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Whether you're in a pontoon boat on Nantahala Lake or by a stream but by the greenway, fishing will always be one of Western North Carolina's favorite pastimes; When it comes to the "great outdoors," there is an array of activities to be a part of in Franklin. At Franklin's Great Smoky Mountain Fish Camp, visitors can be outfitted for kayaking, tubing, canoeing and camping, but mainly fishing. In this month's issue of Our State, a magazine with more than 100,000 subscribers, Franklin is featured in an article about great getaways in North Carolina. The magazine's objective is to "celebrate the people and places that make this state great." In their quest, they found Franklin resident. Jerry Anselmo.

Anselmo first discovered the beauty of Franklin for himself back in 1991, when he accidentally came upon the Little Tennessee River. Anselmo, an avid fisherman and outdoors man, was on his way to Clemson, S.C. in hope of purchasing land there to set up a fishing camp.

Within a couple of days, Anselmo wanted to float down the river and see what it had to offer besides a great view from the road. What he soon discovered would be the future site of die Great Smoky Mountain Fish Camp and Safari, the company now owned and operated by Anselmo, with help from Tiffany Thompson who has been working with Anselmo for the last two years.

The fishing camp is set up to accommodate any customer looking for a outdoors getaway. Guests can be in the two bedroom main building or they can camp out on one of the numerous RV or campsites, and soon will be able to enjoy a cabin built next to a private waterfall. All this while they stay next to the river which Anselmo claims o be "the best place to catch smallmouth (bass) in the world." Anselmo would know too. He has traveled around athe world to places like Russia, Costa Rica and other countries in order to become a more "versatile angler." He has also spent much of his life as an active environmentalist, being publicly recognized for his work with saving dolphins that were getting trapped in tuna nets. He now uses his knowledge about the Little Tennessee to teach the world about the great fishing possibilities here in Western North Carolina.

Anselmo insists that all the fish caught by his customers be released back into the river. He has constantly been involved with helping keep the natural beauty of the Franklin area, as a major part of his business and personal-lifestyle. His work on the river's natural up-keep includes hosting studies of the river's wildlife by researchers from the University of Virginia and the University of Georgia and donating campsites to local boy scouts who collected over one ton of garbage from the river.

A major concern is the growing popularity of outdoor sports on the river. With tourists' population growing and real estate booming, Anselmo is worried that maintaining the natural beauty of the Little Tennessee could become increasingly difficult.

"It's hard: to keep such great secret like. Franklin quiet, Anselmo says. "The land trust is doing a good job, but they can't keep up." Our State says "our mission is to reflect the beauty of North Carolina, to tell the stories of its amazing people and its remarkable history, and to suggest the wonderful places to visit." With Anselmo's' fishing camp being in a widely circulated magazine like Our State thousands of people will get the chance to read and learn about the beauty that is such a major part of Franklin. The publicity will introduce many new people to the town's natural setting.

Pick up -a copy of July 2005 Our State while you go fishing this July and enjoy reading about Franklin.;

