



Wisconsin Trout

Winter 2016

Council Banquet a “can't-miss event”

By Mike Kuhr, Council Vice-Chair and 2016 Banquet Committee Chair

The 2016 Annual Meeting and State Council Banquet on Saturday, February 6 is almost here. Please save the date and plan to join us in Oshkosh. We will once again return to the Best Western Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center.

This location served us well the past two years and we're looking forward to coming back in February. A limited block of rooms has been set aside for both Friday and Saturday nights. Call the hotel at 855-230-1900 to make your room reservations today. Tell them you're in town for the Trout Unlimited Banquet.

The banquet is our Council's biggest fundraiser. Funds raised at this event allow us to continue serving local chapters, and help fund programs such as the WITU Youth Fishing Camp and STREAM Girls.

Tickets are \$35 each. See the full-page ad in this issue of Wisconsin Trout for more details. You may also purchase tickets online at wisconsintu.bpt.me. While we do plan for a few walk-ups every year, ordering tickets in advance or making arrangements to pay at the door and RSVP'ing to mikek.trout@yahoo.com are highly encouraged. This event is open to the public so please consider bringing family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. All are welcome.

Doors will open at 4:30 p.m. and there will be plenty of time to socialize, visit the cash bar, or simply peruse the bucket raffle and silent auction prizes. Dinner seating will begin around 6:30 p.m. After dinner we'll hold a live auction for several different fishing trips with some of the top guides and destinations in the state. We'll also take time to recognize some of our best volunteers and conservationists with a

brief awards program. The evening will finish with the announcement of our silent auction and bucket raffle winners.

The Council would like to thank all of the chapters and individuals who donate prizes for the event. Your generosity makes for a successful banquet and an unforgettable evening for our guests. This year we've assembled more than \$10,000 worth of prizes, and we're eager to give them away! And a special thanks to Rich Vetrano of SEWTU for helping us create the full-page ad in Wisconsin Trout.

Chapter leaders should plan on attending the State Council meeting earlier in the day to discuss Council business. The meeting starts at 9 a.m. and runs until about 2:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Council Chair Linn Beck if you plan on attending the meeting so we can prepare for lunch.

We are also sponsoring a Women's Fly Fishing Clinic for beginners who are curious about the sport. This free clinic will run from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday. A lunch will be provided. Space is limited, so sign up now by contacting Heidi Oberstadt at heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com. These types of events are a great way to introduce trout stream ecology and the importance of TU's conservation work to a new audience.

Much planning has already taken place and the Council is indebted to the work of the Banquet Committee. An event of this scale simply wouldn't happen without the efforts of Committee members Bill Heart, Heidi Oberstadt, Henry Koltz, Jim Wierzba, Kim McCarthy, Linn Beck, and Todd Franklin.

We're focused on planning a fun, entertaining, and successful banquet. We hope you'll join us in Oshkosh on Feb. 6 to celebrating cold, clean, fishable water in Wisconsin.



Todd Franklin

SMILING, HAPPY TICKET SELLERS

How can you resist buying a handful of bucket raffle tickets from these smiling gals? Come to this year's banquet and enjoy raffles, auctions, great food and drinks, music and most of all, friends.

Women's activities planned during annual meeting

Women's social gathering Friday

Please join us for a "Women's Social Gathering" Friday, February 5 in Oshkosh, the evening before the WITU annual meeting and banquet. Let's talk fishing, destinations and resources. Dun Magazine's Jen Ripple and Nome Buckman will be there. Make connections, see gear trends for women. Geri Meyer of the Athena and Artemis Women's Fly Shop will be there. Learn a few new tricks and share good company. No registration needed but we would love to know if you're coming. Let Heidi Oberstadt know by emailing her at Heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com

Free Women's Basic Fishing Clinic Saturday

This clinic will be held during the day on Saturday, February 6. Please invite women you know who are curious about the sport of fly fishing. Those interested please contact Heidi Oberstadt at Heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com to register.

WITU takes positions on proposed groundwater bills

By Henry Koltz, TU National Trustee

Wisconsin's history of codified groundwater protection spans back to at least 1983's Comprehensive Groundwater Protection Act (1983 Wisconsin Act 410). That act created Chapter 160 of Wisconsin's Statutes, which created groundwater standards, regulatory programs, aquifer classifications, monitoring programs, set aside research funding, and set local groundwater management responsibilities.

In 2003, the Wisconsin Groundwater Protection Act (2003 Wisconsin Act 310) was passed, and provided more protections. Specifically, it called for the tracking of well construction and water use, expanded the regulation of high-capacity wells, created designated groundwater management areas, and created a groundwater advisory committee.

In 2007, Wisconsin Act 227 saw Wisconsin pass legislation to implement the Great Lakes Compact, which generally addresses water quality, use, and diversions in the Great Lakes basin. The Great Lakes Compact was itself signed by all Great Lakes states, Ontario, and Quebec, in 2005.

Currently, a new groundwater bill (SB 291) has been introduced by Wis-

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Earlier trout season is open!

History, tips and tricks.

By Duke Welter

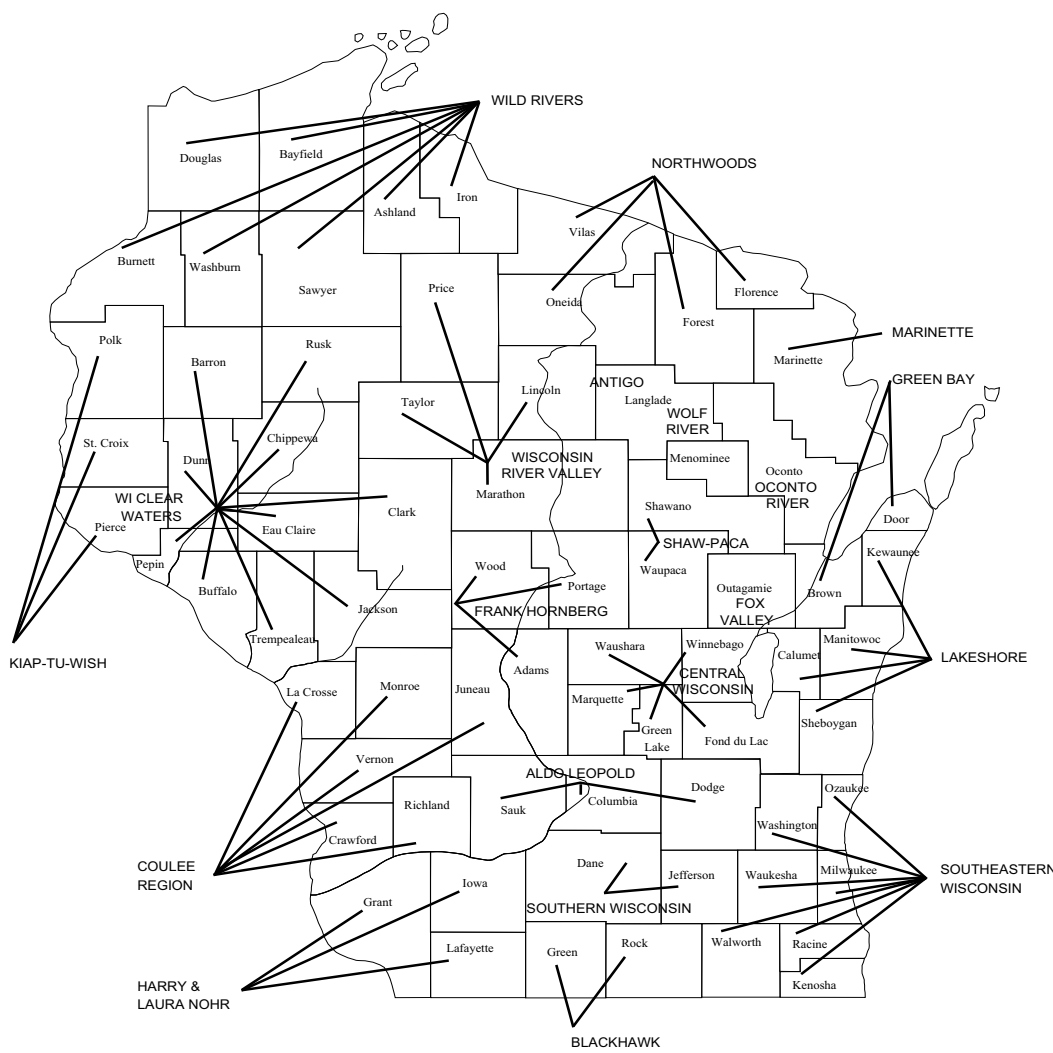
Wisconsin trout anglers will have 11 more weeks of stream fishing in 2016, starting with the new early catch-and-release season which opened January 2 on most state trout streams. The state's history with the early trout season included an early January opener from 1975 to 1999, with harvest of trout allowed. That season was only open in the state's seven southwestern-most counties, and anglers there complained about being swamped by visitors from all over the state and Midwest. As a result the seven-county early season was revamped in 1999. The new structure allowed catch-and-release angling from the first Saturday in March to the last

Sunday in April, followed by a five-day closure.

In 2016, the new season structure will start earlier and eliminate the five-day closure, which earned its share of criticism. Some anglers dubbed it the "silly season." Many anglers who have traveled to Iowa (which has a year-round trout season) during Wisconsin's closed season are likely to fish closer to home this year. That might make Iowa's anglers happy, although it might affect some of the lodging and dining spots in small northeastern Iowa towns such as Dorchester and Lansing.

The trout season changes were the result of a lengthy DNR study
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Wisconsin TU Chapters, Presidents, and Websites



Visit WITU online at:
wicouncil.tu.org

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- Wisconsin River Valley (#395):** Patrick Esselman, pesselman@charter.net; www.wrvtu.org
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Membership: Linn Beck and Mike Kuhr (see above)

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Are you getting emails from TU?

If you are currently not receiving news and event-related email messages from your chapter, the state council and TU National, then you are truly missing out on what's happening at all three levels. TU National manages the mailing list for the council and chapters, so update your address by going to www.tu.org, log in, then go to "Email Preferences." You can also call 1-800-834-2419 to make these changes, or to ask questions about making the changes via the web site.

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Photo/article contributions, letters to the editor and advertisements are welcomed. Submit to:

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State Council Officers

Executive Committee includes officers and vice chairs

Linn Beck, Chair

Mike Kuhr, Vice Chair

Tom Lager, Secretary

Gary Stoychoff, Treasurer

Chairman's Column

By Linn Beck, Council Chair

I would like to start off by thanking all of you for a great year of work in 2015. Your chapter leaders have submitted their year-end reports, and it's always amazing to see how many volunteer hours our members contribute. You all deserve a very big round of applause for a job well done. 2016 promises to be an even better year for all, and we will have plenty of opportunities for involvement and improvement.

To help chapters improve their efforts in the areas of membership and leadership, we have created a very unique program to steer them in the right direction. We are happy to put on this program for individual chapters or for groups of chapters. It includes many lessons learned from past chapter experiences, some of which were floundering and turned their chapters around. If interested please contact Council Vice Chair Mike Kuhr or myself and we will be glad to schedule a program

with you.

Our third annual WITU youth camp is scheduled, and we are excited to raise the limit to 20 attendees this year. With more students means we will need more volunteers for all aspects. And with the popularity of the spin fishing and bait fishing aspects, we would really like to get some of the TU members who spin fish or bait fish involved in the camp. Anyone interested please contact me and we will get you signed up to help out.

Lastly I would like to talk a little about the advocacy that has been happening. A huge thank you goes out to all of you who have contacted the legislature about the various issues affecting our coldwater resources. Please know that your efforts are greatly appreciated and they do work. TU has become very well known and all have come to expect TU to speak up on the issues we feel are very important to our mission. And the best thing is we are doing it the right way by educating



BECK AND A BIGHORN BROWN

Wisconsin State Council Chair Linn Beck enjoys some well-earned vacation time on the Bighorn River in Montana.

and expressing our facts. Please know that we will continue on this track and we will certainly call on all of you again to help us fight for our

mission to preserve and protect our coldwater resources.

Thanks for all you do!

DNR land sales update

By Mike Stapleton, WITU Legislative Committee

The top story in the last issue of Wisconsin Trout explained the potential sale of 118 parcels of state land, which was set into motion by provisions of the 2013 Biennial Budget Bill.

The interests of all outdoor enthusiasts would take a hit if all of the 118 parcels identified for possible sale were in fact sold. However, the interests of TU and other trout anglers in particular could be seriously impacted since almost half of those properties either abut or are in close proximity to existing coldwater resources.

Significant among the parcels were a number of spring pond properties in Langlade County, as well as lands abutting popular trout streams in other areas of the state.

Since the release of the property list, DNR field staff have been conducting reviews of each of them. Deputy Director of the DNR Bureau of Facilities and Lands Doug Haag stated that while most field reviews are complete, a small number are not, which is why the matter was not part of the Natural Resources Board agenda for December, as had been previously anticipated. He said reports and recommendations of the central office staff will be presented to the NRB at its February, 2016 meeting in Madison. These final reports will be posted on the Land Sales page of the DNR website in late January.

Haag also confirmed that the DNR central office has received a considerable number of letters protesting the proposed land sale. In addition to the TU email urging our members to submit such letters to DNR staff as well as legislators, some of the letters received may have been generated by newspaper

articles by columnist Patrick Durkin, in which he urged sportsmen, hunters in particular, to oppose this action.

TU should be grateful for assistance we may have received due to newspaper articles, since every piece of the properties we are concerned about may also be someone else's favorite grouse cover, deer hunting or bird watching spot. It's not just about fishing, and to the extent that hunters and other outdoor enthusiasts have joined us in our response to this, we are grateful to Durkin for helping to get the word out.

In November Rep. Mark Spreitzer, D-Beloit, introduced Assembly Bill 499, which would repeal the statutory provisions that required 10,000 acres of DNR-owned property to be offered for sale. Sen. Spreitzer has stated that the specific target of this bill was the land sale process currently under review. The bill was referred to the Assembly Committee on Environment and Forestry. Sen. Mark Miller, D-Monona, has introduced a companion bill, SB-364, which was referred to the Senate Committee on Forestry and Energy. Neither bill has been scheduled for a public hearing. TU members should contact their legislators, offer arguments as to why the potential land sales would be unwise, and request support to not only bring this bill to a public hearing, but to support its adoption.

Right now it's still a waiting game, though we can continue to express our concerns and opposition to the potential sale of these lands, and also to seek legislative support for the recently introduced AB 499 and SB 364.

It will be at least a month before final staff reports and recommendations are available to the public and we should all be watching for them.



TU National has hired Laura MacFarland to work on northern streams.

TU hires MacFarland for National Forest habitat work

TU National has hired Laura MacFarland as the new staff person to do work on the Nicolet Chequamegon National Forest. Laura comes to Trout Unlimited following a very successful time with The River Alliance of Wisconsin, where she worked with the invasive species program. Laura has also been involved with TU at the chapter level as president of the Northwoods Chapter the past few years.

I'm sure most of you are familiar with the TU model of "Preserve, Restore, and Reconnect." It is the "Reconnect" piece of the habitat model that Laura is being hired to direct on the National Forest. For years it has been well known that one of the biggest issues facing trout streams in the forest has been poorly placed culverts at road crossings. Many problem sites have been identified, and streams both large and small have fish populations being prevented from reaching upstream spawning areas because of poorly planned culvert installations. Laura's task will be to obtain funding and work with crews to get the most serious obstructions corrected.

We welcome Laura on board to TU's staff. Her hiring is another very positive development for trout in northern Wisconsin.

—Kim McCarthy

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National Leadership Council report

By Kim McCarthy, NLC Rep for Wisconsin TU

Things are very active at TU National. A couple of issues are developing that will impact local chapters throughout Wisconsin.

The first is not solely an NLC issue but is part of a change in financial policy by TU National. Properly handling money within chapters and councils is a critically important part of what we do. All chapters and councils owe it to the resource and their donors to guarantee that funds are used solely for TU's mission. The vast majority of chapters and councils have never had any issues financially. But a few have had problems, and a simple policy could have prevented them.

The new policy requires two people to keep an eye on chapter and council finances. It would be as simple as using online banking and having a board member who is not the treasurer take a quick look at the accounts once a month. Regardless of how chapters decide to implement having a second person checking the finances, National is now going to require all chapters and councils to implement that policy.

