

Les Ager



Les was born and raised in the mountains of upper east Tennessee. He learned to appreciate the outdoors, hunt and fish in the woods and waters that surrounded his home. He completed a bachelor's degree in biology at East Tennessee State University and a graduate degree in fisheries biology at Tennessee Technological University. In 1975, he accepted a position with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Game and Fish Division as a fisheries biologist and was assigned to the Fort Valley regional office.

In that capacity he was responsible for a variety of fisheries programs across a 23 county area of the state. He led the effort to develop standardized reservoir sampling guidelines that are currently in use by GDNR and have been used as model guidelines for other resource agencies in the southeast. He provided guidance in the analysis of instream flow issues and the development of a recommended instream flow policy for Georgia. He helped develop survey techniques now used across the country to assess the health of stream fish populations and to indicate environmental problems in streams. He directed efforts that resulted in the re-discovery in the Oconee River of the robust redhorse, a species thought extinct. Subsequently he led an effort to form a recovery network across the southeastern U.S. that has been very successful in recovery of that species across much of its native range. He provided guidance that resulted in the acquisition of land and the development of three new public fishing areas in the state; Marben PFA, Flat Creek PFA, and Ocmulgee PFA. He also led the GDNR efforts during the FERC relicensing of three GPC major hydropower operations and as a result of those efforts, habitat and fish populations were improved in the reservoirs and improvements were made in the environments in the rivers downstream. He also developed the program framework and implementation strategy of the Go Fish Georgia initiative. This initiative was the largest single program enhancement that has ever been provided for the fishermen of Georgia and it provided the mean of improving access to Georgia's waters, improving fishing using the products of a new hatchery and promoting the fishing resources of the state with a large visitor education center.

He retired from GDNR in 2007 and now operates his own private fisheries consulting business.

He is married (Jaydee) with one son, Forrest, age 18. When not working with fish he can usually be found engaged in his favorite hobby, fishing.

