

# Hickory NC Trout Unlimited September 2019 Newsletter



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## A LINE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Last month I wrote about some negative things happening on the Creek with one of them being about the flood damage. Look for the article I asked Charlie Walker to do about that in this edition.

So, this month I want to talk about some positive things happening. Some of them may seem small but baby steps are OK.

Let me explain the dilemma as to why I'm excited about baby steps. Wilson Creek, land, river and roads are governed by several different entities.

Pisgah National Forest Lands – Federal

State lands along the Creek are under the Wildlife Resources jurisdiction.

County Roads are under the Caldwell Co. Commissioners and Sheriffs Dept.

Individual landowners hold private lands.

Because of this, addressing any issue about the Creek becomes mired in the who's who of who needs to deal with it.



Those of us wanting answers along with, A Clean Wilson Creek, and being united in speaking up for our cause has at least brought all of these entities and more together to at least hash out what might be done. This is a big step forward. I don't know what they may accomplish over the long haul but what has happened since that recent meeting has been that 5 new Port-A-Jons have appeared along the

2.2 mile Gorge Area. Yes, in the overall picture that is a baby step but it's a positive step in the right direction. Any amount of sewage stopped from contaminating the River is positive. All we ask is please don't stop there but Wildlife please add some up at the old Mill. We need them badly there too.

Another positive milestone that I hope you take time to seek out is Glynis at the Welcome Center has purchased the Old Coffee General Store in Edgemont and has turned part of it into a Museum. According to Glynis, back during the Hay-Day of Mortimer there were two railroads that operated along Wilson Creek. With each train operating along separate sides of the River. The Hutton Bourbonnais, known as the Hut-Bur stopped in Mortimer and was a working train for the

Mill. The other train, the Carolina Northwestern was the passenger train and continued further up the Creek.

Matthew Bumgarner of Hickory is supplying historical memorabilia of the Carolina Northwestern for display in what is being called the Train Room at the museum in the Old store and post office.

The store and Museum are like a step back in time and will help preserve the Heritage if the area. Be sure you take a few minutes to look around the next time you're in the area.

A lot of things destroy or impact what is happening along this National Wild and Scenic River. While speaking with Glynis about the creek she made a comment that has stayed with me. She said, "Wilson may be the last Wild and Scenic River around". I thought about that. It seems that as people feel the need, to live in or around water and it becomes more and more in demand, places like Wilson are becoming nonexistent very quickly. We may be the last or even one of the last Wild and Scenic Rivers.

So yes, let's go the extra mile, let's not take no for an answer. Let's find new solutions on how to help this beautiful place. Baby steps, ok.

Please give, please support, A Clean Wilson Creek in the efforts to help. Every dollar is important. Every person who volunteers is important. Together we can make a difference!! You can find out more about A Clean Wilson Creek on their website at <https://acleanwilsoncreek.org/>. Please watch the video to learn what is being done and about the effort that Bruce Gray has been doing for years and until recently out of his own pocket. Be sure to stop at Betsy's Ole Country Store and thank Bruce for his efforts.

The tug is the drug,  
Jackie Greene

## SEPTEMBER MEETING

**WHEN:** Tuesday, September 17  
5:30 PM Optional Buffett  
6:30 PM Program

**WHERE:** Market on Main Cellar

**PROGRAM:** Leader Workshop

**SPEAKER:** Brandon Harrison

**RSVP:** [HKYNCTUpres@gmail.com](mailto:HKYNCTUpres@gmail.com)

Discussion about:

Function, Materials, Types, and Tapers for our local fish. Leader examples for Dry Fly, Indicator Nymphing, Long Line streamer (floating line) Sinking Line Streamer, Musky Leaders, Popper/ Bass top water, as well as a variety of Euro Nymphing leaders.

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Hickory NC Chapter 032 of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com) and let us know.

Materials will be available for everyone to practice blood knots and tie their own euro leader to suit their rod and style fishing. Please bring your nymphing rod and nippers.