The NLC Education Committee is also hard at work to make education a larger part of what TU does. TU has developed education programs to make committed conservationists of young people all the way

from early elementary school right through college, but many chapters and councils are not familiar with all of these programs. Chapter members are sometimes reluctant to do youth activities because they don't know how to approach holding an event. Yet TU National has developed plans for just about any kind of youth activity a chapter might want to do.

To solve the familiarity gap between what National has available and what chapters are aware of, each chapter and council will be asked to assign one of their leaders to serve as education coordinator. These people would take on the task of making themselves familiar with all of the education programs available through National and providing that information to their chapter as education activities are considered. By having an education coordinator within each chapter, it is hoped that chapters will be able to increase their educational activities.

We will be discussing both of these issues at the February 6 Annual Meeting in Oshkosh. I look forward to seeing all of the chapter leaders at the meeting.

TU's National Leadership Council is the volunteer body that sets the direction for TU and is made up of representatives from each state council. Kim McCarthy is Wisconsin TU's current NLC representative.



Heidi Oberstadt

Students, volunteers sought for youth camp

By Linn Beck, State Council Chair

I guess with the ringing in of the new year, there is only one thing to think about...well, maybe two. One is the new fishing season but the other is just as important. It's time to start thinking about this year's third annual WITU Youth Fishing Camp.

If you know of a youngster who would be interested in attending this amazing camp, please contact your local chapter or contact one of the organizers listed below. We are expecting to fill the camp roster of 20 attendees, so the earlier the better for getting in your applications to assure a spot.

This year's camp will run from Thursday July 14 through Sunday July 17 at Pine Lake Bible camp between Waupaca and Wild Rose. The camp is open to all youth ages 12-16. There will be a wide variety of workshops, from knot tying to fly tying. This year's camp also will have the same great programs like the

streamside habitat workshop including the fish shocking, fly and spin casting, spin fishing, bait fishing plus many more. We are also adding a new program on invasive species.

We can certainly use more volunteers, especially those who fish with spinners and bait and who can help with the fishing excursions. If you are interested in helping, the State Council picks up the tab for room and board for the weekend. Come for one day or stay and help out all weekend. It's up to you. If you can help please contact us.

All of the WITU youth camp staff thank you in advance for helping us get the third annual camp off to a flying start, and we hope that you consider helping out. You will be glad you did.

To volunteer, nominate a student or ask other questions, contact Linn Beck at chlbeck@att.net, 920-216-7408; Wayne Parmley at wayne.parmley@sbcglobal.net, 920-540-2315; or Bob Haase at flytiner@milwpc.com, 920-579-3858.

2016 Annual Driftless Symposium Feb. 2-3

By Jeff Hastings, TUDARE Project Manager

The annual Driftless Symposium will be held at the Radisson Hotel in La Crosse February 2-3, 2016. Both planning groups have been busy developing two separate tracks: "Coldwater Riparian Management" and "Soil and Water: Quality Matters."

Those who follow the "Coldwater Riparian Management" track will have the opportunity to attend sessions including: the latest research about Driftless trout streams; in-stream habitat; riparian connectivity; and the social aspects of water resource management. The "Soil and Water: Quality Matters" track will be offering sessions on: Ecology and Management of Prairiestrips, Cover Crops, Soil Quality Restoration and more.

The conference will open up again with five-minute presentations from the various conservation groups working in and around the Driftless Area, and a social at Freight House with plenty of opportunity to network.

By the end of December we will have on-line registration and a draft agenda available at <http://www.dare restoration.com/Symposium.html>.

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Bill Heart receives award from WWA



Todd Franklin

HEART'S EFFORTS RECOGNIZED

Bill Heart receives an award from Wisconsin Wetlands Association Executive Director Tracy Hames for his efforts at protecting the Bad River watershed.

Former Council Chair, NLC Representative and long-time Wild Rivers Chapter leader Bill Heart was among several groups and individuals who were recently recognized for their work promot-

ing the importance of wetlands in protecting the Bad River Watershed, which includes the Bad River/Kakaogon Sloughs Estuary and the Penokee Hills, an area recently considered for a controversial

iron mine development.

At its annual awards ceremony in Madison, the Wisconsin Wetlands Association bestowed awards to Heart, as well as the Bad River Tribal Natural Resources Program, the Bad River Watershed Association, John Coleman and Dawn White of the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission Environmental Section and Jim Meeker (who passed away in 2014) and Joan Elias.

According to the WWA, Heart was recognized because he has been instrumental in organizing and helping others protect and care for the wetland resources of the Bad River Watershed. He has also been involved in fieldwork for the wetlands and advocated the importance of the area as a trout fishery.

WWA Executive Director Tracy Hames said "Bill knows the Bad River Watershed. The land, the landscape, and the people are a part of his being. There's no one in the Chequamegon bay area who doesn't know and love Bill Heart (well maybe one or

two). He understands the importance of this area as a trout fishery and how wetlands play a part in maintaining its health.

He has connections throughout the region and the state and is a wetland leader, promoting the importance of this wetland landscape to the watershed resources all the way down to Lake Superior.

He has introduced hundreds of people to the wetlands and water resources of the Bad River Watershed. Bill's work in this area is intensely personal to him. For example, when a large development proposal threatened this area, Bill employed his experience, connections, understanding and passion to protect the land he so dearly loves."

The WWA was established in 1969 for the protection, restoration and enjoyment and associated ecosystems through science-based programs, education and advocacy. They hold the annual Wetlands Awards to honor groups and individuals working hard for wetlands across the state.

Trustee's Report

New and views from our TU national trustee

By Henry Koltz, TU National Trustee

As some of you know, I was voted in as a National Grassroots Trustee at the beginning of this year. I want to say thank you to everyone reading this, as it is undoubtedly your collective efforts that resulted in my appointment. I am keenly aware of the fact that I am nothing more than a reflection of the decades of work that the whole of Wisconsin TU has logged, and the incredible reputation that its achievements have earned. While I happen to be the body at the table, the seat is yours. Thank you, in all sincerity.

Financial controls policy

First, TU has recently adopted a new Policy on Financial and Property Controls. That policy is available to all leaders in the on-line Tackle Box (available in the Leaders Only section of the TU website). The policy seeks that chapters:

- Create an inventory of assets over \$200 in value.
- Ensure funds donated for specific purposes are in fact used such purposes
- Not knowingly elect as leaders those convicted of certain crimes (notably involving fraud, dishonesty, or financial improprieties, and sex-related crimes);
- Strive to have officer turnover and term limits consistent with the national model bylaws;
- Have a non-signatory officer review financial transactions once per month;
- Strive to use dual signatures for checks of more than \$1,000 (or other lower amounts as the chapter sees fit); and,
- Use debit and credit cards with caution, and as outlined in the policy.

This policy is a direct reaction to actual events. Specifically, TU has

had a few not-insignificant alleged issues of financial impropriety which have occurred recently. I have been closely involved working through one of these issues, and have a good working knowledge of others. I can say, quite honestly, that in retrospect every group involved would easily trade 15 to 30 minutes each month dealing with these financial controls versus dealing with missing money, police, anger and suspicion and disappointed donors.

No one wants more work to do. I get it. But think about this: Our volunteers and donors do so much for us. They give their time, money, and efforts all for our good cause. They show up when we ask them to. They donate when we ask them to, and they keep doing so year after year. We owe it to them to safeguard the financial support that they provide with the same vigor that we protect cold water.

Moreover, we owe it to our leaders to ensure that we have given them a framework to operate within, and this policy does so. This policy was vetted with state council chairs, NLC representatives and board members from across the TU nation.

I firmly believe that although this policy may take some getting used to, it is designed with chapters and chapter leaders' best interests in mind. Because of our incredible leaders, Wisconsin is on the forefront of much in the TU world, and I believe that this is another area where we can excel and serve as an example nationwide.

National staffer hired for northern Wisconsin

As reported elsewhere in this

publication, TU's national office has worked on behalf of Wisconsin in the past two years to bring additional national staff to Wisconsin. These staff are intended to help streams in the northern reaches of our state, and to help spread the power of stream restoration just as TUDARE has done in the Driftless region.

Interviews have been held and hires are set. This development is due in no uncertain terms to the reputation that TU and its volunteers have earned. Because of the work that you've done, the national office has come through to support you with additional full-time staff.

Congratulations, and let's do all that we can to support our new staff moving forward, and to make sure that the north sees even more incredible work projects go into the water.

Because of our incredible leaders, Wisconsin is on the forefront of much in the TU world

Free Family Memberships

TU recognizes that many of us are one-member TU families. What does that mean? Well, in my family for many years I was our only paying TU member. My wife, however, is as much a part of the TU family as anyone. My kids have basically grown up in streams, and half of everything they wear has TU emblazoned on it.

In short, being TU is second nature around my place. But for many years, the rest of my family weren't members. I bet that's the case for a lot of us and those we love.

As a result, TU has launched a Free Family Membership Upgrade drive. In short, an existing single, regular member can upgrade their membership to a family membership, for free.

The benefits include ensuring that each of your family members becomes a TU member, the ability for each of your family TU members to create a login for the TU national website, the ability to receive communications about TU events such as women's events, kids events, workdays, and Stream Explorer

magazines for kids under 12.

To take advantage of this offer, simply go to tu.org/familymembership and plug in your information. The entire process only takes a few minutes.

License Plates

License plate sales have been steady. But, to be blunt, we need to sell more plates. These plates will provide \$25 each year to the State Council, which we can use for a variety of things. From habitat work, to hiring professionals to aid us in our mission, to simply building up Wisconsin TU's finances, license plates are a great way to make your car look fantastic, and to also help our cause.

Growing up, I drove what can probably be best referred to as a "junk parade" of jalopies. One time the hood of the car I was driving literally just flew off. One time the dash lights quit working so we drilled a hole through the dash and stuck a little battery powered light bulb in there. Totally custom, baby. A different car had a wheel fly off for reasons that are still unclear. Yet another car, my first, a '76 AMC Matador, was actually more Bondo than metal. It was so nonmetallic that it was actually microwavable. I have no idea why my parents listened to me when I said "I can fix that car!" Anyhow, I would have killed for something like a TU license plate to divert people's gaze from whatever I was driving. All I'm asking is that in the spirit of the litany of rolling garbage I have driven in my life, that you have mercy on me and buy a license plate, and help Wisconsin TU.

Conclusion

It's been another solid year for Wisconsin TU. We've been as active as ever supporting our cause in Madison. We've done an incredible amount of stream work, worked with kids at an amazing clip, and have been incredibly involved using trout and cold water to help our veterans. I've said it before, but it bears repeating: It's an honor and privilege to be your voice at the table. Thank you for all that you do for Wisconsin TU.

Driftless trout numbers dynamic

Some recent trends in trout numbers in Driftless Area streams

By Matthew Mitro, DNR Trout Scientist and Joanna Griffin, DNR Trout Coordinator

Trout populations in streams are dynamic. Trout move and feed and grow; some are caught and maybe harvested while others may succumb to mortality of a natural cause. Those that survive may spawn in the fall and a new year class (young-of-year) may emerge from those fall eggs the following spring. We often keep tabs on the overall population and how it changes from year to year by way of annual electrofishing stream surveys.

In 2007 the DNR updated its survey methods to be better able to track changes in trout abundance across the state and through time. We specifically included repeated annual surveys of a range of streams to identify trends over time. Here we are going to focus on the Driftless Area of Wisconsin.

We surveyed 63 Driftless Area streams in June-September for five or more years during 2007-2014. (Region-wide data for 2015 were not yet available for these analyses.) Figures 1-3 show trends in the number of brown trout greater than five inches in length per mile (generally age one and older), brown trout greater than nine inches (legal size in Driftless streams allowing harvest in 2007-2014), and brown trout less than five inches (generally young-of-year).

The actual abundance of trout in a stream may be higher than these numbers because our electrofishing surveys do not catch every fish in a stretch of stream. We typically capture 75-90 percent of the fish from year to year in a given stream, so these numbers are an accurate index of the actual abundance of trout in a stream.

We see an increasing trend in trout abundance across the Driftless Area of Wisconsin from 2007 through 2012 followed by a decline into 2014. Young-of-year trout numbers appeared more variable, with strong year classes noted in 2009, 2010, and 2012.

Some of the "best of the best"

streams in terms of the number of trout include Plum Creek (Crawford County), Crooked Creek (Grant), Mormon Coulee Creek (La Crosse), Little La Crosse River (Monroe), Rush River (Pierce), and Timber Coulee Creek (Vernon). The catch per mile of trout greater than five inches was more than 2,000 in these streams.

Timber Coulee and Big Spring

The remaining figures show information on two individual streams that were surveyed annually through 2015 as a part of different research studies.

The 11-year October survey for Timber Coulee Creek (Vernon County) showed steep increases in brown trout abundance from 2005 to 2011 in both upper (near Lars Hill Road) and lower (near Olstad Road) reaches of the stream. The number of brown trout age one and older was about four times greater in 2011 than in 2005. Trout numbers have since declined into 2015 but remain about twice as high as they were in 2005. This decline in age one and older trout may be related to the sharp drop in young-of-year brown trout after 2011. Young-of-year brown trout in Timber Coulee Creek, however, have increased over the past couple years.

Elk Creek (Richland and Vernon counties), in a 12-year October survey, showed a similar increasing trend in age one and older brown trout abundance from 2004 to 2011 followed by a decline into 2015. Young-of-year numbers were quite variable, with strong year classes produced in 2005 and 2009. As in Timber Coulee Creek, Elk Creek young-of-year numbers declined into 2013 and have increased into 2015.

Big Spring Branch (Grant and Iowa counties), in an 11-year April survey, showed an almost six-fold increase in age 2 and older trout numbers from 2006 to 2011 in a lower reach (near Pine Tree Road). Stream habitat work had been completed at this site and may have contributed to the high observed

numbers. Age one trout, which had just survived their first winter, also increased into 2011 and decreased into 2014, followed by a sharp increase in 2015.

If you as an angler have noticed that your favorite stream has not been fishing as well this past year compared to just a few years earlier, you are likely noticing the regional trend in trout numbers shown in the DNR stream surveys. There are many factors driving such trends.

