

Blue Ridge NC Trout Unlimited



April 2024 Newsletter

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Trout can only survive if they have cold and clean water and a good food supply. Trout Unlimited was founded by a group of men in Grayling, Michigan on the banks of the AuSable River in 1959. The town takes its name from the fact that there were actually grayling in the river until logging in the late 1800s cleared the forests creating massive siltation and warming the waters by removing the shade the trees provided. This made the water too warm for grayling and smothered the insects that the native brook trout fed on. Trout Unlimited has made it their goal to restore and maintain the cold and clean water to help the trout survive.

This month we will dedicate the newsletter to those efforts being made here in North Carolina and the partners we have to help us.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I would like to thank everyone that has attended our chapter meetings at Little Richard's. The turnout is very good and we are growing! Next time, why not invite a friend or fellow BRTU member to join you at the meeting! Not only are you increasing your knowledge about river conservation and fly fishing, you will also get a chance at winning a small sample of flies tied by our members (P.S. These are the ones that WORK!). The meetings are held on the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30pm. This is also where you can network with other members. What a great way to find a fishing buddy!

Where are the efforts of our group being directed? We are battling those who seek to destroy the resources we are trying to save. We have success stories like Todd Island, Lansing, Wilson Creek, and the western part of the state. But we also have trouble areas brewing like Mitchell River, Elk Creek and Ramey Creek.

As a small organization, our local chapter has 400 members. We need to partner with other organizations that share our common interests. We have started to do just that with New River Conservancy and A Clean Wilson Creek. We are also trying to work with other TU chapters to help support their battles as well.

I often wonder if the general public really understands how a stream works and the importance of keeping it clean. Before I joined TU, I really did not understand this myself. The driving force behind our Trout in the Classroom program is to teach the children of today (adults of tomorrow) about stream life and its importance. This is also the initiative behind TU's drive to have more and younger members. Having the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts help with activities like Todd Island & Lansing is a great way to support this goal.

In the end, what we really need is you. If you're not already involved feel free to approach me or any of the board members and we can get you going. We can accomplish more but need the numbers to do that. Our streams are such a worthy cause. Let's do this together.

Fred Frank

APRIL MEETING

When: Tuesday, April 16th, 6:30 PM

Where: Little Richard's BBQ
109 S. Stratford Road

Who: Jonathan & Lisa Kiley

TOPIC: Saltwater fishing Christmas Island

Jonathan Kiley started Fly Skinz over 12 years ago. After tying flies his whole life, he expanded this creativity into inventing products that make modernized flies. He has been fortunate enough to combine his career with fly fishing and to be able to test his products and creations all over the globe! He has been recognized in many magazines, podcasts, and at fly fishing shows. You may already know of him, as he has over 100 products that are distributed by Hareline Dubbin.

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Blue Ridge Chapter of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to BRNCNews@gmail.com and let us know.

Lisa Kiley grew up in a family of avid fishermen, making fly fishing deeply ingrained in who she is. For many years her family owned a reputable Orvis endorsed fly shop in Colorado, where she began working as the Adventure Travel Manager, selling destination fly fishing trips all over the world. In 2023, she accepted a position with Frontiers Travel as a Fishing Destination Specialist. Where she continues to follow her passion by traveling on and selling fishing trips to locations such as; Spain, Slovenia, Iceland, and Christmas Island.

Having bonded over their mutual love of fly fishing - Jonathan and Lisa got together and have not looked back. Together they travel the world and fly fish! One of their all-time favorite fishing destinations is Christmas Island.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Water is the driving force of all nature.”
 – Leonardo da Vinci

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fly Tying Classes: At 9 AM on Wednesdays Project Healing Waters will host fly tying classes and at 6 PM on Wednesday evenings Blue Ridge Trout Unlimited will host classes. The classes will be held at the South Fork Community Center at 4403 Country Club Road in Winston Salem. The classes are free and all are welcome - from beginners to advanced. No need to sign up, just come join us. If you have specific questions about the evening classes, you can contact, Rusty Berrier at rustyberrier@outlook.com.

Spring Balsam Trip: The trip is now fully booked and has a full waiting list.

TIC Release Dates

Location: Stone Mountain State Park

- April 24th - Ledford, Summit
- April 29th – East Davidson, Reagan two classes, Alternate Day, if needed
- May 1st - Davie, School of the Arts, DDCC, Lexington

More information to come on volunteer needs and program details. Sign up at www.blueridgetu.org.

