

*Mission: to unite as citizens and actively engage in the preservation of the Spring Creek Watershed*

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**Spring Creek Coalition**  
**2434 East 56 Place**  
**Tulsa, Oklahoma 74105**

## Spring Creek Watershed Landowners

### Winter 2013 Newsletter



Est. 1994

THE MOST PRISTINE  
LARGE OZARK STREAM  
IN OKLAHOMA  
MANAGED AND  
PROTECTED BY  
PRIVATE  
LANDOWNERS

**Phone: (918) 637-1449**  
**Email [info@springcreekok.org](mailto:info@springcreekok.org)**

## SCC ANNUAL MEETING

**Saturday, January 12**  
**1:30 p.m.—3:30 p.m.**  
**Best Western Hotel**  
**Locust Grove**

**Season's Greetings, Members and Friends of Spring Creek Coalition**

It's that time again. **Why come to the annual meeting?**

**Learn.** Our featured speaker, Brandon Brown of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, has an outstanding presentation on Oklahoma's fish diversity. You will learn about Spring Creek species such as cardinal shiners and sculpins and see video of the redspot chub building its rocky nest mounds. See Brandon's article in this newsletter.

**A free color poster of common Oklahoma stream fishes** will be given to all meeting participants.

**Socialize.** Get to know the many interesting people who live or own land along Spring Creek, from Oaks to Cedar Crest.

**Share your views.** Talk with your regional board representatives. Let us know what issues matter and why the creek is important to you.

**Stay informed.** What's been going on up and down the creek in 2012? We'll let you know what your Board has been working on.

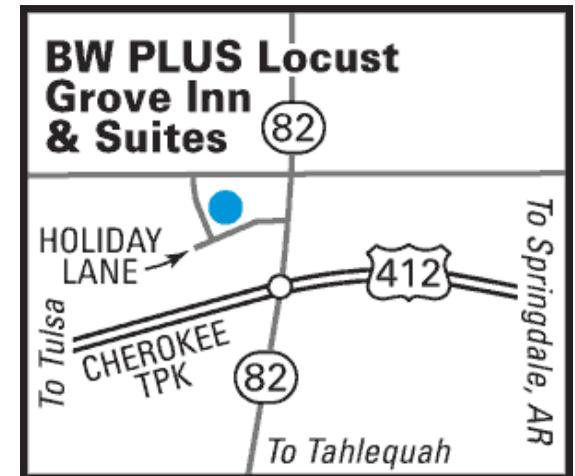
There will be snacks and a limited auction of some of our most popular items.

**Meeting location:** the Best Western south of Locust Grove is at the northwest corner of Highway 82 and the Cherokee Turnpike (412), easily visi-

ble to the north from 412.

If anyone would like to ride-share from Tulsa, contact me at (918) 906-6762. It has been a privilege serving as your Board president this year, and I am looking forward to seeing you in January!

Beth Rooney, SCC President



**Private Plane Ride for Two Over the Spring Creek Watershed: available at the Annual Meeting auction**

See the Spring Creek watershed in its entirety from the air.

Neal Russell, Spring Creek Coalition Vice President, has once again generously offered a private tour of the Spring Creek watershed in a Cessna 172 for two people. This item will be offered for auction at our annual meeting. It has been one of the most popular items in the past and has greatly helped our fund-raising efforts.

"It's a great experience to go for a small plane ride like Neal's," says Robin Tait, 2012 auction winner. "I enjoyed listening to all the chatter back

## Annual Meeting In January

and forth on the radio and experiencing what it takes to get a small plane up in the air. We flew up Spring



Creek from where it enters Lake Ft. Gibson near Cedar Crest all the way to where it pops out of the prairie north of Kansas, OK.”

Neal in front of his Cessna 172

Money raised at our auction

goes towards newsletter printing and postage, website maintenance, tree plantings, and other SCC needs.

