worthwhile event.

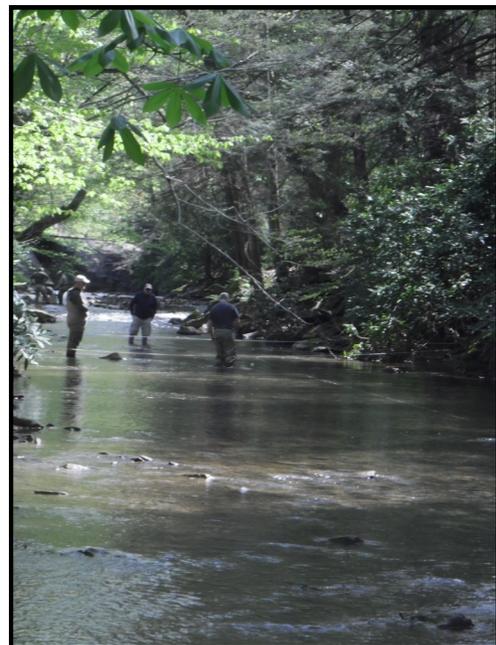
Twelve ENCTU members completed a WV SOS Level 3 assessment on Saturday, May 2, 2015 on Loop Creek.

This survey was at a new site, upstream from the previous site, but still downstream from the new waste treatment plant. The previous site has been fenced and posted.

The stream flow was 27.7 cfs with the stream clear. This flow is normal for this time of year. The Riffle Index was 2.99 with a suboptimal integrity score of 71.1. The sand count from the Pebble Count was 13. Sand from stream crossings for the recent waste treatment project may still be impacting the stream in this area.

The bug count was 193 with 12 total taxa resulting in a “good” stream index of 76.8. The data from this survey have been entered into the WV DEP volunteer data base.

Data from the Loop Creek surveys take on a new meaning to ENCTU. We have recently learned that the Danny Webb Underground Injection Wells in the area are being considered for permit renewal and will take Class II oil and gas production fluids (Marcellus



## New Haven Elementary School TIC Program Report

By Homer Sweeney

aquarium as fingerling trout. By using the webcam, students can even watch the hatching of the eggs. If students cannot visit the lab on a certain day, they can still observe the trout using the live feed of the webcam.



The excitement on the faces of the students as they watched the egg sacs shrink show that learning is taking place. The students constantly ask to go to the trout lab or to pull up the live feed. Students love to draw pictures of their trout in their journals. Students took an ownership of their trout. They even give their trout unique names such as “Big Momma”, “Bubbles”, and “Jaws”.

**Sidebar:** Big Momma’s aggressive nature by eating most of the food and some of the little fish, earned a reputation as a bully aka: “Big Momma.” When in the tank the smaller fish maintained their distant in one end of the aquarium

while Big Momma occupied the opposite side.

The New Haven Elementary School had another outstanding year with their Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program. This elementary school is blessed with three outstanding teachers that stepped up to the plate for their students. This was NHES’S second year with the TIC program, enhancing the first year by adding many more advancements. Those enhancements were embraced by the students. The student were encouraged build upon last year’s experience with new suggestions from the teachers.

Shayla Blackshire, Program Lead and teachers, Laura Cullen and Jacque Richardson shared, “our students in each classroom gained an understanding of ecology and the affects that pollution has on our water quality. They learned; if you take care of the water, the water will take care of you. They have a foundation laid for learning chemistry by testing the water’s pH levels, ammonia levels, and nitrates and nitrites. Students also learn about Brooke Trout indigenous importance to West Virginia. Students also learned a little anatomy along the way. There are so many aspects of learning with this project, the possibilities are endless.”

Students observed the life cycle of the trout’s beginning as eggs and growing to being released from

### Community Involvement

The ingenuity of the three teachers thinking “Out of the Box”, were able to get the community involved by helping the students by inviting the public to join the opening of the trout lab to observe and participate in activities and ask questions. Parents and community members got to see first-hand what the students get to experience on a daily basis.

NHES also installed a live webcam on the trout tank and a direct link on the school homepage. Anyone can access and watch the developing trout. They can watch the eggs hatch, aided by using an infrared light. The students and staff established an “Egg Day “, they invited their local newspaper, the Monitor, and Trout Unlimited members to join in the festivities. The students and community members lined the halls to welcome the eggs being delivered by ENCTU members.

The initial fund for the project the team focused on what was needed to equip their NHES lab so the entire school was included. United Rentals-Steve Blackshire provided the funding last year to set the program into motion. AEP River Transportation Di-

vision, Mr. Gilley got on board to help obtain funds for the program to continue this year. The funding provided the 55 gallon aquarium, a chiller, the filter, a huge mural on the wall of the trout life cycle, buckets with aerators, and other supplies to keep their trout living.

Additionally, they needed a way to include additional students participation in the program, the top 15 readers from each grade were selected to participate in the trout release.