NC Trail Days, June 1st in Elkin. Presenting the Mitchell River and effect farming is having.

June 8th Wilson Creek Event



An invasive variety of giant bamboo is altering the flow of Wilson Creek during flood stage and causing erosion as much as 100' from normal river banks. We are asking members to attend and help us rid it. More details to follow.

Fly Fishing Flim Tour and Auction. A big event coming up in late September. Start gathering up items that you can share for the auction fund raiser. More details later.

Special Trout Unlimited Joint CHAPTERS Meeting



April 30th – 6pm:
 A Special TU joint chapter meeting in Lenoir, hosted by the Hickory & Table Rock TU chapters, is scheduled to share information on an upcoming conservation project scheduled to occur in Wilson Creek Preserve formerly Killians Camp.
This Project Will Require an Army!!!

Joining together in this project:
 Brian Esque -NCTU Chair, Wes Waugh – Chair, A Clean Wilson Creek, Alen Baker – Southern Fly Tiers Guild, Squeak Smith, Shea Tuberty – App State and TU Chapter Representatives and Members from: Hickory, Table Rock, High Country, Rocky River, Blue Ridge, Nat Green and Wilson Creek Residents.

The meeting is going to be held at the Side Street Pour House & Grill on April 30th at 6pm and is located at 128 N Main St., Lenoir, NC. This venue has offered to be open on this evening to support this special gathering and will provide a limited menu.

Guest Speakers:
 Wes Waugh – “A Clean Wilson Creek”
 Jim Mabrey – Conservation Project Manager
 Jim will present the details of the project to remove the invasive bamboo in the Wilson Creek Preserve formerly Killians Camp.
 Followed by an open discussion

The Project Work Date is set for Saturday, June 8th (SAVE THE DATE!)

TO CONSERVE, PROTECT, AND RESTORE TROUT AND SALMON FISHERIES AND THEIR WATERSHEDS.

The above is the mission statement for Trout Unlimited. We are a chapter of trout fishermen and without the trout we are meaningless. In order to survive, trout need clean and cool water and food. It is our duty to ensure that is available to help the trout to thrive.

Back in the late 1800s and early 1900s our North Carolina forests were clearcut. The result was massive siltation into our trout streams and warming temperatures without the shade from the trees. In the years since, much of our forests have recovered, but there are still many threats to the streams.



Clearcut River Bank

Today many of our streams face threats from farming and project development along our streams and not leaving a buffer. In 2020 the Bottomley Corporation began a large clearing near the Blue Ridge Parkway. They cleared the land right to the banks of Ramey Creek. This resulted in massive siltation and destruction of the trout habitat in Ramey Creek, Roaring Fork Creek, and Big Pine Creek. Bottomley com-

pany claimed agricultural exemption of sediment and erosion and placed a small herd of cows on the property, however the agricultural exemption did not exempt them from violating trout water standards for sediment and temperature. These were some of the most pristine trout waters in the state and contained native brook trout. The Wildlife Resources Commission with help from Piedmont Land Conservancy was able to come in and collect several of the fish for later restocking.

This event and subsequent trials created a lot of attention. Thanks to North Carolina Trout Unlimited, North Carolina Wildlife Federation, and Southern Environmental Law Center, this issue was recognized in the North Carolina Senate. This resulted in the 2023 Senate Bill 613 to require a 25' buffer along trout waters. The bill passed the Senate and hopefully will be reviewed and passed by the North Carolina House in the 2024 session. Watch for information from NCTU regarding what you can do to help get this law passed.

In early 2022 farmers along the Mitchell River contacted BRTU regarding a great deal of sediment coming down the river. It was discovered that a development in Roaring gap (old Beau Golf course) was pouring sediment into the headwaters of the Mitchell. Also two farm properties were leased to the Bottomleys company, a commercial agricultural grower, above the delayed harvest section on the Mitchell river. Both properties were tilled several times a year for planting crops and crops were planted to the edge of the stream leaving no buffer zones. This resulted in massive sediment flow into the Mitchell.

Robbie Abou-Rizk has become the Conservation Advocate for BRTU. He initiated action to begin working with Wake Forest University to monitor the amount of siltation and the temperatures of the river. Many inches of siltation were measured and coming off the fields. This information plus many photos were sent to NC DEQ, who



noted they could not accept any third party data according to State law. In a meeting with DEQ in August in 2023, they noted they have done their own investigation and have found no water quality violations. They noted all the sediment coming down was an act of nature and thus there was no need to do anything.



