

# Wisconsin Trout

## October 2011

# **Duke Welter and Don Pluemer honored by TU National in Bend, OR**

By Todd Hanson

Two longtime Wisconsin TU members were honored by TU National at the organization's annual meeting in Bend, OR, in September.

John "Duke" Welter of Eau Claire was given the Ray Mortensen Award, which is given annually to a member for outstanding volunteer leadership at the grassroots level. Duke is a member of the WI Clear Waters Chapter.

Welter is the second WITU member to win this award. Steve Born won the very first Mortensen Award in 1999.

Over the years, Welter has won nearly every award the WITU State Council bestows, including the council's top honor, the Award of Merit last February

Merit, last February.

Don Pluemer of Montfort was given the Distinguished Service Award for outstanding individual contributions to TU in its mission of conserving, protecting, and restoring North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. Don is a member of the Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter.

Pluemer has been a key figure in the Nohr Chapter's efforts to restore nearly a dozen miles of trout





**WELTER AND PLUEMER RECOGNIZED BY TU NATIONAL** 

John "Duke" Welter (left) and Don Pluemer won top volunteer service awards at TU National's annual meeting this past September.

waters in the Driftless Area over the past 10 years.

Pluemer won the State Council's Gold Net Award in 2006.

Congratulations to Duke and Don. We're glad your service with Trout Unlimited has been recognized beyond Wisconsin.

## State Council takes stand on proposed mining law revisions

By Bill Heart

A highlight of the Sept. 24 WITU State Council meeting was the passage of a resolution challenging Wisconsin legislators to maintain the environmental and public input protections in the state's existing mining laws.

The resolution reads, "The State Council of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited opposes any change in state policy, statutes, or regulatory protections for our state's water and other natural resources for mining, or which would remove any opportunity for citizens to be involved in public processes related to the use of these resources."

The above resolution will be of help to The Penokee Hill Education Project (PHEP), which was highlighted in the last issue of *Wisconsin Trout*.

PHEP has been very busy doing exactly what its name implies. We have spent the summer talking to as many people as we can about not only the threat to the Penokees, but to the entire state if Wisconsin's mining laws are changed as proposed by Gogebic Taconite, LLC (GTAC) last May.

We have given many tours of the proposed mining area. We've also had informational tables at events around the state, including farmers markets in Madison and Ashland,

Trout Fest in Coon Valley, the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indian's Pow Wow, and Fighting Bob Fest in Madison.

At the beginning of summer, not many people around the state had

Wildlife Federation, Dave Carlson from *Northland Adventures* (check it out on their website), a group of artists, and the board and staff of the River Alliance of Wisconsin. Everyone agreed that the area is very pris-

The point that got the attention of many local promine citizens was that the proposed bill would make it possible to use eminent domain on private lands for mine tailing piles or infrastructure.

ever heard of the Penokee Hills. That has changed.

I spent much of my summer exploring the Penokee Hills. fishing Devils and Ballou creeks and the Tyler Forks River, harvesting plentiful blackberries and wild mushrooms, and just roaming the hills has made me appreciate how special the resources of the Penokee really are. This fall I am looking forward to spending many days looking for grouse with my dog as I wander the uplands along the edges of the many wetlands south of the ridge.

Getting to know the hills has helped me lead a number of tours for interested officials. In the last month or so, we have taken Sen. Bob Jauch, Sen. Jim Holperin, and Rep. Janet Bewley to the hills. Tours were also given to reporter Ron Seely from the *Wisconsin State Journal*, George Meyer of the Wisconsin

tine and needs to be protected.

Along with educating citizens about the actual area, we have also been involved with other groups to inform the public about GTAC's efforts to change Wisconsin's mining laws. This is the thing that could af-

fect Wisconsin the most.

In the first proposal that was leaked to the public last May, GTAC actually wrote a version of a new mining law that would undermine Wisconsin's current laws. Their version would have eliminated or lessened the role of local communities and the public in the permitting process.

That draft bill would have eliminated mining impact committees, eliminated public challenges to the permit, and lessened the financial obligations to local governments. They tried to lessen the water quality regulations, change wetland protections, and end company responsibility if there was a drawdown in private wells.

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## Fish Habitat board meets in WI and tours Driftless Area sites

The board of the National Fish Habitat Initiative (NFHI) met in Madison in late July and toured Driftless Area project sites on Vernon Creek and the East Branch of the Pecatonica River.

The partnership funds fish habitat projects across the country. This was its first meeting in the Upper Midwest.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Geological Survey, and National Marine Fisheries Service are the lead federal agencies involved in the venture. Working with state resource agencies and nonprofits like Trout Unlimited, the initiative helps fund regional partnerships like TU's Driftless Area Restoration Effort (TUDARE), which has received project funding for five years. TU's top Capitol Hill advocate, Government Affairs Director Steve Moyer, serves as one of about 35 board members of the venture.

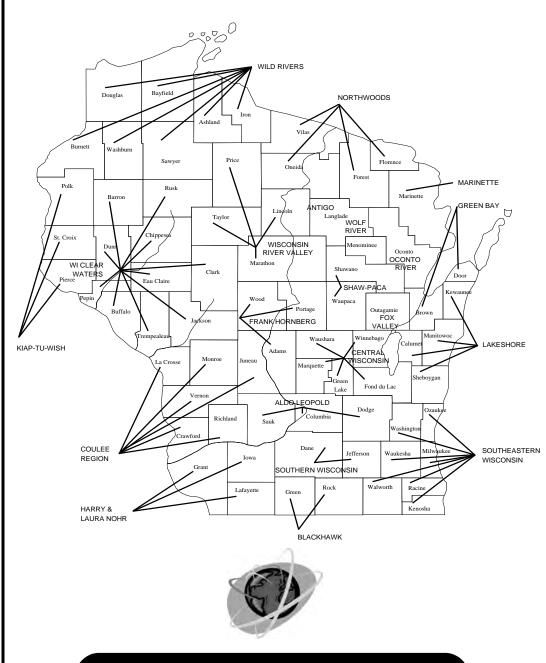
The initiative encourages broad-scale ecological restoration, collaborative partnership efforts, and assessment of recreational opportunities and economic impacts of restoration work.

Southern Wisconsin TU chapter volunteers also guided several board members on fishing outings in Grant, Iowa, Richland, and Crawford counties. The volunteer guides included Jim Bartelt, Steve Born, Todd Hanson, and Tom Thrall. Even though the fishing outing came the day after Dubuque received 10 inches of rain, the fishing was excellent and the participants were impressed with the quality of restoration, the good fishing, and the abundance of public access.

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## Contact TU National when you change addresses or chapter leaders

TU National manages WITU's mailing list, so update your address by calling 1-800-834-2419 or e-mailing trout@TU.org. Address changes can also be done on-line by going to www.tu.org and signing in with your member number, which is found on your wallet card or *TROUT* magazine label.

If you are moving to a different city and wish to be affiliated with the TU chapter in your new area, note the new chapter number (see the text next to the map above for the numbers of our chapters).

## **WISCONSIN TROUT**

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## What's going on here?

By Kim McCarthy
WITU State Council Chair

Just about everybody who lives in Wisconsin has seen the old video clip from the Vince Lombardi Packer years in which the coach is less than pleased with what is happening on the field and screams at the top of his lungs, "What the hell is going on out here?"

As information has poured in to me over the last few months, I am now asking the same question. There are some awfully strange things going on that will challenge everyone committed to preserving the great coldwater resources we enjoy in Wisconsin.

The first issue I want to mention is the high-capacity well proposal along Copper Creek. This well application has been described as goofy by people who are in a position to recognize goofy. The person wanting to drill the well has still not been willing to share what his intentions are for the water, and the story has changed a number of times. When I first heard about the application, the story was that the water was to be for emergency purposes. There was even a story floating around that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was encouraging the well. It turned out that FEMA never had anything whatsoever to do with it and the term emergency could pretty much be defined completely by the applicant. Somewhere about that time, some of the local folks went online and discovered water expected to be extracted from the well being advertised as far away as Germany. Soon after that the website disappeared.

A well permit has not been issued at the time I'm writing this, but that could change at any moment. Conditions have been placed in the permit language that would restrict what the applicant could do with the water and would require monitoring. Now it is expected that a test well will be drilled to try to determine the precise flow of groundwater in the area. Sooner or later, there is a strong possibility that some kind of permit may be issued, and the applicant is still sounding very much like someone who wants to package water in some form and make a profit even if there is risk to the creek. Serious questions still remain about the monitoring and how effective it can be in protecting Copper Creek.

Another issue is a recent fish kill on the South Fork of the Baraboo River. The kill involved silage finding its way into the river. The kill is being described as a total kill. That part is bad enough. The really ugly part of this story is that the same farm has now killed the river multiple times since 1999. Yes, you read

that correctly. The same farm has now killed the river multiple times since 1999.

You would think that heavy fines incurred for killing a stream multiple times would discourage repeated kills. In this case, that would be incorrect. After assessing fines for the original 1999 kill, DNR eventually stopped stocking the river. Now, because the river is not being stocked and there were not that many fish present (although there were several natural year classes and fish up to 20 inches), and because fines are based largely on how many fish are killed, it is most likely that the farm will actually be fined less this time than what was assessed in 1999. One would think that laws would be in place to change repeat destructive behavior. In this case, that has not happened.

Next up is mining. The Penokee Hills sit in a particularly wild and beautiful part of northern Wisconsin. The water flowing from these hills forms the headwaters of the Bad River and makes up hundreds of miles of trout streams. The company wishing to mine the taconite deposits is making some seriously inflated jobs claims and threatening to walk if they can't get rid of some of those pesky environmental restrictions that safeguard coldwater streams and the wetlands from which they come.

Nobody should think for one minute that the Penokee mine being discussed is anything like the iron mines of old in northern Wisconsin. The mine under discussion would be a cross between the mountaintop mining that gets so much publicity in West Virginia and the giant strip mines associated with coal. It would be an enormous open pit mine. The first stage alone would stretch four miles through previously pristine areas and impact a number of streams and wetlands.

No mining bill has been introduced, but a bill is expected this fall. It appears likely that a bill is being drafted over the summer behind closed doors by the mining companies and their allies with no input from the public.

It turns out that the Penokee Hills are probably just the tip of a mining explosion. The Wisconsin State Journal reports that there are as many as five very large proposed mines scattered around the state waiting to see how the permitting on the Penokee project goes. The majority of the mines are the cyanide leaching type of mine that has damaged U.S. trout streams. It is very possible that corporate interests representing most of the mines are remaining quiet until the Penokee project makes every attempt to weaken state mining regulations.

# MINE: council resolution calls for no weakening of resource protection

Continued from p. 1

Finally, the point that got the attention of many local pro-mine citizens was that the proposed bill would make it possible to use eminent domain on private lands for mine tailing piles or infrastructure. It's not hard to see why so many of Wisconsin's politicians and private citizens were outraged by this first proposal. We expect a new version of a law sometime this fall.

The Senate has recently decided to establish a Mining Committee

that will be working to write a new bill. As of this writing, the Republicans that have been named are Senators Neal Kedzie, Dale Schultz, Robert Cowles, and Rich Zipperer. The Democrats have not been named, but Sen. Jauch, who represents the Penokee area, should be named.

We need to be contacting all of the members of the committee to tell them to not change Wisconsin's mining laws to lessen the protection of our coldwater resources.



STATE COUNCIL CHAIR KIM McCARTHY ON TIMBER COULEE CREEK
Kim caught his share of trout on Timber Coulee Cr. during a trip last spring to
southwest Wisconsin.

A new type of mining has also arrived in Wisconsin. I had never heard of something called Frac Sand Mining until a few months ago when I began to receive e-mails expressing concern about what the process will do to streams in the western parts of the state. This new mining involves extracting sand from deposits in Wisconsin to be used in the fracing of natural gas wells around the country.

Here again, it would be a mistake to think of these new mines as the typical quarries we see scattered around the state. These new sand mines will be much larger. In fact they will be closer to strip mines that will actually change the topography of the areas that are mined. Mining interests are busy buying up rights to mine sand while the state is in a position of having no laws dealing specifically with this new type of mining. At this point, we can only guess what the impact to trout streams will be.