The trout lab was placed in a central location so the pre-school class and all classes including the 6<sup>th</sup> grade students to visit on a weekly basis. A schedule was created for everyone to follow and be included in the experiment. This allowed the individual teachers to tailor their programming to meet their classroom curriculum. Students keep an ongoing journal; students monitor the water chemistry, trout growth, feed the trout, observe changes, and monitor the water temperature.

### Next Year's Plans

The teachers wish to continue improving their TIC program and allow the students to correspond with other TIC program schools by having pen-pals or using Skype, allowing the students to connect with students with TIC programs in West Virginia.

The students were introduced to a new/potential career paths by arranging and scheduling Jeff Hansbarger, biologist from the Division of Natural Resources Biology Division visit the school to speak to the students about the mission and duties of the biology division. Last year, John McCoy, sports editor from the Charleston Gazette visited the school and spoke to our students about fly tying and selecting the correct fly based on the type bugs in a stream and how matching the fly to correspond to the bugs in the stream.

New Haven would like to add additional and would welcome other guests from the TIC program and other originations to visit there school with exciting and new information and education for their students.

The students wish to share one final accomplishment with the readers. It is a video a 4<sup>th</sup> grade stu-

dent made this year. The video may sum up their entire TIC program for New Haven Elementary School this year. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7z7eGMJDYQ>

(Shayla Blackshire: “**Please share this video. I am very proud of our students. Each student made their own video. I could have shared more.**”.)

Also, you may access their website link listed below to visit their webcam. <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/nhes---trout-in-the-classroom-2013>

The teachers, principal and students really appreciate the opportunity of being one of the TIC Program and participate in a life altering program by thanking the members of ENCTU and the TIC Program leaders.



In conclusion the ENCTU wishes to applaud the New Haven Elementary Grade School for such an outstanding year and recognize their teachers that dedicated so much of themselves for the students and the community and for the 32 vehicles transporting the family and friends that followed the school buses to the Kanawha State Forest to release the trout in Davis Creek. The entire projects took 180 days beginning with getting the eggs and releasing the 3 to 4 inch trout in the Davis Creek stream.



## **2015 Bucket Brigade – The Hand Placement of Tons of Limestone Sands in the Headwaters of the Middle Fork of Williams River - Monongahela National Forest**

by

**Ernie Nester Chapter of Trout Unlimited + many of the other WV TU chapters and numerous Walmart volunteers from across West Virginia**

**Date:** June 13, 2015

**Meeting Place:** Meet at 9:00 AM in the parking lot at the Cranberry Mountain Visitors Center (Nature Center). The Nature Center is located on Rt. 39 at the junction with the Highland Scenic Highway.

**Work Site:** The work site is located on the Highland Scenic Highway. If you should arrive after 9:00 AM, drive out the Scenic Highway until you spot the work crew.

**What To Bring:** **Bring work gloves** and a 3-5 gallon plastic bucket if you have one. Expect to get wet and dirty, so wear appropriate clothing. The trail is usually wet and muddy so wear your mud shoes.

**Weather:** **It always rains** so bring rain gear or expect to get wet.

**Safety:** Be careful at all times and do not try to exceed your normal capabilities. The buckets will usually contain 25 to 35 pounds of sand. Always watch out for traffic when you are near the Highland Scenic Highway.

**Walmart Volunteers:** Walmart employees will be again helping with the Bucket Brigade.

**Food:** Walmart will provide lunch. Drinks and a mid-morning snack will also be provided.

If you have questions regarding contact Jeff Nelsen 304-768-3933h / 304-951-2247c or [jeffnel-sen@suddenlink.net](mailto:jeffnel-sen@suddenlink.net)



## **Ernie Nester Chapter Trout Unlimited Coming to Mt. Hope Heritage Day Celebration**

The Ernie Nester Chapter Trout Unlimited (ENCTU) group, the State's first Trout Unlimited chapter in West Virginia was formed in 1972 as the Kanawha Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited. Recently, following the death of Dr. Ernie Nester in March of 2013 the chapter was renamed the Ernie Nester Chapter. In addition to chartering the first TU chapter in the state, Ernie served as Dean and Department Head of the WV Tech Engineering School in Montgomery, WV; truly a man for all seasons. The trout, and protection of our State's most valuable resource, water in the streams of WV and their habitats, was a life's passion.

Ernie's spirit and tenacious drive was expanded throughout Fayette county and many other mountain streams. Beginning in 1998, project work began on Dunloup Creek, one of our chapter's adopted streams, was headed up by long time leader Max Robertson, another of the original charter members. Throughout the 18 years several of our chapter members annually worked closely with Max on the stream improvements and stockings of new fingerling brown trout.

Most recently, Mike Sayre has accepted the position of event coordinator for the annual stocking and the local contact for the ENCTU. Mike will be doing contact work with the City of Mount Hope conducting cleanup work and coordinating work on Dunloup Creek and its tributaries. Watch for Mike requests in the local media for volunteers.