There are many other nearby organizations that are working for the same causes as we are and can help resolve

issues that arise. Among some of the most helpful to us have been the conservancy groups. These groups were formed to make land available for public use, to protect and restore rivers and wildlife.

Recently BRTU had planned a stream bank protection on Elk Creek. After the supplies had been obtained and before the work could begin the land was sold and a new location was needed. Working with the New River Conservancy the Todd Island and Lansing Creeper Parks were identified as in need. That project was completed early March and the article on the event is later in the newsletter. New River Conservancy has a vision "To Protect the Waters, Woodlands, and Wildlife of the New River." The south fork of the New River starts near Blowing Rock. The north fork starts about ten miles north of Boone and the two come together northeast of West Jefferson. From there the river flows into Virginia and continues until it flows into the Ohio River. More information can be found about New River Conservancy at [New River Conservancy](#).

NC Foothills Conservancy is headquartered in Morganton. To date they have purchased or obtained public access to over 70,000 acres of land since 1995. Perhaps the most significant to us was the access of land on Wilson Creek that today gives us access to the delayed harvest waters. Without them it likely would not be there today. They have continued to obtain land along Wilson Creek. Perhaps the largest thing they have done is to purchase several thousand acres of land on the west side of South Mountains State Park. If you are willing to do a little hiking there are several small wild trout streams there. You can find out more about Foothills Conservancy at [Foothills Conservancy](#).

Piedmont Land Conservancy has added 9800 acres to state parks, protected 7600 acres of farmland from development, and stewards 10600 acres of land adjacent to water resources to protect the water quality in their region. They have developed trails and greenways and also a wildflower preserve. Piedmont Land Conservancy information is available. [Piedmont Land Conservancy](#).

Blue Ridge Conservancy is headquartered in Boone has protected over 23,000 acres including land for Grandfather Mountain State Park and parkland along the Watauga River in Valley Cruces. All of this and more is described on their website at [Blue Ridge Conservancy](#).

These are the conservancies in proximity where we all fish, but there are several others to the west of us that help to give us access to our rivers and help to preserve the clean clear water that our trout need to survive. Visit their website and take some time to volunteer to help with their programs.

Perhaps the newest and most remarkable organization we cooperate with is A Clean Wilson Creek. [A Clean Wilson Creek](#) This organization was started several years ago by Bruce Grey, owner of Betsey's Ole Country Store on Wilson Creek. At the end of each weekend Bruce would drive the staff at his store along the stream and pick up all the litter left behind. With the classification of Wilson Creek as a wild and scenic river, the crowds began to grow until it was just

too much for his small staff. A few short years ago Wes Waugh officially organized a larger group of volunteers to take over the duties and has dedicated his time to the improvement of the situation. He has worked with the county to have a few dumpsters along the way and on weekends volunteers stop cars at the entrance off Adarko Road and hand out trash bags to the visitors. Today they have even used interns from Appalachian State for the summer to help coordinate the program. They are always looking for more volunteers so check out the website and volunteer your time or a little money to promote the program.

And of course one of our closest partners is the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. They stock our trout in the delayed harvest and hatchery supported streams and police and protect all of our rivers. More about this organization later.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

It is up to all of us to do everything we can to support the mission statement of Trout Unlimited. All of us should try to find time to volunteer for our river cleanups, riverbank protection, education of youth through the Trout in the Classroom program and anything else that helps to maintain clean and clear and cold water for our trout.

As members of Trout Unlimited it is our responsibility to watch for situations that affect our trout streams and make a report. TU has developed a program for reporting issues on our trout streams called the RIVERS APP. With this APP on your cell phone you can report an issue even when you are out of cellphone range as it works with the GPS on your phone to report the location. For information about this APP go to [RIVERS - Trout Unlimited](#). Please put this APP on our phone and the next time you see trash, bank erosion, or any other issue affecting our rivers, report it.

IF WE ALL ARE APATHETIC ABOUT RESTORING AND PRESERVING OUR RIVERS THERE WILL BE NO FUTURE TROUT FISHING IN NORTH CAROLINA.

PLEASE BE INVOLVED!



BROOK TROUT, BOTH A GAME FISH AND A CULTURAL ICON

David Bradley For The T. Times

Jan 21, 2024



Jake Rash of the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission watches juvenile brook trout swim in a tank at the Transylvania County Visitor Center. The fish in the tank will be released this spring into an area stream.