The list of concerns does not end here, but this column must. Suffice to say that our coldwater resources



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advocate for the conservation of those resources. In the past, Wisconsin has been a state that could balance economic and resource protection needs. Protecting the resources that provide many thousands of jobs and bring in billions of tourism dollars has always been nonpartisan. All of us Trout Unlimited members will need to speak for the resource more strongly than ever before.





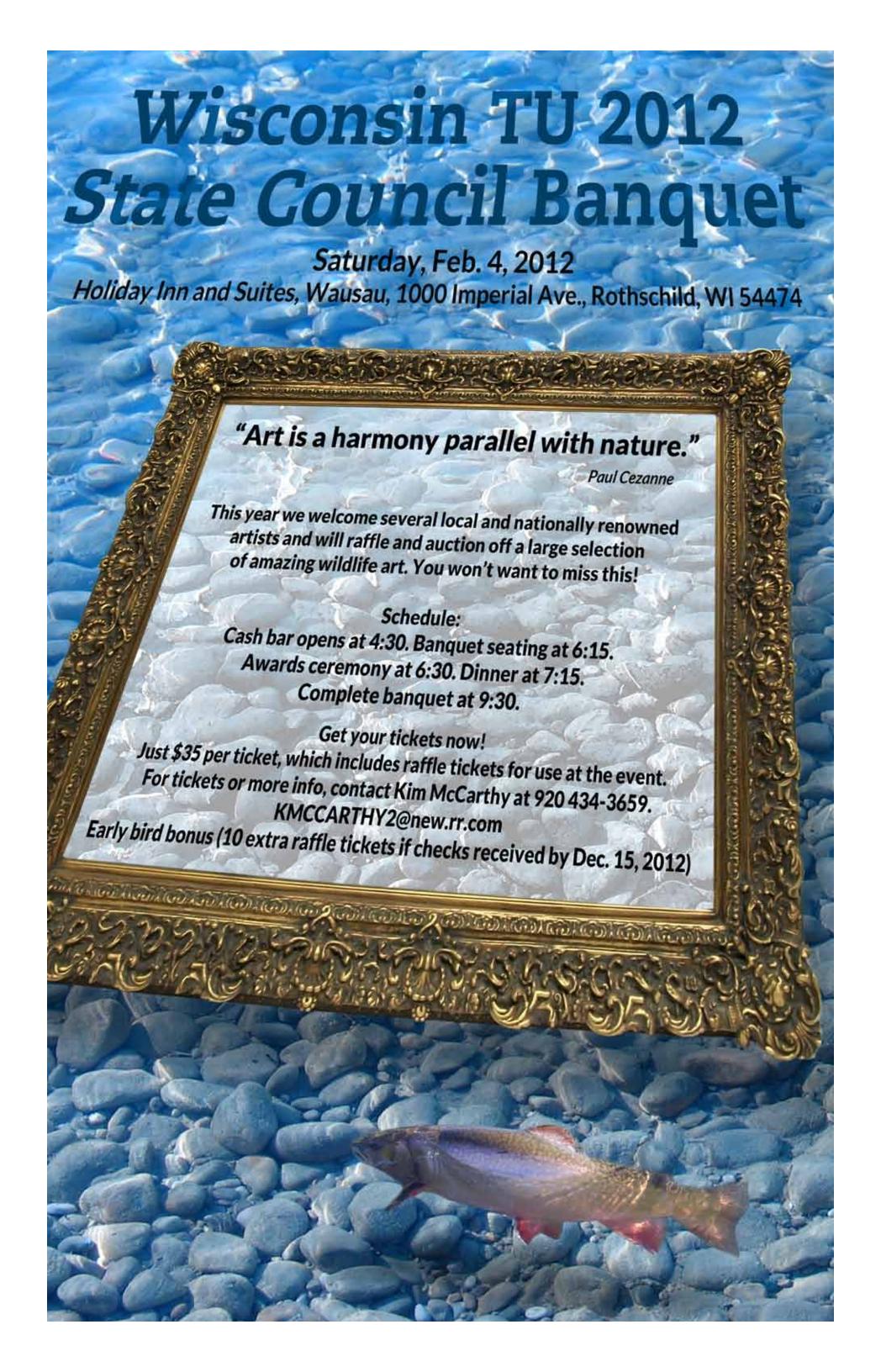
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## Fall State Council meeting highlights

## Council gets updates on mining, trout regs

#### By Todd Hanson

Sixteen chapters were in attendance for the fall meeting of the WITU State Council at the Viroqua Hospital in Viroqua Sept. 24.

One of the meeting's featured guests was Jennifer Giegerich, legislative director for the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters (WLCV) who gave an update on the proposed Penokee Hills iron mine in Ashland County.

The proposed mine is located in an area filled with wetlands and trout streams. It could not be developed without changes to Wisconsin's mining laws.

Giegerich gave a point-by-point analysis of about a dozen items contained in a leaked mining bill last May, all of which would have weakened Wisconsin's mining laws and opened the door for this and other mines in wetlands or next to trout streams and other outstanding water resources.

Giegerich said that provisions in the leaked bill would have:

- limited the ability of local communities to comment on or influence mining permits,
- reduced environmental and public health protections currently on the books, and
- cut back on mining companies' post-mining legal obligations for restoration and site monitoring.

Given all of these environmental rollbacks, Giegerich called the proposed bill "one of the worst pieces of legislation I've ever seen."

Giegerich says now is the time to contact your legislators and the Governor on this matter. She also noted that a special legislative lobby day is being planned for October 19. Anyone interested in lobbying their legislators on changes to the state's mining laws should contact the WL-CV for details at (608) 661-0845.

Besides discussing last May's proposed mining law, Giegerich noted that just two days before the State Council meeting a new Senate Select Committee on Mining Jobs was announced. This committee's Republican members include senators Neal Kedzie of Elkhorn, Dale Schultz of Richland Center, Rob Cowles of Green Bay, and Rich Zipperer of Pewaukee. As of press time, the Democratic members of this committee had not yet been announced.

Giegerich said it is not known how long this committee intends to work, but she suspects its goal will be to present a bill that will weaken the state's mining laws.

Bill Heart noted that the Bad River Tribe has just announced 10 principles they would like Wisconsin to adhere to in its mining laws (see separate story on this page).

After hearing Giegerich's presentation, the State Council adopted the following position statement:

"The State Council of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited opposes any change in state policy, statutes, or regulatory protections for our state's water and other natural resources for mining, or which would remove any opportunity for citizens to be involved in public processes related to the use of these resources."

#### **WDNR** matters

The meeting's other featured guest was WDNR Southern District Program Manager Scot Stewart.

Stewart first reviewed DNR's trout regulation update process.



Jennifer Giegerich

With statewide informational meetings now finished, the next step in the process will be the mailing of an angler survey to a sampling of current trout anglers. This survey will also be mailed to some people who appear to have given up trout fishing in recent years.

Stewart said the DNR is working on revised permitting with the farm responsible for a recent trout kill on the South Baraboo River in hopes of finally stopping the poor practices that continue to take place there.

Kim McCarthy noted that this farm is reported to be the source of four fish kills on the same river since 1999. The farm was cited and fined about \$900 for the latest spill involving silage. Stewart gave Kim McCarthy the names of some DNR people in western Wisconsin to send our concerns to.

Todd Hanson brought up the increase in beaver dams he's noted on southwestern Wisconsin streams the past few years. Duke Welter and Kim McCarthy said they have also noted more beaver activity in recent years. Stewart said part of the problem is that beaver prices are down right now. He encouraged people to let DNR know the exact spots of beaver dams they see on streams. DNR can help line up trappers for local landowners. He encouraged TU to set up an identification system for reporting beaver activity. Reports can be sent to Scott.

Regarding a new round of reorganization at WDNR, Stewart says the new model calls for four fisheries districts to cover all of Wisconsin. There will not be any significant changes to existing work units. DNR expects to consolidate smaller teams and stations as vacancies occur, and the agency will drop some low priority activities.

Eventually, fisheries staff will drop from about 240 to 210 over time. Stewart said Larry Claggett's position with DNR's trout program is being filled by a number of different people rather than hire a coldwater ecologist.

#### 2012 banquet report

Henry Koltz reported that the council's banquet committee has met twice so far on the 2012 banquet to be held at a new location, the Holiday Inn Wausau, on Feb. 4.

Henry said last year's banquet was one of our most successful ever, with nearly 225 in attendance and generating more than \$17,000 in net profit. This year's theme is "Art in the Outdoors."

Henry asked chapters to donate \$500 in cash or prizes as a contribution to the banquet. He also asked

chapters to promote early ticket sales by selling the 10 tickets the committee will be sending chapters.

#### **TU National meeting**

Bill Heart reported on TU National's annual meeting in Bend, OR, in September. About 190 attendees made it one of the largest national meetings ever.

TU's top volunteer award, the Ray Mortensen Award for Outstanding Volunteer Leadership, was presented to John "Duke" Welter of the WI Clear Waters Chapter. Don Pluemer was given TU's Distinguished Service Award for outstanding individual contributions to TU's mission. (See separate story on p. 1.)

#### Bylaws update

Kim McCarthy listed the chapters that have submitted their revised bylaws. Kim said TU National does not advise we allow proxy voting.

Once chapter bylaws are finished, chapters should send an electronic copy to Kim for review against the TU National standards. Bylaws will then be posted to each chapter's website section on TU National's website. Bill Heart says 65 chapters nationwide have so far submitted revised bylaws, of which over a dozen are Wisconsin chapters.

Henry Koltz also submitted a proposed set of bylaws for the State Council, the provisions of which will be reviewed in coming months and voted on at some future meeting.

#### **Watershed Access Fund news**

The Prairie Enthusiasts would like to purchase a piece of degraded property with some trout streams running through it from Iowa County. Kim McCarthy distributed a description of the property and an accompanying map. The land is a few miles west of Gordon Cr.

The Nohr Chapter has already approved some funds toward this purchase with the expectation that a matching \$1,250 would be made from our Watershed Access Fund. There was some discussion about inviting a Prairie Enthusiast representative to a meeting so we can learn more about this project.

There was a related discussion about the Watershed Access Program's language regarding the local chapter's required matching contribution. A motion by Henry Koltz was made to allow in-kind labor to qualify for a chapter's matching contribution in order to leverage more Watershed Access Program funds. This motion passed. Kim will draft revised language and bring it to the February meeting for approval.

#### Frac sand mining

Tim Meyer showed some slides on the boom in sand mining in southern Wisconsin. The area's sand appears to be perfect for the growing natural gas fracing industry.

Duke Welter talked about impacts of these mines on groundwater, roads, and health. Mine impacts to coldwater resources include possible impacts to groundwater flows and polyacrylomides used in processing the sand.

Chippewa County has proposed a long-term monitoring program on two trout streams on each side of a couple mining operations, and our WI Clear Waters Chapter will be involved in this. A motion by Duke Welter was passed to support Chippewa County's monitoring program by having the State Council match local TU chapter contributions toward this monitoring program on a 50% basis up to \$500, and that the council express concern that there by no degradation to trout streams.

# Bad River Tribe opposes iron mine and issues mining principles

The Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa has taken the following position on the proposed iron mine in Ashland County: "The Band opposes the proposed GTAC mine or any mining in the Penokee Hills."

Tribal Chair Mike Wiggins also revealed the Band's position on any proposed iron mining legislation with the following 10 principles:

- 1. The definition of iron mining should be clearly set forth to exclude any project proposal that has the potential to cause acid mine drainage.
- The completeness of iron mining permit applications should be clearly defined and the burden of preparing and submitting a complete application should be entirely on the permit applicant.
- 3. The permitting time frame should be reasonable, flexible, and consistent with federal agency time frames. It should also provide sufficient time for the DNR, the public, federal agencies, and affected Indian tribes to fully review and participate in the permitting process.
- 4. Existing wetland protection standards should be maintained and the federal/state partnership in the environmental review process under state and federal law should not be jeopardized.
- 5. Federal Clean Water Act implementation by the DNR should be corrected and not weakened.
- 6. There should be contested case hearings to allow full participation by interested parties, including Indian tribes.
- 7. There should be no preemption of local control.
- 8. Citizen suits should be maintained to make sure permit provisions and legal restrictions on new mines will be enforced.
- 9. Consultation with Indian tribes by the DNR should be required as part of the permitting process.
- 10.Interested party financing should be provided for the contested case hearing process.