*Please enter the Market on Main Cellar from 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue SW. Parking is available across the street.*

## **WILSON CREEK FLOOD OF 2019**

Many of you have probably not been up to Wilson Creek since Delayed Harvest ended this year. When you return this fall you will be seeing a much different river. The flood that took place in June dramatically changed much of Wilson Creek. Charlie Walker provided us with a review of the changes to the river that happened this summer. Please be sure to read his article at the end of the newsletter so you'll be prepared for the opening in October.

## **QUOTE OF THE MONTH**

*"Get your kids hooked on fly fishing and they'll never have enough money for drugs and alcohol."*

*Unknown Author*

## **DRY FLY ON A TENKARA (continued)**

Last month I reported the difficulty of casting a dry fly with the standard furled leader of a Tenkara rig. Based on recommendations, I changed out the furled leader with some standard fly line that I had. I would have preferred a 2 or 3 weight line, but all I had was 6 wt, so that's what I used. I tied



a loop into the end of the fly line and attached a short piece of fly line backing in a loop where the fly line attaches to the lillian string at the tip of the Tenkara rod. This allows me to remove this line easily and put

on the nymph rig. I tied on a 2' piece of 3x mono, a tippet ring, and then another 18" of 6x mono. I added a dab of UV Knot Sense glue to each knot. I was very pleased the way it worked out. The fly line worked like a charm to cast out the #16 dry fly either with an overhand or underhand cast.

I mentioned another stream I had planned to try the next week and told you that you would never know the name if it worked out well. Well, the name of the creek is Basin Creek in Doughton Park. Cove Creek and Basin Creek come down off the parkway, merge, and then continue down to Longbottom Road where there is a parking area. Kin Hodges from the NCWRC told me they had checked out the creeks a few weeks ago. They found only one trout in the stretch below where the two creeks merge, but did find trout in Basin Creek above there. I hiked up to where they merged and then headed up Basin Creek. A short hike and I found a good access. I wet waded down to the creek and the water was comfortable and the as I reported the rod cast well. On the

first cast I got a 1-1/2" chub. That was the last fish of the day. I hiked on up probably another mile and only found two more spots with easy access and caught nothing.

On the way out I took temperatures in the creeks. Both creeks were 63 degrees where they merged and at the very bottom it was 65. That is certainly cool enough support trout and it made me wonder why there were no trout in the lower section. My conclusion is that with the easy access it is overfished like so many of our rivers. That's only an opinion, so take it as you may.

The total hike in and out was about six miles and climbed maybe 800-1000' in elevation. If you're young and in good condition you might want to give it a try. I think the best way might be to go with a partner and park one car at the bottom and then drive to the top for the hike down. If you do it alone, I would hike down to where the two creeks merge and then head back up. Reports I read say the trail crosses the stream eleven times and it did not once in the part I traveled, so perhaps access may be much better in the upper part of the stream. If you give it a try, please send a report to the newsletter on how it worked out.

## **Tight Lines & Road Kill**

### **Don't Leave Home Without It!**

American Express gave us that admonition a couple decades ago. Wayne Clodfelter, editor of a now-defunct (I think) newsletter, *Trout, NC*, even devised his favorite fly that he called the "American Express." It was nothing flashy, just a tan parachute pattern, but it worked.

Almost all of us have a go-to fly, one we tend to use more than anything else. For me, it's not what I go to when nothing else is working, it's what I start with, before I know if anything's working!

Tom Rosenbauer, writer for Orvis and who I consider a great fly angler, has published his favorite dozen: <https://news.orvis.com/fly-fishing/tom-rosenbauers-12-essential-trout-flies>. It's fun to sit down and ponder what you'd include on your don't-leave-home-without-it list. Just for kicks, here's my top 10.

1. **Parachute Adams**
2. **Parachute Adams**
3. **Parachute Adams** – Do I repeat myself? I just think it's that good. Without a doubt it's my top 3! From size 10 to 28!
4. **Parachute Hare's Ear BWO** – Looks buggier than a regular BWO. Works in all sizes.
5. **Stimulator** – Looks like a hopper, a caddis, a stonefly, or nothing at all, but it catches fish everywhere.
6. Any one of a number of **big foam flies with multiple rubber legs** – e.g. Chernobyl Ant, etc.