There can be no underestimating the significance of native brook trout to the Appalachians. The prized fish were food for Native Americans and generations of mountain fishers have long revered the cold water ‘specks’ that swim in western North Carolina streams. They are the only trout native to the state.

But as with many game species the little fish are under pressure from warming waters to siltation to loss of their historic range. Although not technically endangered, the fish — aka ‘brookies’ — need help to survive from the very source so intent on catching them: humans.

And efforts are afoot to do just that. Jake Rash, a fisheries biologist who specializes in studying and protecting native brook trout populations for the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, told the January meeting of the Transylvania Natural Resources Council brook trout are “important biologically and culturally to a whole lot of people. These fish have a deep connection to this area and these mountains. Generation after generation grew up fishing for these little ‘specks’ up in the ‘hollar.’”

Yet that range has dwindled. Rash estimates native brookies are no longer present in 80-85% of their historic range in North Carolina.

In the 1880s rainbow trout were introduced here and since 1922 when brown trout were stocked, brookies have been under pressure.

Rainbows and browns, now important game fish in local waters, both outcompete the smaller brook trout.

The threat to native brook trout existence in nearby forests dates to roughly 140 years when intensive land use practices

— mostly logging in the late 1800s — resulted in “lots of fish populations lost,” according to Rash.

The loss of habitat continues today with erosion that ends up in watersheds and absence of stream protecting plants.

To compound the issue, non-native brook trout have become stockers in local streams.

While local anglers may catch a brookie, notable by orange fins rimmed in white with unmistakable brown, orange and red speckled sides, they have little way of knowing if the fish is native or not.

Those imported brook trout do not share genetic material with native fish so the differences between the two are subtle.

It is that genetic and research angle where Rash and his teams come into the picture. Researchers literally wade streams and momentarily stun brookies with low-dose electric shocks in order to scoop up the dazed fish in nets to



quickly collect their samples.

The process also includes checking the fish for gill lice parasites which interfere with the exchange of oxygen to the trout.

The data collected has helped create what Rash said is one of the largest research bases in the U.S. drawn from almost 11,000 individual fish.

That research is shared with other states since brook trout readily migrate in streams that flow from one state to another.

“We do a ton of work to find out where these fish are,” Rash said. “We’ve lost a lot of these populations but there are still some hiding out up there.”

Finding new populations is a rarity and when one is located for study Rash said they get really excited.

“It’s a really awesome day when we can record a new population,” he said. Celebrations, however, are few and far between. In 2023 only two new native brook trout populations were identified.

Even with few staff the work Rash and his researchers do is important for more than simple protection of a popular game fish.

Brook and other trout are outsized in their economic importance to North Carolina.

Trout fishing is a billion dollar industry in the state.

It is admittedly an uphill battle to restore brook trout populations. Right now 17 restoration projects have taken place in North Carolina with another 100 location candidates in queue.

Rash said work to help these fish relies heavily on the cooperation of partners including private landowners, national and state forest services, the eastern band of the Cherokees, Trout Unlimited and the land trust community.

He noted concerned anglers can purchase a brook trout license plate which funds brook trout habitat restoration.

Restoration can include revival of stream banks and removal of obstacles such as culverts which block trout from freely moving between spawning beds in their native range.

Rash does not want to see “the gene flow only moving downstream.”

Brook trout need clean, clear and cold water no higher than the mid-60 degrees.

Aside from the impact of humans, Rash and his teams are just now ramping up research on the extent storms levy a toll on trout.

Heavy rains, particularly in the fall and winter, can scour stream beds where brook trout spawn in the fall and colder months. Winter is a hard time for young brook trout.

“Those are the events that impact the number of brook trout,” Rash said. “Warmer summers and wetter winters are when we start to get worried about brook trout populations.”

“The good news is”, he said, “these fish have subsisted for thousands of years. There’s been a lot thrown at them. If nature gets a chance, it will find a way.”

A BEAUTIFUL MESS

Jeff Wright, Southern Appalachians Project Manager for TU, is featured in a video about recent projects to install large woody debris in rivers and streams to create critical aquatic habitat. The video - "A Beautiful Mess" can be viewed by [CLICKING HERE](#).

Trees, branches, root wads, and other debris from downed trees provide substrate for attached algae and invertebrates (periphyton), flow refuge for trout and other fishes, and an important source of energy for the aquatic ecosystem.