## One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish: a look at Oklahoma’s stream fish diversity

By Brandon Brown, Fisheries Technician, OK Department of Wildlife Conservation

“Oklahoma’s lakes and streams contain one of the most productive and diverse fisheries in the nation. That said, surprisingly few people are aware of this diversity and most can only name about 15 to 25 of our 180 or so different fish species. That means roughly 85 percent of our fishes are unknown to the majority of Oklahoman’s - even though they are some of our most beautiful and interesting residents.

Many of these little known species have their own special story, like the cardinal shiner, which each spring transforms from a plain silver minnow to a strikingly handsome red, black and green one with an iridescent blue nose. Or the

## Plane Ride Auction

well camouflaged banded sculpin with green and gold-colored eyes, due to adjustable lenses that work like sunglasses reducing the amount and wavelength of light reaching their eyes. Or the redspot chub who builds his nest exactly opposite from almost all other fish. Instead of spawning in a fanned out depression, the redspot excavates a cavity and then uses his mouth to push, carry and drag just the right stones to fill the excavated cavity level full.

The female then lays her eggs and the male covers them with more rocks. This process is repeated until eventually the chub builds a pyramid shaped mound that may be three feet across and nearly a foot and a half high. He defends his mound viciously from other redspot males, but generously allows other minnow species to lay their eggs in “his” nest.

I have been interested in fisheries as long as I can remember but was first introduced to stream fish while taking Dr. Echelle’s ichthyology class in college.

Ichthyology was a class I could not wait to take, but instead of talking about the bass, stripers and catfish I was interested in, it seemed like we spent all of our time studying taxonomy and physiology while looking at colorless minnows in little jars of formalin.

I was starting to wonder why anyone would want to study a fish that you couldn’t catch on a hook, when we took our first field trip. By the end of the day I had



Cardinal shiners showing their iridescent blue noses

## Stream Fish Diversity

seen my first live orangethroat and orangebelly darters, logperch and a net full of southern redbelly dace in full breeding colors. I remember thinking that these fish had been living all around me my whole life and I had no idea they even existed.

I have been hooked on stream fish ever since and am always looking for ways to share this interest with other people. This led to joining the North American Native Fishes Association (NANFA), which promotes conservation and education for native fish species.

I recently volunteered as our state’s NANFA representative and we developed a stream display to promote appreciation and awareness for our states’ diverse stream and fish resources. I will be presenting this video at the SCC annual meeting.

## November 3rd Creek Clean-up

Spring Creek Friends,

Thank you once again for your time and help cleaning up trash at Twin Bridges. Your kindness and help are very much appreciated.

Donna and Charles Drury, landowners

Our clean-up this year was exceptional. These are some of the things that warmed my heart:

Driving up 15 minutes before the event start on a beautiful, chilly autumn day and seeing a campfire going and children throwing logs on the fire.

Finding two bags of trash already gathered along the road and a note “Heading to Fayetteville to watch the Golden Hurricane beat the hogs. Nice weather!” Bob Frazier.

Meeting enthusiastic Danny Cooper and his fiancée Hanna who were picking up trash as a community service project to earn housing credits with the

## Creek Clean-up a Success

Cherokee Nation.

Having children participate – extra special. I got to meet Wade, Brooke, and Dacey Brown, and Kenzie and Kylie, granddaughters of Mike and Renae Harper from OKC.

Taking stock of just how dependable our Board members are – the Drury’s with their fire and chili and wiener-roast lunch, Neal with the trash bags and gloves ready despite feeling “under



Thank you, Darrell Yoder, for the use of this dump truck.

mention just a few.

Being able to collaborate with Brandon Brown and his Stream Team for this and future projects like tackling a second large dump site near Rocky Ford at this clean-up.

Realizing how special it is to have a dump truck and trash disposal provided each year by Mayes County Commissioner Darrell Yoder, and work again with Rick, the driver who cheerfully follows us wherever we need to go.

The creek clean-up is always rewarding, with dedicated SCC members and willing workers. This year it was particularly special for me. Thank you, everyone.

Beth Rooney, President, SCC

t h e weather” earlier in the week, Chris Robb who I could hardly get to stop cleaning up e v e n though I w a s R E A L L Y hungry and lunch was waiting – to