## **Coon Creek Trout Festival a success**

#### By Todd Franklin

The first thing I saw when I arrived at the Coon Creek Trout Festival in Coon Valley last July was a gaggle of kids laughing and giggling...and catching their first trout!

I thought to myself, even if this event is one-timer, at least dozens of kids may have gotten hooked on trout fishing.

Fortunately, the event was a tremendous success. So if you missed it, you should start planning for next year, because the festival is here to stay.

Coulee Region TU President Eric Rauch, who conceived the event, says they've set a tentative 2012 date of July 28.

"For the first year of this event, it really went off without a hitch. Of the 160 surveys we received, all were positive and requested we have the event again in 2012. The best part is that we were able to reach the general public, especially the kids, with our message of environmental stew-

Rauch and Coulee TU developed a successful partnership with the Coon Valley Business Association, forming a board of directors consisting of members of both groups. Even in the planning stages

"I think the time, effort, and money spent was worth the lasting impression we had on the folks who learned about the environment and took home a message of conservation from the festival."

ardship. I think the time, effort, and money spent was worth the lasting impression we had on the folks who learned about the environment and took home a message of conservation from the festival." for this year's event, it became clear they had a good idea on their hands. In April, Wisconsin Department of Tourism Secretary Stephanie Klett met with officials in Coon Valley to present an \$8,525 Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant to promote the Coon Creek Trout Festival.

The event fell on a hot day and was interrupted by a mid-day thunderstorm. The storm dampened a few of the 700 attendees, but it didn't dampen the enthusiasm of the attendees, from the 66 vendors and 57 volunteers to the 110 kids who fished in the trout derby.

More than 400 trout from 10-22 inches were stocked in Coon Creek at the event site, and dozens of excited boys and girls had the chance to catch their first trout.

Bands played all day and night, casting and fly tying instructors provided free lessons and advice, kids enjoyed a bobber race, and guest speakers discussed such topics as trout fishing and invasive species.

Many enjoyed the movie *Green Fire* from the Aldo Leopold Foundation which focused on the environmental aspects of the region, both past and present.

When the Trout Fest was over, the event pumped an estimated

"We hope to have Trout Fest 2012 on July 28 next year, and without a doubt it will be bigger and better," Rauch declared. "Our goal is to play host to over 1,000 attendees from all over the Midwest."

\$58,000 into the local economy, at a cost of about \$25,000, much of which was covered by grants and sponsorships. It also raised more than \$6,000 for next year's festival.

"We hope to have Trout Fest 2012 on July 28 next year, and without a doubt it will be bigger and better," Rauch declared. "Our goal is to play host to over 1,000 attendees from all over the Midwest. We hope to add a larger tent for venders and environmental groups, and we'd like to start things off on Friday evening with a pre-fest celebration."

Volunteerism was a key factor in the festival's success. Coulee TU and Coon Valley business volunteers worked an estimated 1,000 hours on the event, Rauch says. They really need help to make it happen again next year, and they want to make Trout Fest a premier event for environmental groups and Wisconsin TU.

(Author Todd Franklin of Beaver Dam is a member of the Aldo Leopold Chapter. He writes stories about the outdoors for various publications. -Ed.)



#### SCENES FROM THE 2011 COON CREEK TROUT FESTIVAL

There was plenty to see and do at this year's inaugural Coon Creek Trout Festival in Coon Valley, WI. Several bands played throughout the day and into the evening (top), while youngsters found this honey hole on Coon Creek chock full of trout (bottom). Many local arts and craft vendors were also present.

## How you can help with next year's Trout Fest

TU members from across the state can help with next year's Trout Fest by becoming or recommending sponsors, suggesting advertising hot spots in their area, volunteering, spreading the word, and much more.

If you're interested in helping out with planning or working at Trout Fest 2012, contact Coulee Region Chapter President Eric Rauch at (608) 797-3425 or8088rauch@charter.net.



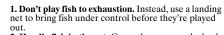


#### MORE SCENES FROM COON CREEK TROUT FESTIVAL

Youngsters like 12-year-old Emma Lee of Coon Valley (left) caught dozens of nice trout during the first-ever Coon Creek Trout Festival. Meanwhile, past WITU State Council Chair Bill Heart (right) brought the threat of a proposed iron mine south of Ashland to the attention of festival attendees.

## Consider Proper Release

CPR is working...keep it up!



2. Handle fish in the net. Grasp them across the back and head for firm but gentle control. Use the net fabric as your "glove."

ric as your "glove."

3. Turn fish belly up while removing hooks. This disorients fish momentarily for easier, quicker handling.

4. Don't remove swallowed hooks. Just cut the line...doing so saves two-thirds of deeply hooked

5. Don't keep fish out of the water more than 10-15 seconds. Fragile gills are damaged after that...especially in cold weather.

# Watershed CCQ44

# Pending grant request could open 99 acres

As the 2010-11 Watershed Access Fund campaign comes to a close, I want to thank all who have donated to this program. Nearly 60 individuals and four TU chapters provided support so important lands can be acquired and protected for our coldwater resources.

The current grant request limit is \$5,000 because two chapters may each request for a single acquisition. Each chapter would have to match at 50%, so the new limits would provide as much as \$15,000 for a single purchase or easement. Since the program's inception, there have been three grant requests totaling \$6,000. Our Kiap-TU-Wish and Clear Waters chapters have been able to secure key properties with these grants.

Currently, another grant is pending that could add 99 acres in southern Wisconsin containing portions of two trout streams. It is anticipated a \$2,500 grant will be provided for this acquisition. But none of this is possible, without your support. Soon you will be receiving the annual contribution letter for this valuable program. Please contribute.

### 2010/11 Contributors

Andrews, Duke Antigo TU Chapter Barnes, Edwin Bartynski, Jeff Benedict, Mark Berg, Ron & Jolene Bhatia, Ashok Born, Stephen Bristol, Jerry Minocqua

Middleton
Eau Claire
Madison
Chippewa Falls
Whitefish Bay
Madison
Ellsworth

Byrnes, Clint Cook, Andrew Craig, Grant Dahlke, Dale Danou, Chris Davidson, Bruce Duplessie, Richard Emerson, James Florine, Craig Beaver Dam Sister Bay Green Bay Knapp Trempealeau Wauwatosa Eau Claire Glidden Washburn

Two Rivers Geurkink, Terry Gitter, James Belleville Stevens Point Mosinee Fountain City Grade, Donald Granum, James Green Bay TU Chapter Halbrehder, John Harkins, Paul Sparta Harshaw Hawk, John New Holstein Heart, Bill Ashland Heifner, Mark Heil, Walter De Pere Herman,Gilbert Stoughton Hill, James Oregon Roscoe, IL Onalaska Hinde, David Hoffman, Mike Hyer, Greg Kendall, Alden Kiap TU Wish TU Chapter Cross Plains Duluth, MN King, Gordon King, Gordon (WPS Matching Grant) Merrill Green Bay Madison Koivisto, Jack Lindroth, Rick McCarthy, Kim McGrath, Randy Green Bay Janesville

Tomah Random Lake Neitzel, Richard Novak, Gene Oechler, Herb Wauwatosa Ringwood, IL O'Leary, John Madison Presser, Dennis Prine, Dick Ashland Rake, Randal Robertson, Steve Rogers, William Ryan, Rosemary De Pere Elkhart Lake Wauwatosa Sandretto, Michael Shaw-Paca Chapter Neenah Smith, Jeff Madison Southeastern WI TU Chapter Spittler, Mike Steudel, Charles Minneapolis Mineral Point Steudel, Charles Stockman, Wayne Swanson, Greg Thurber, Noah Vanden Elzen, Bill Van Ness, Peter Vollrath, Larry Wachowski, Richard Spring Valley Appleton Stratford Appleton Lodi Green Bay Eau Claire Wadsworth, Leslie Welhouse, Don Madison Kaukauna Wiemerslage, Paul Wild Rivers Chapter Wisconsin Clear Waters TU Chapter

# Here is my contribution of \$100 or more to the Watershed Access Fund

(Make your check payable to "Wisconsin Trout Unlimited")

MAIL TO: TU Watershed Access Fund

% Doug Brown R4800 Timber Ln.

Ringle, WI 54471

Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Phone





Bear Creek in southwestern Sauk County joins the growing list of Driftless Area trout streams to be home to a major habitat restoration project. With one section now complete, the Aldo Leopold Chapter is already looking forward to tackling another chunk of this class II stream. As author Todd Franklin explains, ALTU has a strong set of partners in place to put this stream on the radar of trout anglers.

### By Todd Franklin

Considering my lifelong love of trout fishing and my passion for conservation, it was only a matter of time before I discovered the second love of many thoughtful trout anglers: Trout Unlimited. So, about five years ago I began considering potential volunteer opportunities with the very successful Southern WI Chapter, which serves Dane and Jefferson counties.

Then came the move from the Madison area to Beaver Dam, the result of a can't-pass-up job opportunity for my wife and a can't-pass-up educational opportunity for my teen-age daughter. Immediately upon learning the news, I frantically and fearfully tore open a copy of the DNR trout regulation pamphlet and quickly realized why I had never traveled to Dodge County to fish for trout. You'd think with thousands of miles of trout water in this state, geologic history would have sprinkled them around a little more evenly.

Perhaps it was a trade-off for such natural gems as Horicon Marsh, but regardless of the reason, I was going to be living on one of those pages

in the trout regs where the printer's green, yellow, blue, and red inks were largely spared.

I figure misery loves company, so I was pleasantly surprised when I discovered a group of fellow sufferers who several years earlier had begun to revive the Aldo Leopold Chapter of TU. When asked to join their cause and their board of directors, I couldn't say no. A year later, when asked to serve as vice president, I again couldn't say no.

Aldo Leopold TU had been having success with workdays on Columbia County streams (the chapter serves Dodge, Columbia, and Sauk counties), a fly tying class, stream monitoring, and a small restoration project in Lodi. But they never

growing up with Bear Creek running through his family property. As the decades passed, he began returning to his home waters to chase trout, yet often found himself plying streams farther west of Bear Valley. Years of erosion had taken their toll on Bear Creek, and he didn't have to travel far west to find streams with bountiful natural trout populations.

He began to wonder why Bear Creek couldn't

be restored, and he began asking around for help. His search led him to Eric Lorenzen of the Aldo Leopold Chapter, and the Bear Creek Habitat Improvement Project was thereby conceived. Suddenly the Aldo Leopold Chapter had a significant new purpose on its agenda. And before long, the WDNR worked with the family to secure a public fishing easement.

So, we had a willing landowner with two miles of stream, a perpetual DNR easement, a passionate group of chapter leaders, and a very modest bank account. Unfortunately, what we didn't have was a clue, and we didn't have anywhere near the \$130,000 needed just to fund the first half of the project.

But as we quickly discovered, there is no shortage of amazingly diverse and passionate professionals eager to help us along. As the project developed from a dream to a distinct possibility, guidance and support started arriving from coun-



had the opportunity to take on a full-scale stream restoration project...until Ron Fargen called.

## An opportunity beckons

Fargen, whose family owns a farm north of Bear Valley in western Sauk County, remembered

ty, state, and federal agencies, as well as from TU professionals and volunteers from other chapters. The project began to come together and started gathering momentum.

First came the permits, with great assistance from the DNR fisheries office in Dodgeville. Then came a design plan generously created by Brent Bergstrom at the Sauk County Land Conservation Department. The stream would be deepened and narrowed, and structures would be strategically added to create more riffle/pool habitat. Banks would be repaired, stabilized and tapered to reduce erosion and siltation. The project would even include features to improve habitat for non-game species such as turtles and birds.

#### **Funding comes rolling in**

Money was the missing link, however, and so began our self-education in grant writing, undertaken largely by chapter president Mike Barniskis and chapter Secretary Tom Gawle. Whether public or private, no potential donor was overlooked.

Thanks to the Badger Fly Fishers, our bank account grew by \$2,000. Then the Dutton Foundation kicked in \$2,000. The Wisconsin Council of Trout Unlimited believed in our project and granted us \$4,000 from its Friends of Wisconsin TU program. Suddenly, the financial hurdle started to seem surmountable.

Before long, TU National was impressed enough with our project to provide \$8,000 from its Embrace-A-Stream fund. The Sauk County Land Conservation Department would provide \$10,000. The DNR kicked in \$16,000 from the trout stamp fund. The USDA's Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) awarded us a \$48,000 grant, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awarded the project \$40,000 from its National Fish Habitat Action Plan.

