

Annual Report to the NC Chapter of the American Fisheries Society Activities of the Environmental Concerns Committee

February 2011

The Environmental Concerns Committee (ECC) met on January 25, 2011 to discuss ongoing activities and plan future directions. Micky Clemmons graciously hosted the meeting from the Asheville Baker Engineering office with Win Taylor and Dave McHenry in attendance and Bryn Tracy, Tom Thompson, and Marla Chambers participating via teleconference. The meeting notes and new information will be added to the Chapter website. The following is a partial list of issues and future actions that were discussed:

1. On behalf of the North Carolina Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (chapter), the ECC will continue to request that the NCDENR, Division of Water Quality (DWQ) reclassify wild trout-supporting streams that currently are not trout classified. Verification sampling by DWQ is nearing completion for streams in the Watauga, New, Catawba, and Yadkin river basins; the chapter requested that several streams in these basins be reclassified. Our next request will likely involve streams in the French Broad and Broad river basins. There currently is considerable public opposition to a trout reclassification effort in the mountains (not related to NCAFS requests) that highlights the importance of having local grassroots support by environmentally-minded sponsors and groups.
2. The ECC continues to gather and review information about the hemlock wooly adelgid outbreak and possible fishery impacts in the North Carolina Mountains. Some research in the Southern Appalachians suggest that widespread hemlock tree mortality in riparian areas will not cause appreciably higher stream temperatures, but there may be ramifications for water chemistry and organic loading. The ECC will focus its further investigations on any past or ongoing research into observed fishery and aquatic ecology declines associated with the mortality of hemlock stands.
3. During the year new topics arose that are associated with broader issue concerns such as nonnative species introduction ([see associated NCAFS Resolution, 2003](#)). These include the potential for a diatom *Didymosphenia geminate* or “rock snot” invasions in North Carolina waters, the Millburnie Dam removal and compensatory mitigation project on the Neuse River, and the chemical triclosin, which is an antimicrobial agent commonly used in household products that degrades into an endocrine disrupting compound (e.g. dioxin) in wastewater. The ECC will be gathering information about rock snot and triclosin to understand their potential risks to fishery resources in North Carolina waters and what measures there are to mitigate risks. The Millburnie dam removal project elicited questions of how have fishery improvements measures been used to direct dam removal projects and help determine the compensatory mitigation credits they generate for permitting stream impacts in the state.

Respectfully submitted,



David McHenry, ECC Chair