BOOTS ON THE GROUND: JEFF WRIGHT

By Joseph Berney, October 28, 2022

[Home](#) [Conservation](#) [Boots on The Ground: Jeff Wright](#)



For this *Boots on The Ground* series, we head to North Carolina to meet with [Jeff Wright](#) and get involved with a culvert removal and improvement project. Jeff is Trout Unlimited's Southern Appalachians Project Manager. Follow along to learn more about Jeff and some of the projects he's working on.

Flylords: Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?



Jeff: I grew up on the outskirts of St. Louis, Missouri. While we were close to the suburbs, we lived in a much more rural area. At one point, my family had about 200 acres and I spent a lot of time playing around in the woods. As I got older, I got to see the impacts of urbanization as a lot of open space was converted into subdivisions and shopping centers. I think this connection to nature combined with seeing the tangible impacts of development really fueled my interest in conservation. After high school, I attended Truman State University in Kirksville, MO, receiving my BS and MS in Biology with a focus on wildlife. My intentions have always been to have a career in conservation but the path there has had some unexpected turns. My family moved to northeast Tennessee in 2015 for my wife's job and I was looking for a way to get involved with a conservation group and do some hands-on work. That's how I got involved with Trout Unlimited. As the common story goes, I volunteered for the local board and soon after became chapter president. This experience combined with my educational background and work in volunteer management helped me land my staff position with the organization.

Flylords: Can you tell us why the Southern Appalachian Brook Trout is so special?



Jeff: The thing that makes Southern Appalachian Brook Trout stand out to me is that they have been able to stay on the landscape despite humanity throwing a lot of challenges their way. Native fish in the Southeast have made it through the eras of unsustainable logging, acid rain, and a barely

regulated mining industry, and are still here. This is our connection to hundreds of thousands of years of brook trout populations that came and went without human involvement. I think that type of connection with ecological history is very meaningful. I personally believe that we should take action now to rectify some of the impacts society has had on these types of native species.

Flylords: What is the goal of the Alarka Headwaters Project?

Jeff: The goal of this project is to address one of the remaining issues for Brook Trout, connectivity. When any road crosses a stream, there must be some sort of crossing structure there. Traditional structures focused on handling water volume but did not address the ecological function of the stream. Many times, crossing structures like corrugated metal pipes create a head cut and become perched above the stream. Fish and other aquatic species cannot move through these crossings and the population is essentially cut in two.



On Alarka, we are replacing a double CMP crossing with an open-bottom arch. The open-bottom arch is wide enough to span beyond the banks of the stream and has a natural stream bottom running through it. Not only does this allow for better connectivity, but these crossings actually handle flood-level flows better and pass materials like downed trees better. Additionally, this project should reduce the amount of sediment coming from the road and entering the stream.

Flylords: What challenges have you faced trying to restore this native habitat?

Jeff: Funding can be a major challenge. It takes a good bit of money to get the work done and TU taps into a lot of different sources. For this project, we have support from Dominion Energy Foundation, Little Tennessee Native Fish

Conservation Partnership, Tennessee Valley Authority, Mainspring Conservation Trust, Wildlands Engineering, Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, and National Forests in North Carolina.



Our work also tends to be in tough-to-reach areas. That creates a lot of logistical issues that you might not have in spots that are easier to reach.



Finally, there is no shortage of work to do. You have to be able to identify the high-priority projects so you are spending money in the best way possible.

Flylords: You have done work all over the Southeast protecting this fish. How have you seen populations respond to projects TU is working on?



Jeff: We don't often get to see the tangible products of our work but there is a lot of research out there that shows the benefits of reconnection and sediment reduction. It is neat to see Brook Trout moving through a place where they previously could not.

Flylords: What is the overarching goal of TU's work in the Southeast?



Jeff: To advance TU's mission for native and wild trout in the region. That mission is bringing together diverse interests to care for and recover rivers and streams, so our children can experience the joy of wild and native trout and salmon.

Flylords: How can people get involved in the projects you are working on?



Jeff: Get involved with a local chapter. We try and work directly with chapters who are interested in the areas where projects happen. Chapters are good at letting their members know about upcoming opportunities and promoting the work staff are doing. We couldn't get many of our projects done without these grassroots volunteers.

Thank you Jeff for sharing your work with us on an incredible fall day in the South! If you are interested in getting more involved [CLICK HERE](#).

All Photos from Dave Fason.