7. **Copper John** – Usually tiny, size 18 or 20. To me, the deadliest nymph ever.
8. **Dave Hise's Hetero-genius Nymph™** -- just as deadly as a Copper John.
9. **Woolly Bugger** – olive, black, even gaudy orange. Easiest fly on earth to tie and will catch fish whether stripped or dead drifted.
10. **Y2K** – Shhhh! Works as well as an egg pattern but you don't have to say "egg!"
11. **Bonus Fly** – What the guy upstream from me is catching fish on repetitively ... if he's a nice guy and will tell me.

(I wrote the column early this month because I'm off to Yellowstone for 8 days of great fishing. Maybe I'll have some good stories to recount next month. Nothing but the truth will be written!)

By Joel Miller



Joel Miller, our Tight Lines & Road Kill Author reported in from Yellowstone last week with a monster cutthroat trout. He said he caught it on a parachute hopper. Based on his above article we must assume that this

was a bonus fly that the guy upstream was catching them on. Well, to be fair, he didn't describe the fly in detail. Maybe it was a big foam fly with rubber legs. (A post script after I had written this article, Joel reported he had just caught a 24" cuttie on a #18 Parachute Adams giving proof he does comply with his recommendations.)



It's not a question of "if" your waders will develop a hole. Rather, the operative word is "when." Regardless of the type of wader, breathable or neoprene, a jagged rock or sharp thorn is in your future. Guaranteed. The good news is there are reliable repair products that are both easy to use and inexpensive with some even being "instant" for use on the side of the stream.

The challenge, whether you are doing a streamside repair or are at home, is to find the source of a pinhole leak – tears

are apparent. The first step is to turn the waders inside out and look for imperfections in the fabric near where you believe the hole to be. If on the stream, you may see a dark spot where water has come through and, of course, you can look at your trousers to find where the wet spot appears. The hole will be at the top of the wet area on your pants. If the waders are dry, rubbing the inside at the site of the suspected failure



with isopropyl alcohol may cause the pinhole to become visible. Look on both sides – sometimes the material on the inside does not darken,

but there may be a small dark spot on the outside where the alcohol spreads back through the hole. Streamside, you can squeeze a few drops of alcohol out of a prep wipe from your first-aid kit to do the test.

What you do not want to do is to completely fill the waders with water! Never! Water is heavy and will cause the seams to separate. Simms recommends against filling the waders above the knee for this specific reason – best not to do it at all. A better approach is to inflate the waders using the exhaust from a shop vac or a leaf blower. Rub soapy water over the target area and see where it bubbles. Mark the spot with a sharpie and proceed to the next step.

Instant repair: For a pinhole or small tear, grab an ultraviolet activated repair adhesive. [Aquaseal UV](#) and [Loon Outdoors UV Wader Repair](#) are the two best choices. Using them is simple. Move indoors or into the shade. Turn the waders inside out and squeeze a small amount around the pinhole or small tear. Work it into the material with your finger. Once done, expose the repair to sunlight, and it will harden within 30 seconds. Hop back in the water and continue to fish.



For a more significant tear, use a [Tear-Aid type A](#) patch for rubber, neoprene or breathable materials if the temperature is above 50°F. The patch should be one inch larger than the damage and be sure to round off the corners of the patch. A square edge

may catch and cause the patch to peel off. Before applying, clean the area with an alcohol prep pad, wait for the surface to dry, and apply. According to the manufacturer, the patch will achieve 90% adhesion instantly and 100% within one hour – good enough to jump right back in the water.

Traditional repair: Hands down, [Aquaseal](#) is the go-to material for a conventional repair. The downside is it can take up to 12 hours to fully cure and is not appropriate for streamside use. To accelerate the cure time, mix [Cotol-240](#) into the Aquaseal to reduce the cure time to two hours. For a pinhole or small tear, you do not need to use a patch. Again,

turn the waders inside out and repair from the inside. Squeeze out some of the Aquaseal and work it into the target area to make sure it penetrates through the material. This is especially important for a repair to neoprene - think stocking foot.

For a more extensive tear, apply Aquaseal around the edges; spreading it at least an inch away from the damage and apply a patch over the top. Be sure to round the edges of the patch to prevent a square corner from catching and pulling the patch up. Hang up the waders and wait for the sealer to cure.

