

**TROUT UNLIMITED OF SOUTHWESTERN VERMONT**  
March 14, 2006 Chapter Meeting MINUTES

**Attendees**

**Officers**

Eric Rickstad	President
Doug Lyons	Vice President
Frank Nelson	Treasurer
Peter Bellamy	Secretary
Bill Bullock	Director
Steve Hemkens	Director

**Members**

Landy	Bartlett
Ed	Vallero
Alan	Hess
Joe	McCusker
Alan	Edmunds
Marty	Oakland
John	Whalen
Barry	Mayer
Joseph	Phillips
Todd	Halvorsen
Shawn	Harrington
Kevin	Andrezejewski
Conrad	Poirier
Don	Kinney

**Guests**

Steve Roy - Fisheries Program Manager, Green Mountain & Finger Lakes National Forests, USDA Forest Service  
Ken Cox - Fisheries Biologist, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department  
Scott Wixsom - District Program Administrator, Green Mountain National Forest, USDA Forest Service  
Cynthia Browning - Executive Director, Battenkill Watershed Alliance  
Alan Edmunds - Proprietor, Battenkill Inn, Sunderland, VT

**Minutes**

- 1) Meeting called to order at 7pm by President Rickstad
- 2) Welcomed our guests and speakers and reviewed the following agenda items:

A) Reminder: Regarding the Upcoming Jonathan Edwards Concert at Burr & Burton Academy, Sun. 3/19 - with tickets on sale \$15 and proceeds going to the Battenkill Watershed Alliance.

B) Opening Day Pancake Breakfast - Sat. 4/8/2006, 7AM-10:30AM, to be held at the barn at the Battenkill Inn.

We have several volunteers already, including donations of syrup and pancake mix, but we still need more volunteers to help make this a successful event. We have a few griddles and stoves, and can use a few more. We'll also need donations of plastic utensils, & paper plates & napkins, as well as juice, sausage, bacon, etc. Let us know if you can contribute either time, resources of money toward this fund-raising project. The e-board members will all be there, and we definitely

need a few more individuals to help things run smoothly. The event will be publicized in the Manchester and Bennington and other local papers. We'll also post flyers in area businesses (Orvis store, Northshire Bookstore, etc.) and a few large posters in the Arlington/Sunderland area. Please contact Eric Rickstad ([President@TUSWVT.org](mailto:President@TUSWVT.org)) or Doug Lyons ([VP@TUSWVT.org](mailto:VP@TUSWVT.org)) via email if you can help with donations, contributions, or volunteering for this event.

#### C) Tree Planting Project -- April 22, 2006 (Earth Day)

We plan on helping out and providing a small army of volunteer labor to help with the planting of some 35+ (6-8' tall) trees along the banks of the Battenkill on the property of Alan Edmunds, of the Battenkill Inn. Alan has generously offered to pick up the tab for the first \$2000 worth of expenses involved with planting the trees, and we're looking forward to contributing the labor. Sources for the trees are still being evaluated, and Scott Wixsom, District Program Administrator for the GMNF/USFS is coordinating this effort. Costs have been estimated at approximately \$4000 for this project, though the grand total will depend on the cost of the machinery used and source and size of the trees.

\* On a similar note, Cynthia Browning of the BKWA mentioned that she plans to continue with supplemental plantings of native trees, shrubs & plants through-out the season, with planting labor most likely provided by the 2006 River Stewards. These will be much smaller plants (allowing a higher quantity of plantings) grown from cuttings of native species. These ongoing smaller plantings will help to fill in the undergrowth layer. As noted, these two efforts dove-tail nicely together, and we hope that this will be another area where we as a chapter can contribute or assist (with labor, or possibly with future funding).

\* At this point, Ed Vallero, a relative new-comer to the area, was introduced to the group. Ed joins us from the Fairfield County CT area where he was actively involved with the Myanis TU chapter, and where he had 10+ years of experience with river and trout habitat restoration. Ed has some heavy equipment of his own and is eager to get active in our chapter, lend a hand, put his skills and knowledge to work, and get busy. As a chapter, we're happy to welcome him...

