



FROM THE CHAIR

TFFC – March 2009 Newsletter

Hi all,

Miracle upon miracle – I have actually managed to have two trips to the farm since I last wrote to you - one in December and the other at the end of February. The two trips gave me different points to ponder.

The December trip was a “boys only” trip where my son Gareth and I celebrated his passing of Matric (after the obligatory Matric holiday in Durbs somewhere). For those of you who remember Gareth, he has accompanied me on many trips ranging from being bathed in the basin, climbing the coal pile, playing adventure games in the haystacks and “skunking” my late friend Shaun at the age of six, to tubing quietly next to me as we worked the weed bank along the wall of number 5 and having a celebratory dinner in Dullstroom. We spent a great couple of days doing dad and son things – with the son often leading the way.

The February trip was a real family event, with Sandy and Gareth, brother Trevor and

his family and friends, and sister and brother-in-law and their family and hanger’s on. What a great weekend – with kids laughing, crying (very little), playing and fishing – and may I say catching more than those with many more years of experience in the art of flyfishing.

What I got out of these two weekends is that the farm continues to be a haven for all of us, irrespective of age or fishing ability, weather or water condition – it remains the one place where we can all enjoy ourselves and return home re-charged and ready to face the world.

The rainfall has returned to some form of normality with good rains falling in the period December to February and all bodes well for the remainder of 2009.

A couple of enhancements to the accommodation:



- a bathroom has been added to the lapa making it en-suite – our thanks to the shareholders yet again
- a new fireplace has been installed in the lounge
- 5 replacement beds have been purchased

In conclusion, I ask that irrespective of the rules that govern the farm:
 if the water in the dams is warm, please return fish with due care and caution
 if the trout are “shoaling” and you are catching fish after fish, move to another dam

Cheers
 Kevin



Editorial

Peter Ardern hoped that I would have the newsletter out by the end of March. Due to totally unforeseen circumstances (laziness being the primary one) it, yet again, did not happen. I am now tired of apologising for my tardiness, so I won't. Happy Easter everybody.

Preoccupied Ed.

PISCETORIALY SPEAKING:

March TFFC newsletter

Fishery news

Stocking of the Middelpunt dams recommences on March 18 and after a cool, wet summer we can look forward to good autumn and early winter fishing. We are also aware that Dams 3 & 4 are heavily weeded and we plan to rectify this by first dropping Dam 4 when the water cools, spraying with the herbicide Midstream and then refilling from Dam 3. Dam 3 which is very heavily weeded will then be allowed to drop to about 50-60% to first allow the winter frost kill some of the weed, and later as the water warms enable the grass carp to have a better chance of cropping it. With a bit of luck and normal rains 3 should refill by Christmas.

The NEM:BA alien/invasive fish saga

Having seen the reports in the newspapers, Carte Blanche and even the fly fishing magazines some trout anglers are rightly concerned about the future of their sport. Unfortunately most of these reports have been highly inaccurate and added to the general confusion amongst flyfishers.

After 5 years of exhaustive negotiation by FOSAF with two sets of task teams (the first did a good job but unfortunately was fired) the authorities have finally accepted FOSAF's proposal of zonation. This means the traditional trout areas will be demarcated

and within these zones it will be relatively simple to obtain permits to breed, transport and stock trout. Mpumalanga landowners outside this zone who have been issued with permits in the past will continue to receive them in future.

This is very much the situation that has existed in Mpumalanga for the last 12 years since FOSAF and the provincial authorities mapped out a flyfishing zone for the province. All that will happen now is that the borders of the zone will be reviewed on a regular basis. Two meetings convened by FOSAF have already been held in Belfast recently to brief the industry so we are well on track.

In all our recent negotiations both at national and provincial level nobody could be found who wanted to ban or eradicate trout. In fact, although an alien species, the authorities accept that it is a vital component of both tourism and aquaculture and cannot be wished away.

What has indeed added to the confusion is the "rotenone issue". CapeNature have proposed an alien fish eradication project in 3 Cederberg and one E. Cape stream. The main targets are bass and bluegill but there is a very small trout population in one of these streams. Many of the unique indigenous fishes of the Cape are facing extinction due to predation from these aliens and all the scientists are trying to do is create sanctuaries for these fishes in relatively short sections of these small streams which are some distance from the traditional trout streams of the Western Cape. These traditional trout rivers are already included in a proposed trout zone. EIA's have still to be approved for the project but rest assured that rotenone is not a deadly poison as claimed in the media and by some bigots, and is the best product for the job.

You can read about both subjects by going to HYPERLINK "<http://www.fosaf.co.za>" www.fosaf.co.za and there is a good link from the TFFC site.