The typical wader repair kit includes Aquaseal and some large patches. This kit does have an instant option as a result of the adhesive on the patches. Follow the instructions contained in the package.

Seams present a unique problem. While small repairs using the techniques discussed above are possible if seams become weak or leak, apply a dedicated seam sealer such as [Seam Grip](#). Seam Grip comes with a brush applicator to put on the product. The best approach for an even application is



to put painter's or masking tape on each side of the seam and then apply. Like Aquaseal, it must have time to cure.

Caution!! Ignore the hacks you see on the web and YouTube about using Shoo Goo or similar products. They do not have the flexibility of products developed specifically for waders and will eventually crack.

Simple! Although breathable waders are

relatively inexpensive at this point, there is no need to replace them when a few minutes with a cheap patch can put them back in the business. I recommend you carry a small tube of the ultraviolet-activated material along with a Tear-Aid patch to keep from being pushed off the stream by a small hole or tear.

Check out [Steve's YouTube channel at KayakHacksFishing](#) for more on this topic.



*I'd like to add a postscript to this article based on an experience I had last year. I discovered my Goretex jacket was no longer waterproof. I did some research and learned how to use the Nikwax solution. It involves some laundering and then a treatment with a spray. When I was finished I had some spray left over. My waders were not leaking, but there was a small amount of seepage that left my feet damp after fishing. I sprayed the legs and boots with the Nikwax spray and have not had an issue since.*

## TIP OF THE MONTH

### Floatant Vs. Desiccant

By: [Philip Monahan](#)

*On the wild trout streams this summer I have been doing a lot of dry fly fishing. I find that Gink only works until you catch your first fish and then it becomes waterlogged. Adding more Gink does nothing, but if you shake the fly in a desiccant after each fish, it can be used several times before you need to change it out. This article is the best I found describing the process.*

**Question:** What's the difference between paste-like floatants (Gink, etc.) and the crystals, where you have to shake the fly in the stuff?

Andy E., Richmond, VA

Desiccant usually comes in a plastic canister that features a notch in the edge through which you put your tippet. Close the lid, and shake away. Photo courtesy of Orvis.



**Answer:** Fly floatants come in many forms—paste, liquid, gel, etc.—and are designed to keep the materials in your fly from absorbing water. These products work best when they are applied to a fly that is totally dry, usually right when you take it out of your fly box and tie it on. If you catch a couple of fish or if you're fishing in rough water that frequently sinks the fly, these kinds of floatants eventually stop working. A waterlogged

fly doesn't float, so you need to either change the fly or get the water out of it somehow.

The other downside of pastes and gels is that it's possible to use too much, which causes the hairs or feathers of the fly to stick together. This can make the fly less buoyant, and it may make an imitation seem less natural. Once you've over-gelled a fly, all you can do is let it fully dry before you can pull the fibers or hairs apart again.

*Gink has been around for almost 30 years, and the name has become a generic term for paste floatants.*



Most of the crystalline products are desiccants, meaning that they actually remove moisture from the fly. You take your soggy fly, put it in a small canister with the crystals, and give the whole thing a hearty shake. When you pull the fly out, it is magically dry—but covered in white crystals, so you need to blow on it or shake the white stuff off.

Desiccants work best for larger, fluffier patterns, such as stoneflies and Wulffs and the like. Eventually, a fly may become waterlogged enough that desiccant can't revive it, in which case it's time to change flies.

I like to use both floatant and desiccant for fishing rough-and-tumble waters. The floatant gets your fly floating right off the bat, and the desiccant restores the fly quickly when it becomes waterlogged, allowing you to get right back to fishing.

There are also several dry-fly dressings, such as Water Shed and Hydrostop, meant to be applied long before you are on

the water. These products are often called “permanent floatants,” and they literally waterproof flies by adding a coating to the patterns.

