

HATCHES

Newsletter of the Doc Fritchey Chapter
P. O. Box 227, Palmyra, PA 17078 www.dftu.org
Fall 2021



"Dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of the cold water resources of Dauphin & Lebanon Counties"

From Your President:



Summer has come and gone, and we stand in the wake of continuing threats to our community's health. Unsure of what lies ahead in terms of covid, we are cautiously proceeding with returning to our group's many and diverse efforts. Volunteerism is certainly on the rise within our chapter. Summer's dry weather brought diminished flows of water into our Diversion Well, but this is not the first time the stream has been subjected to low flows.

Our dedicated team of laborers are eagerly ready to continue their work as autumn rains replenish the water supply in Rausch Creek. The gang has changed its hours from Mondays at 6 to Sundays at 1, beginning October 3.



Thanks to Stephan Vegoe, Rick Wasserman, Mark Miller, and Jack Longenecker for removing the fallen trees from our chapter's streambank restoration project on Snitz Creek this summer, and to Vegoe for keeping the weeds down.

Russ Collins and Jim Suleski have kept up their persistent efforts to seek funding for new stream conservation grants. Chuck Swanderski was busy planning our Ladies Day outing. Our Events committee hosted a well-attended late August chapter picnic, and more volunteers surfaced to staff exhibits for National Hunting and Fishing Day, and for the Palmyra Sportsmen's Association Field Day. Our stream stocking group will do late season trout stockings. As we look ahead to autumn and cooler days, we can't ease up on efforts to protect our streams. It is a time for reflection on what did we accomplish, assessing what could have been accomplished, and planning on what we will accomplish next spring and fall. I'm proud of the efforts of our chapter members and their good work!

Rich DiStanislao, Chapter president

"The most wonderful thing I have today that wasn't available to me before is old age." Garrison Keillor

Chapter Banquet Plans

One of the key highlights of any TU year is our annual spring fundraising banquet, held for the past decade or more at the Holiday Inn in Grantville. The banquet has always played two important roles in the life of the Doc Fritchey Chapter: Fund raising, of course, but also as a way for as many as 100 of our members, sometimes even more than 100, to get together for conversation, camaraderie, and networking. Over the years that Doc Fritchey members have been organizing and conducting fund-raising banquets, many life-long friendships have started over a beer at the Holiday Inn. Thus, when we were forced to cancel our March 2020 banquet because of the rapid spread of Covid-19, and reluctantly did not host a banquet in 2021, we were resolved to "get back on track" in 2022. However, "on track" is not there yet, and our chapter's leadership recently decided that the chapter's important annual banquet could not safely be held at any time in 2022. That was a tough call, but when fully-vaccinated members of the chapter have recently come down with significant cases of Covid-19, we decided that waiting a year was the only prudent decision we could make. We are resolved to hold a banquet in 2023, which leads us to pose a question to everyone who has gotten this far reading about the chapter's banquet plans – we need new, committed leadership to plan and conduct this banquet. If that's something that appeals to you, please drop chapter president Rich DiStanislao a note at rdistani@comcast.net. If fund-raising is something that appeals to you, here's an opportunity for you to contribute your time and talent to benefit your chapter's resources.

PA Council of Trout Unlimited Honors Russ Collins and our Website

Due to ongoing concerns about the pandemic, the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited conducted its 2021 Annual Meeting via Zoom teleconference on Saturday, September 18th. Capping off the meeting was the virtual presentation of the 2021 Annual Awards, with two significant awards presented to our chapter.

Former chapter president **Russell Collins** was honored with the annual *Doc Fritchey Award for Outstanding Coldwater Conservationist*: this award recognizes a TU member with a history of exemplifying PATU's core values and mission—conserving, protecting, and restoring PA's cold water fisheries and watersheds – and who demonstrates a commitment to volunteerism. Well done, Russell.