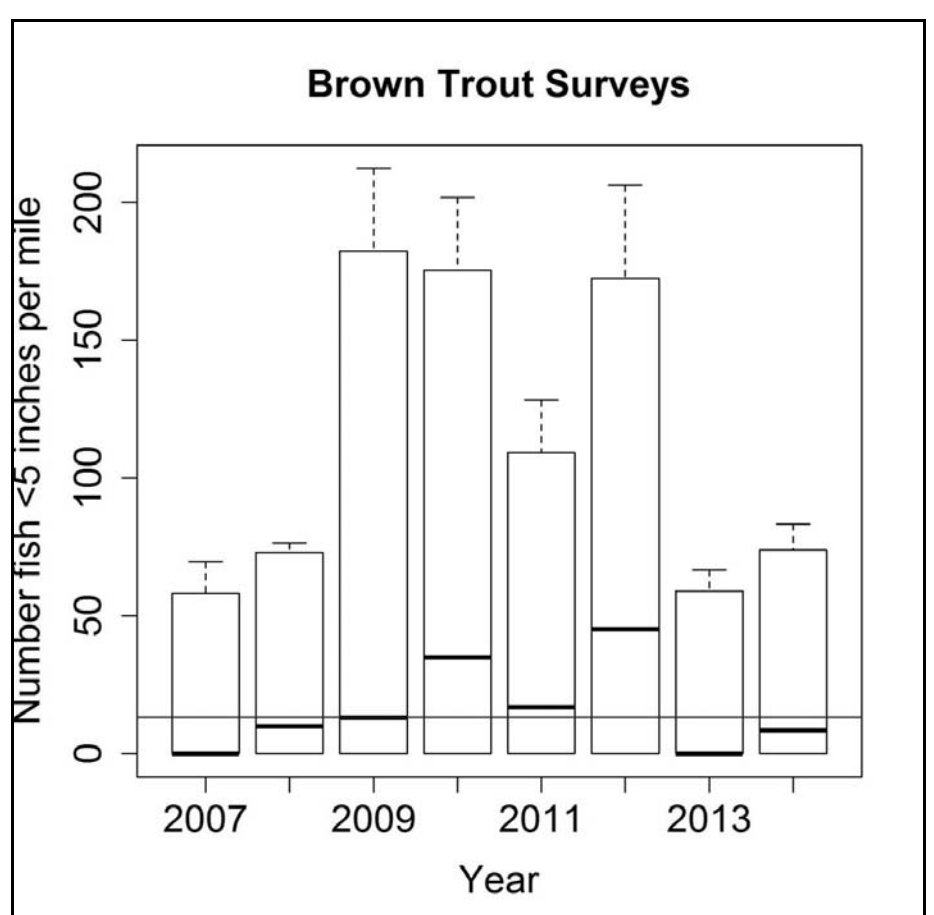
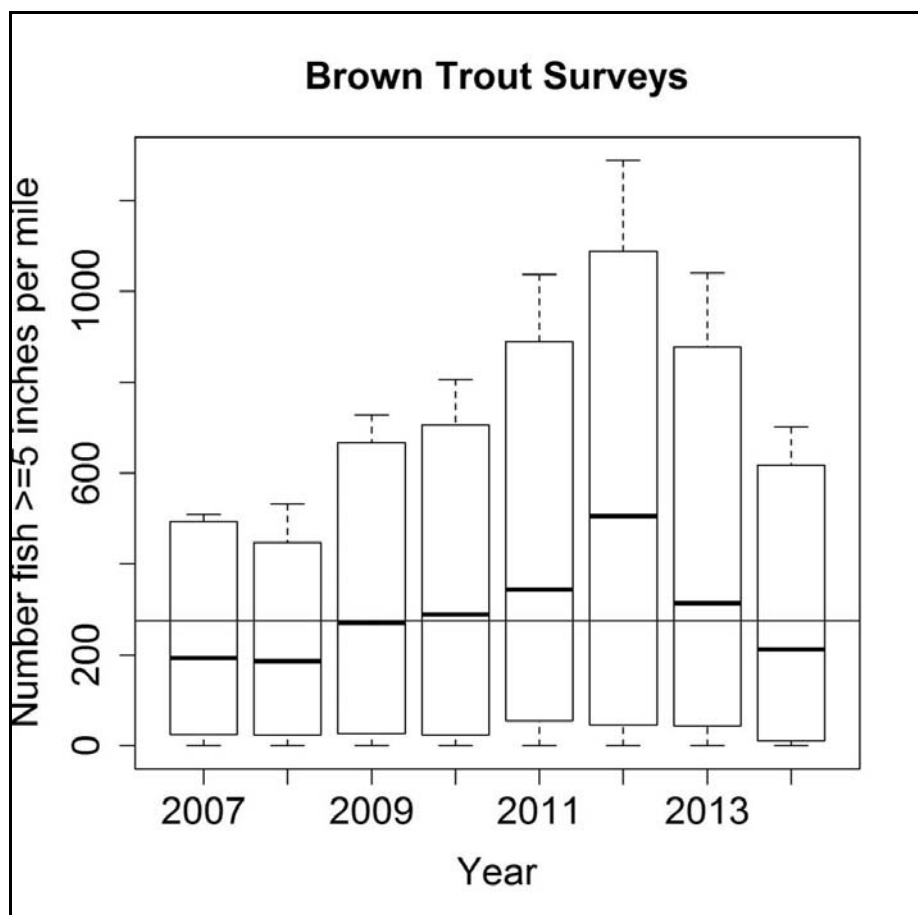
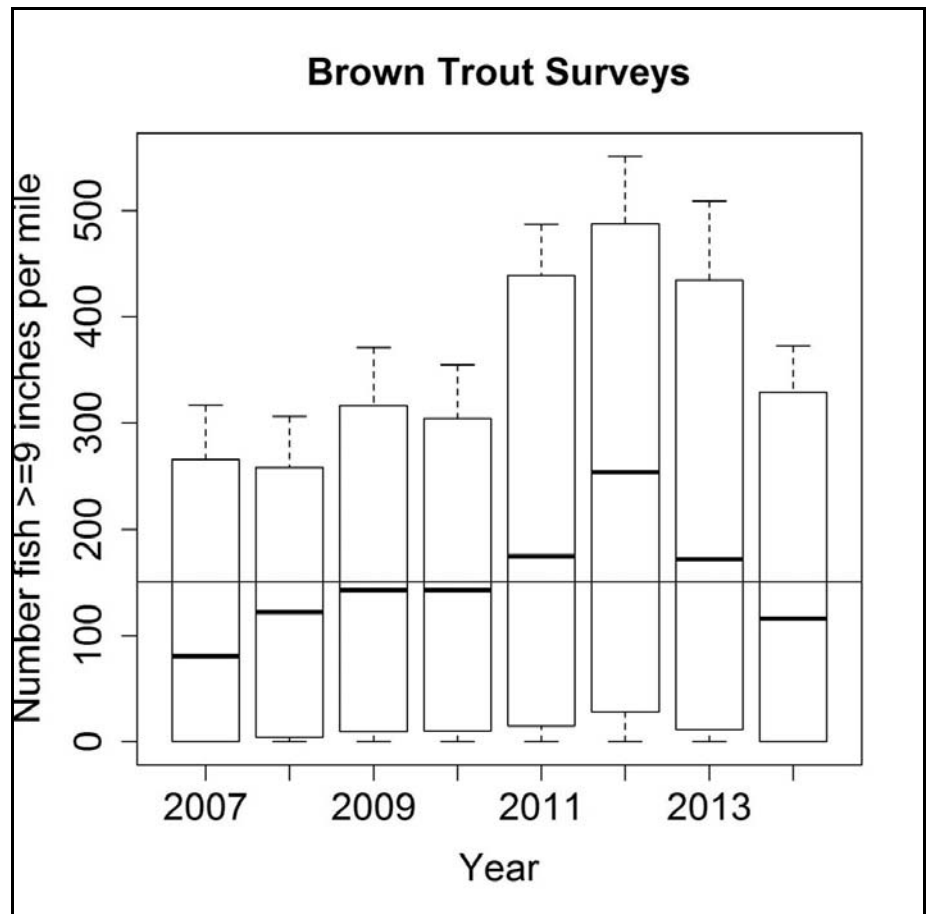
During this period, we have experienced two major flood events in the Driftless region (2007 and 2008), cool-wet summers (2010), hot-dry summers (2012), unusually warm winters (December 2011-March 2012), and unusually cold winters (December 2013-March 2014).

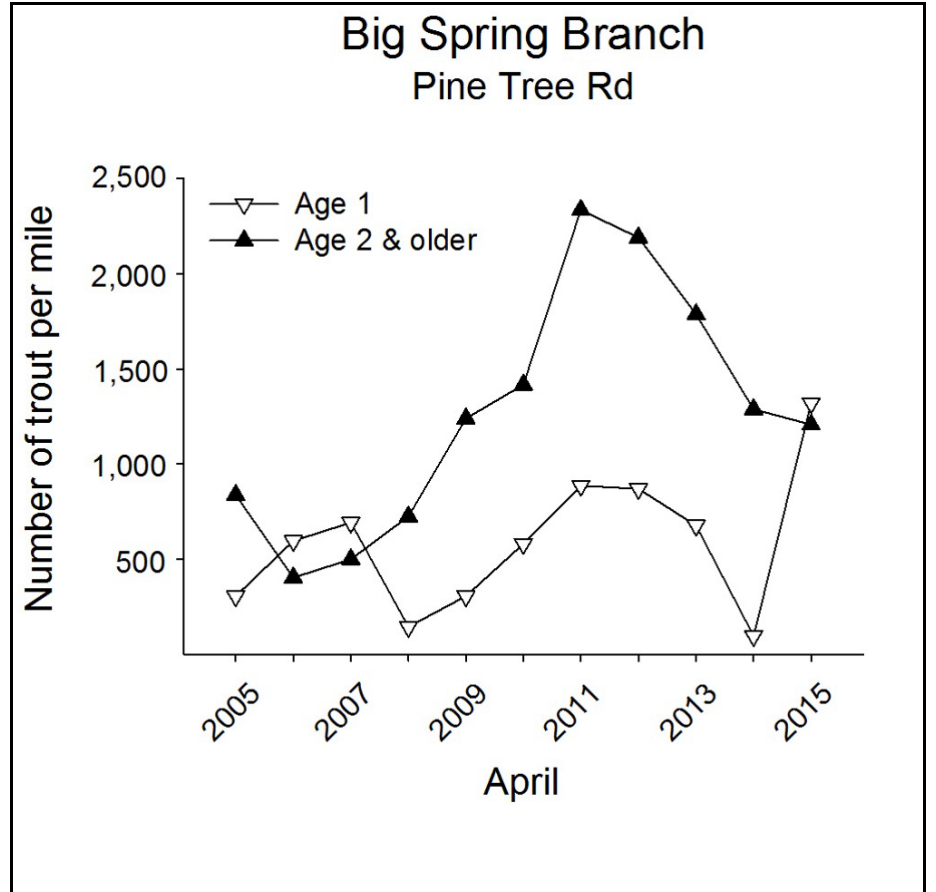
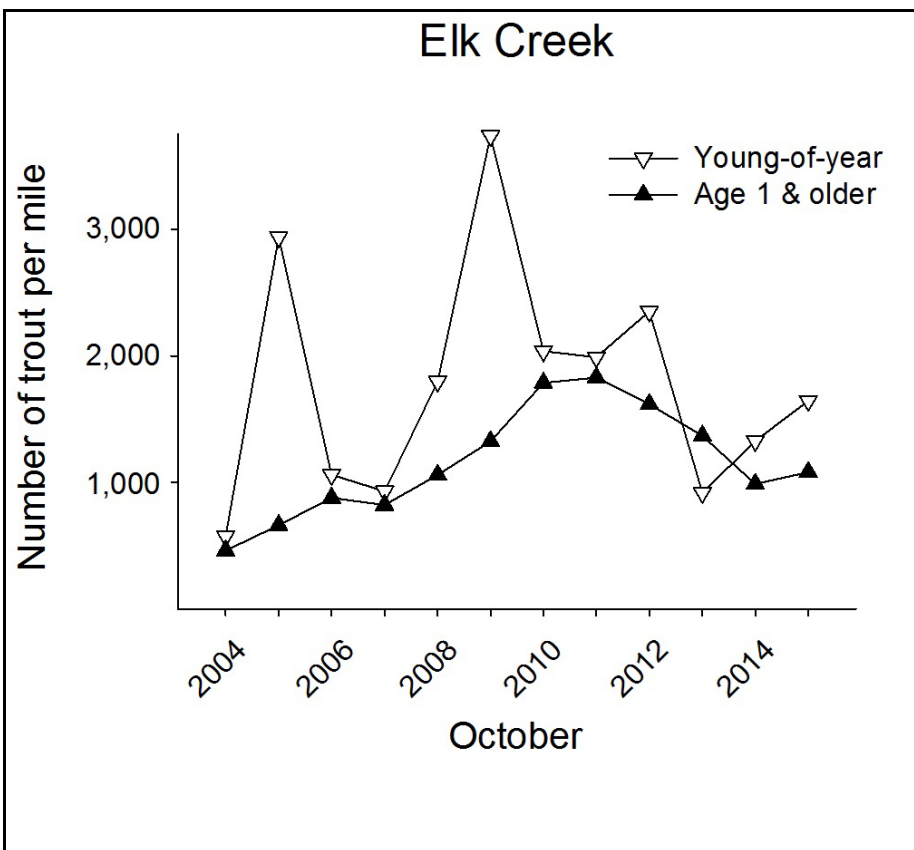
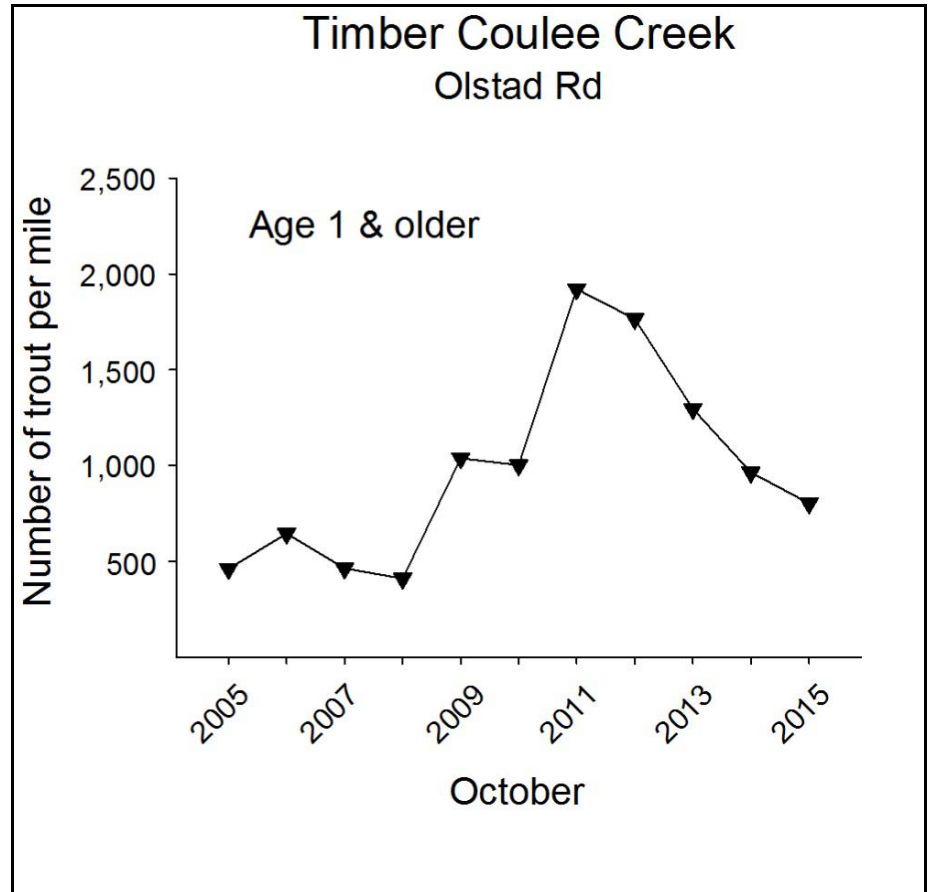
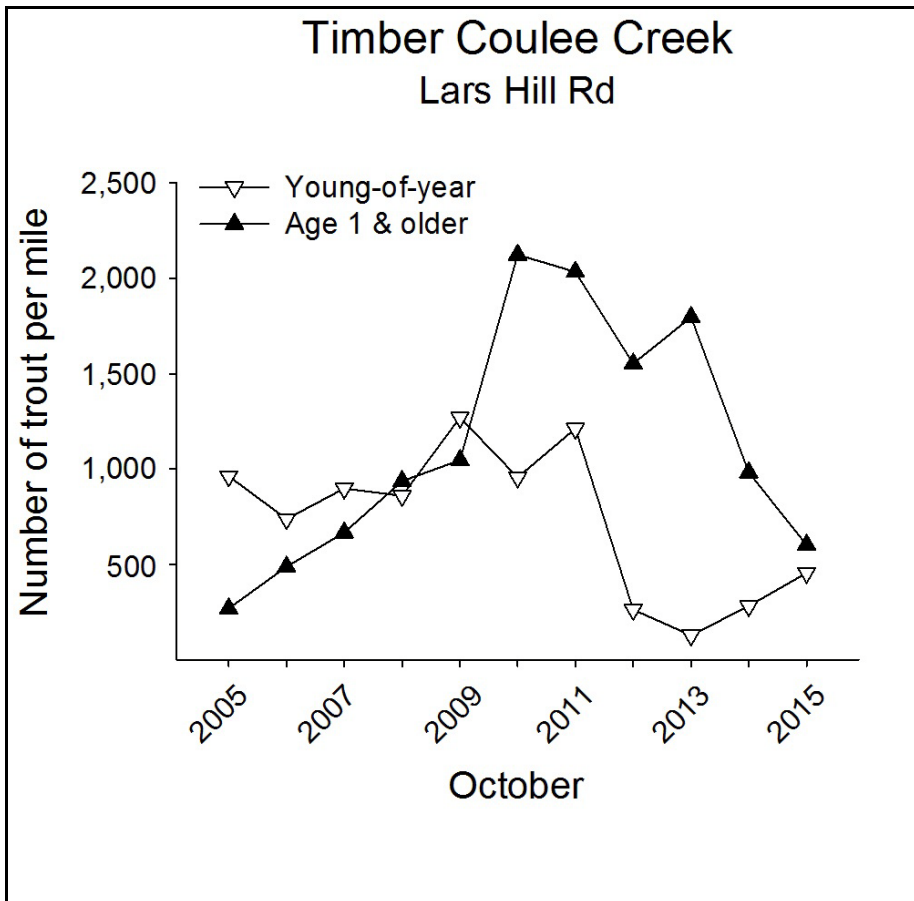
Such variable weather conditions will have regional effects on stream conditions and affect regional variability in trout numbers. On top of this, individual streams are inher-

ently different from one another. We cannot predict how regional weather conditions will change from one year to the next and how it will affect regional trends in trout numbers. With proper management and protection of our trout populations, streams, and watersheds we can expect Wisconsin streams to continue to provide quality trout fishing opportunities into the future.