#### Featured Comment

Henry K

*There is often confusion between desiccant crystals and powder crystalline floatant. Desiccant crystals are silica gel, just like the crystals in electronic gear and shoes. Powders like Frogs Fanny and Loon Blue Ribbon are hydrophobic fumed silica. Both silica gel (the desiccant) and the fumed silica are made of silicon dioxide (silica). Hence the confusion. Same chemical in different forms.*

*Combination products like Shimazaki Dry Shake and Loon Top Ride have both silica gel and floatant powder. They are called “Shake and Bake” products and will dry and waterproof the fly with a single treatment.*

*After the powder floatant in the shake and back products is used up, the remaining drying crystals can be renewed by putting the crystals in a glass dish and microwaving the crystals on high for 15 seconds X 2. The water will escape as steam and the popping noises are the crystals exploding. Put the crystals back in the original container and use them to dry flies.*

#### ADVICE FROM THE VISE

While it’s an unseasonable 68 degrees out while I write this, I don’t expect it to last, but it’s a nice reminder that fall and cooler weather are just around the corner. As the temps cool, trout will get their feedbag on looking for big fat morsels to feast on. It’s our job to imitate those and take a last look at trout that made it through the summer. One of my favorite flies is a hefty Pat’s Rubber Legs. It’s traditionally designed to imitate a stonefly nymph, but using different colors and the action of the legs in the water make fish dial in on this pattern. You can fish it under an indicator, tight line alone or as point on a double nymph rig. It’s heavy to get deep into the slots and eddy’s where the wiley fish hold.

This pattern can be tied down to a #16, but in this case I’m using a #12 3x long streamer hook. 10 and 12 are my mainstay for this heavier version. For a bead I’m using a tungsten 3.8 mm and about a dozen turns of .020 lead free wire.

Rubber legs come in lots of different options, I’m using a round medium leg from MFC for this demo, but spanflex or sexi-floss comes in a variety of colors and makes awesome wiggly legs.

The body is chenille in size small. Again a variety of manufacturers and colors are out there. I’m using a variegated tobacco/black on this one.



Start off with your bead on the hook in the vise and put about a dozen turns of lead free on. You can dry fit that to the bead, then slide it back about midway as we will put the first set of legs through the bead for antenna.



Once you thread the legs through the bead, pull them taught upward and slide the lead into the beads countersunk hole. I like my antenna on top of the eye. Pull the back legs forward and start your thread behind the lead wraps and build a thread dam



there to taper the hook shank to the lead and secure in the legs to the hook.



Now, gentle traction on the back legs and take some wraps rearward with the leg material on the top of the hook shank. This is a game of tension here, tight enough to secure but not so tight that you cut the material or not let it lie straight and naturally. It takes practice



so give yourself a break if it takes a few times.

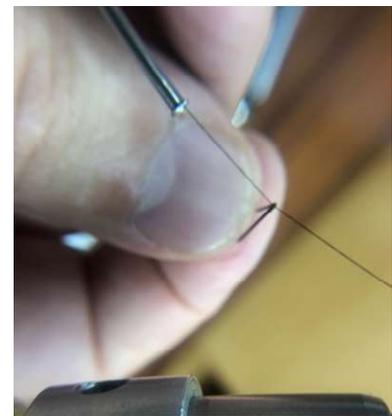


Strip off the end fuzz of the chenille. I see folks tying in full hook shank chenille and the wrapping it, but for me, that makes too fat of a body and it doesn’t come out smooth as it should be. No one likes a lumpy stonefly. Left Kreh said that, or maybe he would have....



Tie in the chenille thread and take your thread up to the abdomen area or where the lead starts.

Wrap the chenille forward with touching turns to the thread, and take a capturing turn of the thread to secure it. I counter wrap my chenille, or pretty much any wrapped material so that the thread capture is smoother.



Now we all know a stonefly has 6 legs. But in extensive research trials, flies with 6 legs showed no statistical significance in outperforming flies with 4 legs. Feel free to stop a bit sooner with chenille and put on an extra leg pair if desired.



Pull the thread towards you taught, and drape a leg over the thread. Then with thumb and forefinger put gentle traction on the leg and seat it on the side of the hook shank and take a second wrap around it.

Repeat on the other side

(rotary vise is handy here).



With the legs tied in, advance your thread to to bead and you can begin wrapping forward the chenille. Gentle traction on the back pair and wrap in front of those legs and then gentle traction on the front set forward and continue to wrap the chenille towards the bead. The chenille will hold the legs in the x pattern.