The chapter's website was selected as the **Best Chapter Website** for 2021. The selection committee noted the website is "particularly attractive, clear, up-to-date and easy to navigate." We particularly thank board member Andy Link who took on the task of updating and revising our website eighteen months ago. A job well done, Andy.

TROUT UNLIMITED

Founded in Michigan in 1959, Trout Unlimited today is a national non-profit organization with 300,000 members and supporters dedicated to conserving, protecting, and restoring North America's cold water fisheries and their watersheds. TU's staff and volunteers work from coast to coast to protect, reconnect, restore, and sustain trout and salmon habitat on behalf of today's anglers and coming generations of sportsmen and women who value the connection between healthy, intact habitat and angling opportunity.

Our Mission

To bring 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.

Our Vision

For communities across America to engage in the work of repairing and renewing the rivers, streams, and other waters on which we all depend.

Picnic at the Lake



On Sunday afternoon, August 29th, our chapter held our annual summer picnic at Memorial Lake State Park. We were so fortunate to get the picnic in during a respite in the uncomfortable August weather. The afternoon was

overcast and "cool", in the mid-80s, a break from the mid-90s temperatures with matching humidity. Approximately 70 people were in attendance, and the day was filled with renewing friendships, meeting family members, yard games for both young and old, learning to cast fly rods, and, of course, catching up on great fishing stories. The picnic marked the first general membership "in-person" event in over a year and a half.



Mission BBQ was on hand to cater and serve a terrific picnic menu, and no one left hungry. Even lots of left-overs for folks to take home with them.

Door prizes were given

out, bags of candy for the kids, and an assortment of prizes for the fly-casting tournament and for cornhole winners!



Many thanks to the chapter members for putting this fun day together - George Dodson, Becca Fronk, Fran Barilar, Andy Link, and Chuck Swanderski. Many

chapter members jumped in to help with the set-up and tear-down, making it a real chapter event.

Planning for Chapter Fly-Tying Courses for Spring 2022



Although it seems early, it's actually time to start the planning for fly tying courses in 2022. The Palmyra Sportsmen's Association has asked our chapter to sponsor a beginner's fly-tying course, to be held at their clubhouse. PSA was recently

the recipient of a generous gift of fly-tying materials, and club members are anxious to learn how to tie trout flies. The course will be open to anyone who wants to take it, not just the Sportsmen's club members. Considering the location of the clubhouse is at a farther corner of our chapter footprint, we are expecting to appeal to a new audience.



Since we have offered our beginner course so many times in the Harrisburg location, it seems prudent to do something a little different in 2022. Last year, we had a very successful advanced fly-tying class, although it was offered in a

virtual setting online. We believe there will be sufficient interest in conducting an advanced tying course done with an "in-person" setting at the Wildwood Nature Center in Harrisburg. Our chapter group of fly-tying mentors will be meeting around the Thanksgiving time to make some course planning decisions. Final results will be announced before the end of the year.

Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp



This past spring our chapter sponsored three teenagers to participate in the PA Rivers Conservation and Fly-Fishing Youth Camp, held June 20 – 25. This marks the 26th year of this Rivers Camp; an opportunity for teens that want to learn about cold water conservation and learn to fly-fish. The camp is held at the Messiah University campus on the Yellow Breeches at Grantham. Our chapter typically sponsors two teens to attend, but due to the cancellation of the camp in 2020, we were able to fund three students for this year: Collin Gourley, Evan Kocher, and Mason Liartis. Daily classes are based on college-level coursework that has been distilled to provide students with a background in science.

Classes include principles of ecology, hydrogeology, aquatic vertebrate and invertebrate sampling, hydrology, trout behavior, trout stream entomology, the biology of pollution, and the politics of conservation and the effects of humans on the Chesapeake Bay.

