



# The Buzz

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## Chris McCotter To Speak on Fishing Lake Anna

### Upcoming Items

#### Club Trip

September 24, 2016

#### PRSC Meeting

September 28, 2016

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C.C. McCotter, the founder of *McCotter's Lake Anna Guide Service*, has fished Lake Anna for the past 30 years and began guiding 24 years ago. Long since over his competitive fishing days, C.C.'s passion now lies in teaching others, a philosophy obvious after just a few moments on the water. From the tournament contender to a father and son out for some quality time, McCotter takes care of them all. He is the most experienced fishing guide on Lake Anna.

McCotter unofficially started his guide service during the summer of 1989 when he guided his very first "clients" for gas money. In 1990, he finished college and fished weekend tournaments taking several top finish plaques home. By 1992 he switched totally to guiding. In the next five years, the fledgling guide service grew to over 200 days on the water a year. By 1999, McCotter added associate guides to handle the demand that was coming from all over the Atlantic region.

The guide service's philosophy from the start has always been to offer the best product available for a reasonable price. It is this drive for customer satisfaction and the landing of some huge fish that has made the guide service so successful.

Clients have caught largemouth bass up to 10 pounds with C.C. and countless striper and crappie. The MLAGS founder has been featured in *BASSMaster*, *Fishing Facts*, *BASSIN'*, *CRAPPIE*, *In-Fisherman*, *Virginia Game & Fish*, *Woods & Waters*, and many other magazines. McCotter's vast storehouse of Lake Anna knowledge comes from living on the shores of the lake with his family since 1986.

His dedication to and stewardship of Anna is also evident from his directorship of the annual Fish Structure Enhancement Program. He and his fellow volunteers have created or enhanced 12 fish structures in Lake Anna. Another project McCotter initiated, the annual Lake Anna Cup Invitational, grew to 76 teams in 2009 and has become one of the most prestigious events on the lake. Commenting on his guide service, C.C. stated: "We are totally immersed in guiding and caring for Anna. That's it. My philosophy is to fish one lake, try and master it, and then teach others. What makes Anna so special is that if you can learn to catch fish here, you can catch them anywhere."

McCotter is a founding member of the Concerned Bass Anglers of Virginia, a member of the Virginia Outdoor Writers Association, and is sponsored by High Point Marina, Anna Point Boat Sales, Nitro Boats, Mercury Outboards, Pure Fishing (ABU Garcia, Berkley, Fenwick, Spider, Mitchell), Humminbird Electronics, Dave's Tournament Tackle, Anna's Marine Center and TRACKER Boats.

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## Chris McCotter To Speak on Fishing Lake Anna

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A few months ago I wrote about C.C.'s last visit many years ago during which he gave a great presentation. I am sure he will give another on a fishery not too many of us know.

## Upcoming Items

**Club Float Trip, Brunswick to Point of Rocks, September 24th.** Rick Mrstik will lead a club trip for up to 10 members, weather and river conditions permitting. Sign up at the club meeting on August 31st or through the Meetup.com site. Must be a PRSC member to participate.

**Join us Wednesday, September 28th, for our monthly meeting.** Walt Carey creator of Walt's Poppers will be our speaker. 7:30-9:00 PM at the McLean Community Center, 1234 Ingleside Ave., McLean, VA.

## PRSC on the Water



PRSC member Chun Rhee pictured with an 18" small-mouth he caught on August 2nd at Riverbend Park using a Senko.