The intent of ENCTU's involvement in the Mount Hope Heritage Day Celebration is to share and inform the local residents of Mount Hope and surrounding area of the work that has been conducted and future enhancements that will be made to Dunloup Creek. Currently, a segment of the stream in Mount Hope is being improved and funded by a grant that was obtained by Jeff Nelsen of the ENCTU. Another desire of our involvement is to get local res-

idents to fish and take ownership of the stream. Each year, sometime in the first two weeks of August, ENCTU working with the WV DNR, and local volunteers, stock fingerling brown trout in Dunloup.

We have another project that was implemented by Max Robertson, signage along some of the streams' banks, with approval of the property owner, to; "Please Practice Catch and Release", allowing anyone fishing to have stream access if they practice good sportsmanship.

Fly casting demonstrations, Fly Tying and Fly Fishing techniques will be included during the afternoon in the cafeteria of the Heritage Center. Please come by and visit with the chapter members and hear about your Dunloup Creek.

**GUIDE TO THE  
CATCH AND RELEASE  
TROUT STREAMS  
OF WEST VIRGINIA  
MAPS, TIPS, HATCH CHARTS, LODGING  
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## Chapter Fund Raising Challenge

By Homer Sweeney, VP Fundraising

Our chapter has been very successful in crafting ways to generate funds to support our projects. There is interest in enhancing our efforts. So here are a few suggestions worth considering enhance giving, donating or even memorial gifts our chapter has been fortunate to receive.

### Initiatives and Sponsorships

Recently, President Steve Young mentioned that all of us are the chapters Salesmen. Currently and jointly, our chapter participates in projects as volunteers by soliciting donations to fund projects. Our chapter has projects that we fund with our revenue.

### Bucket Brigade

The Bucket Brigade held on the second Saturday of June annually. Funding for the limestone fines (crushed sand) that many of you have helped on the effort is funded by our chapter funds and one of our partners. The project consist of spreading the fines on small tributaries just off of the Highland Scenic Highway. As the sand matriculates down the narrow ditch line, the limestone sand helps bring up the Ph levels, the trout and other aquatic life returns or improves.

### Trout in the Classroom (TIC)

The TIC project was initially funded by Chesapeake Energy for the procurement of aquariums, filters, chillers, stands and related supplies to start a new program. The second year for a school to participate in the program only needs to replace food, chemicals that may have been exhausted in the previous year.

These are a few of our current chapter projects and programs. Recently, Trout Unlimited launched a new program just for our children and youth (teens). These two programs are to attract and retain the young people that may have been associated with our chapter by the TIC or one of other similar activities. How can we fund this new initiative? I have a suggestion.

## TUs New and Improved Youth Membership Levels

TU's youth department has heard you, and we've made some changes. We know that Hatcher the Mayfly is great--but only for little kids. We understand that teenagers want to be treated more like adults. In light of this, we have now created a fully separate level of TU membership, for teens only.

TU Teens still receive the great TU calendar and four issues of *Trout*. But now, teens have their very own; TU Teen decal, which comes in a regular TU envelope. **This new level of membership costs \$14.**

The **Stream Explorers level** of membership is just exactly the same as it's always been (though we have new webpages for them, too). These TU members 12 and under still receive *Stream Explorers magazine* four times a year, and they also get the awesome TU calendar. **Their membership costs \$12**, and it's easy to give a Stream Explorers membership or renew a Stream Explorers membership online.

I bet many of you see the value of considering this new program. Our State of West Virginia is losing hunters, fishermen and trapping licenses yearly. We need the youth to bridge this young experience by finding special a business or corporate partner to fund these two groups.

Contact me if you wish to help or wish to donate, evening if you have another approach to obtain funding for this new initiative.

Homer Sweeney, VP Fund Raising  
Cell: 304-546-9328 Email: [tu166@suddenlink.net](mailto:tu166@suddenlink.net)

Source: information extracted from TU's National website for Youth Programs: website ref:<http://www.tu.org/teens>

**UPCOMING ENCTU EVENTS**

**Upcoming ENCTU youth activities**

**May 12th**, ENCTU membership meeting, SCPL 7:00 PM—9:00 PM. This months program speaker will be Robert Fala, new WVDNR director. Please see the article on pg. 3 from the West Virginia Governors office.

**May 26th**, ENCTU Board meeting, SCPL 6:30 PM–8:30 PM.

**June 13th**, ENCTU Bucket Brigade, 9:00 AM Cranberry Visitors Center, see accompanying notice pg. 7.

**June 9th**, ENCTU Board meeting, SCPL 6:30 PM–8:30 PM.

The 2015 stocking schedule will be posted as soon as some logistical issues can be resolved.

**May 30th**, The Beyond The Backyard, Outdoor Adventure Camp. This event will held at Cabala’s (outside) from 9:00am. To 3:00pm. This is fast becoming an extra large event so extra help can always be used. We will have Fly Tying Demo. and Fly Casting.

If you can help out with this event, please let Larry Riffie know.

**304-586-4125, [Larry138@frontier.com](mailto:Larry138@frontier.com)**

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