This camp is the learning experience of a lifetime, but it is not all work. There are hands-on classes in fly tying, fly casting, streamside ethics, wading safety, streamside botany, and habitat restoration. Students also experience fishing on the world-famous Yellow Breeches Creek. Fishing sessions are conducted both mornings and evenings. The students are advised and tutored by ghillies (guides) comprised of Trout Unlimited members. The angling is conducted in the Catch-and-Release section of the Yellow Breeches at Allenberry, made famous by the writing of Vince Marinaro, Charlie Fox, Ed Shenk, Ed Koch, and others.”

Diversion Well Takes a Hit from Ida



Two days after Hurricane Ida passed through the Lebanon Valley - 6.28 inches at the diversion wells - George Dodson, Larry Herr, and Dennis Coffman walked into the Rausch Creek Diversion Wells to open the intakes into the wells. They found two large oak trees had fallen across the area where the pipes to the wells are buried and water was seeping out of the ground, indicating it was likely the intake pipe was broken.

Diversion well, continued

On Labor Day evening, the full diversion-well crew brought in chain saws and removed the parts of the trees that were on top of the area where the intake pipes are buried. They then uncovered the pipe to find that the pipe to the round well was, indeed, broken. The crew also pulled the gates to the square well and found that two of the outflow nozzles in it were completely blocked. Subsequently, the crew went in on three occasions to clean the blocked nozzles (now working perfectly) and to replace the broken pipes.

Note: Chapter members interested in seeing the diversion wells (or joining the crew) are always encouraged to come out during regular maintenance, which shifted to Sunday afternoons at 1:00 PM on October 3. The rail trail leading to the Diversion Well is located on Goldmine Road. The trail is closed at a gate, so meet the crew at the gate and introduce yourselves to the crew. They will take you back the four miles to Rausch Creek and our diversion wells project.

DCNR: Derek Eberly Appointed New Director of Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing & Conservation

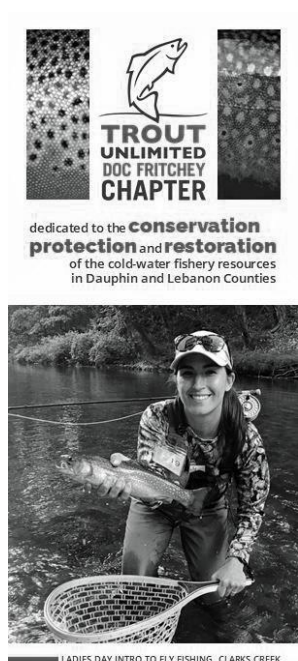


On July 21, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced Derek Eberly has been appointed to serve as the director of the Governor's Advisory Council for Hunting, Fishing and Conservation. Eberly previously worked for the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership as its first Pennsylvania Field Representative and is the owner and head guide of Keystone Fly Guides.

Tyler Frantz Continues to Promote our Doc Fritchey Chapter

During the Mason-Dixon Outdoor Writer's Association's 2021 conference, held July 17th in Clear Spring, Maryland, Tyler Frantz took 1st place in the Talbot Denmead Memorial Award category for Best Article on Conservation or the Environment. His winning article, *"Keepers of the Stream: Volunteers breathe life into broken trout waters,"* which ran in the Jan/Feb 2020 issue of *PA Angler & Boater Magazine*, featured Doc Fritchey's own Rausch Creek Diversion well crew. The article also won first place in the Trout and the Coldwater Resource Award, sponsored by PA Council of Trout Unlimited at the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association conference, held July 31 in Mercer, Pennsylvania. The winning story was published in the summer issue of *PA Trout*.

New Chapter Brochure Now Available



Nice work Becca.

Thanks to the superb effort of Becca Fronk, our chapter now has a new color brochure that we will use to promote the chapter and promote membership in Trout Unlimited. The brochure covers the reasons we all belong to Trout Unlimited and a bit of history on our half-century-old organization, including how we became the Doc Fritchey Chapter. Becca covered meetings, events, educational programs, and stream conservation, all with color photos.