Join Our Weekly Newsletter:

BANK PROTECTION AT TODD ISLAND AND LANSING CREEPER PARK

The original plan had been to plant them along Elk Creek, however, the farm where this was to take place was sold. As a result BRTU had to find a location for all of the materials they had already obtained.



Through association with the New River Conservancy they were put in touch with Todd Community

Preservation Organization (TCPO).

Todd Island is on the south fork of the New River just south of the town of Todd. The island was experiencing some bank erosion and had few trees protecting the river from the heat of the sun. 28 volunteers from several TU chapters, TCPO, boy scouts, and girl scouts showed up to help. The group planted 590 trees and 500 live stakes.



At the same time a group of 21 people showed up at the Lansing Creeper Park in downtown Lansing to



plant live states and trees there for the protection of the Big Horse Creek. The group there planted 100

trees and 500 live stakes. There is a large patch of invasive vegetation along the stream that the group had to work around. Hopefully the shade from the trees will help keep that under control in the future.

We would like to thank everyone who came to help us with this major event that should provide a much better future keeping both streams clean, clear, and cooler. For more photos and a great video of the event at Todd Island, please visit [BLUE RIDGE TU Event Gallery](#).

IMPACT OF FLY FISHING IN NORTH CAROLINA

In the current issue of Wildlife in North Carolina, there is an article entitled "A Billion Dollar Impact". The study emphasizes the impact that trout fishing has on North Carolina's economy. Highlights of the 2022 study are as follows:

- 350,000 anglers fished for trout
- Collectively 4.6 million days were spent trout fishing
- 9 trout fishing trips was the average per angler
- Trout anglers spent an average of \$240 per trip
- The economic impact of these expenditures was \$1.38 billion
- Trout fishing directly or indirectly supported 11,808 full and part time jobs
- The types of tackle used:
 - artificial flies (69%)
 - artificial lures (66%)
 - natural bait (55%)
- Anglers fished
 - hatchery supported waters the most (58%)
 - delayed harvest (26%)
 - wild trout (10%)
 - wild trout with natural bait (1%)
 - special regulation (1%)

ADVICE FROM THE VISE

April is finally here and that means the opening of hatchery supported water as well as the heavier spring stocking of delayed harvest. In honor of all those fish just waiting to succumb to the charms of our perfectly presented fly drift, I thought I'd offer up a pattern I came across several years ago. It didn't have a name that I was made aware of, but it has often been the go to fly for Toe, Wilson, Watauga and Helton delayed harvest trips. I call this one the Stocker Stalker.



It's equally effective for smallmouth and panfish as well as trout, and I've even taken a few wilds on it. A pretty straightforward pattern using marabou for the tail, mohair yarn for the body, and a touch of ice dubbing for the collar. This is tied on a 400bl hook with a slotted bead. On this #16 I used a 3.0 bead, but it lends itself to bigger and heavier as needed and it works great as a dropper off a nymph rig or a dry in #18.

I'll step through the olive pattern on this fly, and as shown black and white versions are proven for the "bright day/dark day" philosophy.



Dress the hook from the eye to the bend, I'm using 14/0 orange thread for this one. Pull two end pieces of blood Jill marabou, I am using one golden olive and one orange and stack those. With your dubbing brush, stroke the fibers to align them and blend them into a tail as shown.

Pinch wrap that tail, about twice the shank and take some securing wraps, then trim out the butts behind the bead to keep a level body.



Tie in a strand of the mohair. I love the buggy fuzz of this material. It traps air bubbles for a little extra sparkle. From the bend, take touching turns and form a tapered body.



With just a touch of fluorescent orange ice dubbing, form a noodle and wrap the collar. Whip finish with a solid 5 turns and you are ready to fish or tie the next one.



You can take this pattern and adapt it with endless colors and sizes to get those stockers in the net this season.

If you have a pattern you would like to see in the column, shoot me an email and we can feature that in an upcoming month. As always, I'm honored to answer questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly tying and fishing. Don't hesitate to contact me at Jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com Please check out some of my current ties on Facebook and Instagram at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Support Rivercourse, enter to win Yellowstone Fishing Adventure! Win 6 Night Trip & Fly Rod of Your Choice



Please Help RiverCourse build the next generation of leaders in cold-water conservation. Every year we educate young women and men aged 12-15, at our camp. Enter to win this dream trip at Yellowstone Angler's Basecamp, \$1000 travel stipend, and fly rod. Proceeds directly support North Carolina Trout Unlimited's [Rivercourse Youth Program](#).