With that, phase one was suddenly fully funded, and that means the most important stage of the project — heavy equipment on the ground, dump trucks hauling rock, dozers moving dirt, and excavators creating habitat. An experienced stream restoration crew from Holtz Lime and Gravel of Loganville has already begun what it does best. Soon a thing of beauty will appear — a meandering, silt-free stretch of premier trout habitat amidst a scenic Driftless Area valley.

I visited the site in August to see the progress, and I experienced a feeling of satisfaction and pride that I have never felt before. Looking at crystal clear water flowing along the graded, boulder-covered banks, the dark, deep trout "hides" and the various plunge pools, I kept saying to myself, "We did it!"

#### The power of asking

Ron Fargen made the first ask, and ALTU's enthusiastic leaders have since made asking a habit that has worked better than imagined. Whether we've asked for advice on how to obtain certain permits, reviews of our grants before we submit them, or leads on funding to pay for the project itself, help was always a phone call away.

From the beginning, DNR Regional Program Manager Scot Stewart was there to help. DNR Fisheries Management Technician Dan Fuller volunteered to oversee the project, and DNR Fisheries Biologist Gene Van Dyke provided assistance with permitting. DNR River Coordinator Bob Hansis also provided helpful advice. Trout Unlimited's Jeff Hastings and Duke Welter were always ready to lend a hand.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Fisheries Biologist Louise Maldin, Natural Resource Conservation Service Soil Conservation Technician Tony Pillow (who has offered to design phase II), and John Exo of the UW-Extension also deserve mention for their support.

Quite a few members of the Aldo Leopold Chapter donated money for the cause, and countless other individuals and organizations have supported this project indirectly, from those who donated items for our fundraisers to the newspaper editors who covered the project.

#### More work planned

With phase II of the project planned for next year, there will be plenty of opportunities for organizations and individuals to support this project. But for now, make a plan to fish this restored stream later in the season and you'll quickly realize why TU is so successful and so popular.

(This story first appeared in the Aug. 21 edition of the Wisconsin State Journal. -Ed.)







SCENES FROM THE BEAR CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT

As with so many stream restoration projects in Wisconsin's Driftless Area, heavy equipment is needed to taper highly eroded streambanks. With the right tapering, projects can withstand heavy rain events.



#### Aldo Leopold Chapter

The main news for our chapter is the completion of the 2011 phase of the **Bear Creek** habitat improvement project (see separate story on p. 8). The contractor, **Holtz Lime and Gravel**, completed seeding the week of September 5 after about six weeks of work. We are really pleased with the way the stream work turned out and can't wait to fish it.

Of course, a successful project is the work of many hands and minds, and I'd like to thank of few of the major contributors. First and foremost, I want to thank the landowners, **William Fargen** and family. It was your desire to restore Bear Creek to its former glory that started this all, and your continual support of our efforts is greatly appreciated.

Second, our chapter's board of directors deserves thanks for all of the hours you put in to make the project happen. You folks are the best.

Next in line are the wonderful agency folks who have taken this project under their wings, and without whom we could not have done it: Brent Bergstrom from Sauk County Conservation, Planning, and Zoning Department, Tony Pillow from NRCS in Baraboo, and Dan Fuller from the DNR in Poynette were all vital in our success.

Jeff Hastings of TUDARE was also critical, with his knowledge and advice helping steer us in the right direction time and time again. Many more people contributed both large and small, and it all added up to a really successful project. Thank you one and all!

As much as we are pleased with this year's work, the 2012 work season will be upon us all too soon. Shortly Brent Bergstrom will be surveying the next mile of stream so he can develop construction plans. DNR permits will be needed, and once again we'll need money, roughly \$130,000. A huge part of the needed money was taken care of when we were notified in July that we'd received a full \$50,000 River Management Grant. We will be pursuing a variety of other funding sources in our quest for another \$80,000 on top of the \$50,000 RMG, but what a great start to phase 2.

This fall's activities will include a landowner outreach meeting with other landowners along **Bear Creek**. We plan to discuss what has been done, explain what we plan for next year, and hopefully will be able to solidify a multi-year plan for additional restoration work up and down stream of the Fargen land.

Local landowners have been really positive about what's been done whenever they've visited the project site, and a few have said, "How can I get this done on my land?" So we are optimistic about our long-term prospects.

Another piece of important chapter news would be **Scott Allen** joining our board of directors. Scott hails from Reedsburg, and we thank him for volunteering to help serve the chapter. Welcome aboard!

—Mike Barniskis

#### **Antigo Chapter**

Hope everyone had a great summer, but where does the time go? We held our annual **Kid's Fishing Day** on Sat., June 4, at **Antigo City** 

**Park.** With great weather and community support, we had another fun day for the kids. Again we had the trout fishing tank with over 800 nice

brook and brown trout for the kids to catch. **Pete Curran's Taxidermy** mounted the largest fish caught, and a cute little girl landed a 16" trout.

We also had a prize fish tank where each kid could try to receive a nice prize. Our **DNR Area Fish Manager David Siebel** and his daughter manned a casting contest and handed out ice cream certificates. Everyone who came also received hamburgers and hotdogs to eat. We hosted 435 happy kids and cleaned a lot of trout for the kids. After this event the remaining fish were put into **Remmington Lake** for the other kids in the community to catch.

The summer work project on the **Evergreen River** was continued by the **DNR** work crew. This is a great

project and will be done by September. Also, the dredging project on **Karberger Sping** pond in the **Elton** area was started and the fuel cost paid by the **Antigo Chapter**. Again we have help to fund summer work in the **Nicolet National Forest**.

Just last week we had a work crew out at three different spots repainting and fixing previous stream project signs. After the afternoon and evening painting, the workers gathered on the **East Branch of the Eau Claire R.** for some well-earned food and refreshments for their hard work.

We will hold a meeting soon to plant more trout in **Remmington** Lake for the area's fishermen.

—Scott Henricks

## Blackhawk Chapter

Thanks to a great effort from the banquet committee and chapter members, plus generous contributions from our donors, we had a successful banquet at the **Pontiac Center** on April 25. We did well, despite the current state of the economy and a decrease in attendance from prior years.

We have contributed \$500 to Madison Shabazz High School's Green Teen project again this year.

We've committed up to \$4,500 to the **Vernon County Land Conservation Agency** for the construction of a parking area along **Reads Creek** at its crossing with **County M**. This will provide safe access to the stream at that point.

We've provided \$4,500 toward rock for a project on the West Fork of the Kickapoo River at the **West Fork Sports Club** property.

In addition, we partnered with the Lee Wulff Chapter of Elgin, IL, for extending stream improvements on Mill Creek and Higgins Creek north of Sabin in Richland County. Our two chapters contributed \$7,000 plus some physical work.

On June 25 eight Blackhawk members joined up with 10 from Lee Wulff TU and a couple from the Gary Borger Chapter to built 20 mini-lunkers, which have now been installed. The renovated area looks great!

Our last workday was at **VanSlyke Creek** near **Fontana** on Sat., Sept. 17, in conjunction with the **Southeastern WI Chapter**.

Five chapter members attended the **State Council** meeting in **Stevens Point** in February.

At our regular monthly meetings this year, we've been pleased to have Larry Claggett, Dave Vetrano, and Tim Fox (all three of 'em WD-NR guys), plus Jay Thurston and Todd Opsal (both authors) as informative presenters.

Our May and June meetings were held along the bank of **Turtle Creek** and featured cookouts and fly casting practice (and much spinning of tales). **Craig Amacker** helped with the casting instruction in June. —Dave Hinde

#### Central WI Chapter

The summer arrived and went quickly with some good times and with a bump in the road. CWTU, like all of our chapters, had a very busy summer, with our CWTU Riverkeepers and our workday teams bearing the brunt of it.

The workday crews had fairly cooperative weather for every one of the sessions. They accomplished a lot, averaging about 25 volunteers for each workday. There was on average 1 1/2 to 2 bank structures completed each Saturday, with some brushing also on the agenda. This brings the total for the summer to four bank structures on the **Mecan R.** completed and awaiting back fill. Another two structures were landscaped and seeded. Total stream improvement footage covered is just shy of 2,000 feet.

We had help from several chapters all summer, with members from the Elliott Donnelley Chapter of Chicago showing up several times, and Mike Kuhr from SEWTU bringing up several guys for our August workday. Check our website calendar for upcoming workdays. A big thanks for all the hard work from everyone, and thanks for the extra travel from all. Special thanks to Scott Bahn for stepping up and taking over the workday coordinator's position.



ANOTHER CUSTOM CWTU BANK COVER ON THE MECAN RIVER

This bank cover is a little different than many of this type because it is not built directly into the bank. Instead, the structure is away from the bank so as to narrow the stream. Notice the slough boards extending vertically off the back of the structure. These boards will keep the structure from silting in during the backfilling process.



CWTU also had the good fortune of receiving some very positive press. At our July board meeting, we had the *Waushara Argus*, the Waushara County newspaper, come out and do an article on the restoration of the Mecan River. The article described the work we are doing and the reasoning behind what we do with restoration.

Then in mid August, Mike Kuhr contacted me with an opportunity for us to do a segment for the Outdoor Wisconsin TV show. Deb Wolniak of Outdoor Wisconsin hosted the segment focusing on TU's stream restoration efforts and youth education opportunities. We had Shawn Sullivan of the DNR demonstrate the building of a bank cover from beginning to end, and then we had Tracy Moran of CWTU work with her son, Alex, on fly fishing for the youth segment. Mike talked about TU's mission statement and Linn Beck talked about our youth programs.

The bump in the road came when we needed to postpone our **Fly Fishing School** for the first time in 35 years. But the bright side is that it will be back next year with a new venue and new pricing. We will still be having it the first weekend in June, so check out the website or contact us for updates and exact details.

September found one of our members being honored for a lifetime of achievement when **Elward Engle** received the **Harold** "Bud" Jordahl Lifetime Achievement Award from the Gathering Waters Conservancy. He was honored for his years with the DNR and for his lifelong commitment to the environment. Elward continues to do many things to protect our natural communities and preserve our ground and surface waters. Congratulations, Elward.

Work has begun on our fall banquet, with banquet chair Laura Tucker putting together another great program for our 40th anniversary banquet. We have a lot of great prizes already for the live and silent auctions. We will also be raffling off a sit-on-top **Precision** fishing kayak with paddle. Please contact us for info and tickets (you need not be present to win). The banquet is on Sat., Oct. 15, at the Veterans Memorial building in Wautoma. Doors open at 5:00 p.m., with dinner at 6:15 p.m. Come and celebrate our 40th anniversary with us.

Our summer picnic board meetings have come to an end, but that only means our meetings will be moving inside to the **Fin-n-Feather** in **Winneconne**. Please check out the website for programs we have after each of our board meetings. **Bob Smaglik** has been working hard to put together some exciting programs for all of us. September's program featured **Ross Mueller** program "Late season trout fishing opportunities."

—Linn Beck

We divided into teams, each with a canoe to carry tools. We used chain saws to clear the river of downed trees and sweepers. Chapter member **Stu Grimstad** organized the teams and tasks. After completing their sections, workers returned to the **Rising Star Mill** in **Nelsonville** for a hot lunch. Recreational kayakers, canoists, and fly fishers who walk or float the river here will see the obvious improvements.

The annual **Shooters** workday was on August 28. Each year, chapter member **Gene Schulfer**, the owner of **Shooters Supper Club** in **Plover**, gives his employees a day off to work with us on the **Tomorrow River**. They enjoyed getting in the river, and we benefited from all the sandbags they filled. Many thanks are due to Gene and his staff.

Continued on p. 12



## CWTU presents a memorable Boy Scout jamboree program

By Linn Beck

Central Wisconsin TU had a unique opportunity to help host a Boy Scout Jamboree function last May.

Scott Bunde of the DNR was approached by David Becker of the Boy Scouts last February to put something together for a jamboree that was planned for the weekend of May 14. Scott, in turn, contacted me to see if CWTU could assemble volunteers and a program for the scouts. He suggested we do it at the Mecan River site where we have been doing stream restoration.

We tried to coincide this with a habitat workday, but the timing didn't work out. However, the Mecan R. turned out to be a perfect place to show what is going on during a stream restoration and the benefits of what comes from a restoration.