Explanation of box plots

In each figure the boxes represent the 25th to 75th percentiles, the black bars represent the median or 50th percentile, and the horizontal line across years represents the average of the medians. The "caps" on ends of the bars extend to the 5th or 95th percentiles. In any given year, 50% of the streams surveyed had abundances that fall within the box, and half of the surveyed streams had abundances greater than the median or above the black bar.





Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics

Presented by Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited
http://www.swtu.org/wffc_womens_clinics.html
<https://www.facebook.com/SWTUWomensClinic>

<p>BY WOMEN FOR WOMEN BASICS CLINIC June 17-19, 2016</p> <p>Learn how to choose proper equipment, tie knots, cast, read water, select the proper fly and time on the water. You will learn new tactics, regardless of your level of ability. Equipment available for use.</p>	<p>ON THE WATER SKILLS INTERMEDIATE CLINIC June 15-16, 2016</p> <p>Personalized instruction streamside. Tune up workshops by women instructors to refresh skills in casting, matching the hatch & reading the water. Fish WI finest trout streams with experienced anglers.</p>
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women's flyfishingclinics

Cost
\$195 until April 1st
\$225 after (+ reg fee)

Location
Avalanche, WI (near Viroqua, in Wisconsin's Driftless Area)

For more information please visit the links above.

Registration: <https://www.regonline.com/womensflyfishingclinic2016>
<https://www.regonline.com/onthewaterskillsclinic2016>

By Women For Women Beginners Fly Fishing Clinic (free)

9:30am - 4:30pm (lunch included)
 Saturday, Feb 6, 2016
 Best Western
 One North Main Street
 Oshkosh, WI 54901
 (920) 230-1900

Join us to learn about reels, rods, boots, waders, and other gear. Learn about flies the insects they emulate, conservation issues and the etiquette of fly fishing. We will learn and practice casting and if time permits we will tie a fly or two.

Hosted by WITU and presented by Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics.
 To register for this free clinic contact: heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com

Driftless Rambler

With Duke Welter
TUDARE Communications Director

These are the good old days

An abundance of riches. A wealth of resources. A plethora of challenges. However you look at it, the increasing number of miles of trout water, improved trout water, and publicly accessible trout water indicate the Driftless Area is an incredible place for a trout angler. And if you pay some attention to the research attempting to model what our trout resources might look like in a changing climatic world in 50 to 100 years, you might conclude that the attention being paid to these resources gives us some ground for optimism that they will continue to offer quality fishing.

To try to assess what we have, and where we were a few years ago, I contacted various sources to gather information on trout resources in the three Driftless states richest in those waters. Then I sought to calculate how much publicly accessible water is available, and how that's changed in the past 10 years or so.

Comparatively speaking, I can go back to a mid-1970s article from Fly Fisherman magazine by the late Jim Humphrey (co-author with Bill Shogren of "Trout Streams of Wisconsin and Minnesota," the first and second editions of which are known to some anglers as the Old and New Testaments) on Driftless Area trout opportunities. Back then, Jim could focus on only a half-dozen streams across the region, simply because there were so few available to be fished. Not much restoration had been done, and many streams were badly degraded.

These days, the number of high-quality fisheries across the region has mushroomed, with strong restoration programs in both Wisconsin and Minnesota leading to reduced erosion, better natural reproduction, and abundant public access. As a matter of policy, both Minnesota and Wisconsin DNR require public fishing access before they invest in a stream, and so does TU. In Iowa, some "handshake" public fishing access agreements are still in place, but they only last as long as the landowner who agrees to grant access rights continues to do so.

When TUDARE began back in 2004-6, biologists estimated that there were about 4,000 miles of

trout water across the region, in about 600 watersheds. A rough estimate of the dollars going into Driftless Area restoration at the time would have been about \$1 million a year from all sources.

The number of miles of public fishing access would have been about 750 miles across the three states, although some of it wasn't legally enforceable access, but rather permission from landowner granted through a handshake.

What's it look like today?

Today the number of miles of classified trout water has increased dramatically in the Wisconsin Driftless Area, from about 2,500 miles in 2002 to almost 4,445 miles today, with more on the way. Minnesota counts 173 streams with 800 miles of trout water, and Iowa reports another 530 miles of trout water. That totals up to 5,775 miles of trout water in the three states, an increase of 1,775 miles of classified water in the past 14 years.

And what does the access picture look like? Well, Wisconsin DNR reports 694 miles of access to trout streams in the Driftless Area. Minnesota has 208 miles of access, and Iowa reports 143 miles of streams have public access.

Other entities also hold easements in the Wisconsin parts of the Driftless Area. Counties hold at least 87 miles of easements, land trusts at least 14, local conservation clubs at least 10, and TU an estimated 10 miles. The Wisconsin total, including the DNR easements, comes to 814 miles.

Combining Wisconsin's total with those of Iowa and Minnesota, that's at least 1,166 miles of publicly accessible trout streams. In a region where the vast majority of trout stream miles are privately owned, it's a significant resource for public recreation.

These are, as I said, the good old days.

Lower Kickapoo getting help

Lower Kickapoo River tributaries may get a lot of attention the next three years, as TUDARE helps



BOB HUNT AND JOHN SOURS SHARING IDEAS

The DNR's John Sours (right) is retiring. Sours was leader of the "Trout Crew" in west-central Wisconsin and helped with dozens of projects in the area around Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, Hudson and River Falls.



This spring you may see this Limited Edition 1957 Rambler Rebel along a Driftless stream. The 327-inch V-8 will make it a snappy mover from 0-60, if its operator can find a straightaway. Who knows, maybe it will have a trunkful of Driftless Ale? Jim Dworschack of Soldiers Grove restored this beauty.

obtain a grant from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service of almost \$5 million for projects in the watershed. Part of the Mississippi River Basin Initiative, the grants are intended to reduce sediment and nutrients flowing into the big river from targeted watersheds.

Jeff Hastings, TUDARE Project Manager, co-wrote the grant and says it will help focus on key erosion sites where both fisheries and water quality can be improved. DNR and Vernon County are pursuing easements to go along with the project sites. Landowners can sign up now with the Vernon and Crawford County Land Conservation departments. If you know landowners in this area, please encourage them to sign up.

DNR's John Sours retires

During the last 20-plus years, I've had hundreds of interactions with the DNR's John Sours, who became the leader of the "Trout Crew" in west-central Wisconsin. TU pushed hard to develop the Trout Crew in 1997-98 to put a backlog of trout stamp dollars into the water. John headed that crew for four years, and dozens of projects got done in the area around Eau Claire, Chippewa Falls, Hudson and River Falls.

When the backlog was gone, we worked with a solid group of conservation partners including TU chapters, county and federal conservation agencies, good local outdoor groups, schools and universities to find other funding and do more projects.

John served as Trout Crew leader since 1998, and put in hundreds of evenings and weekends working with landowners and volunteers, operating an excavator like a surgeon with a scalpel, meeting with groups in the evenings, and just helping move things forward.

It wasn't hard to recognize John's burly figure in that cab even from a distance, from morning 'til dark, throughout every dry day of the project season and a bunch of the soggy ones.

But it was darn hard to recognize him to give him thanks for all the work he did, because he isn't a headline-grabbing kind of guy. John retired this past fall after more than 30 years with the DNR, just after we showcased projects on Trimbelle River and Gilbert Creek on the TUDARE project tour, projects he'd played key roles in. You hate to

see the good ones hang it up, and one can hope that there will be a way to utilize his expertise to help more projects across the region. TU has honored John for the great contribution he made and vision he has had for the streams of this part of the state. They're better for his work.

New event coming

Although we witnessed the last of the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo in the Twin Cities, a new event will be coming to western Wisconsin in March. The River Falls Fly Fishing Festival (or R4F), is March 11 and 12 on the UW-River Falls campus. Organized by Brian Smolinski, proprietor of Lund's Fly Shop in River Falls, the Friday night event will be a Fly Fishing Film Tour presentation and party, and Saturday will offer exhibitors, seminars, fly-tying and other fun stuff. Check in at the RFflyfishingfestival.com website and Facebook page for details.

Project planning help

Project planning, done well, takes time and networking, thought and vision. We've found that if planning a project takes an extra year, it will be far better organized and funded than if it is rushed.

Right now long-term planning meetings are going on across the Driftless Area, bringing together agencies, partners and landowners. They mull possible projects, plan a couple years ahead, put together partnerships, and get things under way.

In December more than 30 people joined to talk about projects east and west of Menomonie, and in January we expect to hold more meetings around LaCrosse and Decorah, and possibly elsewhere in the Driftless Area. If you're interested in helping to organize or attend these events, email me at dwelter@tu.org.

Similarly, we're starting the planning process for the Westby Workshop to be held at Living Waters Bible Camp April 2-3, 2016. If you would like to learn how to plan, fund, organize, carry out, publicize or celebrate a restoration project, this is the place to do it.

If you've got ideas for what you'd like to see offered, or would like to play a role in this fun two-day event, complete with evening dinner and fishing opportunities and other fun, send me an email.

Passing the torch:

Women teaching women at the Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics



Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing

FLY LINES ARE FLYING, WITH SOME NICE LOOPS

The Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics' cover everything from fly tying to casting to identifying aquatic life.

By Erica Hickey

The friendship and support of an experienced fly fisher can be so important for a novice angler.

Learning how to fish as an adult and as a woman, I felt my lack of mentorship acutely.

It's not that I don't have good fishing genes. My grandfather was an avid outdoorsman: a hunter, a fisher, a lover of the lakes and woods. He took me fishing when I was seven years old on Lake Ontario, using big spinning rods and downriggers for Great Lakes salmon. I mostly watched, but I was proud of the fish he caught and prouder still that he deemed me stalwart enough to accompany him.

I don't know if he ever fished with a fly rod. No one in my family is able to remember, but he died when I was 12 years old, long before I had discovered the quiet beauty of fly line on water.

He died on the opening day of fishing season, on the shore of his favorite fishing spot. Some days when I am up in the Driftless Area fishing on my own, I wish he were there with me to pass on his legacy of fishing knowledge. I know that in his gruff, yet kind, way he would have been a good teacher.

It was this fishing knowledge that I sought when I drove to the Avalanche campground near Viroqua in June of 2012 for what would be perhaps three of the most impactful and important days of my life. I

loved fly-fishing. I knew that already, but I needed skills, and I needed to ask questions of someone who had the knowledge, time, and patience to give me good answers. I had heard about the Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics from a friend and fellow novice angler.

Myself and two other girlfriends had decided to check it out, hoping to become more competent in our waders and to transition from being ladies who relied on guides or husbands for help to being independent fly fishers. What we discovered over the course of the next several days was a living culture of passionate female anglers, a legacy that we had not even known existed.

Through word of mouth, these annual clinics have become a gathering place for some of the most experienced female anglers and guides in the Midwest. Not only that, but many of the instructors who come to share their expertise are also experienced educators. They know how to fish, but they also know how to communicate, encourage, build confidence. And they are starting to show those of us who now have a few years of experience behind us how to teach others.

The three-day Basics Clinic addresses the minutiae needed to get out on the water and fish: how to put a rod together and rig the line, tie knots, identify insects, a casting clinic, and a fishing session with a more experienced female "River Buddy." The Intermediate "On the

Water Skills" Clinic focuses on giving women a chance to review basics and gain more experience in casting, fly selection, reading water, and line management.

Intermediate participants also get a chance to fish with several different volunteers from Wisconsin Trout Unlimited chapters, introducing them to networks of experienced anglers and challenging "the boys" to think seriously about how best to help mentor women in the sport.

I have received a lot of eye rolls when talking about the idea of a "Women's Clinic" with other anglers. Even my mother, who also fishes, was skeptical when I first broached the topic. Why have a clinic only for women? What does that matter?

I suppose many of us would answer this question in different ways: women have a different learning style; we have the shared experience of feeling a bit reticent about looking for advice and mentorship in a sport where most of the participants are men. Maybe some of us are afraid of being patronized or that our inexperience will somehow be interpreted as helplessness.

My answer to this question is "Why not? Spending time with people who share your interest; nights around the campfire drinking beer; telling fishing stories; watching a participant and new friend release her first trout, letting that vibrant, living soul slip through her hands to disappear back into the depths. This is more than just the passing of knowledge. It is the stuff that we live for, fishermen and women alike."

Over the last few years that I have been involved with the Women's Clinics, I hear time and again the instructors speak of when a participant "gets it," that "aha!" moment when it all comes together and she understands the power of this pursuit, the pure and unadulterated joy of being on the water and feeling connected to everything around you.

Some have been lucky enough to receive this legacy from fathers, mothers, grandfathers or friends, but for some of us the path to fly-fishing has been a little less straightforward. And for many of the more than 200 ladies who have been fortunate enough to attend the Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics over the last seven years, this group of female anglers who are committed to passing the torch to a new generation of women have been, well, everything.

Sign up now!

The 2016 Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinic "Basics Clinic" is June 17-19.

The "On the Water Skills Intermediate Clinic" is June 15-16.

Volunteers, flies and extra gear and tackle are always welcomed. For more information go to swtu.org/wffc_womens_clinics.html.

Hope to see you on the water.



Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing

TRULY PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

Instructor/guide Nome Buckman (center) is one of the key instructors for the women's clinic. She is a guide in the UP. Not only do the instructors teach the students, but they show the more experienced students how to share their knowledge with each other and with newcomers to the sport.



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A life-changing experience

The Reel Recovery leader was inspired by cancer survivors and volunteers.

By Jeremy Southworth

The date was important enough that I'll always remember it: February 9, 2012. Perusing the local paper during my lunch break, I came across the headline "Onalaska may reel in fishing retreat for men with cancer." For some reason, it grabbed my attention.

At the time I was 35 and considered myself an avid outdoorsman. The words "fishing retreat" instantly piqued my interest. The article went on to describe a fishing retreat that would bring together men whom had been effected by cancer, and would allow them to spend a few days together and talking about how they cope with the disease. It would also pair them up with a fishing buddy to learn the art of fly fishing. The article ended with some contact information and asked for volunteers.

At this point in my life, I had never even picked up a fly rod, but the draw of fishing with men who had been diagnosed with cancer had gotten me to write down the website, and I was determined to throw my name in the hat in hopes of being chosen to volunteer in whatever capacity I was needed.

The following evening I punched in the website and discovered photos and quotes of men who had attended one of these retreats. Seeing those pictures and reading about their feelings excited me even more. I navigated through the site and found the "how can I help" tab.

It wasn't long before I received a follow-up email and a personal phone call from one of the organizers who had noticed that I had listed my "career" as emergency medical technician on the application. They had apparently noticed the lack of fly-fishing experience, as they asked if I would be interested in providing medical support for their upcoming event. Without hesitation, I gladly accepted, because I was going to be part of a "fishing retreat" that benefitted men with cancer, and I wasn't going to be asked to teach someone how to fly fish.

Fast forward a few months to September 12, 2012, at Stoney Creek Inn in Onalaska. At this point I still didn't know a lot about the organization. I parked my truck in the hotel parking lot and made

my way inside the lobby when I was drawn to a large banner that read "REEL RECOVERY...BE WELL! FISH ON!" and was instantly greeted by the staff.