I take a tight wrap of chenille at the bead before I whip finish just to make sure I have plenty of fuzz at the head. You can adjust the legs at this point if needed, they sometimes twist a bit with the chenille wraps. Whip finish the head with two whips of 5 and trim the legs to an even length all around.



The color combos on this pattern are endless. Pat's was the reason for some very successful days Big Horse this spring, and have a full box ready to go for a couple

fall trips. It's really an easy tie, super productive and a great fly to tight line with in the Euro style with a sighter because it's heavy and has a great bounce feel on the bottom.

As always I'd love to hear your feedback and I'm always happy to answer any and all questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly fishing. Don't hesitate to contact me at [jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com](mailto:jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com) or check out some of my current ties on Facebook and InstaGram at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

## EAGLE ROCK CAMP

The fall retreat is scheduled for the week of October 27 with the fly fishing day on October 31. Please mark your calendars to come and help out the veterans and their families.

## CASTING CAROLINAS

Casting Carolinas is a free program for women cancer survivors. The fall retreat is scheduled for October 11-13 at Lake Logan in Canton, NC. Fly casting volunteers will be needed on the 13<sup>th</sup>. To apply for the retreat or to volunteer to help out, sign up at [www.castingcarolinas.com](http://www.castingcarolinas.com).

## REEL RECOVERY EVENT FOR MEN LIVING WITH CANCER

REEL RECOVERY is a national non-profit organization that conducts fly-fishing retreats for men living with all forms of cancer. Our purpose is to help men in the recovery process by sharing with them the healing powers of the sport of fly-fishing, while providing a safe, supportive environment to explore their personal experiences with cancer, with others who share their stories. Retreats are offered at no cost to the participants and are led by professional facilitators and expert fly-fishing instructors. Reel Recovery provides all

meals, lodging and fly-fishing equipment, and no previous fishing experience is required. A maximum of 14 men are invited to participate.

The Retreat Starts: 4:00 PM Sunday September 29

The Retreat Ends: 2:00 PM Tuesday, October 1

Primary Service Area: N. Carolina, S. Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia

Eligibility: Men living with cancer

To apply for this event, please fill out and submit:

Retreat Application Form

<http://reelrecovery.org/programs/application/>

Medical Release Form

<http://reelrecovery.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Medical-Release-Form.pdf>

## **CC AND RR FUNDRAISING EVENT**

Hi Everyone!

Very excited to report that Jim Baran (the Reel Recovery guy) and I met with the folks at **Bold Rock**

**Brewery** in Mills River and we're going to have an awesome event there.

Event date: **Friday September 13**

Time: 5 pm until

They had already lined up a band for that night so the music will be provided by Mink's Miracle Medicine.

Bold Rock's venue is great... with a very nice outdoor space... grassy area, tables, outdoor stage with a screen... and a nice indoor area in case of rain.

Bold Rock will be making *pint glasses with the CC and RR logos* on them and also creating one of their signature "cocktails" - made with their hard cider for that night.

CC and RR will receive \$1 for each one sold.

Bold Rock's PR people will be creating and printing posters for the event. I will be picking some of those up on Aug. I so please let me know if you'd like posters.

There's a big area for a **silent auction**. Jim and I have decided that we will gather auction items that both of us are willing to split 50-50.

Bold Rock will connect their FB page with our pages as co-hosts for the event so all the info they post will appear on our pages.

We will show CC and RR videos on their big screen during band breaks.

Finally: they love fly fishing and want that evening to be like a mini fly fishing show... so we'll be offering fly casting and fly tying and whatever else fly fishing we can think of. We can bring our banners, etc and of course all of our CC info.

We need to pack the place!!!

[Starr Nolan, Executive Director](#)  
Casting Carolinas  
[www.castingcarolinas.com](http://www.castingcarolinas.com)  
828-407-0560

## **A CLEAN WILSON CREEK FUNDRAISER**

Announcement: Oyster Roast at Wilsons Creek, Hosted by "A Cleaner Wilson Creek" and Betsy's Ole Country Store in Mortimer, NC. October 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>. Lunch through late night. All you can Eat food includes Shrimp, Oysters, Fried Flounder, and Low Country Boil. Live music will start in the evening and is included in the price of admission which is \$50 a day.