What started out as a program for 25-30 scouts ended up serving over 140 scouts attending two sessions. We were able to put on a program that was very fun and educational. It consisted of four stations: fly tying, fly fishing/casting, stream monitoring, and a habitat station. The curriculum consisted of a morning and an afternoon session. Each station would have 25-minute programs that were completed on a rotation basis.

The fly tying station was all set with vises for all and a packet of materials so each scout could tie a fly. The materials were supplied by Bob Haase. These are the same packets used for all of the youth programs and partially funded by the WITU State Council.

The next station was fly fishing/casting. The boys learned the basics of fishing and casting, including some hands-on experience.

The third station was stream monitoring, where the kids learned about our stream monitoring process and a short entomology lesson.

The last station was the habitat station, where the kids learned about structures and the impact they have on the water and the fish that use them. Here the boys learned some more about the insects and how they also use the habitat created. There was even a lesson on poisonous plants and how to identify them.

Following the afternoon session, the DNR conducted a stream shocking on two structures that were completed the previous year. They explained the difference in the size and number of the fish present compared to the year before.

This program was made possible with the help of some great guys giving up a Saturday for a great cause. CWTU members who helped out included Ira Geise, Jim Murphy, John Tucker, Dave Johnson, Chris Northway, Mike Niemczyk, and Jerry Smet. The DNR personal that helped out were Scott Bunde, Shawn Sullivan, and Ted Johnson. Thanks goes out to all for a wonderful day and a great learning experience for the scouts.

#### Fox Valley Chapter

The Fox Valley Chapter's activities this summer and the past couple of summers have been centered on stream work and the building and refurbishing of structures that were placed in the **South Branch of the Little Wolf River** years ago. We completed the work on that project in June.

We now have started habitat work on Peterson Creek in Waupaca County. Our work started with a July 9 habitat day and will continue over the next couple of years. FV-TU members, TU member Stan from Oakbrook, IL, a number of Boy Scouts and their leaders, students from Fox Valley Technical College, and a group of young men from Rawhide Boy's Ranch have been working on the project. Jim Hlaban and Joe Bach have coordinated additional evening and weekday opportunities to work on the project. We will be placing brush bundles and lunker structures in a number of places on the Peterson. The work this year finished up on September 10.

On August 13 we also had our chapter picnic following the habitat day on the Peterson. The picnic was again hosted by **Nancy Rosenbacher** 

at the Rose Farm on the Waupaca River just west of Waupaca.

Our first chapter meeting of the fall/winter season was on Sept. 15 at the **Bubolz Nature Center** just north of **Appleton**. **Bob Haase**, our friend from the **Central WI Chapter**, presented a program on planning a western fly fishing trip.

Our future meetings will be on the third Thursday of the month in October, November, December, January, February, March, and April. Check our website for information.

We are in the planning stages for our annual fund-raiser, Cabin Fever Day, to be held Jan. 28, 2012. We are moving our event to Fox Valley Technical College in a new addition which includes state-of-the-art symposium rooms and a very nice gathering area. Please see the ad in this issue and the January Wisconsin Trout for more information. Also check our website for updates at www.foxvalleytu.org.

Enjoy the last few days of trout fishing this fall, and in the words of **Tom Lager**, our "Let's Talk Bugs" writer, "enjoy His creation."

—Rich Erickson

#### Frank Hornberg Chapter

As is our usual custom, members of the Frank Hornberg Chapter spent the summer working in the **Tomorrow River**. We had a large turnout on June 18, working at the **Rolling Hills Road** crossing where we removed a large willow tree just downstream from the culverts. **Paul & Loretta Peck** prepared a marvelous hot lunch for appreciative work-

We scheduled two additional days in July and August to complete our work on the DNR project where

the river passes through the **Bob Lea** property. This summer our role in this project was to jet in posts and position Christmas trees to narrow the channel. The project is now essentially finished, and the river looks quite different as a result.

On July 23 our chapter co-sponsored a river cleanup with the **Friends of the Tomorrow Waupaca River**. This, too, is an annual event. This year we concentrated on the section of the river from the **Clemenson Road** bridge to **Nelsonville**.



Continued from p. 11

Our September 8 work evening was spent in the river just upstream from **Stedman County Park**. We used chain saws to remove downed trees that were blocking the river. When that was finished, **Bob & Louise Juracka** invited us to their house to sit on the front porch, tell stories, nd eat popcorn.

We had another workday scheduled for September 17 at Welton Road, just downstream from Nelsonville.

For the last few years, some of our chapter members have gotten together for a joint fishing outing in September. This year it will be on September 28. We are changing the format this time, picking a location closer to home, thereby making it one-day event instead of an overnight one. We are also inviting family and friends. It should be a great day on the water.

—John Vollrath

#### Green Bay Chapter

The Green Bay Chapter (www.greenbaytu.com) has completed another very successful season of work projects on area trout streams. Work Project Chair Lee Meyers filed the following report on the summer's activities:

We had a total of eight workdays starting in April and running throughout summer, usually on the third Saturday of each month. In April, we helped the **DNR** stock catchable trout into **Haller's Creek** along the trout educational walking trail.

In May, we did maintenance work on the same trout education displays along the walking trail. This required an extra half day by some members who returned to totally rebuild the bank cover display along the trail.

Following the education theme, on July 13 we did our annual **Kids Fishing Day** outing with the **PALS Program** of **Brown County Social Services**. I believe this was the 20th year of this event.

In June we switched over to

In June, we switched over to trout habitat improvement work. In total we did four work projects, two on the **South Br. Oconto R.** in association with the **DNR** LTE crew.

We also had two days on the **Upper N. Br. Oconto R.** with the **US Forest Service** fish crew. Most of the work involved brush bundles and improving stream depth, water flow, and trout habitat cover.

In many of these areas, warm water is often a problem to trout, and the improvements we made will help keep the waters cooler. We averaged 15 TU members per project,

which is an increase over the last two years. Some of these helpers came from the **Oconto** and **Marinette** chapters. A huge thank you goes to those of you who took time away from your weekends to help make the trout resource better. All totaled, I think we did about 450 hours of habitat work and about 150 of hours toward trout education.

The chapter now has resumed monthly meetings, the focus of which will be raising funds through our annual banquet and planning the best use of these monies to benefit our coldwater resources.

Finally, we've recently revamped our chapter website. Check it out to see the work of our tech-savvy volunteers working to keep you informed.

—Gary Stoychoff





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FOX VALLEY INVOLVING PARTNERS ON CHAPTER PROJECTS

Mark Peerenboom and Gordy Braun (top, I to r) pose with some Fox Valley Technical Institute students from South America near the South Branch of the Little Wolf where FVTU completed a two-year steam restoration project. WDNR Fisheries Supervisor Al Niebur (bottom left) gives Rawhide Boys Ranch volunteers a briefing on the downtown Waupaca River improvement project.



## Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

Our 2011 stream project is about 1.3 miles of Six Mile Branch. Six Mile Branch runs into the Blue River after Big Spring runs into Six Mile Branch. These streams are a few miles WNW of Highland. Work should start in a couple weeks and lunker structures have already been completed as there were only about a dozen needed. Thanks to all those who did the building. Grants have already been awarded to the project for a lot of the roughly \$134,000 cost.

Our summer interns from UW-Platteville have been busy all summer doing stream studies, including studies of Six Mile Branch before we got started with the stream stabi-

lization. Each summer for a number of years, we have hired a college student from UW-P to be our summer intern. We also have an assistant who becomes the intern the next summer. A UW-P professor works with them, and they do stream studies of streams in our area, in particular those we are working on or may work on. At our annual meeting in March, they give a report on their findings.

On September 24 we had our **Landowners Recognition Picnic**. We served food from 11:30 to 1:00, put on a small program, and conducted a raffle drawing for two rods.

—Brian Larson

### Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

Kiap-TU-Wish finished up projects recently on Pine Creek, Parker Creek, and Plum Creek. There may be some residual work, or even opportunities to extend our work, but we have basically met our goals here. We will now be looking to work with our county conservation personnel to hopefully map out future projects on a broader scale.

We have been asked to do a tire cleanup project on the **Trimbelle R.** sometime in October in coordination with the **DNR** and some local residents.

We are currently dealing with a couple of sand mine proposals that are simply putting several trout streams in very precarious situations. We will be monitoring these

situations, and our goal is to work with the all parties involved to minimize any risk to our resources.

Our board is currently prioritizing the tasks that were mapped out in our new strategic plan. Once completed, we will use the final list as initiatives for future plans. Thanks to all the board members and chapter members who helped develop this plan.

At the September meeting we had our first "social slide hour" where members contributed fishing/outdoor pictures from their outings over the last couple of years to a simple slideshow. The presentation brought some great pics, as well as some interesting talking points.

—Kyle Amundson

#### Northwoods Chapter

We had our 18th Youth Fly Fishing Conclave at Cedric A. Vig Outdoor Classroom in Rhinelander. We had a small group of kids this year, but they were all excited to be learning about fly fishing.

Thank you to our volunteers Aaron Nelson, David Brum, Dave Carriveau, Brian Hegge, Joshua Kunzman, and Bob Tabbert. Thanks to our organizer, Terry Cummings, for another great conclave.

### Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

Our formal all-chapter meetings resume on Tuesday, Sept. 27, at the **Thunder Bay Grille**, which is located at N14W24130 Tower Place, in **Pewaukee**. Dinner (optional) is at 6:00, meet and greet is at 7:00, and the meeting starts at 7:15. Our meetings are open to the public and run monthly from Sept. thru May. Stop out, get acquainted with some old friends, and make some new ones.

We have a great slate of guests lined up this fall. On Sept. 27, **Mike Reiter**, Chair of the **Wisconsin Conservation Congress' Trout Committee**, will speak about trout fishing regulations and the role of the WCC.

Filmmaker **Robert Thompson** will join us on Oct. 25. He is best known for his recent films "Night of the Hex" and "Musky Country: Zero 2 Hero."

Long-time supporter Capt. Pat Ehlers, owner of The Fly Fishers fly shop in Greenfield will be our featured speaker on Nov. 15.

Thanks also to **Josh Kunzman**, **Terry Cummings**, and **Laura Macfarland** for making it to the workday on the **Deerskin R.** in August. It's people like you who keep organizations like us going.

Finally, Monday, Oct. 10 will be our meeting at **Bucket Heads Bar and Grill** in **Rhinelander**. Starts at 6 p.m. See you there.

—Hannah Hansen



I CAN'T WAIT TO OPEN THIS BABY

This youngster won a couple handfuls of fishing equipment at a recent Northwoods Chapter Youth Fly Fishing Conclave held at the Cedric A Vig Outdoor Classroom in Rhinelander.

We'll host our annual holiday party on Dec. 13. This is a less formal meeting featuring dinner, an optional gift exchange, and a movie.

We've had a full summer of stream restoration in 2011. On June 11, SEWTU volunteers helped the Aldo Leopold Chapter build 50 lunkers for the Bear Creek project in Sauk County. This workday coincided with our chapter outing at the West Fork Sports Club in Avalanche. Many came out to enjoy this weekend of camping, fishing, stream restoration, and an entomology lesson from Professor Jason Freund.

On July 16, we returned to Rosenow Creek in Oconomowoc. The creek had long been cared for by local teacher Mike Olander and his students. Since Mike's retirement several years ago, no one has been around to clean up after several se-

vere storms washed trees and debris into the creek. Mike reached out to the **DNR** who, in turn, contacted SEWTU. It's not often we get asked to work on a class I trout stream in our own area! Volunteers removed logjams and raked elodea from the stream channel to increase the flow. Afterwards, the DNR crew shocked a short stretch of the creek and found wild, native brook trout ranging from 4-9".

Partnering with other chapters has always been a big part of the way SEWTU approaches workdays. On August 20, a group of SEWTU volunteers joined **Central Wisconsin TU** for their workday on the **Mecan River**. Work crews built bank cover structures in the river, seeded a re-graded stream bank, and performed brushing.

Continued on p. 14



**CHAIN SAW SAFETY TRAINING FOR SWTU MEMBERS** 

With so many TU chapters involved in brushing and tree removal on stream projects, chain saw safety training is becoming a popular program. The Southern WI Chapter recently held such a session for its members.