From the moment I stepped into the hotel lobby and walked into the inaugural Midwest Reel Recovery retreat, I unknowingly became part of a family that can share something deeper and more meaningful than I could have imagined, all because I took the time to volunteer at what I ignorantly thought was just a fishing retreat.

It had such a positive effect on my outlook on life that I have agreed to serve as the state coordinator for Reel Recovery. My goal now is to make this organization a household name.

Reel Recovery was founded in 2003 by a group of avid fly-fishers who were inspired by their fishing buddy's ongoing battle with brain cancer. Witnessing first-hand the beneficial impact that fly-fishing provided their friend, they created Reel Recovery to provide the same opportunity for other men who were battling cancer.

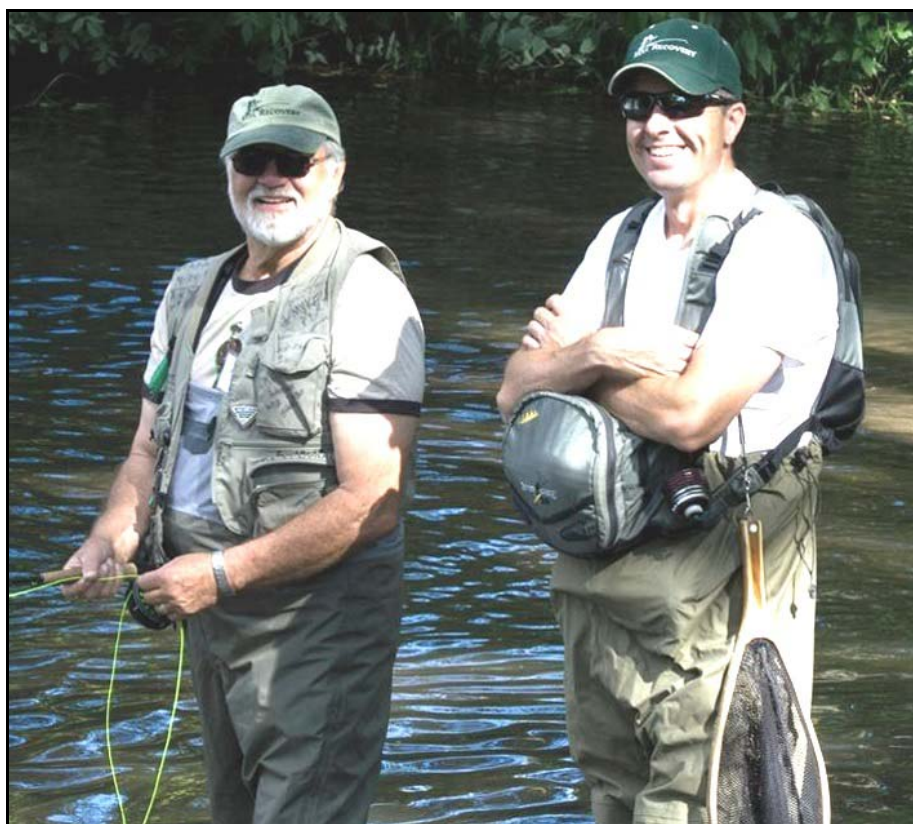
Combining fly-fishing instruction with directed, courageous conversations, the organization provides men with all forms of cancer a unique opportunity to share their stories, learn a new skill, form lasting friendships and gain renewed hope as they confront the challenges of cancer.

The mission of Reel Recovery is to help men in the cancer recovery process by introducing them to the healing powers of the sport of fly-fishing, while providing a safe, supportive environment to explore their personal experiences of cancer with others who share their stories.

The retreats are three days long and give a mixture of "courageous conversations" and fishing time to the participants.

Since I was initially placed in a position of general support, I had the opportunity to participate in all of the aspects of the retreat, not just the fishing. This gave me the opportunity to sit in on one of the "courageous conversations," in which the men share their experiences with cancer through guided questions, mediated by a psychologist.

Throughout the retreat, the men are able to attend five different



Anthony Larson

HIGHLIGHT OF REEL RECOVERY RETREATS? FISHING, OF COURSE!

Retreat participant Milton Borntranger (left) fishes with then-volunteer Jeremy Southworth, who is now the state coordinator for Reel Recovery.

therapy sessions. Going into these conversations, some of the men approached it with their guards up, tight-lipped and stubborn...because that's the way many of us have been raised. But the main purpose of these conversations is to reverse that.

By the last "courageous conversation" on Friday afternoon, the men have completely changed their perception of cancer and have opened up their hearts and minds. Many leave the retreats as truly changed men. These unique conversations are what makes a Reel Recovery retreat such an amazing opportunity for the survivors and the volunteers.

The participants, like me, got hooked with the promise of fishing some of the country's greatest waters with a fly-rod. Each day there are designated times in which the participants are given fly-fishing instruction, and are then taken to several area locations to put their newfound skills to the test.

As many of you are already well aware, there are many benefits to heading out to the local streams, rivers and lakes with rod in hand, the same goes for the participants of a Reel Recovery retreat. Something magical happens when you are surrounded by the natural beauty of the outdoors. When it's calm and peaceful on the local stream, and you quietly watch the tip of a trout's nose break the surface in search of its next meal and you try to outsmart it with your best fly and your perfectly placed cast.

That's what makes Reel Recovery such an amazing organization. It combines some much needed open conversations between men experiencing many of the same hardships and struggles of cancer with the peacefulness that is fly-fishing. It gives the men hope, it gives them a place to talk openly, and it allows them to be vulnerable if only for a few days.

Reel Recovery began hosting retreats in Wisconsin in 2012 and will be hosting 27 retreats in the United States and New Zealand in 2015. The Wisconsin/Midwest retreat serves almost the entire Midwest as

Traverse City, Michigan is the only other retreat in our region. With nearly 800,000 men in the United States being diagnosed with cancer each year there are very few programs out there specifically for men and none that offer what Reel Recovery retreats do for men.

All Reel Recovery retreats are free to the men we serve. The Wisconsin/Midwest retreat is currently seeking funding from individuals, businesses and organizations. I would like to personally invite and challenge all TU members and chapters to help make sure this event occurs for years to come.

If you or someone you know would like more information on Reel Recovery, please visit the website at reelrecovery.org or feel free to contact me personally at jsouthworth@centurytel.net



Anthony Larson

CLOSING CEREMONY

Reel Recovery participant Gilles Cochet with Retreat Facilitator Ted Larson (putting hand on chest) at the closing ceremony of the Retreat.



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Hidey Ho from Heidi O. Women's Initiative Chair Heidi Oberstadt

Hello, Wisconsin TU members!
Once again I am thrilled to be full of fabulous information regarding the women in Wisconsin TU. Our Women's Initiative committee had its first conference call this fall, and we will resume regular calls this spring! As always, if you are interested in joining our Women's Initiative here in Wisconsin, please reach

exciting to see what chapters and women across the country have been doing! You can read the most recent newsletter by following this link: tu.org/sites/default/files/Womens_Initiative_Newsletter_November_2015.pdf.

If you are active on the national TU website, tu.org, you can sign in to your account, and have access to

the new women's website at tu.org/women. There, you can find information that will help your chapters get and stay involved with the women in your area, including back issues of *On The Rise*.

I got a new vise for Christmas, and believe me, I'll be

making good use of it during the upcoming cold and snowy months. I will be spending a week of January in Colorado at the Women's Showcase of the Fly Fishing Show and out on some secret water. Meanwhile, I'll see you all out on our streams on January 2. You'll know I'm there when you see my license plate.

Love, Heidi O.
heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com
715-573-5104



IF HEIDI HAS ONE, THEN THEY MUST BE COOL!

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out to me. I don't bite, and we will welcome you with open arms!

Our WITU State Council is excited to be hosting our second annual free introductory clinic for women who are interested in learning more about fly fishing, on February 6, in Oshkosh. This year, we're adding a social event on Friday, February 5, for active fly anglers. Send me an email and I'll get you on the list.

National TU has been producing a quarterly Women's Initiative newsletter entitled *On The Rise*. It's

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EDITORIAL *Another View*

By Mary Dougherty,
Co-Founder of Farms Not Factories

Bayfield County, known for its premier trout fishing and access to Lake Superior, may soon join the ranks of the 57 other counties in Wisconsin with a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO), know by some as a "factory farm," within its borders.

Iowa hog farmer and businessman Dale Reicks submitted an application in late 2014 requesting a permit for a farrowing CAFO in the Town of Eileen, about eight miles from the Chequamegon Bay and Lake Superior. According to the February 2015 application, the Badgerwood LLC facility will house 100 boars, 7,500 sows, 4,125 (55 pound market weight) pigs and 14,625 (0-55 pound) piglets.

The Badgerwood facility will be the largest hog CAFO in the state as well as the first hog CAFO in the entire Lake Superior basin. The DNR CAFO specialist responsible for permitting the facility, already monitors 77 CAFOs in 15 counties and is located in Black River Falls, more than 200 miles from the proposed Badgerwood CAFO site.

It is estimated that Badgerwood will dump 10 million gallons of manure per year in the watershed of Fish Creek, and possibly the White River watersheds. Given the clay soils and potential for runoff, the health of these watersheds is in very real danger.

I'm deeply concerned that the intersection between little to no DNR operational oversight and the self-regulating/self-reporting nature of the CAFO industry will result in disastrous consequences for Lake Superior and that streams that feed it.

I have been working with citizens from Kewaunee County, who know too well the impacts of

CAFOs on water. With 16 CAFOs and more than 98,000 cows in Kewaunee County, more than 30 percent of tested private wells are polluted with nitrates and bacteria.

From the fur trade through the 1860's, the logging and cutover through the 1920's and the small-scale agriculture of today, the Fish Creek watershed has seen land-use practices that have impacted its overall health and vitality. South Fish Creek, where the Badgerwood CAFO will be located, has experienced the most adverse impacts and already has elevated levels of phosphorus, according to the research conducted by Professor Randy Lehr of Northland College.

Given the complexity of the watershed and the numerous feeder streams that flow into the Fish Creek Watershed and the Chequamegon Bay, runoff from the land-spread or injected manure poses a threat to the entire fishery.

Nutrients, such as phosphorus and nitrogen, reduce the dissolved oxygen in the streams and creeks and will either reduce or eliminate habitat necessary for a robust trout population. Unfortunately, many small wetlands were lost when the area was cleared for farm fields in the 1920's and as a result, there are areas of "concentrated flow" which further contribute to runoff and sediment entering the system.

While there are no current plans to spread or inject manure near North Fish Creek, the CAFO requires a large amount of water (between 24 - 33 million gallons annually) and will have two pumps with a flow rate of 65 gallons per minute. Currently, North Fish Creek has a steady supply of cold, artesian water and maintains a temperature of about 50 degrees in the summer, which provides an optimal environment for the resident rainbow and brown trout.

If the CAFO starts to deplete the groundwater due to its water demands, it is likely North Fish

CAFO threatens Ashland and Bayfield county trout streams

Creek would be impacted because the flow of cold groundwater will diminish and the water will warm.

The Wisconsin DNR estimated that the Fish Creek watershed accounted for 20 percent of Lake Superior's self-sustaining, migratory fisheries and spawned 47,000 one-year-old migratory trout and young-of-the-year Coho salmon in the 1990's. The Badgerwood CAFO and the farm fields that will receive its manure is upstream from this sensitive and important fish spawning and nursery and, given the self-reporting and self-regulating nature of the CAFO industry, is extremely vulnerable to the water pollution that often accompanies industrial agriculture.

We don't believe that existing CAFO regulations protect citizens or are adequately enforced. For instance on October 20, 2015, 16 Wisconsin citizens and Midwest Environmental Advocates filed a petition for corrective action with the U.S. EPA asking them to more closely monitor water regulation in Wisconsin. In addition, 45 former DNR employees sent a letter to the EPA expressing deep concern about the DNR's ability to effectively administer its Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) program.

Wisconsin citizens are in a quintessential David and Goliath fight against an industry that has insured they have every legislative and regulatory right to operate in rural communities, regardless of what citizens want.

This is the time for courage and truth. A time for citizens, elected officials and organizations to stand together, united in defense of their community's clean water and air.

For more information about the Badgerwood CAFO, check out Farms Not Factories website, www.farmsnotfactorieswi.org.

Learning from Tenkara-no-Oni

The master of long-line Tenkara shows his skills

By Matt Sment of Badger Tenkara

It is not often that one gets the chance to meet someone who is a true "master" of anything, let alone fly fishing. This summer I had the opportunity to learn from Masami Sakakibara, known as "Tenkara-no-Oni," and one of the most respected and experienced Tenkara anglers in the world. Hosted by Tenkara Guides LLC, the "Oni Tenkara School USA" was held June 13-15 on three different-but-incredible rivers near Salt Lake City, Utah.

At this point, you may be thinking about people who have been fly fishing all of their lives, and nobody is calling them a "master." So what is the big deal about Masami Sakakibara? Simply put, he casts long,

light lines more accurately than anyone you've ever seen!

One of the most common misconceptions about Tenkara is that the length of the rod is used to dangle the line and fly in the water like a "cane pole." I've heard many fly anglers say that they are not interested in exploring Tenkara because "they like to cast and wouldn't be able to do that with Tenkara." Anybody holding this opinion need only watch Tenkara-no-Oni use an ultralight 10-meter line to drop a pinpoint cast on a 12-inch target to know the true potential of Tenkara casting!

On the water, he fished more practical lengths of line (4-5 meters) with a tippet section of about 3 feet, but on several occasions Oni dem-

onstrated long-line casting with line lengths exceeding 10 meters. It was explained that while this would be largely impractical on the water, it serves as excellent training for casting and manipulating "normal" length level lines. The idea being that if you can control a 10 meter line, you'll be able to exert even more control over a 3-5 meter line. There is certainly a logic to that!

As far as all of those amazing, graceful casts that you can see Oni make on YouTube videos, they are 100 percent real. He makes crisp, but never overpowered, casts that rely more on timing than force. One major thing to note

is that he does not give his cast time to straighten out behind him. Often times, the line was still travelling backwards, the line tip overhead, when the rod tip was snapping forward again. The cast's backstroke was the familiar abrupt stop at 12 o'clock, but it was a much faster backstroke than I expected.

One big takeaway from watching Oni fish was that his entire body is involved in supporting the cast. He places the foot on his casting side forward and firmly plants it before making the throw. He often drops into a slight crouch to lower his center of gravity and settle into a stable position. Conversely, when he gets a good sized fish on the hook, he does not remain rooted in place. He springs quickly into action and moves as needed to play the fish. This seamless shift between stability and mobility gives him whichever advantage he needs at a given moment to best target or land a fish.

Oni keeps a very light and flexible grip on the rod. During the cast, the butt travels 2-3 inches out from his wrist before returning. I saw him make several corrections on casts where the angler was creating too much separation, so this is an important aspect of his casting style. A frequent move I observed was Oni repositioning his hand on the upper, middle, or lower grip by doing a small, quick toss of the rod into the air and then grabbing it where he wanted it next. I suspect that this was largely to make minor adjustments in range, used in conjunction with body position when setting up for a cast.

Tactically, he made very thorough and varied explorations of key water. He would target specific zones and terrain features, in sequences set to minimize disturbance to areas he had not yet hit. When fishing a pool, he would fish the near edge, then the bottom, then the far edge, then get out and move around the far side of the pool, and fish the entire pool again from an

upstream position with different drifts and tactics.

On some casts, the line would be kept off the water entirely, and others, half the line was in the water as he played the fly downstream. Some drifts were very short, 2-3 seconds long, and others were very long, as he drifted an entire broad section of current from top to bottom. There did not seem to be any hard and fast rules, and his tactics were extremely dynamic.

Of course, it goes without saying that his casts were precise and consistently impressive. You could tell that he was not just casting into that shadowy area by the bank, he was cast-

ing to that clump of grass sticking out by that particular rock in the shadowy area by the bank, because that is exactly where his fly would land.

I had the pleasure of watching him catch a good-sized cutthroat that gave him some nice runs. The fish put a serious bend into the rod and Oni brought up his off hand to support the rod. If you have not seen this technique, it is a good one to learn. He applies his off hand with an open palm to the section up above the grip. It is important to note that he does not grasp the section; that would stop the section from being able to flex. He simply puts his open hand there to act as resistance for the fish to pull the rod against, and at the same time, drops the rod sideways so that it is mostly parallel to the water. This lets the rod flex and distribute the force of the fight across the entire rod.

