

## **FOSAF NORTHERN REGION CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR THE 2021 PERIOD**

### **1. Finances**

The 2020 accounts for FOSAF NR and the Flyfishing Publications cc accounts for 2020/21 have been circulated to Exco for approval. Sales of books have virtually ceased but Millstream's annual sponsorship which was partially withdrawn in 2020 was reinstated and amounted to R58 200. In addition, the Machadodorp Flyfishing Club closed down due to lack of support and an amount of R5961 remaining in their bank account was donated to Northern Region.

As of 17/01/ we had a total of R26 000 in the two accounts.

It was proposed that we sell Flyfishing Publications cc in 2022 for an amount of R10 000 and the loss of VAT claims should be offset by the reduction in stipends.

### **2. Membership**

Both the DFFA and TFFC agreed to participate in the club membership scheme in 2021 and the amount raised from these two clubs was R47 000. Although Jacaranda did not take part they kindly donated a welcome R10 000 to National. The DFFA and TFFC will again participate in 2022 and we have approached Jacaranda and will also ask the Sabie Club which is growing its membership to consider joining.

### **3. NR Committee**

After many years of valuable service Geoff Taylor has stepped down while Andy vd Werff (relocated to Cape Town) and Mike Mitchell resigned. Anthea Piater, a guide based in Parys joined the committee. Other members of the committee are Chris Williams (chair), Peter Arderne (secretary), Andy Lawler, Jade dos Santos, Jonty Scott, Martin Rudman, Mike Biccard and Warren van Tonder.

### **4. Northern Region Projects**

#### **a. Books**

Although sales of books to angling stores virtually ceased a fair number are supplied to FOSAF members at the discounted prices. Such sales accrue to the National account.

#### **b. Communications: Website, Facebook & Twitter**

Work on the upgraded website was completed in 2021 and launched in January 2022. It was agreed that the revised site was a major improvement in every respect. Our thanks go to Jade dos Santos for his assistance with this project.

#### **c. Yellowfish Working Group**

Although a vast amount of information is filed in the YWG archives

section of the site there has not been a conference since 2015 and we rely solely on the bi-monthly newsletter to keep the project alive. However, we are in negotiations with several of the leading figures in the group to see if a virtual meeting can be held this year. It is quite possible that Northern Region will have sufficient money to fund such a conference.

**d. The Vaal River Crisis.**

Regular updates are included in the YWG reports on the new FOSAF/YWG website. Northern Region FOSAF/YWG maintain their activism including working with other fishing and environmental groups in particular with the SAVE team. Municipalities and Government has not really progressed anything since our report a year ago. The last DWS Minister made many empty promises and she has delivered nothing. Waste water treatment plants and sewage pump stations in the mid-Vaal region are either inoperable or are decaying with no repairs or renewals. It is however promising to note that many powerful entities including SAVE/FOSAF NR, Afriforum and others, are taking legal action against the offending structures and individuals. This is now fact. It is at a legally-sensitive stage but we will appraise you of the action taking place when it is publically available. There is a huge call for privatisation which has been shown to work in areas like Harrismith where the general public have united to get things repaired and up and running. It is amazing how a small, determined band of citizens can get things done without the burdens of corruption, inefficiency, apathy and incompetence.

**e. Mpumalanga mining crisis**

Opposition to mining, especially in the Trout Triangle is led by the Greater Lakenvlei Protected Environment, but well supported by FOSAF, environmental NGOs and some of the flyfishing destinations. Although considerable success has been achieved in opposing applications for prospecting/mining in the last 5 years the WPB Colliery at the head of the Elands River continues to cause extreme damage to the environment. Despite clear evidence of criminal offences neither the DMRE nor the DWS appear to be prepared to take action. In addition, there is a new application to contend with. This is to mine coal alongside the Belfast/Dullstroom main road.

At least a major victory was scored in a 14-year battle with a would-be diamond miner on the border of the GLPE protected area. There are plans to expand this protected area by another 7000 ha in the near future. Such expansion will include some important trout fishing destinations.

**f. Northern Trout Association**

This organisation which is strongly supported by Northern Region was launched as the Mpumalanga Trout Association in 2015. More recently it incorporated the provinces of KZN, Free State, Gauteng and Limpopo and together with FOSAF is a member of Trout SA. Whereas FOSAF aims to represent the interest of all flyfishers the NTA is focused on the production of trout. Most of the funding for the mapping of the trout zone in 2015 was sourced from the then Mpumalanga Trout Association.

**g. Youth**

We await further Covid restrictions being lifted so we can continue our schools and community water/fishing education programmes. This would include a drive for youngsters and new flyfishers to join our FOSAF/YWG family. Jonty Scott will spearhead this in our region, and we will be looking to develop and work in co-operation with our other Chapters. Not only Covid but extreme rains/floods have made any real progress nigh on impossible this year with this promotion.

**h. Closing**

The Chair thanks the Northern Region Committee and our individual/club members for all your hard work and continued support this year. Peter Arderne continues to be our engine room and a special thanks to both he and Vicki for their sterling work. May next year be easier for all of us so we can return to the lifestyle we all love – fly fishing!

**Chris Williams.  
Northern Region Chapter  
Chair**