# Club Trip, 340 to Brunswick

By Rick Mrstik

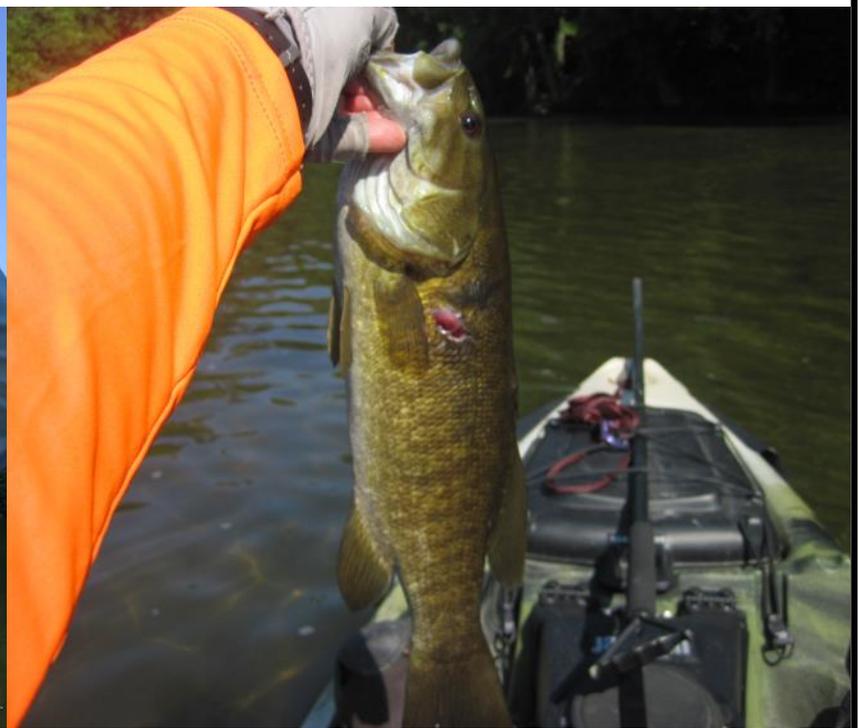
On Saturday, August 20th Steve Kim led 11 club members on a float from Potomac Wayside to Brunswick Family Campground, where he had arranged for shuttle transportation to the launch site. The group included Steve, his brother Kevin, Herschel Finch, John and Quinn Lippetz, Hank Firey, Terry Cooney, John Brett, Rick Mrstik, Dominic, and new member Ms. Shawn.

As the sun was rising, we met around 6:30 AM to cart and carry boats down the steep hill at Potomac Wayside park. Afterward we moved all vehicles to Brunswick for an easy exit at the end of the day. With logistics out of the way, we were on the water shortly after 8:30.



This was my first time on this section of the river, and I was very impressed. This is some of the best smallmouth habitat I've ever seen, and the fish were cooperative, providing my best day this year for catching big fish on the Potomac, including my largest smallmouth ever at 18 inches. Overall, I landed 23 smallies, including the 18", 15", two 14", a 13" and multiple 12" fish, for a 74" big-five total for the day. I used a variety of soft plastics fished mainly in the bottom of the water column. I caught fish on green tubes, both black and green grubs, a brown 5" worm, and even a flesh-colored paddle tail swim bait. I caught the 15-incher just above the 340 bridge on a green tube and caught the 18-incher just above the Brunswick bridge. He spooked as my kayak approached but I saw where he moved to, casted 10 yards upstream of his new position, and hooked him up on my black grub.

Comparing notes at lunch time, everyone had caught fish, mostly on soft plastics, but with spinners and buzz baits also catching fish. By the end of the day, Herschel had tallied over 50 fish, including the fine 18-incher pictured below right. This fish appeared to have suffered an eagle attack and bore a scrape and two puncture wounds.



# PRSC Club Trip, Pennyfield to Swain's Lock

By Marty Burkard

On Saturday, August 13th, six intrepid souls and I braved heat, humidity, and a tricky take-out point to fish the Potomac from Pennyfield Lock to Swain's Lock. Joining me on the trip were Terry Cooney, Herman Yam, Jeff McCandless, Rick Mrstik, Hank Firey, and new member Shawn Thomas.

This float runs just a bit under five miles, including a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile upstream paddle at the beginning of the trip. The water level was good for this time of year, but not so high as to make upstream paddling difficult. Water visibility was a bit cloudy on the first mile or so—possibly due to algae—but cleared up nicely for the rest of the trip.