It was an honor and pleasure to meet Tenkara-no-Oni and an invaluable learning experience to watch him fish. There was a lot to learn and I am still processing much of it myself. Hopefully, I've passed on something from the experience in this article that you'll find useful or thought provoking for your own Tenkara fishing. If you have not seen Tenkara-no-Oni casting, there is a wealth of videos on YouTube that showcase his skills, and demonstrate the potential of long-line Tenkara. Have fun exploring.

He casts long, light lines more accurately than anyone you've ever seen!



TENKARA MASTER SHARES HIS TECHNIQUES

"Tenkara-no-Oni" demonstrates casting from a kneeling position directly towards the class.



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Bob's sunken beetle draws hard hits from fish

By Bob Haase

I don't know the origin of the first sunken beetle but as new tying materials become available I keep modifying and changing the pattern. My first modification was a variation of a fly tied by John Gremmer, and I used black toolbox liner for the shell back. I then changed the body material from chenille to Ice Dubbing and the shell back to pheasant tail fibers coated with UV-set polymer.

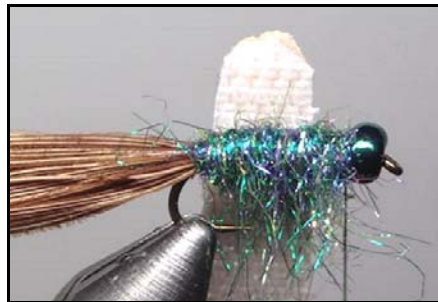
All the previous patterns worked quite well, and sometimes they caught fish when nothing else was working. When fishing this pattern just let the sunken beetle tumble in the riffles and strip it in the pools. You will not believe how hard the fish hit these. I believe the pattern shown here is the most productive yet, and you will want to have some in your fly box.



Step 1 - Put a glass purple or black 6/0 bead on the hook. Then make wraps of .25 lead or lead-free wire from the point of the hook to the bead. Start your thread and wrap over the lead to secure the lead wraps. Then coat the lead with UV-set polymer to help secure and seal the lead.



Step 2 - Cut three clumps of pheasant tail fibers about 3/8-inch wide and tie them by the tips as shown, letting the tips of the fibers go past the eye of the hook. Tie the first clump in on top and the next two clumps on each side. Trim the tips of the fibers as shown. This is for a #12 hook. Use a little less for smaller hooks.



Step 3 - Dub the body with a mixture of ice dubbing. I blend Emerald Green, Blue Steelie and purple. After dubbing, use a Velcro brush to pull down the fibers as shown.

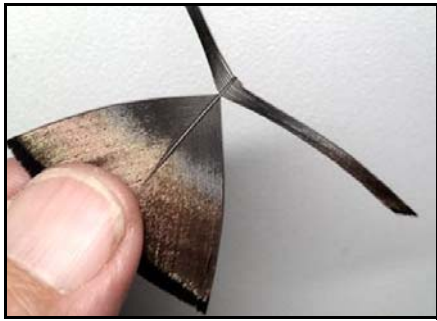


MATERIALS LIST
Bob's sunken beetle
Hook: Mustad 3906B or equivalent #12 & #14
Thread: black 140 denier
Body: mixture of ice dubbing (blue & green)
Head: dark purple/black iridescent 6/0 glass bead
Weight: .25 lead or lead-free

Step 4 - Turn the hook upside down and, using a scissors, trim the ice dubbing close to the body as shown. Then turn the hook right side up.



Step 5 - Bring the pheasant tail fibers over the back first and tie in with a wrap of thread or two over the fibers and then in front of the fibers behind the bead. Repeat this with a clump of fibers for each side, trying to keep the fibers even as shown and leaving a little of the body showing. Then trim off the excess fibers as close as you can to the bead.



Step 6 - Select a wild turkey body feather and trim it so that you have a sharp edge on each side on the top. Select about six or seven fibers on each side and cut the stem where it is separated. Run each side between your forefinger and thumbnail to separate the fibers.



Step 7 - Position the fibers on the side of the body and using your thumb and forefinger to hold them in position, tie them in place. Make wraps behind and in front of the legs to hold them out perpendicular to the body. Trim the excess fibers off and tie off your thread.

Step 8 - Place one coat of head cement over your thread wraps and the pheasant tail shell back. Let dry and place a coat of Loon UV Knot Sense over the shell, covering all the fibers on top and sides. You can use a bodkin to spread the Knot Sense so that it covers evenly. Then put a coat of regular UV-set polymer over that and you are done.

Bob's Tying Tips Advice from the bench of Bob Haase

Coating lead wire with UV-set polymer

A while back I started coating my wraps of lead wire with a UV-set polymer to lock in the wraps, but more importantly to coat the lead and seal it. I do not have documentation to prove it, but I believe that sealing the lead with a UV-set polymer makes the fly more environmentally friendly. I try to use substitutes for lead when possible, such as lead-free wire, tungsten or other alloys. However, I still find a need to use lead at times, such as with the sunken beetle pattern.

Lighting

If you only tie a few flies, the use of good lighting is not as critical, but if you tie a lot you should consider buying yourself a good light for your tying station. The light you select should provide enough light and it should be even, soft lighting. Harsh lighting is hard on the eyes. Having good even lighting will also help you see better when tying smaller flies. I also prefer lighting that is daylight balanced. Stores such as JoAnn Fabrics often have 50-percent-off coupons on OttLites, and they offer a number of different styles.

The reason I am talking about lighting is that it can actually help you tie a better fly when you can see better and reduce your eye strain caused by poor and harsh lighting. I am not as critical of the

lighting when tying on location for short periods, but one of the best investments I have made in my tying is purchasing a good tying light for my home and cottage where I do most of my tying. Look around and take some time in selecting a good light that fits your tying needs.

Free tying materials

If you hunt, you will end up with a lot of free tying materials such as duck, turkey, pheasant and grouse feathers, as well as squirrel fur and tails, and deer hair and tails. If you don't hunt, talk to some of your hunting buddies, friends or an area taxidermist to see about getting some of their trimmings. I have talked about this before, but I mention it again now because so many tiers overlook the free source of quality tying materials. With hunting season all but wrapped up, now is the time to talk to your hunting friends.

IMPORTANT! Do not bring any hair or feathers into your tying area unless it has been cleaned and processed to get rid of any insects or their larvae. I will be posting information on how to inspect, wash, clean and treat hair and feathers and it will be posted on the CWTU website under Fly Tying. I don't let anything into my tying area without first placing it in a microwave for 20 to 30 seconds.

Get "social" with our Facebook pages

We're getting social. The Council now has an official Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Facebook page at facebook.com/WisconsinTU. So go ahead and give us a "Like!" We've also set up a Wisconsin Trout Unlimited State Council "group" on Facebook for people to share upcoming event info and conservation-related news.

You've Arrived

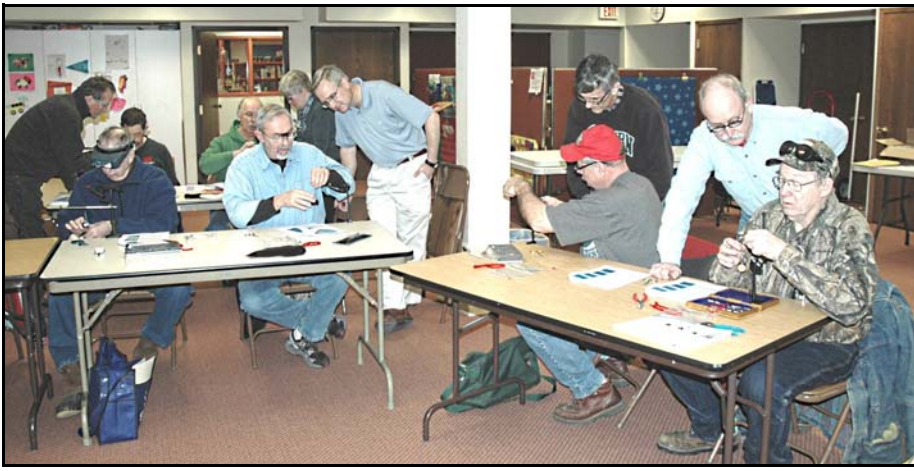
*as an angler,
you know you've arrived:
when you appreciate
the experience of angling
more than the fish
you've caught;
when you commit
to helping the resource,
not just enjoying it;
when you acknowledge
you are mortal,
the river immortal;
you can rejoice
for you've become reverent.*

From the book "A Poet's Gift To Anglers," by Daniel O. Holland

For copies contact Dan at dholland@coredcs.com



Chapter News



Todd Franklin

ALDO LEOPOLD CHAPTER'S FLY TYING CLASSES COMING SOON

The chapter will be hosting its five-week fly tying class at the Baraboo Public Library beginning Wednesday, January 27 at 6 p.m.

Aldo Leopold Chapter

The final bank seeding of Bear Creek in western Sauk County is completed, bringing to a close the largest habitat improvement in the chapter's history: 4.25 miles of improved trout water. The chapter spearheaded the project and a huge thank you goes to the contractor, Holtz Lime and Gravel of Loganville, Brent Bergstrom of Sauk County Conservation, Planning and Zoning, and Tony Pillow of NRCS. Our public servants did indeed serve us well.

The chapter is now securing funding for a smaller habitat project at Manley Creek in eastern Sauk County, a small ribbon of a stream with a resident native brook trout population. We plan to develop deep pool habitat and increase accessibility through bank tapering and canary grass control.

Two newly created positions for the chapter, webmaster and membership chair, have been filled. I am very happy to announce that Dan Braun of Baraboo will assume webmaster duties to maintain and develop our web presence. Bob Moss of Pardeeville stepped up and offered to take on the responsibilities of membership chair. Bob will keep

our roster and contact information current and produce a member directory each year.

Jared Sagal, one of our very active teen members, recently earned his Eagle Scout Award, and several of our chapter leaders attended the awards ceremony in December. Congratulations, Jared!

Coincidentally, Jared was among the students in last year's inaugural Wisconsin TU Youth Fly Fishing Camp. Riverland Conservancy has agreed to help us sponsor a student for this year's camp, so if you know of a youth in our chapter area with an interest in conservation and fly fishing, please submit their name to me as soon as possible.

The chapter will be hosting a five-week fly-tying class at the Baraboo Public Library beginning Wednesday, January 27 at 6 p.m. On the heels of the fly-tying class, the chapter, in conjunction with Orvis of Middleton, will offer Fly Fishing 101, a free fly-casting clinic indoors at the Baraboo Civic Center on March 9. The class will be taught by Tristan Kloss of Orvis. All tackle will be supplied and each attendee will receive a free TU membership.

—Scott Allen



Mike Stapleton

ALDO LEOPOLD'S JARED SEGAL ACHIEVES EAGLE SCOUT RANK

Aldo Leopold's most active teen member, Jared Segal, was recently awarded the Eagle Scout award. Here he receives the award from his scoutmaster while his proud parents look on.

Antigo Chapter

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all. As I write this chapter report the grass is green and looking for snow.

This fall has been busy. Tim Gregrich has done a great job of making contact with some area disabled veterans and the Langlade County Veterans Service Officer to arrange a

fishing day for area disabled vets. We are looking at July 2016 to set this event up.

Our chapter is working with the city of Antigo to help acquire a floating dock system at Remington Lake in the city. This would replace the existing dock at this site. With the support of local people and An-

tigo TU we have approximately \$2,000 set aside for this project.

In November our chapter joined Silver Moon Springs and planted trout in Remington Lake for the kids to catch this winter.

I just returned from our WITU Northeast Region winter meeting and saw again what a wonderful job our chapters did in supporting our

area DNR fish managers and the National Forest Service staff. If I'm not mistaken we donated more than \$47,000. Great job, everyone, for helping us support our coldwater resources.

Our banquet is Saturday, April 2, 2016 at Northstar Banquet Center.

—Scott Henricks

Blackhawk Chapter

With stream work over earlier than usual this year, the members at our monthly meetings sat back and listened to three good presentations regarding Wisconsin trout streams.

In September, Kurt Welke, DNR Fish Biologist for Green, Dane and Rock counties, gave us his view of the trout conditions in our local area. In October, Kyle Zempel OF Black Earth Angling Co. reached out further north and west with his views, now from a guide's perspective, and Paul Cunningham, DNR Systems Ecologist and Habitat Protection Specialist, discussed trout fishing Easements and Acquisitions throughout Wisconsin at our November meeting.

Dave Patrick represented the chapter at the Council meeting in Eau Claire in October. In early November the chapter sent letters to Duke Welter and Jeff Hastings in support of the funding grant request for the TU Driftless Area Restoration.

Looking ahead to 2016, we have already pledged \$500 for a Shabazz High School Project Green Teen work day on the West Fork of the Kickapoo River in May. We are planning one or more work days on Otter Creek west of LaFarge, and we've been in touch with Land and Water Conservation Director Paul Krahn in Vernon County.

—Dave Hinde

Central Wisconsin Chapter

Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited members Ira Giese and Jeff Treu took the lead in an event we were invited to participate in. St. Paul Parish in Plainfield held its first annual "Women in the Great Outdoors Retreat" in late September. This was an all-day event for women and daughters of faith to learn about and participate in outdoor sports and activities.

Participants had the opportunity to explore archery, bow hunting, outdoor campfire cooking, wild game cooking, outdoor photography, master gardening and of course fly fishing and fly tying. Ira and Jeff had 20 women who were interested in learning fly fishing and fly tying. It went well. The women progressed through basic fly casting. Each tied a fly they got to keep.

With the announcement of the possible sale of numerous DNR parcels, we decided to look at the parcels being considered in our five-county area. The total number of parcels to be offered for sale in the region are 15.

Thanks to Jeff Wegand's extensive Central Wisconsin stream fishing experience, we did find a parcel worth commenting about. It is parcel number FI2847 and is part of the

White River Fishery Area. While this parcel is just outside the Lunch Creek project area, it offers the best public access to the upper portion of Lunch Creek. Also, if this property is sold, two DNR easements would no longer connect to Upper Lunch Creek public lands.

Letters were sent. Work done by the Council has really been very helpful and we appreciate it. They identified the issue early, made it easy for us to learn where the parcels were and how to comment. In their last mailing to Wisconsin TU members they included the property of interest to us and parcels found by other chapters along with the Langlade County spring ponds.

October is banquet time for CW-TU. On Saturday October 10 we held our 44th Annual Banquet at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center in Oshkosh. This is the same site where the Wisconsin TU banquet has been held the last two years. This was a new site for our banquet and it worked well. Changing a banquet site can make you nervous, but many chapter members have been to recent WITU State Council Banquets and knew this site had good facilities, food and service. We had



Chris Amundson

COULEE CHAPTER STARTING A TIC PROGRAM

Looks like the eggs have hatched at the TIC project in Sparta.

Chapter News



better attendance than last year and raised more money. Emphasis was made on youth participation with a deeply discounted ticket price and a youth raffle. Each young person got a small box of flies tied by chapter members. The fly boxes were donated by Tight Lines Fly Fishing Company of De Pere.

Our November program presented by DNR Fisheries Biologist Nick Legler was most interesting and provided great insight into factors that influence the fishery of Lake Michigan and its tributaries. The program was well attended, demonstrating the great interest in tributary fishing even for an "inland" TU chapter. Many of our members live within an

hour and a half drive to quality tributary fishing.

With the new early season upon us, have you found places to get out and get ice in your guides? Do you feel the need to maybe come in and warm up? We would love to have you join us at our winter show, Troutfest, Saturday February 27 at the Fin'n'Feather in Winneconne. We have 10 mini seminars throughout the day. There will be raffles, fly tyers, vendors and much more. Admission is free. Check out our website cwtu.org in February as all the details come together.