Continued from p. 13

We partnered with **Blackhawk TU** for our **Van Slyke Creek** workday in **Fontana** on Sept. 17. Volunteers installed half log overhead cover structures, filled a sinkhole, and performed brushing work. Thanks to all who participated.

Future workdays include Oct. 15 at Genesee Creek in Genesee Depot, and Dec. 10 at Bluff Creek near Whitewater. We'll work from 9:00 a.m. until Noon, and then enjoy a brat fry lunch. For the latest details, join our e-mail list by sending a request to sustain@sewtu.org or check www.sewtu.org.

On Tuesday, October 18, SEW-TU will host our Annual Habitat Fund-raiser to support future stream restoration efforts. The event will be held at the Charcoal Grill and Rotisserie in New Berlin from 6-10 p.m. This fun -filled evening will feature food, drink, live music, and lots of raffle prizes! We hope to see you there. E-mail Mike Kuhr at mikek.trout@yahoo.com for more information.

Our education and outreach calendar has been full this summer, too. On Tuesday, July 26, we held our annual Casting Clinic in Greenfield Park. Orvis instructor Erik Helm, SEWTUs Larry Wirth, and others were on hand to provide instruction. Thanks to SEWTU leaders Chuck Beeler, Stan Strelka, Chris Weber, and Jay Zawerschnik for providing food and beverages.

In addition to the casting clinic, we participated in several retail events at the **Orvis** and **Cabela's** stores. On Oct. 8, we'll have a booth at the **DNR's Root River Steelhead Facility Open House** in **Racine**. This is a fun event catered toward children and families.

Our **Project Healing Waters** program is still busy tying flies at the **VA Medical Center. Al Dalphonso** and **Glen Winston** lead our morning group. **George Batcha** and **Rick Frye** have been leading the evening classes.

We held five fishing outings with the veterans this summer: May 2 at Greenfield Park, June 27 at Wern Valley Sportsman's Club, July 25 at Cabela's, August 22 at Rushing Waters Fisheries, and Sept. 19 at Thiensville Village Park. Special thanks to Wern Valley, Cabela's, and Rushing Waters for sharing their private ponds with our veterans. Our vets particularly enjoyed Rushing Waters, where large rainbow trout eagerly took dry flies all morning long! Thank you to all the volunteer fly fishing mentors who make these outings possible.

If you would like to receive SEWTU e-ail alerts with details about upcoming events, contact us at sustain@sewtu.org. Thanks for all you do. Our coldwater resources wouldn't be the same without you.

—Mike Kuhr

## Southern WI Chapter

Summer found the Southern WI Chapter tackling a wide array of activities — some annual events and some brand new!

We were proud to partner with

the **Nohr Chapter** on a raffle for two drool-worthy items: a **Paul Douglas** bamboo rod and a Sage TCX with Sage 3800 large arbor reel. By the time you're reading this, two very





# Wild Rivers works with WDNR on Little Sioux River restoration

By Chuck Campbell

Wild Rivers Chapter volunteers working with WDNR to complete the first phase of a stream clean-up on the Little Sioux River in Bayfield County this summer.

DNR cut and placed overhanging alder brush on the stream banks. The brush will be piled later, and some plantings will be made. The chapter will be involved in the planting of conifers along the riparian area in the future to discourage beaver use and advance succession in the future.

Chapter volunteers spent Saturday mornings on August 20 and 27 clearing brush dams and small sections of wood from the stream. The brush was cut and the stream cleared 400 feet upstream and 1,050 feet downstream from Little Sioux Road. Chapter members working on the project included Dick & Jody Prine, Rob Kemkes, Jim Emerson, Rolland & Joyce Kiel, Mark Eggleson, Dick Berge, and Chuck Campbell. More stream work remains, so contact a chapter officer if you are interested in working on this project.

The area of the Little Sioux Road crossing with the stream has been the scene of much activity, including the installation of a large culvert in 2010 and a timber harvesting operation during 2011. A timber harvest is currently underway on both sides of the stream.

Chapter member Don Bayliss has been very concerned over the amount of erosion that has resulted from these activities near the stream. In fact, the erosion fencing and bales installed as a part of the culvert project have failed, and a large washout extends from the roadway ditch to the stream. The Wild Rivers board of directors decided to seek a resolution to this erosion with Bayfield County, and a letter was filed with the conservation and forestry departments on August 11, 2011. Thanks to Don for his work on this issue.



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lucky people will have won heirloom rods, and the two chapters will have raised funds for joint stream improvement projects. A win-win for the two chapters, and an even bigger win for our coldwater resource.

Our stream workday efforts roared loudly forward with a chain saw safety training class. Those who attended learned a great deal about the proper care and safe use of a chain saw, skills they'll put to use clearing trees and brush at future workday parties.

We have formed a new Conservation Committee to organize and focus our stream restoration efforts. Our efforts also continue on several fronts, including encouraging and supporting Dane County's program to purchase permanent easements for critical coldwater habitats. This drive to permanently create habitat and access protections is a national model that we are very proud to be a part of.

We have also kept our focus on the major habitat restoration project being planned along Black Earth Creek near the Village of Mazomanie. This project will result in significant stream improvements, as well as greatly improved outdoor recreational activities. Earlier this year, our board of directors approved a commitment of \$10,000 for the project.

Lake Marion was also the site of our annual chapter picnic, which included a review of the project as well as great conversation and excellent food.

In June we held our annual Special Fishing Day for people with disabilities. A rainy day slowly turned to sun, providing excellent weather for an outdoor adventure. Again organized by John Schweiger, many chapter volunteers gathered at Kalscheur Ponds to help some very special people have a great time catching fish.

Please mark your calendar for our annual Icebreaker event on Saturday, January 14. Our featured speaker is Kirk Deeter, noted Colorado guide and author. His articles have appeared in many national publications and his books include Castworks and Tidelines. The event will again be held at the spacious Promega Center in Fitchburg, and we hope to see you there. Aside from winging your way to somewhere warm, there is no better cure for the winter blahs than a day spent at the Icebreaker.

Learn more and stay up-to-date on these and our many other activities by visiting www.swtu.org!

—Drew Kasel

## Wild Rivers Chapter

Wild Rivers Chapter was selected recently as Volunteer of the Year by the Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge. In presenting the award, Mike Mylmarek said, "On behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge, we would like to congratulate the Wild Rivers Chapter of Trout Unlimited for being selected as this year's recipient of the Refuge's 'Volunteer Of The Year Award' in recognition of your contribution, dedication, and valuable partnership in the support of the refuge mission.'

Wild Rivers volunteers worked with the **DNR** to completed the first phase of the stream cleanup on the Little Sioux River in Bayfield County. DNR cut and placed the overhanging alder brush on the streambanks. The brush will be piled later, and some plantings will be made. The chapter will be involved in the planting of conifers along the riparian area in the future to discourage beaver use and advance succession in the future.

The chapter participated in the open house event at the Iron River National Fish Hatchery, a great event for kids and families. We toured this impressive fish hatchery and learned about fish and fishing. Wild Rivers chapter members volunteer at the event each year to help the staff and to demonstrate fly casting and fly tying.

The annual call is out for volunteers to help Glen Miller and USF&WS conduct the electro fishing survey of fish population on Whittlesey Creek. The survey will use barge shocking on the lower part of the river. This survey is very important to the coaster brook trout restoration effort and gives volunteers a chance to have a hands-on experience in fisheries work in a beautiful setting.

—Dick Berge

#### Wisconsin Clear Waters

The Cochrane-Fountain City HS (Buffalo County Office-Todd Mau) Ag 2 class of sophomores spent an afternoon at the Eagle Valley Creek restoration project in Buffalo Co.

Ag teacher Christine Jumbeck told me this class has a number of students that have their sights set on careers in natural resources, and there is a waiting list of students signed up for any stream restoration trips. This group of kids didn't stand around and goof off, either. They really went to work seeding, liming, fertilizing, and mulching from the minute they got off the bus until the driver gave the signal to get back up the hill and back on the bus!

As you probably know, everything in **Buffalo County** is uphill. I would swear that the creek was even flowing uphill. Rob Herman and a crew from **WDNR** oversaw the work and do a short electro-fishing demo for the kids.

Partners in the Eagle Valley Creek project include USDA-NRCS Fountain City Rod and Gun Club, DNR trout stamp program, Clear Waters TU, and the Cochrane-Fountain City High School.

Greg Noll, a UW-River Falls senior majoring in agricultural technology engineering, recently completed the Buffalo County Natural Resources Internship. At the completion of his internship, Greg received a \$4,000 scholarship that was established through donations provided by the following conservation clubs, businesses, and private donors: Alma Rod and Gun Club, Alma Swan Watch, Brunkow Hardwoods, Dairyland Power, Durand Sportsman's Club, Fountain City Lions Club, Fountain City Rod and Gun Club, Marty Hallock, Mondovi Conservation Club, Nelson Rod and Gun Club, TU Clear Waters Chapter, and the Waumandee Rod and Gun Club. The internship consisted of 500 hours of natural resources and land conservation work. Projects included fishery and wildlife surveys, conservation planning, stream monitoring and restoration, designing and engineering conservation practices, environmental and angler education, forest regeneration monitoring, agricultural crop damage assessment and monitoring, and white-tailed deer fawn mortality research.

Todd Mau, NRCS District Conservationist, said the internship was very demanding, but Greg did an outstanding job from start to finish.

For more internship information and to view a report entitled "2011 Buffalo County Natural Resources Internship Program," go to http:// buffalo.uwex.edu/land-owner-network/conservation-intern/.

Several work nights were spent in felling the dense box elder stream corridor forest on the Rick & Stella **Bauer** property east of **Durand**. The next step will be to re-shape and stabilize banks along with installing trout habitat structures.

—Tim Meyer

### Wisconsin River Valley Chapter

Chapter members Henry Kanemoto, Bob Pils, Gene Koshak, Al Hauber, and Linda Lehman volunteered to help with the annual Sporting Heritage Day at the Wausau School Forest. This is one of my favorite events of the year and takes place the last Saturday in August. It's a great opportunity to meet some fine young people and their parents as they learn about outdoor activities.

This year our group provided entry forms for one youngster to win a Cahill fly rod and reel. From 94 entries, the winner was Jordan LaRue. Although there were many kids with their fingers crossed to win, I think this rod is in the right home after seeing the first part of Jordan's email address, "fishinglarve."

We had beautiful weather this year, and 243 kids participated in

the event. It is a free event, and every kid walks away with a prize at the end. I did not get her name, but the first name drawn was a young lady who picked a full size deer decoy. To watch her carrying her prize was priceless.

I also had the opportunity to tag along with the **DNR** crew as they did a fish survey in Lincoln County. I was wearing the wrong waders to get too close to the boat with the electric paddles, but I really enjoyed the day with them.

Continued on p. 16









#### DALE AND JIM INVITE YOU TO REST AWHILE

Two permanent benches along the Wolf River in Langlade were dedicated to the memory of Dale Druckrey and Jim Waters by the Wolf River Chapter.

Continued from p. 15

They surveyed hundreds of fish that day, the three largest of which were brown trout over 16 inches. One that was estimated at over 20" escaped. They also came up with a black crappie and a largemouth bass that was about three inches long. A

northern pike was seen but not captured. The surprise of the day was a tiger trout.

Our Monday, October 10 meeting will feature guest speaker **Kris Stepenuck**, the **Volunteer Stream Monitoring Program Coordinator** for the DNR. I have heard many

good things about her, and we're very anxious to finally meet her and learn about the stream monitoring program. The meeting takes place in the lodge room at **Gander Mountain**. The program should begin at 7 p.m. Please join us.

—Linda Lehman

#### Wolf River Chapter

Chapter members placed two benches along the Wolf River in Langlade on Sat., Sept. 3. They are located at the landing on the southwest corner from the bridge. The benches are permanent and are dedicated to Dale Druckrey and Jim Waters for their work on the Wolf River and its tributaries. A lunch was provided by Sharon Waters.

Water monitoring on eight Wolf River tributaries wrapped up for the year in September. Eight locations were tested once a month, and nine locations were monitored for temperature. The data will be processed by the DNR.

The culvert at the snowmobile crossing of upper **Ninemile Creek** is in the process of being replaced. The old culvert was placed too shallow and at the wrong angle. The new one is oval in shape and will allow the free passage of spawning brook trout. Some beaver activity has been observed above the crossing, but trapper **Duane Fronick** is in hot pursuit!



