



Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp

by Bill Porter

It was Friday, June 26, 1998, and 32 young people were saying their farewells as another session of the Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp came to a close at the Allenberry on the Yellow Breeches Creek, Cumberland County.

The planning for the 1999 version of the camp is well underway for a return to the same site on June 20-25, 1999.

"We are emphasizing conservation of the coldwater resources, their flora and fauna, and the proper multi-use of Pennsylvania's coldwater resources," said PA Fish & Boat Commissioner Enoch S. "Inky" Moore Jr., co-founder of the school with the late Dr. Jack Beck.

The Cumberland Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited hosts the youth camp under the approval of the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited.

"A structured curriculum, centering on stream stewardship, is presented, using *Trout Stream Therapy*, by Robert L. Hunt, Wisconsin, as the textbook for the course," Moore said.

Samples of the daily schedule show the emphasis on serious technical concerns of the conservation camp, as adapted by experts for the youthful students.

Monday: Ecology—Mike Klimkos, *Trout Stream Therapy*—Robert Hunt; entomology of a trout stream, Dr. James Gilford; live aquatic insect seminar, Bob Schott and Mike Klimkos; concepts of ecology, several staffers' views on ecology, hydrology and stream formation with Dr. Richenderfer; ecological effects on water pollution, Bob Schott; wader survival, Dan Martin, PA Fish & Boat Commission.

Tuesday: Reading the water, Catherine Tucker, and field work on Big Spring Creek, south of Newville.

Wednesday: Reptiles and amphibians, Andrew Shiels, PA Fish & Boat Commission; trout behavior, Dr. Robert Behnke; wetlands, Ed Perry; acid deposition and other forms of pollution, John Arway, PA Fish & Boat Commission;

and additional field work on the Big Spring in the afternoon.

Thursday: Electrofishing demonstration, Larry Jackson, PA Fish & Boat Commission; stream fencing and its benefits, Mark Dubin; stream corridor protection and development, Mark Gutshall; the Chesapeake Bay and its problems, Jennifer Bartos; and afternoon work on the Big Spring.

Friday: Politics of conservation and conservation associations, John Broujos; comments, Vern Ross, the Governor's Sportsmen's Advisor, and Pete Colangelo, Executive Director, PA Fish and Boat Commission.



"Our program is augmented with a variety of lectures and demonstrations and hands-on activities to maintain a balance for our young students," said Commissioner Moore.

Early morning and late afternoons, students fly-fished in the special regulations area of the Yellow Breeches at the Allenberry. Guiding the youthful casters were expert mentors. Sprinkled through the week's classes were fly tying and tackle selection and care, and hands-on casting training on the lawn and in the stream, monitored by a host of experts in the art of fly fishing.

Angling literature, its history and recent quality, and angling art were two additional fishing-related programs. And the appearance of "Ye Olde Colonial Angler" was a special highlight of the week's program.

Physically, the camp was of premium quality. The Yellow Breeches Creek, itself, lies in a scenic, historic section of Cumberland County. The immediate section of the Allenberry is a special Fish

& Boat Commission-regulated area that has lent itself to the theme of the youth camp. In a similar manner, the Trout Unlimited rehab project on Big Spring Creek was just a convenient half-hour away.

The students each received a personal library of hard-bound books related to the theme of the camp-school, and a three-ring binder chock full of organized material for school use and later reference. A fishing vest, a cap, and appropriately designed tee shirt helped identify the students and stressed unity of purpose for the classes and projects. Additional "goodies" were made available as the week progressed.

"To list all the staff, instructors, and specialists used in creating this successful camp would require much more space. It is safe to say that from the local chapter of

Trout Unlimited through the state organization and beyond, including the specialists and professionals brought in to conduct class and lecture presentations, and the presence of mentors, the quality was superior in all respects," said Commissioner Moore.

An interested young person can become a member of the Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp by following these

preliminary steps: First, contact the local chapter of Trout Unlimited for information and application. A secondary outlet for these applications would come from directions printed in a number of fly fishing magazines, such as *Mid-Atlantic Fly Fisherman's Guide* and TU's *Trout*.

Students should have their applications processed and in the mail by mid-March 2000, for that year's camp. The application is a fill-in-the-blanks form and requires a brief essay on why the student should be accepted to the youth camp.

A steering committee reviews the application and the subjective essay and makes acceptance judgments. Each school is limited to 32 students and is co-ed.

There are registration fees. However, many local chapters and other patrons make funds available if an accepted student has a need.

"The Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Youth Camp is one of a kind that does an excellent job and could serve as a model for similar programs throughout the country," said Commissioner Moore. □