Motion made and passed for the chapter to support the tree planting project along the banks of the Battenkill at the Battenkill Inn. This chapter support will largely be by way of volunteer labor, but may also include providing funds, though this was not agreed to as exact figures for expenses were not available.

D) Doug Lyons spoke about a proposed Battenkill Summit, to be held in November of this year. This will be an opportunity to bring together the various interested parties and organizations from VT & NY, including, but not limited to: SWVT TU, Clearwater TU, BKWA, Vermont Fish & Wildlife Department, U.S. Forest Service, NY DEC, Bennington County Conservation District, Natural Resource Conservation Service, and various other local, state, & federal officials and organizations -- with the end goal of connecting the resources and all interested parties, and developing a plan for following up on the Twin Rivers Farm Project and keeping the momentum going and moving forward with correct next steps, etc.

\* As noted by Cynthia Browning, this is exactly the goal that the BKWA is already working toward, and she is happy to hear of our interest and commitment and will be pleased to share the work with us.

A request for interested volunteers to assist with the Summit was made. Alan Edmunds volunteered. This item will be kept on the agenda, and we will continue to accept volunteers. Contact Doug Lyons ([VP@TUSWVT.org](mailto:VP@TUSWVT.org)) if you are interested.

3) This concluded the discussion of the agenda items.

4) Next, President Rickstad introduced our guest speakers, Steve Roy & Ken Cox, joining us to speak informally about the upcoming Twin Rivers Farm Project.

They presented an overview of the study (of possible reasons for the decline in the Battenkill's brown trout population) and the upcoming habitat restoration project (the "Twin Rivers Farm Project").

In summary, the study found the primary contributing factor to be the lack of in-stream cover offering protection and refuge for trout. In random samplings of the stream from the VT-NY state border upstream to the headwaters, the Battenkill was found to have well below the required amount of in-stream cover. For additional details, you can download the VT Fish & Wildlife Department's Winter/Spring 2005 "Batten Kill News" newsletter from the following URL: [http://www.anr.state.vt.us/fw/fwhome/library/newsletters/battenkill/2005\\_Winter\\_Spring\\_Issue.pdf](http://www.anr.state.vt.us/fw/fwhome/library/newsletters/battenkill/2005_Winter_Spring_Issue.pdf)

The next stage is the planned installation of a significant amount of large woody debris in a 1200 ft section of the Battenkill (on the property of Dr. W. Lesko, along route 313, in West Arlington, VT.) Detailed drawings, charts, and graphs were presented and discussed.

The actual on-the-ground/in-the-water project work is planned for execution mid-Sept to Oct 1 (~2-3 wks/10-15 days).

The project will make extensive use of heavy machinery to install the large woody debris (root wads, fallen trees, etc.) but Ken and Steve will welcome a few volunteer 'foot-soldiers' on a daily basis through-out the project's implementation. We as a chapter will be happy to provide some volunteer labor, and will coordinate a sign-up sheet and attempt to schedule 1-3 individuals per day.

Interested volunteers are urged and welcomed to contact Eric Rickstad or Doug Lyons ([President@TUSWVT.org](mailto:President@TUSWVT.org) or [VP@TUSWVT.org](mailto:VP@TUSWVT.org)). We will try to coordinate a steady supply of volunteers, and will post a schedule and possibly a volunteer sign-up form on the chapter web-site (<http://www.TUSWVT.org>). Additional details regarding the project will be forthcoming as they become available, and we will try to keep as much information posted on the chapter web-site as possible. Stay tuned for further details.

5) This concluded the presentation by Steve & Ken, and brought the chapter meeting to a close.

Notes taken by Peter Bellamy ([Secretary@TUSWVT.org](mailto:Secretary@TUSWVT.org))  
3/14/2006