SURPRISE...A TIGER!
This beautiful tiger trout was a highlight of a recent shocking on a Lincoln County stream that some Wisconsin River Valley TU member

attended.

The chapter is selling prints made of original drawings by Cap Buettner of hatches on the Wolf River. The prints are being sold for \$20 each. Anyone interested can contact Tim Waters at (920) 751-0654 or MuddyWaters@new.rr.com.

—Tim Waters

## 2008-2010 trout stamp project report published

A new WDNR report detailing projects funded largely by the sale

of inland trout stamps is now available at the WDNR's website.

# Miscellaneous facts and statistics on the inland trout stamp program

- DNR and its partners improved habitat on more than 75 miles of trout streams and three spring ponds from 2008-2010, did maintenance work at the site of past habitat improvement projects, and contracted with federal wildlife officials to keep 2,250 miles of northern trout streams free of beaver dams to benefit trout.
- The amount of trout stamp revenue available for 2008-2010 increased significantly over the previous threeyear period, to more than \$1.5 million annually, due to an increase in trout stamp fees starting in 2006.
- The number of trout stamps sold in 2008 increased 5 percent over 2007, and 2009 sales increased 7 percent over 2008.
- Through funding primarily from the sale of inland trout stamps, Wisconsin has now improved an estimated 865 miles of trout habitat.
- Wisconsin has more than 13,000 miles of classified trout waters.
- The exact locations of these improved trout sites are not maintained by the DNR, but they are shown in the book Map Guide to Improved Trout Waters of Wisconsin. See www.WhereAml-Pubs.com.

"There are clear and demonstrable benefits to fishing as a result of these projects. And if anything, this report understates all of the work

Expenditures of Ir

Irout Stamp R

report understates that is going on to improve trout fishing in Wisconsin," Staggs says. Staggs notes that the report captures only work funded primarily through trout stamp sales and conducted by the DNR with partners.

The federal Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and many county governments and fishing organizations also undertake their own projects of ten in the service of the se

projects, often in partnership with DNR.

One example is Trout Unlimited's Driftless Area Restoration Ef-

fort, which seeks to tap a variety of sources of funding to restore trout habitat in the Driftless Area that includes portions of Wisconsin, Iowa,

Minnesota, and Il-

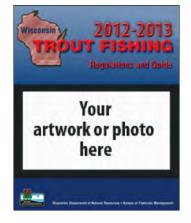
linois.

Wisconsin created the inland waters trout stamp program in 1977 to provide more funding for improving and restoring habitat than the \$140,000 typically available before the program started.

With an increase to \$10 for the stamp starting in 2006, revenues from trout stamp sales have climbed to \$1.5 million annually. General li-

cense fishing fees were also tapped for some habitat work. General license fees contributed an average of \$411,812 per year from 2008-10.

## TU helping DNR select cover art for trout reg booklet



TU is working with the WDNR to select a photograph or artwork for the cover of the 2012-14 edition of the *Wisconsin Trout Fishing Regulations* and *Guide*. So review your photos or dust off that canvas. There's still time to enter.

In recent years, the DNR has discontinued its traditional trout stamp contest and the printing of physical trout stamps. This effort with TU helps revive some aspects of the original program. It also broadens the program by accepting photos.

To have your photo or artwork considered, send your high-resolution electronic submission/s

to Darrell Toliver at DJTSOK@aol.com by December 1, 2011.

Submissions will be reviewed and judged by TU members under the direction of Wolf River TU President Tim Waters. The winner will be notified by the end of December. The new trout regulation booklet will be available by early February.

Wisconsin residents who submit photographs or artwork are granting Trout Unlimited and the DNR a non-exclusive license to use and reproduce all submissions for all such purposes as TU or the DNR may deem appropriate.

## Brookie caught twice in 24 hours

By Lloyd "Duke" Andrews

A few years back when fishing the S. Branch of the Oconto River, I had a catch, release, and recapture experience with a 14" brook trout.

Memorable Trout Trip It was the first week in June and water level was normal for that time of

year. It was late evening, about a half hour before dark, and I was fishing a dry fly (Grizzly Wulff) downstream. Yes, that's right, downstream. That way I could float the fly into cover scenarios that couldn't be accessed fishing upstream.

I noticed a nice rise near the left bank ahead of some alders. The location was out of the main flow and in slower water that didn't look all that productive. I deftly cast somewhat upstream from the rise form and, voila, a nice take occurred. I figured it was a brown as that has been my experience in this stretch of river. When bringing the fish in for unhooking and release, I was elated to see that it was a nice brookie. Further examination found that one of its gill covers was significantly deformed. Following further examination of an otherwise beautiful trout, it was released.

The next evening, about 24 hours later, I again fished the same stretch that I had the previous evening with the same fly. Letting the fly drift into a cut bank, where I have taken trout before, wham, another nice take by a respectable trout. When bringing the fish to hand, it was another 14" brook trout. I thought it was a twin to the previous night's catch, but low and behold, it had the identical deformed gill cover.

Dumfounded and without reservation, I judged it to be the same brook trout I caught the evening before. The only difference is the second night's fish was caught about 150 feet farther upstream. What are the chances that two identical brook trout with the same deformed gill cover would be found in virtually the same stretch of stream within 24 hours?

The probability of that occurring is so remote that it is not worth debating. This experience confirms that catch and release — at least within 24 hours and likely beyond — is a viable regulatory option, and that brook trout, at least in this case, have a relatively short memory.

Of course, I might like to think my angling skill in presentation had something to do with it, but then



STUDENTS HELP WI CLEAR WATERS SEED EAGLE VALLEY CREEK

Ag students from Cochrane-Fountain City High School spent a recent afternoon at the Eagle Valley Creek restoration project in Buffalo County. Students found it a great day to seed, lime, fertilize, and mulch the newly sculpted streambanks. Quite a few of these students plan careers in natural resources.

luck might be a bigger factor.

Being in the right place at the right time probably had a lot to do with it. After 65 years of trouting, the latter circumstance bears heavily on my successes.

(Longtime TU member Duke Andrews is a retired DNR District Fisheries Supervisor and past WITU NE Region Vice Chair. He lives in Minocqua and is a member of the Northwoods Chapter. -Ed.)



## WITU Looking Back

## From the July 1981 WITU Quarterly Report...

DNR LAKE TROUT PROJECT STRIKES PAY DIRT

Madison, Wi. --- A pilot project utilizing astro-turf "sandwiches" to aid in hatching lake trout eggs in Lake Superior has proved successful. The project is part of an effort by the Department of Natural Resources to encourage lake trout to reproduce naturally in Lake Superior.

In October, DNR fish managers anchored five of the one by three foot astro-turf sandwich mats containing some 55,000 lake trout eggs in 45 feet of water over Devil's Island reef in the Apostle Islands area of Lake Superior. On May 7, after six and onehalf months, the mats were lifted and examined for hatching success. About 78 percent of the eggs had hatched. This is equivalent to the success rate obtained in controlled hatchery condi-Survival of fish to spawning age through use of this technique is expected to be greater than that for fish produced in hatcheries.

From the October 2001 Wisconsin Trout...

## **Budget item returns stream access to 'keep feet wet' rule**

Trout anglers should be aware that changes to rules pertaining to waterway access were enacted in the 2001 Wisconsin state budget bill

Effective Sept. 1, 2001, people using these waterways will, for the most part, have to return to the old "keep your feet wet" test, as created by the Wisconsin Supreme Court, according to Michael Lutz, a DNR attorney specializing in shoreland rules.

This take-back of public waterway rights was introduced into the Assembly budget by Rep. Du-Wayne Johnsrud (R-Easton). The provision then made it through the budget conference committee.

Wisconsin TU objected to the budget provision in a letter to Gov. McCallum, but the change was not vetoed by the Governor.

The 'keep you feet wet' test was the accepted standard rule prior to the recently signed budget. Ironically, it was the previous budget bill that broadened stream access, allowing people to walk on exposed shorelines up to the ordinary high water mark at any time for water-related recreational activities.

However, Lutz said, the Legislature did retain some portions of the prior law, which were found in s. 30.134, Wis. Stats., allowing users to exit the body of water, where necessary, to bypass an obstruction.

Obstructions could consist of trees or rocks, shallow water for boaters or deep water for wading trout fishers. The bypass can involve areas up to the ordinary high water mark and should be by the shortest route possible.

As with the prior law, the right to use the exposed shoreline applies only to rivers and streams. On lakes and flowages, the requirement remains that users must be in the water with no right to use the exposed shoreline without the owner's consent.

From the Fall 1991 Wisconsin Trout...

## Some "dam" good news, for a change

No news, so goes the saying, is good news. Mass murders, armed assaults, child abuse and banking scandals all seem to make the front pages day after day.

But once in a while some news comes across the wires that is "good" news. And we have in this issue-in this article--some "good" news. "Dam"

good news, in fact!

This past summer has seen three cases where decisions have been made to either remove old, dysfunctional man-made dams or modify flow orders for dams on well-known rivers in Wisconsin. Those decisions will be of great benefit to anglers and all who love free-flowing streams.

In Lincoln County, the County Board of Supervisors gave final approval for the demolition and removal of the "Prairie Dells Dam" on the Prairie River northeast of Merrill.

In St. Croix County, the Willow Falls Dam will be removed this fall as a result of the state Legislature appropriating funds in the 1991-1993 budget for such work.

And, in Oconto County, Oconto Electric Cooperative, which operates the Stiles Dam on the main Oconto River just west of Highway 141, was ordered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to maintain minimum stream flows in the river at significantly higher levels than it has done in the past.

## **Spinner preferences from TU experts**

My clear favorite spinners are Panther Martins in sizes 4 (1/8 oz), 2 (1/16 oz.), and 1 (1/32 oz). Their slow spin is the key. I use Mepps 1/0 and 00. For known big fish I might use Panther 6 or Mepps 2. On my wall I have a 10 pounder caught in the Trempeleau River on a #2 plain brass Mepps. Two weeks ago I caught two 20-inchers on a #2 yellow-dotted plain Panther. I also much like the smallest sinking Rapala, I think it's #5. Finally, I really like the smallest Little Cleo #140.

—Bob Meier, Fox Valley Chapter

I like #1 Mepps in gold and in rainbow (blue and white). I also like the holographic small spinners that Panther Martin make in sizes 1 or 2. I can remember at least 20 years ago talking to Ron Ehnert about the same subject. He noted that his favorite was a #1 Mepps copper spinner. I went out and bought several of them and found them to be relatively unproductive. Than I came to the realization that what a guy thinks is the best spinner is what he fishes the most, and because he fishes it the most, he catches the most fish with it.

—Chuck Steudel, Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

I've been using a #2 gold Mepps spinner for the Driftless Area since 1985...not the same one...been through 50-60, I suppose. Also, the treble hook comes with a red plastic attractant. I cut that off. I'm not sure why, except that is what Jim Radke, former District Conservationist for NRCS, told me to do when he introduced me to trout fishing for the first time. I use about a 6 lb. line on a 5 1/2' ultra-light rod. Side by side with some of the greatest (like Duke Welter, a guy TU hired to travel across the nation), the Mepps outfished them all!

-Jeff Hastings, TUDARE Project Manager

I have several recommendations, depending on stream size and conditions. I like spinners that I can work slow, especially when water temps are low. My current favorites are the #6 Panther Martin with a black body with yellow spots and a gold blade. My other Panther favorites are the #6 yellow body with red spots and gold blade and the #4 or #6 with the multi-colored blade and body.

I also use the 1/8 and 1/4 ounce Rooster Tail. My two best colors are the black and gold bodies and gold blades. I also use several crank baits, especially in waters with lots of crayfish and minnows. I learned years ago that, like smallmouth, brown trout love crayfish, so I use the smallest Rebel Crawdad in a variety of colors and try to match the native crayfish as close as I can.

I also like the small floating and sinking Rapalas. I've done well on the standard silver color, but I have caught more fish using the rainbow trout colored Rapala.

The best advice I can give to anglers new to spin fishing for trout is to start your retrieve just before the bait hits the water. Many times if you wait until the bait is in the water before you start your retrieve, the trout will have already hit it and spit it out.