A Free App that will Astound You



Attention birders - Ever hear the melodious tune of birdsong and wonder which bird it came from? Well, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology has recently updated its Merlin smartphone app, which aims to help both amateur and experienced birdwatchers. It now comes with an artificial intelligence (AI) 'Sound ID' feature that works amazingly well. With the free **Merlin** download, users turn on the app on a smartphone or iPad and let the app record birdsong in your neighborhood, or out in the woods on a hiking trail. The app then lists all the birds it hears. It's quite extraordinary.

Upon recording a bird's sounds, the app transforms the noise into a visual graph known as a spectrogram. Then, it analyzes the spectrogram and compares it with known bird calls, which are found in the Cornell Lab's eBird citizen science database.

"The first time I hit record on the app I could just barely hear an American crow - it was at least two blocks from my backyard. Merlin promptly listed American Crow as the first bird it "heard," and then listed nine more birds in the first 60 seconds of recording," said newsletter editor Stephan Vegoe.

Hammer Creek Watershed Project Update

Under the expert leadership of former chapter president Russ Collins and Dr. James Suleski, a current member of the chapter's board of directors, the largest conservation project in the history of the Doc Fritchey Chapter is slowly coming to fruition in SE Lebanon County, in the upper reaches of the Hammer Creek Watershed, on a 1,000 acre farm owned by the Barry brothers.



Back in early 2019, a couple of DFTU members and a similar number of Donegal Chapter members started talking about an effort to restore the upper reaches of Hammer Creek. Those conversations resulted in a working group - the Hammer Creek Restoration Group - which has slowly and surely, despite a global pandemic, created a working plan for a major streambank restoration project on Hammer Creek, an expansive watershed with a drainage area of 15.62 square miles, running from north of Schaefferstown in Southeastern Lebanon County to its confluence with Cocalico Creek in Lancaster County.

Almost all of the stream in the upper sections is privately owned and the group has found willingness on the part of almost all landowners for the restoration efforts the working group is currently designing. Further downstream of this initial project area is public water, annually stocked by the PA Fish and Boat Commission's "white fleet."

Note: As the working group has met with landowners to determine interest in this project, and walked and surveyed the meandering stream, the group has come to realize that in some significant sections of the creek there are thriving populations of native brook trout, and it's clear that a restoration effort in the spring-fed sections of the upper portions of Hammer Creek could result in major improvements to brook trout habitat. Our consultant, Rocky

Powell of Clear Creeks Consulting, has identified a small spring that feeds the main stem of Hammer Creek on the Barry Farm. Rocky has suggested this spring presents the opportunity to create a brook trout nursery in Hammer Creek, which raises a fascinating possibility; that we can restore Hammer Creek to help the brookies better cope with the currently existing stressors on the watershed and mitigate them as much as possible. The spring channel Rocky Powell has designed will serve a triple purpose of being young-of-the-year-habitat, spawning habitat, and summer thermal refuge habitat that Hammer Creek brook trout can use even if the main stem of the Hammer gets too warm during the summer. The design and permitting for this "special project" will begin once we receive notice of our grant being awarded.

The working group started its efforts on Hammer Creek by engaging TU National's habitat coordinator, Shaun McAdams. With Shaun's help, the group began a full-scale habitat assessment process.



The group divided the watershed into three sections and walked the stream and its feeders to gather data to determine the areas that were most in need of

restoration. Dr. Jim Suleski spent countless hours accompanying Shaun on stream walks, many of which were during the winter.

Phase One of the assessment also pointed the working group in the direction of property owners interested in restoring the creek on their property. As they talked with these property owners, they discovered that the Pennsylvania DEP had previously completed a watershed implementation plan (called an ARP - Alternate Restoration Plan). During this initial assessment period, Shaun McAdams, and Dr. Suleski identified numerous stretches of Hammer Creek with severely-eroded stream banks, wide and shallow areas with no riparian buffers, and significant livestock impact.