About 15 minutes into the trip, Terry hooked up with the day's first fish—an 18-inch smallie. I thought this was an omen of good things to come, but it was not to be. While I don't think anyone got skunked, it wasn't a big numbers day. With water temperatures in the mid-80s, bright sunshine and air temperatures climbing into the mid-90s, the fish just weren't very active. I tallied five fish on the day, with a pair of 15 inchers as my best. All were caught on either green pumpkinseed flukes or three-inch stick worms. Some fish were found in shade by the banks, while others were in main channel eddies or boils.

By 12:30 we were at our takeout, and I think everyone was grateful that we weren't doing a longer float in the heat. Everyone pitched in to assist each other in hauling each other's boats up the steep six-foot bank (there's no ramp or canoe/kayak ladder at Swain's), and soon we were all on our way to much cooler places. I look forward to doing this trip again, preferably when it's 10 to 20 degrees cooler.



Here are some observations from the other attendees:

Terry Cooney: I caught 10 fish; 18, 14, and 13 inches were the biggest. I caught the 18 on a 4-1/2 ft Kmart ultra lite, #10 reel, and four-pound test line. It was a great day but, oh was I exhausted from the heat!

Rick Mrstik: This was my first time on this section of the River. It is a nice, scenic float with several sections of good smallmouth structure. With water temps around 82 degrees, the early morning bite was better for me. I caught six fish between 8:00 and 10:00 AM mostly on a five-inch dark purple twister tail grub fished on the bottom, usually in shade along the bank. All were 12 inches or less. The grass beds made it hard for me to

# PRSC Club Trip, a.k.a. the August Fish Bake

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decide what to target because there was cover everywhere. When we resumed the float after the stop on the gravel bar, I picked up two more fish on a four-inch green tube, including my best fish of the day at 13 inches. The fish seemed more sluggish, and a slow presentation was needed to get them to bite. I saw many nice bass and catfish in the water, which was very clean and clear, but they seemed uninterested for the most part.



Hank Firey: It was not my greatest day of fishing, but I've never had a bad one. The few (small) fish I did catch were on pigtail 4-inch transparent green or black worms. Had a nice one hit and run on a 5-inch straight black worm but lost it.

Herman Yam: I deny catching a green fish (pictured at right) on the Upper Potomac even if the angle of the picture and color of the kayak says otherwise.



Jeff McCandless (pictured below): I caught four ranging from 8 to 15 inches. Lost at least three. Good day for me and learned lots.



Below: New member Ms. Shawn, pictured with a 15-inch smallie she caught on her first club trip.



# Up North for Kings, Walleyes, Smallmouth

By Rick Mrstik

Every year in late July, I make an excursion with my family to upstate New York, where my wife's family has had a camp in the Adirondacks on the Great Sacandaga Lake since the 1930s. For many years, I've kicked off the vacation with a weekend of trolling for king salmon and brown trout on Lake Ontario with my nephew and some of his friends; this year was no exception. The salmon bite was not exceptional this year, but we managed to catch four nice ones each day.

This year I was more excited about fishing Sacandaga because I installed a Bassyaks trolling motor kit (I may do a review for next month's *Buzz*) on my Jackson Big Rig. The motor extended my reach on the lake and saved my shoulders from infinite soreness.



My routine for nine days went as follows: rise at 5:30, head down to the dock, troll into the rising sun in search of walleyes and perch, return to the dock by 9:00 for breakfast, recharge my 12V battery. During the day I would glare at all the "googans" ripping up and down the lake in their boats and jet skis until 6:30, then head to the dock for my evening troll, often until well after dark.