—Mike San Dretto

Coulee Region Chapter

We've had some excellent presentations during our fall chapter meetings. Cy Post gave us some very helpful tips with stories and photos from his years on the water. Levi Plath, from the Mississippi Valley Conservancy, shared how the MVC works with other organizations like TU to preserve and restore our beautiful natural resources and also make that land available for public recreational use. Steve DeWald is a retired DNR warden and shared stories from his books about his time in the field. Roger Haro from UW La Crosse gave a fascinating talk about the adaptive caddis fly and how it uses silk to survive and thrive in many different environments. DNR fisheries biologist Jordan Weeks will talk to us in January about the outlook for the upcoming trout season.

Thanks to Steve Craig for hosting a monthly fly-tying event at the West Salem Legion on the first

Monday of every month. We are looking forward to the Cozad 1Fly event on March 26, hosted by the Driftless Angler Fly Shop in Viroqua. This is a team event that raised more than \$3,000 for our youth fishing and outdoor events. Find out more about the event by searching "Cozad's Driftless 1Fly" on Facebook. See the highlight video from the last 1Fly event on Casey Zempel's YouTube channel or by searching "Cozad's Driftless One Fly."

One of the youth projects the 1Fly event sponsored this year was a Trout in the Classroom setup in Chris Amundson's classroom in the Sparta School District. Chris reports that their eggs have arrived and now the kids are waiting for a hatch.

Our banquet is Friday, February 26. Ticket information can be found on the CRTU web site at couleeregiontu.org.

—Curt Rees

Fox Valley Chapter

The Fox Valley chapter has started the 2015-2016 winter schedule of meetings and is preparing for our annual fundraiser, Cabin Fever Day.

Our October chapter meeting featured a presentation by Dave Seibel from the DNR and chapter member Tony Garvey, dealing with the "Spring Ponds of Northeast Wisconsin". Dave presented an overview of the profile of the spring ponds and talked about the history of the ponds. Tony shared some nice photos from his many fishing trips on the ponds. Check our chapter's Facebook page and scroll down to the pic of Tony with a very nice spring pond brown.

On October 22 a number of members gathered at Nancy Rosenbacher's place, called The Rose Farm, on the Waupaca River, for an afternoon of planting more than 16,000 brown trout in the Waupaca River.

Our November meeting featured a presentation titled "The Lake Michigan Steelhead and Brown Trout Fishery." The first speaker was DNR fisheries biologist Nick Legler. Two of our members, Don Clouthier and Tom Lager, then used a PowerPoint presentation to explain the "What's, How's and Maybe the Where's of Trib Fishing." Both presentations were very informative, but a few of us believe that not all of the "Where's" were shared with the group!

Our December meeting was our annual "Tie and Lie Night." Members and friends tied flies and told stories/fibs/lies about the past fishing season. Our January 28 meeting is our annual event put on by the students in the Culinary Arts program at FVTC. If you are interested in attending that event please check our website for information.

We are also planning and prepar-



Roger Genske

FOX VALLEY CHAPTER PLANTS 16,000 BROWN TROUT

These Fox Valley TU members planted 16,000 brown trout along a reach of the Waupaca River in Waupaca Co.

ing for Cabin Fever Day on January 23 at the Grand Meridian. Funds from this event help pay for the DNR LTE crews that work in the northeast and north-central regions during the summer months. Please check our website at foxvalleytu.org for additional information on Cabin Fever Day and our other activities.

Jen Erickson has created a Facebook page for our chapter, so please check it out and use it to keep up on chapter activities.

Frank Hornberg Chapter

Our 2015 stream rehabilitation activities came to a close in September. During that month we had two work sessions at the intersection of the Tomorrow River and Stedman Creek. We also moved rocks and cut brush on the Tomorrow River at the Welton Road access areas.

Several members helped DNR personnel do shocking surveys in September on the Tomorrow River upstream from Nelsonville. This was a new experience for some of the members, and it proved to be educational as well.

We were saddened by the unexpected passing of Robert Lea, a great friend of our chapter. The Tomorrow River flows through the Lea farm downstream from Nelsonville. Bob gave chapter members free access to the river from his property. He worked with the DNR,

Even though we have had a mild start to winter this year, the decorated homes and businesses have many of us thinking of Christmas and the holidays and the special times that we will be having with family and friends over the next few weeks. Relax and enjoy this great season. From all of us at Fox Valley TU: Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and we'll see you on a trout stream in 2016.

—Rich Erickson

providing construction equipment and labor, when they did a major rehabilitation project on his property.

In December we held our holiday social occasion with a family dinner at Shooters Supper Club in Plover.

We are scheduling three public meetings in January, February and March of 2016. The exact dates and speakers will be announced when final details are determined. We will also be scheduling fly-tying workshops during the winter months, just as we have in the past.

We are also using the winter months to arrange the future delivery of rocks, Christmas trees, sandbags and other supplies for our workdays next year. We look forward to a busy summer on the water, working as well as fishing.

—John Vollrath

Green Bay Chapter

In September seven GBTU members (Dennis Gusick, Pat Hill, Jack Kovistio, Adrian Meseberg, Jeff House, Lee Meyers and Mike Renish) got together for our sixth work project of the summer. For this project we finished painting a covered bridge on our Trout Education Trail across from the N.E.W. Zoo.

During the summer of 2015 GBTU held a total of six work projects, averaging about eight volunteers per project. Our projects averaged 4.5 hours, and we logged 209.5 hours of volunteer labor.

A big thanks goes to work project chair Lee Meyers, our devoted volunteers, the U.S. Forest Service, Nicolet Sportmen's Club, Wolf River TU, Oconto TU, Southeastern TU, the Peshtigo DNR, Antigo DNR and all those who helped restore and improve our northeast regional trout streams in 2015.

During our fly-tying events we were encountering folks who were interested in tying a variety of flies. Unfortunately we only had materi-

als for a panfish wooly bugger. After many weeks of discussing how we wanted to approach our fly-tying program, we finally reached a conclusion. Education chair Dave Ostaneck put in the orders for enough materials to tie several hundred flies including such classics as the wooly bugger, Mickey Finn, a beetle and more. We also printed and laminated step-by-step directions for each (around four for each pattern). This way the chapter will have them for a long time, and multiple volunteers can use them at once.

In August members Jack Koivistio, Mike Renish and Adrian Meseberg helped dozens of girl scouts catch fish. The event was held at the Izaak Walton League Ponds and was coordinated by Jodi Arndt.

This quarter GBTU finally got involved with the popular Trout In the Classroom program. In August we teamed with the Oconto Chapter to bring 250 brook trout to Pulaski High School. This was a fun and exciting endeavor. On November 20 the eggs were delivered.



Rich Erickson

FOX VALLEY CHAPTER MEMBERS LEARN ABOUT LAKE MICHIGAN SALMON
Nick Legler, Wis DNR Fisheries Biologist Lake Michigan, presented status of Lake Michigan salmonid fishery and future plans. By Tom Lager



Chapter News



Mike Renish

PAINTING THEIR HEARTS OUT

Green Bay Chapter members enjoy nice weather and even better scenery as they paint the Trout Education Trail's covered bridge.

The DNR salmon egg collection facility in Kewaunee held its Open House in October. GBTU was there to direct and perform fly tying for interested parties. Our volunteers included Paul Kruse, Mike Renish, Dave Ostanek and Adrian Meseberg.

Also in October I lent a helping hand to around a dozen boy scouts in Pulaski with instruction on fishing. I taught the group a variety of fishing-related topics including, fish anatomy, species, habitat, diet, locations, fishing equipment, how to fish for different species, and much more. Of course, much of the time was spent on trout. The event was also used to promote Trout Unlimited and its goals and mission.

GBTU began our first Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing program this quarter. We held classes two Tuesday's a month (first and third) from September through November. To start we did an introduction

into fly fishing, then showed participants how to tie a different pattern each class. Some of the patterns were the wooly bugger, Mickey Finn, deer-hair beetle, different egg patterns and more. Paul Kruse is the chair of this program. It has been a great learning experience and, as we move forward, hopefully we can generate even more excitement. Some of our volunteers include Dani Long, Jim Vanden Branden, Mike Renish, Jack Koivisto, Dave Ostanek, Dan Simmons and Adrian Meseberg.

Our meetings season lasts from September through April. The first Thursday of the month is a "program" meeting with presenter, food, drinks and door prizes. The third Thursday's are our business meetings. This is where board of director decisions are made. We kicked off our meeting season on Thursday, September 17.

Tim Waters was our first speaker,

in October. Tim talked about his decades of knowledge, experience and data fishing the Wolf River. It was terrific. There is no doubt many a GBTU angler will hit the Wolf with added excitement next season.

Our second program, in November, featured DNR biologist Dave Seibl. Dave shared his insights on the Spring Ponds of Langlade County. His program was also great. It really helped many of us understand the uniqueness of this resource and the threat it currently faces.

In December Adrian Meseberg, Lee Meyers, Kim McCarthy, Mike Renish, Staush Gruszynski and Bruce Duechert, along with two Ducks Unlimited members, met with Sen. Robert Cowles and Rep. Joel Kitchens. The meeting was to discuss Cowles' proposed high-capacity well bill. High-capacity wells pose a potential threat to ground water levels which can, and in many cases will, affect surface waters. Wisconsin's Central Sands region is already seeing lowering water lev-

els, and is considered an area of immediate concern. We wanted to develop a better understanding of the representatives' efforts, and to provide our own insight and input.

Also in December Paul Kruse (WITU Northeast Vice Chair), Dani Long, Lee Meyers and Adrian Meseberg attended the WITU Northeast Regional meeting. Working with all the northeast chapters, we were able to cover all funding requests for trout stream improvement, conservation and studies. Every regional representative was great to work with.

Please do not hesitate to visit our amazing website at greenbaytu.org for the latest news, recent stories, an incredible photo gallery and much more. Mike Renish has done an incredible job with the construction and management of the site. Content management is contributed from Randy Rake and Adrian Meseberg.

—Adrian Meseberg

Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

Projects for 2016 are Pompey Pillar, which was delayed from 2015 because of permitting issues, and Blue River below Shemack Road, and below our last work there down to the next road. The latter has very high banks and will require moving a lot of dirt. This is the lowest area on the Blue River with access. This summer we completed projects on Six Mile Branch and on the Widerow property on the Blue River.

A project for 2017 includes a new property on the Blue River above Bower Road. We will be getting an easement and we've started the permitting process. We are also looking at a piece of ground that already has access on Borah Creek,

near Lancaster.

We will have a "Lie and Tie" at Stonefield Apartments at noon on Sunday, January 17. We will be tying flies for the state banquet and will happily accept any fly donations for our chapter's fly box, which will be auctioned off at the WITU banquet.

There is a Grant County Sportsmen's Youth Day on Jan 30 at SWTC in Fennimore. We will be demonstrating fly tying and teach basic casting. We are looking for volunteers.

The chapter banquet will be Friday, May 6 at the Arthur Haus in Arthur, a few miles north of Platteville.

—Brian Larson

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

The Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter remains busy with stream restoration, advocacy, outreach and fun.

The 1,700-foot Trudeau Project, the most recent of the chapter's work on the Trimbelle River, was completed in September.

The DNR stream crew, DNR's Habitat Coordinator and Fisheries Biologist John Sours and Roger Fredrick incorporated large flat rocks for overhead cover, 13 LUNKER structures, boulders, logs and root wads into the stream.

Dan Wilcox, Randy Arnold, Fairmount Santrol employees and Kiap-TU-Wish volunteers supported the project by seeding, mulching, building LUNKER structures and installing blue bird and bat houses. The bat houses will provide roosts for summer broods.

Everyone who has toured the site is impressed with the enhanced habitat, including the trout that can be easily seen investigating their trout-friendly habitat. This winter, grass and forb seed obtained by Caitlin Smith of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will be planted.

Work on the Trimbelle has been ongoing since 2013 and the total project includes a mile of restored stream. It has proven to be a great resource for educational opportunities. This past fall, two groups toured the project site to learn about the restoration.

In October Professor Jarod Blades and 15 UW River Falls students from his Foundations of Ecological Restoration class toured the site. John Sours met the group and explained the techniques used to improve the stream habitat, the importance of exploring the past history of the site and how the restoration work improved overall stream health.

"I think the Trimbelle tour was fantastic," said Professor Blades. "The tour provided our students with a first-hand look at how a multi-year, multi-phase, successful stream and riparian restoration can be implemented by collaborative efforts, such as partnerships with TU, the DNR, private landowners and Fairmount Santrol. These types of partnerships and restoration projects bring life to what we teach in the college classroom."

In October, shortly after the UW River Falls tour, the Trimbelle was featured on the TUDARE Fall Stream Tour. Approximately 60 people, from Wisconsin DNR, Minnesota DNR, other public natural resources groups and TU members, listened to John Sours and Marty Engel of the DNR explain the different techniques that were used to enhance the stream and riparian habitat.

In regard to future work, Kiap-TU-Wish long-range planning com-



Marta Thomson

KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER AWARDS

Bob Bradham (left) received the Silver Trout award for his long-time Kiap involvement and his specific dedication in keeping the chapter's newsletter affordable and available to members. He is pictured with Kiap-TU-Wish member Jonathan Jacobs.

Chapter News



Maria Manion

ARNOLD AND SOURS GET KIAP-TU-WISH AWARDS

John Sours, WDNR Trout Habitat Coordinator and Fisheries Biologist, with Randy Arnold, Habitat Volunteer Coordinator for the Kiap-TU-Wish chapter.

use by all Wisconsin TU chapters.

The annual Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Conservation Banquet in December scored high marks on all fronts. It provided a comfortable, congenial atmosphere to socialize with fellow coldwater enthusiasts. The speaker, Steve Kinsella, educated the audience on the growing effort to move federal public lands to the stewardship of individual states and explained the negative possible consequences. The banquet was also a good venue in which to recognize the efforts of Kiap-TU-Wish members and, based on the preliminary numbers, it looks like the chapter's funding goal will be achieved too.

Members Trish Hannah, Scott Thorpe and Jack Sackrison received certificates of appreciation and a \$25 gift card for their 2015 volunteer efforts. Bob Bradham received the Silver Trout award for his long-time Kiap involvement and his specific dedication in keeping the chap-

ter's newsletter affordable and available to members. Kiap-TU-Wish Volunteer Coordinator Randy Arnold did a great job recognizing John Sours, who recently retired from the DNR for his 30-plus years of stream restoration work in the upper Driftless Region. As a bonus, John then shared with the audience his view of how important organizations like TU are to the protection and restoration of coldwater resources.

A big thanks to the committee that put on this first-class event: Mike Alwin, Deb Alwin, Allison Jacobs, Scott Wagner, Bob Diesch and Tom Schnadt, plus countless other volunteers. Also, thanks to the individuals, corporations and private businesses that generously donated both premium raffle items and gently used silent auction items.

—*Maria Manion, Tom Schnadt, Tom Henderson, Greg Olson and Dan Wilcox*

Lakeshore Chapter

Lakeshore TU lost an amazing force in our chapter. I am incredibly sad to report the passing of Jeff Preiss on Saturday, December 5. For those of you who knew Jeff, you knew of his great enthusiasm for life and mostly fly fishing. Jeff was a pillar in our Lakeshore Chapter, coordinating the entire banquet, handling the finances and doing just about everything to keep the chapter going. Jeff's tireless work on the Onion River is a testament to his devotion to coldwater fisheries not only locally but throughout the state. He will be greatly missed.

It seemed everywhere I have gone in Wisconsin, whether for TU or just fishing on my own, someone knew Jeff Preiss. I could be on Timber Coulee, meet a few guys, tell them I am Lakeshore president and undoubtedly they knew Jeff. Always they would say "tell Jeff I say hello," and of course I did. Jeff's response would invariably be "Oh ya, how's he doing, did I tell you about the time we were fishing and we caught a great hatch and landed 75 fish?" I, of course, would listen and somehow by the end of the story I felt as though I was there...which was always the case with Jeff's stories. He was devoted to the sport and all the friends he made in his life. I'm sure

he is in dry fly heaven casting to a 20-incher and is about to set the hook.

On a personal note I will never forget our banquet about five years ago. I was minding my own business and he came up to me and said, "Hey, Mr. President!" I looked around wondering who he was talking to, before I realized what he was up to. He basically appointed me as new president of Lakeshore TU, citing the chapter wanted "new blood." And that is literally how I became Lakeshore president. I will never forget that evening and the ensuing months once I was elected. Thanks, Jeff!