ACWC is also hosting another Fly Fishing Competition on Saturday which Team NymphMaster is putting on. This competition filled up in about an hour on Monday August the 26<sup>th</sup>. It would be a pretty fun day for anyone who wanted to watch some very talented anglers compete for prize money and to support the Cleanup of Wilson Creek.

<https://www.flycomps.com/events/oyster-roast-on-wilson-creek-10-26-2019> For information on the competition, contact Bruce Gray at the Store or <https://acleanwilsoncreek.org/> for information on the efforts to support one of our favorite trout streams.

## **COME VISIT OUR FACEBOOK**

I follow a dozen different fly fishing blogs and post many of them on our Facebook page. Many of these articles are too long to include in the newsletter so never make it here. Recently I posted a blog on fly fishing for big bluegill. It turned out to be one of the most followed posts we've ever had. There are also posts on targeting fish in small streams, how to tie a Tenkara fly, and even a bit of humor thrown in. Please visit our page at: <https://www.facebook.com/nwctu/> and be sure to like and follow the page so you will be kept up to date on the latest posts.

## **CHAPTER WEBSITE**

For those of you who may want to give wild trout fishing a go this summer we have added a video of *How to Fish a Small Mountain Stream* on our website page that includes the nearby wild trout stream maps. <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/nc-wild-trout-streams/>

## **NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED**

I'm sure many of you will be taking trips to Montana, Alaska, the Bahamas or many other places this year. Take some great photos like Joel just did at Yellowstone, put some words to them and submit it to the newsletter. Your adventure may inspire others to start planning their own trip for next year. Send it to us at [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com) for consideration of publication.

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## Wilson's Creek Flood 2019 - One for the Record Books

Most fisherman in the area are very familiar with Wilson Creek that is located in North Carolina, but there are some of you that are new to the area or that may not have visited it for yourself. Wilson Creek is a water way located in Pisgah National Forest that starts at the top of Grandfather Mountain located in Caldwell county and runs for 23.3 miles through the Blue Ridge Mountains into a 200ft gorge before dumping into the John's River. It was added to the Wild and Scenic River System in August 2000. The Wilson's creek area is broken up into several designations made up of the following sections: The Wild section that is - 4.6 miles; The Scenic section that is - 2.9 miles and The Recreational section that is - 15.8 miles.



Wilson's creek is home to various species of fish that include wild brook, hatchery supported rainbow, brook, and brown trout, several species of bass, blue gill and others. The clear pools and changing terrains make recreational activities both challenging, adventurous and beautiful that is complimented by the backdrop of the Pisgah National Forest. It also brings with it, the recreational adventurers that hike along the numerous hiking trails that are near or that cross the creek and the recreational people that like to enjoy a picnic along the creek's edge and swim in the same cool deep pools that fishermen enjoy so much.

One could be mesmerized by the beauty of the creek and the backdrop for the forest never realizing the changes and perils that the creek encounters over time. All creeks go through a certain amount of changes each year but Wilson's Creek is no stranger to high waters and severe flooding and the devastation that it brings. An emergency notification system utilizing flood warning sirens attest to that fact.

The ghosts of the buildings still stand at the old mill and parts of railroad trestles remain giving testament to the destruction of the two major floods that occurred in 1916 and in 1940 that wiped away the foot print of Mortimer, NC where a country store stands and Lone Flag marks the spot of this historic town. The last flood that occurred in the summer 2019 has been noted by locals as the worst that they had seen in many years. Dennis Coffee a local resident of Edgemont and owner Edgebrook (a local rental cabin) and Bruce Gray who resides in Mortimer and is the owner of Betsy's Country Store were both hit hard by the impact of the flood. Both men were quoted as saying this is the worst that they had seen including the flooding from hurricane Florence in 2004. The impact this time was so severe that the Federal government rendered aid to Mr. Coffee in restoring parts of the property and creek that runs through it due to the damage from the flood waters that rushed through his property and down Pineola Road. The water was so severe that it washed away the edges of Pineola road leaving gullies in areas along the road that were up to 6ft deep as well as a destruction that left the road impassible unless you accessed it by a high clearance 4wheel drive vehicle.