Russ Collins has been actively engaged with the affected property owners and has created significant rapport with these owners (three of which have signed landowner agreements) – to the point where we are confident this Hammer Creek project, once funded (and we think

funding is imminent), will be able to begin construction in the fourth quarter of 2021. One of the key sections of Hammer Creek that needs immediate attention is on the farm owned by the Barry Family: three hard-working – conservation-minded – brothers that run a successful farming operation on about 1,000 acres of prime, Lebanon County farmland.

Over the past two years, Russ Collins and Jim Suleski have walked the farm with the Barry brothers, explaining how the Doc Fritchey Chapter operates, and explaining in detail how the chapter will work with them to professionally restore the creek and the watershed. Over several meetings and lots of walks-about their farm, a basic streambank restoration concept was developed, which resulted in the submission of a comprehensive funding proposal.



Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Jim Suleski and Russ Collins, the Barry brothers have grown to trust our chapter's interest in working with them to restore a large portion of Hammer Creek as it winds through their farm. Even though several for-profit-restoration companies have approached the Barry brothers, they have decided they want to work with our Hammer Creek Restoration Group (and take a significant number of acres permanently out of production) to complete phase one of what promises to be a multi-year streambank restoration project within the Hammer Creek watershed.

Obviously, we are at the beginning of a major effort to restore Hammer Creek, and there are many miles of stream to go. For this initial grant application submission, we have engaged Clear Creeks Consulting and Ecosystem Planning & Restoration as our project design consultants.

"They say getting older is a process of elimination and I wonder if we eventually start defining ourselves solely in terms of what we won't do." John Gierach

Ladies Day on October 2nd

On Saturday October 2, 2021, our Chapter sponsored an educational program to introduce women to flyfishing as a sport and fun family recreational activity. This year's program was held at the Limestone Springs Preserve (limestonespringspreserve.com) in Richland in eastern Lebanon County. The participants were given instruction and activities in flyfishing gear, equipment, knots and knot tying, entomology, fly tying (to match the insects), and casting. Displays, equipment and handouts were provided by the Chapter and instructors to enhance the presentations.



Lead instructors were Jacquie Law, Cyndi Camp, Lynn Langer, Steve Long, and Sarah Stark. Assisting as mentors were Bob Pennell, Russ Collins, Khervin Smith, Rich DiStanislao, Chris Liartis, Greg Silva, Gary Copenhaver, and Chuck Swanderski.

The morning was dedicated to presentations on the topics listed above. Lunch and snacks were provided by the Chapter. Participants were given the opportunity to chat with the instructors during the break.



Participants were then given the opportunity to practice their casting skills in the stream (with a mentor) to experience the thrill of "the take".

Hookless flies were used as Limestone Springs is strictly a "Catch and Keep" facility. No fish were harmed during this session! After a general wrap up meeting the group was again given the opportunity to further interact with the mentors and fish the stream with actual flies and keep their catch.



Initial evaluation by the participants gives the program "100% great and let's do it again next year."

A special thanks to our DFTU volunteers and the staff at Limestone Springs for making this event possible. For some great pictures of the event visit our website (dftu.org) or our Facebook page.

Quittapahilla Creek Floodplain Restoration



The creation in 2018 of the six-member Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium - North Cornwall Township, North Lebanon Township, South Lebanon Township, the City of Lebanon, Cleona Borough, and Annville Township - resulted in the creation of the 2018 Stormwater Fee.

The annual fee is paid by all property owners - residential and commercial - in the six municipalities and was the result of mandated clean water regulations by the EPA and DEP which requires pollution reduction plans, rehabilitation projects, and routine maintenance operations designed to lower pollution entering waterways and to help reduce sediment loads in streams.



The Consortium is regulated under a five-year DEP permit and must budget an estimated five million dollars for pollution reduction projects during this DEP permit cycle.

