

FOSAF East Cape Chapter

Chairman's Report

AGM – Somerset East - 8th November 2014

This year has been dominated by the NEM:BA debate and the efforts of FOSAF and Trout SA to resolve this whole saga in our favour. Trout SA was formed at the initiative of FOSAF in order to provide a united front to counter the intransigence of the DEA. Significant progress has been made and it appears that we will win in the end. FOSAF National Chairman Ilan Lax has been the driving force behind this initiative and will provide us with a detailed report on NEM:BA under item 9 on the agenda. The one thing that has emerged from all of this is that Trout SA is in desperate need of funds in order to carry on this fight to the end, having already incurred costs in excess of R300 000. An account has been established for voluntary donations and I suggest that we discuss this after Ilan's report.

The Club reports (next item on the agenda) will show that we have at times over the past year, had some spectacular Trout fishing in the Eastern Cape, with most of the traditional waters producing well and with some new waters opening up. An example here would be "Little Thrift" in the Hogsback area, managed by Martin Davies and already producing trophy sized fish. Vicky Bell will report that trophy catches on her Highland Lodge waters have declined, for reasons not yet fully understood.

The availability of fish for stocking purposes is in a healthy state, with 3 East Cape located hatcheries to choose from – Rhodes University/Ventnor and Sandile. The owner of the Sandile hatchery near Gubu dam was invited to join FOSAF East Cape Chapter, but chose not to. We therefore recognise and welcome this hatchery, but will not be promoting it as a facility in future. The Rhodes University hatchery has been upgraded and modernized and has been able to significantly reduce the price of fish this year. Two price levels will be offered – Thrift Trophy and Commercial. The Thrift Trophy fish are the traditional selected fish from Rhodes and are of prime quality. The Commercial fish are in fact the same fish as offered by Sandile hatchery. These are purchased as already eyed ova from Molapong hatchery in the Western Cape, hatched at Rhodes (and Sandile) and sold as fry or fingerlings, at the lowest possible price due to obviously low input costs. If you are on a budget, then you can try this route – these fish apparently worked well at Gubu when stocked there last year from Sandile hatchery. More of this under Fish Supplies, item 10 on the agenda. On a sad note, Jonny Morgan owner of the Ventnor hatchery and Redcliffe guest house in the Winterberg, passed away suddenly recently.

Fortunately, his son Matthew will continue to operate the Ventnor hatchery as a back up to the Rhodes University facility to ensure continuity of fish supplies for our Clubs. The price of the fish ex Ventnor is basically the same as for the Rhodes hatchery fish; the source of the fish is identical ex Martin Davies Thrift brood stock.

So overall, the future of fly fishing for Trout in our Province is looking bright for the foreseeable future, probably brighter now than what it has looked for a long time. As usual, we have a handful of individuals to thank for this, two of whom are attending the meeting this morning. I have been privy as to what has been going on behind the scenes with NEM:BA and I can tell you that the amount of work that National Chairman Ilan Lax has been involved in has been almost unbelievable, with very little recognition from the Trout fishing public for his efforts. The same can be said for Martin Davies, who just never gives up in his quest to keep Trout fishing going in our Province, no matter what obstacles are thrown in his path.

In closing, I would like to thank Alan Hobson for hosting our AGM at the Angler and Antelope this year and for his hospitality, which is not over yet – Alan will be hosting a braai tonight for all AGM participants. A sincere thank you to everyone for attending, some of you have travelled a long way. A special thank you to Ilan Lax for taking time off from his busy schedule in KZN to be here once again and for keeping us updated on developments re NEM:BA. It is always a pleasure to have Ilan with us and his attendance has become a bit of an institution at our AGM's.

Let's keep the meeting as short as possible, so that we can all enjoy a bit of fishing at the spectacular Mountain Dam this afternoon.

Brian Clark

Chairman

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