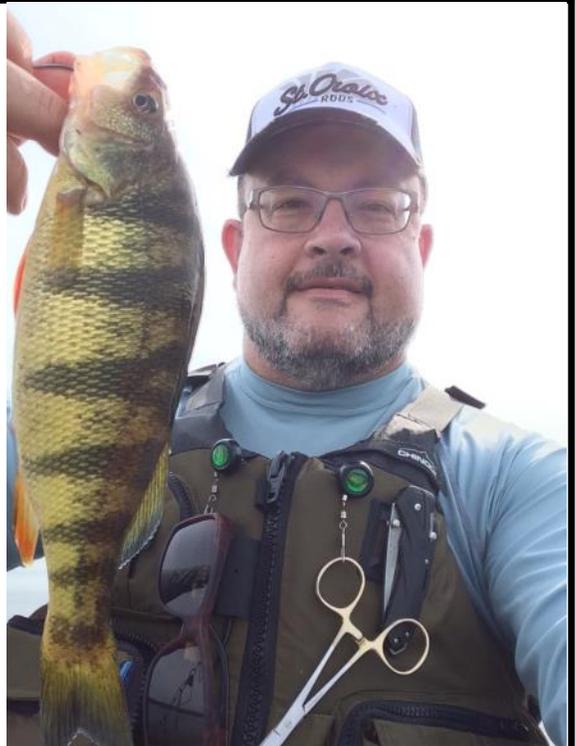
Often the walleyes and yellow perch were obliging, gobbling up nightcrawlers that I trolled in crawler harnesses and sometimes eating 4" white twister tail grubs jigged vertically up from the bottom. Too often the walleyes didn't meet the 15" minimum required to land on my dinner table.

# Up North for Kings, Walleyes, Smallmouth

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With the extended range and endurance of the Bassyaks trolling motor, I was able to reach areas of the lake I had not ventured to before. One evening as I approached the rocky point of an island, a fish hit my rig so hard I thought it must be a monster walleye. That is until the fish came to the surface to tail-dance three times. Then I thought I had a small pike like the one I'd caught over Memorial Day weekend earlier this year. As I reeled it in and used my landing net, I discovered I had a 15" smallmouth at the end of my line. We both grinned for a selfie. I had heard they were in the lake but had never caught one here before.

Throughout the week I would find my bronze-colored friends on rocky points and began to target them with soft plastics and crank baits, catching about 20 of them in my outings. Occasionally I caught an odd-looking youngster (lower right), which confused me for a while. I eventually concluded it was a juvenile smallmouth and that their young simply look different than river smallies. If anyone thinks differently and can positively identify it as something else, I'd like to know what.



# Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

Lately I've been watching developments across the country as legislatures in various states wrestle with the question: "Who owns the natural resources?" And when they talk about these resources they're not discussing mineral rights on a particular piece of property. The resources in question are sources of the water flowing in rivers and streams, in other words rain. And the very air itself . . . as in wind . . . the kind used to drive turbines that generate electricity.

Here at the PRSC, we're all familiar with the issues of "King's Grants" and how that legal issue has played out down on the Cowpasture River in southwest Virginia. That's more a question of property allocation and the laws that govern that allocation and the business transaction that transfers property from one owner to another. At some point I believe that the US Supreme Court will have to step in to decide if the laws, edicts, and favors handed down by long-dead Kings when we were just a colony are going to govern our laws going forward. The handful of situations here in Virginia are not the only places where this issue of "King's Grants" come into to play either. You can find these issues in virtually every state east of the Mississippi River, and even beyond. On the West coast, these issues involve Mexican Kings. I suspect you can guess where I come down on this issue . . . I suspect I can guess most of the club members' positions as well.

But what we're talking about here is more complicated. For generations, property owners were seen to be the beneficiaries of any and all resources that were located on their property, or that happen to arise, or fall on their property, such as rain water that falls on a piece of property and fills ponds, reservoirs and rain barrels. Springs and artesian wells, as well as precious and useful metals, coal, oil, and natural gas are also seen as belonging to the owners of a said piece of property. But what about the wind that blows across mountain tops and wide open prairies out west? Does the property owner have possession of that wind to do with as he pleases, such as generate electrical power? And how about that rain water? Does it belong to the property owner or to everyone who might benefit from its replenishment of aquifers and streams?

But four years ago, in a move some are citing as politically motivated, Wyoming began taxing electricity generated by wind turbines to the tune of \$1.00 per megawatt. To date they've only raised about \$15 million in tax revenue but the main reason for the new tax, say some in the wind industry is a new wind farm being constructed to provide power for nearly a million homes in southern California and the greater southwest United States. This will be a large windfall for the state, but at the same time, may make the wind farm untenable. Which may be the real reason for raising a generation tax in a state that normally wishes to leave energy companies unhindered while they dig bituminous coal and drill for oil and natural gas.