Beginning in late 2022 or early 2023 construction will begin along the Quittapahilla Creek, at and upstream from the current 22nd Street bridge.

This construction activity will be the first part of an extensive Quittapahilla Creek Floodplain Restoration Project. Land Studies, Inc. and Steckbeck Engineering & Surveying, Inc., are working with the Consortium to plan the project, with the intended outcome of reducing sediment and nutrient loading within the watershed. The project will restore about 1,700 linear feet of floodplain from the end of Lebanon City's flood control channel at 19th Street to the bridge at 22nd Street. The restoration will reduce sediment loads within the watershed and will result in a functional floodplain-wetland system that provides flood storage, water quality benefits, and significant ecological uplift along the Quittapahilla Creek. The project is expected to cost approximately \$1.9 million.

As soon as funding is fully acquired, the Lebanon Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) will be extended along the Quittapahilla Creek into North Cornwall Township from the Lebanon City line at 16th Street and will be constructed along the northside of Chestnut Street to 22nd Street.



The paved path will connect to Gloninger Woods Park, with a section of the Trail to proceed north on 22nd Street to Cumberland Street,

eventually connecting to the West Lebanon and North Lebanon Township Trails. In addition, a bridge-replacement and road-realignment project on 22nd Street will improve pedestrian and motorist safety and reduce flooding. A new road section of 22nd Street will be constructed, realigned, widened, and raised to connect with the Chestnut Street/22nd Street intersection at Gloninger Woods Park. A new, wider-span bridge over the Quittapahilla Creek will be constructed with the new road section of 22nd Street.

"One of the great sorrows of sub-surface fly fishing is that it doesn't give you any excuse to rush out and acquire a bunch of new gear." Dave Hughes

Doc Fritchey's Sponsors

Our chapter's sponsors help make many things possible, like this advertising-free print newsletter. We sincerely appreciate their willingness to write checks to support the cold water conservation efforts of Doc Fritchey TU. If you own or manage a business that could be persuaded to become an annual sponsor, we would love to talk to you about the various levels of support available to you. Please send an email to chapter treasurer Trip McGarvey at trip@dftu.org. Trip will get you the information you need to help support our Doc Fritchey chapter.



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"The catching of fish is but an incident in fishing. To be out in the open where fish are; to watch them at their great business of living; to see them in the water or out of the water; to fish for them, and even to hook them and have them get away - all this is wonderfully worthwhile - wonderfully better and more worthwhile than merely to catch and keep the stiffening fading body of one of the most beautiful forms of life." Gifford Pinchot

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Fund-Raising for 2022

As we noted on Page 1, we have decided not to conduct a fundraising banquet in 2022, but that does not mean we are not going to raise funds to support the chapter. There are many projects that require significant funds, so we are in the planning stages for a raffle which will be announced with the next print newsletter, the Winter 2022 issue. It looks like that raffle will include multiple items, with a guided fly fishing trip with one of Pennsylvania's premier guides as the top prize. Then, post raffle, sometime a bit later in 2022, we will conduct another online auction, quite similar to the online auction that was recently so popular with our members. Combined, those two fundraisers will go a long way toward funding the chapter for 2022.

Help Your Friends Become Members of TU

There is a good chance you have friends that are not members of Trout Unlimited. They can easily join today at the special introductory rate of just \$17.50. This low rate is for new members only and \$15 of your \$17.50 will go directly to this chapter. Send them to DFTU.org. Scroll down the home page until you get to Become a Member. Click on that button and complete the application.

Reminder:

Chapter logo gear is just a click away at our *Award-Winning-Website* – DFTU.org. Click on the STORE button on the home page and you'll find loads of great gear, name brands like Columbia, at attractive prices.

"I think if I only had one fly pattern to use in both fresh and saltwater, it might well be the Clouser Minnow. And if I only had one color combination, it would probably be chartreuse and white." Tim Flagler