

## **VCTU Executive Committee Meeting Notes – October 21, 2024**

**Attendees: Jim Wilson, Burr Tupper, Bill Pierce, Scott Allen, Eric Tichay, Tom Benzing, Graham Simmerman, Amy Orr, Jeff Deering, Tony Hill, Dawn Kirk (WSFS)**

**Meeting Start: 7:35 p.m.**

**Meeting End: 9:03 p.m.**

### **Agenda:**

1. Review and Approve August 12 meeting minutes
2. VTSSS Funding (Jim)
3. Sweepstakes Fundraiser Status (Jeff)
4. SW Virginia plan for next spring (Eric)
5. 2025 Business Calendar
6. 2025 Fly Fishing & Wine Festival (Scott)
7. NLC Update (Eric)
8. TIC Update (Mike)
9. Community Committee Update (Burr)

### **0. Open Discussion**

- Jim's email address for TU activities: jwilsonnvatu@gmail.com
- Richmond TU meeting at Orvis later this month

### **1. Review and Approve August 12 meeting minutes**

- Reviewed and Approved

### **2. VTSSS Funding (Jim)**

- Mike Makufka and I had a call with Dawn Kirk on Friday about funding of a short list of sites in the National Forest in VA to continue some of the long-term stream monitoring that might otherwise end with EPA no longer funding the VA Trout Stream Sensitivity Study. See the attachments for more information.

- [[Attachment 1 – VTSSS Short List](#)]

- [[Attachment 2 – VTSSS Briefing](#)]

- Options that we could consider include (1) VCTU donating \$15K per year to continue monitoring and analysis at all of the proposed sites in the Short List attachment, (2) asking chapters to consider donating \$1K or more for continued monitoring of individual streams in or near their chapter boundaries, (3) applying to TU National or other groups for a grant to pay for this work. A grant application might be for \$75K for 5 years. Of course there are other combinations that are possible. Funds would go to UVA for the lab analysis and database development.

- Open Discussion

- Is Embrace a Stream Grant an option? (Tony) - Probably not (Graham & Burr)
- Short List collected by forest service quarterly and analyzed by UVA. (Dawn)

- Use of Council Youth Grant as a source of funding if college students are doing the analysis (Burr) – Students are most likely not used (Dawn)
- Would the \$15K turn the analysis back on? (Scott) – Yes (Dawn)
- Any other organizations involved with finding funding? (Scott) – No (Dawn)
- SAM registration for Council expired—needed for reception of Federal grants (Bill)
- Opposes a quick award –concerns about other expenses, what do we get out of the process, need to get more details (Eric)
- Need to send motion to chapter presidents (Burr)
- Support for continuing to support this effort (Tom)
- The council is known for sitting on money (Tom)
- The council does have sufficient funds to support funding (Bill)

**- MOTION: Propose allowing Jim to work with UVA to ascertain details for funding. Jim will provide the Council leadership with the findings and subsequent actions, to include the vote for awarding funding to support VTSSS analysis.**

**MOTION Approved** (*Pending wording of motion to the satisfaction of executive committee*)

- Subsequent motion pending to award \$15K from the Council as a stop-gap measure to fund the analysis for 1 year. Subsequent funding will have to be sourced by outside grants. This motion is dependent on satisfactory findings from the previous proposal.

- Questions/Details for inquiry:

- Who is the recipient of the Council checks?
- Specifically, how is the money used?
- What is the Return on the Councils investment?
- *Other Questions or concerns added by executive committee*

### **3. Sweepstakes Funding Status (Jeff)**

- Six notifications for tickets, lag in funding and reduced fees (Bill)
- Bill and Jeff to work on matching funding with tickets and determine Stripe payout cycle
- Continue to promote at Chapter level (Jim)

### **4. Spring 2025 SW Virginia Priority Waters Meeting (Eric)**

- Attached is a draft agenda for our 2025 spring priority waters meeting at Hungry Mother State Park in the Grayson Highlands area.
- [[Attachment 3 – Agenda](#)]
- The forum dates are May 30-31, and June 01. The location is Hungry Mother State Park, Marion, VA. The facility location at the park is the Lakeview Lodge. The Park location is within VA DWR Region 3 and the Virginia TU Grayson Highlands Priority Waters.
- A variety of lodgings are available at the park or locally in Marion and Wytheville. The park has RV and tent camping sites, Yurts, and cabins.
- Excellent fishing opportunities abound nearby at Whitetop Laurel Creek, Fox Creek, South Fork of the Holston, Grayson Highlands State Park, various mountain streams, and the lake at Hungry Mother State Park.