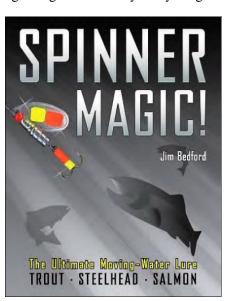
On those days when you just can't seem to find the right bait, don't be afraid to try something totally different. Once Mike Staggs, WDNR Fisheries Management Bureau Director, kicked my butt using a bright yellow marabou jig he still had on his ultra light form a recent crappie fishing trip.

—Dave Vetrano, former WDNR fishery manager

# Wisconsin Trout book review Spinner Magic! has good advice from a spinning expert

By Bob Meier

For openers, I think Jim Bedford, author of *Spinner Magic!* (Frank Amato Publications, \$14.95), is a true expert. I found myself agreeing with virtually everything he



wrote, though the area where he primarily fishes is different than our Wisconsin streams.

I suppose to identify Bedford as an expert implies that I have some credentials myself. I don't know about that, except that I do have experience spinner fishing. I have caught about 50,000 trout and over 100 have been 20-inchers or better.

The great strength of this book is that it is extremely thorough. Bedford covers every aspect of trout fishing, including what you need, why you need it, and how it works. Chapter two includes all of the above except waders and wading, which are covered in chapter five. If a beginner was exposed to the things in these two chapters — a total of 13 pages — he or she would have been introduced to about every item of equipment needed.

A problem with the book's usefulness for Wisconsin spinner fishermen is that it is mostly oriented to big water and deals more with steelhead and salmon than trout. Of the fish pictured, 10 are trout and 18 or so are salmon or steelhead. Of the streams shown, 14 or so are large and all the rest are medium in size. No streams pictured fall into the 20-foot-wide-or-smaller category that fill our Wisconsin landscape.

Here in Wisconsin, our fishing focus is on what a trout lie looks

Accurate casts are a requirement, and brush is frequently a problem. My impression is that brush is getting worse on our Wisconsin streams because former pastures are being abandoned and brush is growing up.

like, how brushy the stream is, and how I can get in position to cast to a trout lie.

Accurate casts are a requirement, and brush is frequently a problem. My impression is that brush is getting worse on our Wisconsin streams because former pastures are being abandoned and brush is growing up.

To handle brush, I make my own short rods from spinning rod tips. My preferred rods are just 34 to 40 inches long. I have a good purchased rod that is only 42 inches long. With these short rods I can fish about every stream I can wade. With the short rods and four-pound line, I can routinely cast about 60 feet, which is plenty. Long casts will help you spook fewer fish and improve your catch rate.

In summary, every new trout fisherman — whether bait, hardware, or fly — can profit from reading chapters two and five of this new book, and current spin fishers will learn from the entire book.

(Author Bob Meier of the Fox Valley Chapter has fished across Wisconsin with spinners. -Ed.)

## Why I don't whack



#### By Augustus Merrill

Our chapter's "Whack a Northern Day" is a highlight in a year filled with highlights. I am told that it's a great day, and someday I hope to make it. The crew assembles at the Sutherland bridge on Bayfield County's upper White — that great shrine of hex fishers where the launch fee is still 50 cents. They then float down in maybe a half dozen canoes, casting spoons for northerns.

Member Thoughts The float lasts about six hours, and at the end of the day the gang takes out in Mason and has a wonderful fish fry. They eat pike if

they've caught a few, whitefish or panfish if the fishing is poor. There is lots of food, lots of camaraderie, and not a soul among the participants fails to appreciate the high-quality wilderness setting they have just paddled through.

In short, there is not a thing wrong with "Whack a Northern Day," and yet something about it gnaws at me — something that perhaps shouldn't be there. Certainly it isn't the people involved. They are all nature's noblemen: boon companions on a barstool or a church pew. All are heavily involved in stewardship of the land and water, but none are overly serious. They are a great group of guys.

I think what gnaws at me is that northern pike are regarded as somehow more fair game than brown trout when it comes to whacking and eating one. I leave it to those who wish to explore the subject more deeply, but my understanding is that the northern pike is the indigenous species on the White River, while the brown trout is the invasive or introduced species. Even so, the logic behind "Whack a Northern Day" is to get rid of the sinister northerns that are eating our angelic browns. This is what gnaws at me and why I have not yet whacked a northern.

I think the entire distinction between those who eat trout and those who don't has caused a world of trouble. I see no difference in whacking a northern or whacking a brown. Political correctness may have its place in this world, but not in such an atavistic occupation as fishing. If I whack a northern, I might as well whack a brown, and that is all that I am in favor of. A fish is a fish, and to make distinctions based on which is prettiest and which is more to one's pleasure or personal aesthetic taste reminds me a bit too much of my native country where people were quick to put sheets on their heads.

One spring I was fishing with a Japanese student named Nori Kitakura. We fished off the old Ashland ore dock — bottom fishing, just taking it easy, talking and waiting for a bite. Suddenly

## a northern

there was one. My line peeled out, I set the hook and reeled in my prize. I was hoping for a trout or maybe a walleye. When the fish came to the net, I saw that it was a burbot or fresh water cod. This is the fish that they hilariously call a lawyer up here. My prize was a slimy brown thing with a tail like an eel and the mouth of a bottom-feeding catfish. I turned to Nori and said, "Isn't that an ugly fish?" Embarrassed, he looked down at the fish and told me that to him all fish are beautiful

I think this is what gets me. I don't particularly care that northerns are indigenous while browns are not. I am far too old for that. I don't particularly care that trout offer more sport than pike. They are both a lot of fun to catch and eat. What I care about, as I have one foot in the grave, is that Nori was right: all fish are beautiful

Someday I hope to float through the Bibon with my good friends. Maybe I will whack a northern or scandalize them by whacking a brown. In the meantime, I like to think that both the slimy green predators and their lovely prey are both doing well in the White. I like to think that a simple sentence spoken by an honest person can change one's life. All fish are beautiful.

(Augustus Merrill is a member of the Wild River Chapter. This story originally appeared in the September 2011 Wild River Tribune. -Ed.)

## Bob's Hex uses a curved needle to form its extended deer hair body

By Bob Haase

Begin this fly by bending a large sewing needle as shown and securing it in your vice jaws.

Tie on thread, but do not put on any head cement because you will have to slide this body off the needle later on.

















Begin by tying in about 5 to 6 moose body hairs or other similar material.

Take a clump of yellow deer body hair about two thirds the size of a lead pencil and tie it on as shown. Begin at the end of the needle where you started to tie in the moose hair and make even wraps about 1/8" apart for a length of about 1 to 1-1/4". When you reach this length, reverse and wrap evenly back to the tip. You should wrap with more tension at the tip and less at the butt end to taper the body.

You will leave about 1/4" inch of hair flair at the tip as shown. Whip finish at the tip and cut your thread.

Grip the body between your thumb and forefinger and slide the tail part way off the needle. Apply a few drops of flex cement at the tip as shown so that it drips down into the center. Pull off the rest of the way and apply a layer of flex cement over the body and allow to dry.

Place the hook in the vise and lay down a layer of thread about half way down the shank of the hook and bring it back to the eye of the hook. Tie in a pair of mono eyes as shown and bring the thread back to the

#### MATERIALS LIST Bob's Hex

**Hook:** Mustad 94840 or equivalent #6 or 8

Thread: gold or brown 6/0

(140 denier)

**Extended Tail:** yellow deer body hair tied on needle and attached to hook

**Hackle:** amber, gray, and brown dry fly hackle

**Wing:** McFlylon in a blend of brown, gray, and gold or just one color

Eyes: brown mono eyes

middle of the hook.

Put a few drops of super glue on the hook from where you stopped the thread to about half way to the mono eyes. Tie in the tail and body section by holding the loose ends of deer hair around hook where you put the super glue and wrap around the hook to form the body. Stop a little before the eyes as shown.

Take a piece of brown, gold, and gray McFlylon or polypropylene yarn and blend the colors together by using a Velcro brush and separating and bringing the bunch back together. You can use one color for the wings or blend two or more colors as shown.

Tie in the McFlylon wings in an upright "V" as shown. They should be placed just about 3/16" behind the eyes. Wrap about six wraps around each wing and figure eight to hold them in place. Place flex cement at the base of the wings to about 1/4 inch up on the wings. You may want to give them two coats. You don't want to go all the way up with the flex cement because if you leave the upper two thirds of the wings loose they won't cause your leader to twist as much.

Tie in three dry fly hackles of appropriate size just behind the wings. You can use more than one color hackle. I generally use a brown, gold, and dun colored hackle. Then wrap the hackle, one at a time, behind and in front of the wings.

With your thumb and forefinger, grip the wings and bend them back to the tail. Reference the spot where

## Bob's Tying Tips

Advice from the bench of Bob Haase

# Many head cement options out there for today's tyers

Most tyers, including myself, use some form of head cement during the various steps of tying a fly and also to coat the head. Many tyers also have a prefer-



ence as to which kind of head cement they use, such as a specific brand, or water based vs. solvent based.

I use a variety of head cements depending on the application I am performing. If I am tying at a youth tying program, I use water-based cement, if I use any at all. I also always use water-based cement when applying cement around any rubber legs so that they don't curl up.

## Applicator bottles with needles a help

Regardless of which kind of head cement I am using, I prefer to use the bottles with an attached needle applicator attached to the cover so it does not dry out as fast and is always handy when needed.



Please notice in the picture that I am bringing the needle applicator up inside the rim of the bottle to remove excess cement rather than doing so on the top rim of the bottle. This prevents cement build-up on the rim that makes the cap difficult to open.

I prefer the bottles shown that are distributed by Wapsi because they fit so nicely into the Renzetti tool holder. Once you tip over a bottle of head cement on your tying station, you will invest in a Renzetti tool holder or devise one that will hold your bottles without tipping. You can purchase empty bottles like this and fill them with anything you want.

## Thinners extend your cement's life

Also, if you are using a solvent-based cement, most of them can be thinned with methyl ethyl ketone, which I purchase in quart



containers because it is a lot less expensive than purchasing thinner in the smaller bottles.

You may need to use a different thinner based on the cement you are using, but you can save on the cost of head cement by finding the proper thinner and thinning your cement when needed. It is important to thin your cement so that it can soak into the thread and materials and create a stronger bond without too much cement buildup.

## Rubber bands help open sticky lids

If you ever have problems opening a bottle of cement, wrapping a rubber band around the bottle top will help you grip the cap and make it easier to open. I usually carry a few extra



rubber bands with me in my tying kit.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each kind of head cement, water based vs. solvent based, or between the various brands and products. You can get them in hard finishes, gloss finishes, flexible finishes, and even in different colors as well as clear. Loon even makes finishes that cure in seconds with a UV lamp.

Check out some of the new products and see what works best for you.

the wings reach a little past the solid part of the tail where the deer hair flairs. Bring the wings back upright and cut the wings to that length on an angle as shown. Then make a small cut at an angle on the tip to form the shape of a mayfly wing.

You can trim the hackle off the bottom a little to make it sit on the water better or leave it as is.

Options: You can tie this as a parachute as well by simply wrapping the hackle as a parachute around the wings. The flared deer hair on the tail helps make this fly float better, and this fly floats great

and lays on the water nicely.

I think you and the fish will like this fly. All you need now is a hex hatch to try it out! That comes next spring.



## Friends grants have totaled \$37,000 since 2010

#### By Doug Brown Friends of WITU Chair

The 2011 Friends of Wisconsin TU fundraising campaign is half over and the support has been generous. I thank ALL of you who have contributed this year.

I am continually impressed with your support of this program. We received over \$14,000 in donations this year from nearly 130 members and eight TU chapters. Since 2010, this program has returned an in-

credible sum of \$37,000 in grants to eight TU chapters and the WDNR.

YOUR trout streams have benefited with these grants by providing a long-lasting tribute to what generous donations can do. Countless miles of our coldwater resources have benefited with in-stream restoration to benefit our trout friends.

This year's gift for a donation of \$100 or more is a StreamWorks HatLight. The light attaches to your cap for hands-free use, or it can be attached to your key chain for all

sorts of uses. You will also be listed in four consecutive editions of *Wisconsin Trout*.

Thanks to Tight Lines Fly Shop in De Pere for their help in securing this gift.

If you have not yet donated, please seriously consider it, knowing that your financial commitment will benefit YOUR streams, and more importantly, the trout in them. And if your chapter is in need of funding for a habitat project, let us know. The Friends are here to help.