Before



After Flood



After repairs

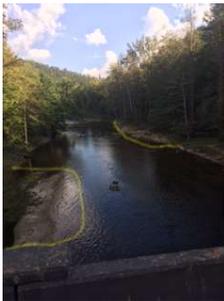


The devastation of the flood not only changed the path of the creek in some spots but the creek bed, terrain and the banks were also dramatically changed. What were areas of sandy beaches along the banks are now replaced with beaches consisting of rock beds. Areas that once had deeper holes are now filled in with rocks or sand creating new beaches of stone, while other areas that once were once shallow have now become deeper parts of the creek.

Popular fishing holes such as High Bridge, Emerald Pool, Sandy Beach and Handicap hole and a few others had more changes than other areas like Middle Bridge and Flag Pole Hole that did not receive as much damage. The majority of the damage was done above and around Edgemont and on through the delayed harvest section and on down to the Welcome Center. Bridges in Edgemont were damaged with one being completely destroyed by the flood waters leaving some residents trapped on the other side.

The sand beach that reached out into the water on the Mortimer side of High Bridge is no longer there, leaving deeper pools of water surrounding the large center rock and created a new current flow at the spot. A little further downstream on the right or the Edgemont side that once was a small rock bed is a more prominent rock bed that juts further out into the water. While directly across, are trees that once stood on the side that hung over the creek but are now holding down trees lining the bank.

High Bridge Before



High Bridge After



Emerald pool was another favorite spot amongst many that sported a large sandy area that no longer exists and is now under water.

Emerald Pool Before



After



Sandy beach has now been replaced by rocks and the sand that was once there, has now filled up areas of the deep pool.

Sandy Beach



Stretches along the area from Middle Bridge to Handicap Hole have either deepened or have been filled with massive amounts of sand. An area just before Handicap hole at the bend had a small island of rock before it made a transition into a deeper hole is now almost nonexistent. Large trees were left along the bank just before the handicap fishing deck, while the once deeper water in front of the deck has now filled in more with sand. Trees ARE left dangling from high power lines below the old mill and more trees and debris are scattered all along the banks. There is a foundation at the water's edge of the old mill that appears to be a trestle, has been uncovered and is exposing most of it to a height of nearly 5ft.

After the flood



Phillips Branch, where the Delayed Harvest section meets the Hatchery Supported waters received massive amounts of rocks and debris as water rushed down the mountain making its way to the creek.



Damage down through the campground and onto the welcome center, sustained lots of considerable destruction. Debris, decks and trees are left piled against and hanging in the standing trees. The road just below the campground received a lot of damage and a new wall was constructed and the road was repaired. Buildings and other structures were ripped apart and debris, tin and other items such as a dog house were left in trees all along the various spots along the creeks edge in and though Edgemont.



Large trees are left hanging in trees along the entire section of the creek while others are piled up in large masses against objects such as the trestle above Betsy's Country Store. Many trees were shoved through objects and trees and left splintered like the end of a toothpick that had been chewed on. Trees with a root system of about 10ft to 15ft or more in diameter, were uprooted like a weed pulled from the yard and laid over or carried downstream.



Roads were washed away or severely damaged from the water rushing down the mountainside carrying mud, rocks, trees and other items clearing a path of destruction before dumping into the creek below. Roads were closed as a result of high water that extended all the way down to Adaco Road.



Wilson's Creek was impacted in many ways, not only affecting the people that lived along the creek but the damage on the aquatic species, vegetation and wildlife that may have been displaced and or even destroyed. Broken pipes, debris, trash and perhaps sewage were carried downstream and deposited along the banks as flood waters receded leaving a trail of destruction that could pollute the waters and could cause a health risk to not only humans but the eco system of Wilson's Creek. Trees and objects left dangling and the depth in water changes along the creek can cause a potential harm to the recreational aspect of the water.

There are actions from multiple entities, organizations and volunteers that could improve the creek should they take the initiative to help clean up and restore the creek to its natural beauty and create an environment that is true to a Wild and Scenic River System.

*"On the line with Charlie Walker"*

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