[Read More](#)

NC WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION

If you can say we have a partner in both our mission and also in our vision, it is the NCWRC. Trout Unlimited has a mission statement as follows:

To conserve, protect, and restore trout and salmon fisheries and their watersheds

The NCWRC mission statement is:

To conserve North Carolina's wildlife resources and their habitats and provide programs and opportunities that allow hunters, anglers, boaters; other outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy wildlife-associated recreation.

Do you notice a bit of similarity in these mission statements? This makes it important that our organizations work together so that we can achieve the ends that we are both working toward. In order to better understand our partner organization, this newsletter will give you more insight into the details and workings of the NCWRC so that we can have a more constructive working relationship.

TROUT RESOURCES MANAGEMENT PLAN

The NCWRC has responsibility for many outdoor activities, but at the heart of the relationship with TU is the *Trout Resources Management Plan*. I will try to give a summary of those activities, but if you wish to read the entire

document, you can see it on-line at <http://www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Fishing/documents/TrotManagementPlan.pdf>.

The plan was adopted in 1989 through the gathering of information and discussions with many groups, including TU, and resulted in strategic goals for managing the State's trout resources. These goals were organized into five critical program areas:

- I. Trout Management
- II. Resource Protection and Habitat Management
- III. Research
- IV. Angler Access
- V. Education and Communication

Of these five critical program areas, the ones that have the most immediate impact on the majority of us are Trout Management which impacts the quality and quantity of stocked trout and Angler Access which seeks to provide us with more places to fish. There are, however, goals within these two areas as well as in all other areas that have an impact on the present and future quality of our fishing experience.

Trout Management

- Goal 1. Identify, protect, and enhance Brook Trout populations.
- Goal 2. Provide diverse, high-quality trout fishing opportunities.
- Goal 3. Provide a sound regulatory structure to manage Public Mountain Trout Waters.
- Goal 4. Maximize the fishery potential of stocked trout resources.

Our Vision for the Trout Unlimited is: *By the next generation, Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters.* The first goal in Trout Management is in alignment with our Vision Statement. The NCWRC will identify native trout populations, manage those areas exclusively for native brookies, and restore them in other streams where it is deemed feasible.

The second goal relates to providing all of us with angling opportunities through management of the various types of waters. Where feasible, the non native waters of streams, ponds and tail races will be stock with sterile rainbow, brown, and brook trout populations. The impact on other aquatic species will be considered as part of the plan.

The third goal relates to the regulations for the various trout waters. While most of us are aware of two or perhaps three of the types of trout waters, there are currently six:



This goal includes that regulations will be developed, published, and equitably enforced.

Goal number four relates to the production and stocking of trout. I think most of us will agree that the Commission has done a good job in the quality and variety of trout stocked, but they identify in the plan that current demand has fully utilized the available production capabilities of Commission trout rearing facilities. Many of us have expressed a need for additional stockings and with the heavy pressure on Wilson Creek I'm sure we would all love to see additional Delayed Harvest developed. Here is an area where we can perhaps help the Commission expand its facilities.

Resource Protection and Habitat Management

- Goal 1. Minimize degradation and loss of trout waters and associated riparian habitat.
- Goal 2. Improve trout habitat quality and quantity.
- Goal 3. Manage and minimize adverse effects of invasive species.

Threats to trout habitat include land-disturbing activities associated with residential and commercial developments, road construction, in-line impoundments, improper agricultural practices, impediments to fish passage, and invasive species. Although impacts exist region-wide, habitat loss is more severe on private lands where streams are often channelized or moved, their canopies are removed, flow regimes altered, or they are impacted by sediment. In addition, point and non-point source discharges often result in a decline of water quality due to increased temperatures, high nutrient loads, acid deposition, and other substances toxic to fish. Impacts are often reflected by negative changes in stream ecology, such as reduced abundance and diversity of aquatic invertebrates, which are an important part of the trout diet, and the loss of pools, adequate substrate, and cover necessary to support trout populations.

We can all help the commission prevent these issues by bringing them to their attention whenever we observe an occurrence.

The third goal in this area is identification and control of invasive species. The NCWRC has found evidence of both gill lice and whirling disease in trout streams in North Carolina. They have also identified vegetation invaders didymo and knot weed in and along NC streams. The commission has posted notices to let us know what we can do to prevent further spread. We need to support the commission by assuring our felt boots are thoroughly dried and even better rinsed in a bleach solution before fishing in another stream. The knot weed is a vegetation that grows along the banks of creeks and is everywhere along Wilson Creek. As its name implies it grows very dense and tangled and makes it very difficult to get to the stream.