The politics of it doesn't necessarily concern me as much as the precedent being set. I could understand a state putting a tax on coal, oil, and natural gas extraction. These are commodities that are traded on markets around the world. They generate billions in profits for private corporations and almost always leave the environment worse off for their extraction. And tax payers are left footing the bills for the cleanup. I think extraction companies have a responsibility to first, clean up the mess they make pulling these commodities out of the ground and second, return a share of their profits with the areas where they removed them.

But wind and water are different in my opinion, they're necessary for the continued existence of life on the planet. Putting a value on either as a commodity sets a precedent that I think spreads a dark cloud on our future. Treating either one of these as a commodity will create winners and losers in the global marketplace. And we all know what that means. I just don't like the idea of using water and other life-sustaining elements so that a handful of wealthy individuals can profit by them . . . to the detriment and eventual degradation of others. The CEO of Nestle' has bought up acres of headwater stream-laden property in California and the northwest for the sole purpose of being able to control the water on these properties for bottling and selling. He's actually stated that he believes that no one should have a 'right' to clean water.

I'm really starting to believe that the futurists are correct; the next world war won't be over gold or oil or land . . . it's going to be about who controls the world's water resources.

I don't know about you, but I think these developments bear watching.

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## 2016 Fishing Contest

### Fishing Contest Heats Up by Jack Cook

As you can see the contest is between Bill Pearl and Randy Chandler again. I remind both that the competition committee has a close eye on them. I remind them about the rules on dynamite and drilling holes in the other's boat.

We have quite a few new entries. So far Chip Comstock has the only fly fishing entry with a 12" big fish and a 54" total. In the rookie category, John Aucella has a 17", Randy Hall has a 75" total with an 18.5" big fish, and Rick Mrstik has a 74" total with an 18" big fish.

The contest closes October 31st, so get out there. I'm sure some of our members wonder why our major awards are named for Grover Cleveland and William Shriver. According to my vast research of all our Presidents, Grover Cleveland was the only smallmouth fisherman. His favorite fishing spot was Pennyfield Lock. Some of our other Presidents fished for stupid fish (largemouths) but only Grover was a real fisherman!

William Shriver is responsible for all the smallmouth in the Potomac, Susquehanna, and several PA lakes. He put about 25 smallmouth in the water tank of a train tender at Wheeling, WV and brought them to the C&O Canal terminal at Cumberland, MD. They were released in the C&O Canal basin and the rest is history. Later he bought smallmouth from Maryland and put them in the Susquehanna and several PA lakes. He is a man who should be honored.

### Entries Thus Far

<b>Section 1, Biggest Fish:</b>	No Report
<b>Section 1, Best 5 Fish:</b>	No Report
<b>Section 2, Biggest Fish:</b>	Randy Chandler 20"
<b>Section 2, Best 5 Fish:</b>	Randy Chandler 76"
<b>Section 3, Biggest Fish:</b>	Randy Chandler 21"
<b>Section 3, Best 5 Fish:</b>	Bill Pearl 85.5"
<b>Largest on Fly:</b>	Chip Comstock 12"
<b>Best 5 Fish on Fly:</b>	Chip Comstock 54"
<b>New Member Big Fish:</b>	Randy Hall 18.5"
<b>New Member Best 5:</b>	Randy Hall 75"
<b>Grover Cleveland Leader:</b>	Randy Chandler 21"
<b>William Shriver Leader:</b>	Bill Pearl 160"

To submit an entry visit <http://www.prsc.org/fishing-contest/entry/>

The Potomac River Smallmouth Club was founded in 1988 as a non-profit recreational club in accordance with IRS section 501(c)(7). Dues are \$40/year. Monthly meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at the McLean Community Center. Club by-laws and member rosters are published once a year and available during meetings or upon request. The Club newsletter, "The Buzz," is emailed to all members prior to each month's meeting. Articles, photographs and general information relating to smallmouth bass fishing are solicited. The Buzz reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication. Observations, conclusions and opinions expressed in The Buzz are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the club, its officers, or the editor. All materials submitted become the property of the club.