- Attached is a proposed meal plan and total expense for the Priority Waters Forum to be held at Hungry Mother State Park on May 30-31, 2025. Also attached are the meal option prices. Bar service for Friday and Saturday evenings is at the participants' expense. The total cost for the forum, including Saturday room rental and four meals, is about \$3,000.  
- [[Attachment 4 – Total Expense](#)]

**- MOTION: Request Virginia Council TU approve funding, \$3500, for the first ever Virginia Priority Waters Forum.**  
**Motion Approved**

- Discussion about registration process—no resolution, will continue to evaluate process in order to manage reservations vs no-shows.

### **5. 2025 Calendar (Scott)**

- [[Attachment 5 – Draft Calendar](#)]  
- Proposal to have the Winchester chapter host February meeting.

### **6. 2025 Fly Fishing & Wine Festival (Scott)**

- The Council will have a booth at the festival  
- Booth Schedule will be sent out for volunteers  
- Looking to have Virginia Capital Chapter involved in booth (Jim)

### **7. NLC Update (Eric)**

#### National Leadership Council (NLC)

The NLC held a business meeting on October 16. Presentations were made on two topics.

- TU National Conservation Agenda: Process Oriented Approach by Andrew Keneflick
- NLC Climate Change Workgroup – “Climate Change Coordinator Training Modules”

Updates by Jeff Holzem

- The NLC agreed to work on adopting a process oriented approach to develop the NCA which would begin with input from grassroots Chapters and Councils.  
- The Climate Change Workgroup encouraged Councils and Chapters to train and appoint Climate Change Coordinators. Training opportunities will be announced.

#### TU Annual Meeting

- [[Attachment 6 -State of Grass Roots](#)]  
- The TU Annual Meeting was held on October 16 shortly after the NLC annual meeting. Rich Thomas gave the State of the Grassroots Presentation. The report shows volunteer hours had an 11% growth over last year and hours are slowly growing to match pre-COVID records.  
- Organizationally, the NLC will provide a renewed focus on our member & supporter base. A copy of the presentation slides will be made available.  
- The State of TU on October 24th is a not-to-miss event. Register in the TU Events Center at [tu.myeventscenter.com/event/2024-State-Of-Trout-Unlimited-102356](https://tu.myeventscenter.com/event/2024-State-Of-Trout-Unlimited-102356)

- Virginia Priority Waters - Grayson Highlands  
Hurricane Helene, Southwest Virginia, September 26-27, 2024

- Jeff Williams, Fisheries Manager, Virginia DWR Region 3 Phone: 276-783-4860
- According to Jeff Williams, Fisheries Biologist, Virginia DWR Region 3, sections of highways, Route 58 and Konnarock Road, between Damascus and Konnarock with access to Whitetop Laurel Creek in Washington County are closed. Portions of the highway are gone, washed out.
- Jeff informed me stream channels were changed and help with stream restoration will be needed. Damage assessment is ongoing and will take some time due to limited access. Help from Virginia TU will be appreciated.
- Other roads are closed within the U.S. Forest Service Mount Rogers Recreational Area.
- The Grayson Highlands Priority Waters comprises Washington, Grayson, Smyth, and Wythe counties. All four counties including three others in Southwest Virginia were officially declared as disaster areas — Grayson, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe counties and the city of Galax — which will make them eligible for federal aid.

**8. TIC Update (Mike)**

- The TC Energy grant for TIC on behalf of the State Council in the amount of \$15,000 over a three-year period was approved. The money is in our account. The money will be used to help chapter's schools with transportation costs for field trips and equipment replacement. I will work with Bill Pierce to set up a grant item within the TIC budget category. The grant protocol guidelines will follow the State Council's grant program. The grant program is up and running. There is a link on the website describing the grant and the terms as well as the link to download an application for funding. Any schools requesting money will have to apply through their chapter's TIC Coordinator. This insures a level of accountability. An announcement will also be in the latest newsletter.
- The TIC contact person for the Rapidan Chapter, which is one of our biggest Chapter with thirty-one schools participating, is still at large. The Chapter is trying to recruit someone (hopefully two people) to take over the program. In the interim, Chuck Hoysa is temporarily fielding the duties.
- The revised TIC manual is nearly complete. I am formatting the final few chapters.

**9. Community Committee (Burr)**

- Newsletter
  - Planned release first week in November
  - Request submissions by 28 October
- Still working on 1% for the planet

**-- end**