Research

Goal 1. Obtain routine measurements of social and economic data regarding trout management programs.

Goal 2. Conduct biological surveys to determine the effectiveness of stocked trout and wild trout management strategies.

Goal 3. Evaluate alternative trout management practices

There are two facets to Goal 1. The first is to gather angler input data will allow the Commission to identify topics that are important to trout anglers and should be considered in the management of trout resources. The second is to collect economic data periodically and use these data to promote the importance of trout fishing in North Carolina. You can stay in touch by signing up for the NCWRC newsletters at

<http://www.ncwildlife.org/News/Wildlife-Email-Update>.

This will keep you abreast of any actions by the Commission and any hearings that you may be able to attend and supply your input for making the decisions.

Goal 2 is the evaluation of stream conditions and efforts of both stocked and wild trout to determine if the goals and efforts by the Commission are successful.

Goal 3 is to evaluate the research and determine if regulations and practices can be changed in any way to improve the maintenance of trout in NC and to improve our experience as fishermen.

Angler Access

Goal 1. Secure permanent public access to trout fisheries.

Goal 2. Improve angling access for trout anglers with special needs.

The first goal is of course very important to us as it allows us to get to the streams we love to fish. The access in State and National forests are worked out with those agencies. Perhaps much more difficult is the effort by the Commission obtain access for us to private lands through lease or purchase. We should all thank the Commission for that

effort. In return for our rights to fish these streams we should be very careful not to litter the streams. That has been cited as the biggest complaint by land owners and could cost us the right to fish there.

The second goal is to provide access such as you may have seen at Wilson Creek for persons with a handicap that are unable to wade and fish under normal conditions. This type of access can help us with our Veterans programs.

Education and Communication

Goal 1. Increase the awareness of trout fishing opportunities.

Goal 2. Maintain and enhance trout fishing information.

Goal 3. Evaluate enhancing public awareness of trout stocking events.

Goal 4. Continue to cultivate interactions with trout anglers.

Goals 1-3 all pertain to information and awareness of trout fishing. This is done through the website, magazine and brochures made available to trout fisherman. The fishing website is located at www.ncwildlife.org/trout and the magazine is available at <http://www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Multimedia-Center/Wildlife-in-North-Carolina> for a fee of \$12 per year. Some brochures are available by stopping wherever they sell fishing licenses.

Goal 4 is achieved by presentations to groups like ours and by partnering with groups like ours to set up kiosks at Wilson Creek to include information about trout fishing both from the NCWRC and from our TU chapter.

Nowhere in the trout management plan do I see what I believe is a tremendous program for educating both current and future generations of trout fisherman. At various centers around the state the NCWRC puts on educational programs (mostly free) to teach both adults and youth how to fly fish. The programs can be found at

<https://www.ncwildlife.org/Learning/Courses-Seminars-Workshops>.

In Conclusion

The above discussion of the NCWRC Trout Management Plan demonstrates just how in sync we are with them in regard to the present and future of trout fishing. They rely on groups like ours for support and we rely on them to make a great fishing experience for us.

Finally you should understand that this plan was developed in 2013. Since that time there have been modifications that may not appear here. The plan is expected to be updated soon, but in the meantime it is suggested that you go to the NCWRC Trout page at www.ncwildlife.org/trout for additional information.

WILSON CREEK CORRIDOR PLAN



A diverse partnership is leading an effort to create a more sustainable future for Wilson Creek. Over the past three years, the community has come together to support better stewardship of the Wild and Scenic River. As part of this partnership, the US Forest Service is moving forward with plans

to improve parking and river access. The Wilson Creek Action Plan will provide a vision for outdoor recreation infrastructure development along Wilson Creek and present recommendations for parking areas, river accesses, and support facilities such as restrooms and picnic areas. The US Forest Service is seeking public input to ensure the views of the community are represented in future developments. Public input is critical in ensuring that these recommendations will meet the current needs of the community and protect the Creek for future generations. We need to hear from you to make this plan better!

To learn more about this program and to reply to the survey, visit [Wilson Creek Corridor Plan](#).

We'd love to hear your input. If there is a topic you'd like addressed or if you have something to share in the newsletter, please contact us at BRNCNewsletter@gmail.com.

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