In all seriousness I do thank Jeff, not only for his work but also for trusting me to do a satisfactory job. I owe so much to Jeff. He helped me with a lot of issues when I had no clue. Anyone who has a story, a picture or an anecdote about Jeff, please contact me at 773-308-6156, as I would like to put together some sort of acknowledgement of Jeff.

I will submit all important news from Lakeshore TU in the next Wisconsin Trout. I think this submission should be all about Jeff. We will miss you.

—*Gordy Martin*

Marinette County Chapter

In December representatives from our chapter taught 10 members of Peshtigo Cub Scout Pack 4054 to tie their first fly, a woolly bugger. The scouts learned about various tying tools and tying materials. They were also given a copy of

Stream Explorers. Cubmaster Darryl Proft reported that "all the kids had a blast." Our hope is that we inspired the next generation of stewards for our coldwater resources.

—*Doug Erdmann*

Oconto River Chapter

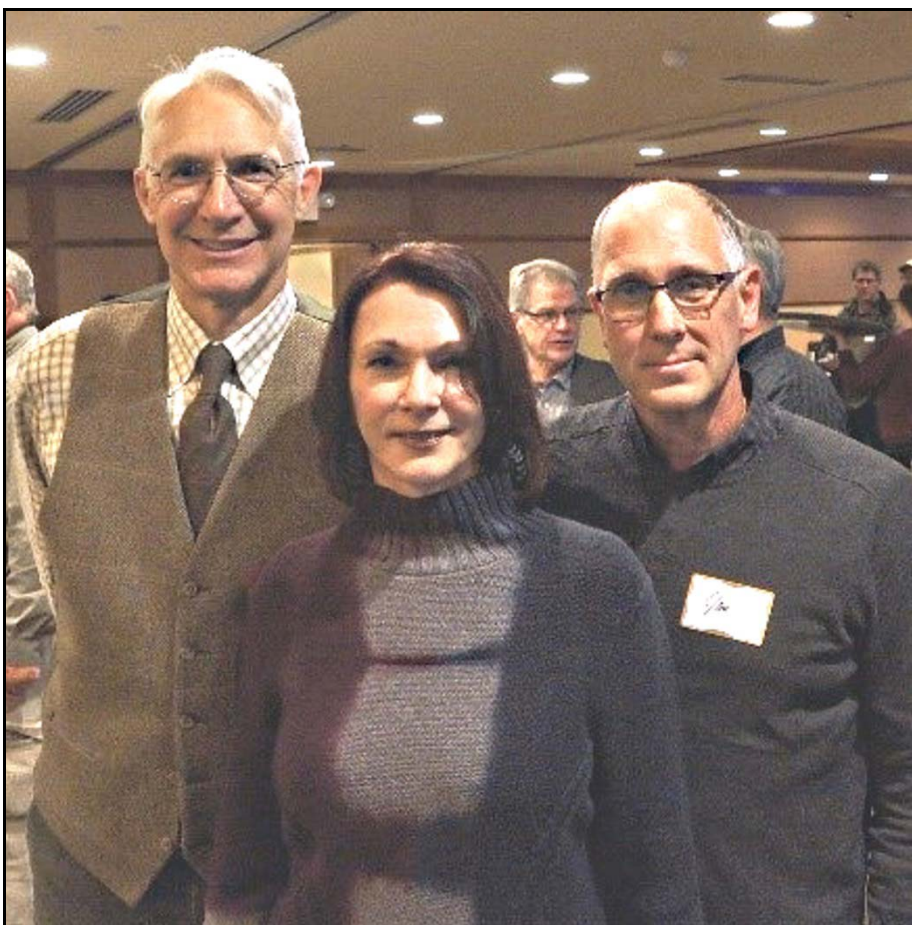
The chapter has kicked off its annual Trout In the Classroom program by delivering "eyed" eggs to the students at Suring, Oconto, Oconto Falls, Lena, Marion and Gillett School Districts.

Pulaski High School has also joined the other schools and will be adding the Trout In the Classroom curriculum. We owe a big thanks to Green Bay TU for assisting with the cost of the chiller and equipment for Pulaski.

Dale Halla is coordinating the effort. Eggs will begin to hatch in early December and will provide a won-

derful project for the classes involved. Special thanks to Tim Winkle at Silver Moon Springs Trout Ranch for supplying the eggs to the classes. The school district coordinators that include this project in their curriculum are Lara Nichols at Oconto, Roberta Windus at Lena, Greg Zeitler at Gillett, Sean Wagner at Suring, Jodi Meyer at Marion, Amanda Lietz at Oconto Falls and Kaleb Santy at Pulaski. These instructors have been asked to share their experiences with their peers.

Our board of directors met in November to complete the AFR.



Maria Manion

KIAP-TU-WISH AWARD WINNERS

Recipients of Kiap-TU-Wish Certificate of Appreciation awards: Scott Thorpe, Trish Hannah and Jim Sackrison

committee members Randy Arnold and Tom Henderson recently met with Marty Engel, John Sours, Nate Anderson and Heath Benike of the DNR to review the list of potential stream habitat improvement sites within our territory.

A new easement on the Trimble, located four miles northwest of Ellsworth, was given high priority. Having received a project scope and budget from the DNR, Kiap-TU-Wish can now begin planning to raise the necessary funds. Most likely the stream at this new easement will be our project for 2017.

The City of River Falls convened a stakeholder meeting in October to review the report on the sediment study conducted by their consulting engineers, Inter-Fluve. Dan Wilcox attended on behalf of Kiap-TU-Wish and reported back to our Dam Committee. The committee includes Dan Wilcox, Gary Horvath and Kent Johnson, who reviewed the study and responded with a well-reasoned, 20-point response, including additional items the City of River Falls and Inter-Fluve

should consider when doing their sediment sampling plan. Both the City of River Falls and Inter-Fluve responded positively to the suggestions.

Kiap-TU-Wish is expanding its Trout in the Classroom (TIC) programs. In 2014-2015 the chapter assisted Brian Burbach's fifth-grade North Hudson Elementary class with their TIC program. The program was a huge success for Brian's class and last May they released classroom-raised brown trout into the Willow River. This school year, Kiap is assisting two new TIC programs in our area: John Mueller's fifth-grade class at River Crest Elementary in Hudson and Jeremiah Fisk's fifth-grade class at Amery Elementary. Near the end of the school year, River Crest will stock brown trout fingerlings in the Willow River and Amery will do the same in an area trout pond.

Kiap is also assisting the Wisconsin Clearwater Chapter with starting a TIC program at Menomonie High School, and has helped draft some TIC guidelines for the Council for



Chapter News



Darryl Proff

MARINETTE CHAPTER TEACHES FLY TYING TO SCOUTS

In December Marinette TU members taught 10 members of Peshtigo Cub Scout Pack 4054 to tie their first fly, a woolly bugger. The scouts learned about various tying tools and tying materials. They were also given copies of TU's *Stream Explorers*. Here Doug Erdmann teaches Brooks to tie his first fly.

They will propose a 2016 activity schedule at the upcoming meeting and will prepare a budget accordingly. Member of the year and best lunch awards were discussed at the December chapter meeting. Awards will be presented at the February meeting.

The banquet committee was established and a tentative date set for April 28, 2016. Our banquet is our largest fundraiser event of the year. Banquet Chair Dan Sumnicht reported that we have a great selection of prizes already set aside for the banquet.

Members attended the WITU Northeast Regional meeting in Langlade in December. With so many

projects affecting the Oconto River Watershed in 2016, our chapter juggled our budget for the coming year to contribute \$4,500 for stream restoration. In addition, the chapter will be placing an application to Friends of Wisconsin for a grant of \$2,000 to be used on these Oconto River projects.

Our membership meetings are held monthly, except May and November, on the first Wednesday of the month. Meetings are held at the Lone Oak Gun Club just north of Gillett starting at 7 p.m. Learn more about what is happening by following us at ocontorivertu.com.

—Tom Klatt



TWO-CHAPTER TIC TROUT EGG DELIVER CREW

Delivering brook trout eggs to Pulaski High School. Pictured from left are Oconto TU's Dale Halla, GBTU President Adrian Meseberg, and Oconto Chapter members Kaleb Santy, Dave Brunner and President Tom Klatt

Shaw-Paca Chapter

With 2015 coming to a close, the Shaw-Paca Chapter is busy at work planning their annual banquet and enjoying the incredible December weather we're having. In November we enjoyed an amazing presentation by Tim Landwehr of Tight Lines Fly Fishing Company on fly fishing for golden dorado in Bolivia. On February 18 we'll be hosting Kyle Zempel of Black Earth Angling Co. for our

monthly meeting, where he'll give a presentation on fishing the lower Wisconsin River. All are welcome. Our meetings are held the third Thursday of the month at Mathew's Supper Club in Clintonville.

I have been out on the tributaries this past month and have had some luck with fresh steelhead and migratory brown trout. The unseasonably warm temps and rainfall had the riv-

ers open and flowing well, with fresh fish arriving each week. It's amazing to think we can now fish the inland trout streams earlier with the new early catch and release season. With all the forecasts pointing towards a very mild winter, there's a lot to be excited about when it comes to Wisconsin trout fishing this winter.

The annual Shaw-Paca Chapter Banquet will once again be held at NorthWinds Banquet Hall in Marion on Thursday, April 7. Check out the Shaw-Paca Facebook page or chapter website at shawpaca.tu.org for information on our meetings, presentations and banquet.

—Nate Sipple

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

Numerous events this fall have kept members of the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited (SEWTU) quite busy. We've been attending chapter events and meetings, workdays and planning and participating in outreach programs.

In October we held our annual SEWTU Habitat Fundraiser at the New Berlin Golf Club. Attendees enjoyed some delicious hors d'oeuvres while socializing with friends and acquaintances. Many wonderful prizes were won in the raffle, and the number and quality of donations was very impressive.

We would like to thank everyone who supported this event by donating items or purchasing tickets. All of the proceeds will be used for habitat projects. Stan Strelka, Jim Wierzba and Ivan Nohavica, along with many others, did a great job organizing this event.

Our chapter meetings have been well attended and we've had some great speakers and events. In November Jen Ripple spoke. Jen is the editor in chief of *Dunn* magazine and the executive editor of *Tight Loops* magazine. The topic of her presentation was "The History of Women in Fly Fishing." This was a fascinating topic and we learned that several women with Wisconsin connections hold prominent places in the history of fly tying, casting and fishing.

Our December chapter meeting capitalized on the holiday season. We held an optional gift exchange for attendees and members contributed to a food drive to support the Hunger Task Force. Robert Thompson, an outdoor filmmaker, was our guest for the meeting. Robert has just completed a new fishing film that we viewed to conclude the meeting. Our membership committee chairs, Taylor Todd and Abby Mertz, have done a wonderful job inviting speakers and planning activities for our meetings.

Workdays also kept SEWTU members active this past fall. Our September workday, planned by Jason Freund of SEWTU and Luke Roffler of the DNR, took place at

Whitewater Creek in Walworth County. We cut brush, and piled bundles of brush in the stream to narrow the channel and stabilize the banks. This was a very challenging task, because prior to the workday approximately five inches of rain had fallen and flooded the area. Most of our work was done while standing in water over our knees.

In October we partnered with the Ozaukee County Fish Passage, the Great Lakes CCC, and a Boy Scout troop from Fredonia for a workday at Ulao Creek in Ozaukee County. Participants planted trees and shrubs along the stream. Ray Weiss did a great job running this workday for SEWTU.

Our December workday was held at Scuppernong Springs in Waukesha County. The project involved installing and adjusting biologs and removing some in-stream gravel that was slowing the velocity of the stream. Jim Wierzba and Jason Freund of SEWTU, and Ben Heussener of the DNR, planned this event.

SEWTU members continue to provide educational and outreach opportunities and there have been many events this fall. In October, SEWTU members, along with members of the Gary Berger TU chapter, demonstrated fly-casting and fly tying at the Root River Steelhead Facility in Racine. Benbow Cheesman represented our chapter at this event.

Also in October some members manned an information table and demonstrated fly tying and casting at the Shorewood Fish and Feathers Event at Hubbard Park in Shorewood. Rick Frye, chair of the SEWTU education committee, did a wonderful job organizing both of these events.

The fall season also means that the Oak Creek fly tying events have started. This group, organized by Greg Schick, meets two times each month at the Oak Creek Community Center to tie flies.

SEWTU is a strong supporter of the Project Healing Waters (PHW) program that connects veterans



Matt Krueger

SWTU A KEY PARTNER IN TROUT AND TRAIL FEST

Trout and Trail Fest was held in Mazomanie in September. SWTU was a key partner in this community celebration.

Chapter News



with fishing and fly tying opportunities. This fall, SEWTU members have been involved in PHW fishing outings at Kletzsch Park in Milwaukee and weekly fly tying sessions. In early December, veterans involved with the PHW program volunteered to wrap gifts and demonstrate fly tying at the Orvis Shop at Bayshore Mall. George Batcha continues to

do a great job organizing these activities.

Feel free to check out our website at sewtu.tu.org and Facebook page to learn more about SEWTU. We hope everyone has a great start to 2016 and that you have a chance to enjoy the early trout season.

—Boyd Roessler

Southern Wisconsin Chapter

Please mark your calendar for our annual Icebreaker event on January 16. We are excited to welcome Jeff Currier as our keynote speaker. Jeff has fished the world over and landed 300 species of fish on the fly. He brings a tremendous passion for the sport and conservation to all he does. Jeff will speak domestically of “Four Seasons of Yellowstone Trout Fishing” and then take us on a whirlwind trip called “Trout Fishing the World.”

The Icebreaker has something for the experienced and novice fly fisher. Be sure to note our new location: this year it’s conveniently located at the headquarters of American Family Insurance, right off the interstate on the east side of Madison. The address is 6000 American Parkway.

The day-long event will also feature some of the region’s most innovative fly tyers, a Trout Fishing 101 session, and a legendary array of bucket raffle items. Raffle items range from a beautiful Paul Douglas bamboo fly rod to a Yeti cooler, and scores of rods, reels, flies, guided trips, outdoor gear and pieces of art.

Bring the kids. Those under 12 get in free when accompanied by a parent. They can visit our stream explorers’ education room between 9 a.m. and noon and they always enjoy Mike Miller’s invertebrate display.

We again invite both retired and active military personnel to our

event; they will receive free admission with their military ID.

We’ll see you on Saturday, January 16 at our new event location. You’ll enjoy a friendly, roomy, professional and relaxed atmosphere. Read our latest newsletter at swtu.org for more information.

Looking back to September, we’re extremely proud of the first-ever Mazomanie Trout & Trail Fest. It was a fantastic day of celebration, and a fine example of how a coldwater resource can be the centerpiece of a community. Businesses and organizations from the Mazomanie community and beyond were present and each made contributions to make the event special.

The festival was capped by a delicious, friendly, celebratory, collegial, engaging and musical evening. At this banquet, we presented awards to Curt Diehl, Paul Douglas and The Natural Heritage Land Trust. We also honored landowners David Mays and Ann Windsor, and the Neperud family, for their conservation stewardship. Lastly, we presented Jeff Smith with our highest honor for his decades of service. Jeff passed away several days later. We were better for knowing him, and our chapter was better for having him as a driving, and welcoming, force.

Learn more about us, our events and activities at swtu.org or by finding us on Facebook.

—Drew Kasel

Wild Rivers Chapter

It’s a rare December that I can look out the window and see bare grass on the hay fields instead of snow blanketing the landscape. If this uncommon warmth persists, our new extended catch and release season in Wisconsin might be an enjoyable time. Wild Rivers chapter tends to get so cold and snow covered in the winter that I was anticipating travel times to make the most of the extended season beginning in January. If it remains warm, I might not have to drive as far.

Our chapter has been working with Allison Werner of the Wisconsin River Alliance to develop a five-year strategic plan. This past fall we gathered survey data from chapter members, interviewing key stakeholder and partners who are instrumental in the chapter being successful at fulfilling TU’s mission locally, and meeting as a board to make sense of the data being collected. In December we held a board retreat to develop goals for the next five years based on the data collected.

Over the years, I have participated in a lot of strategic planning initiatives. I’m always mindful that you only get what you put in to it. I’ve been happy to see enthusiasm and committed participation from our board. A very special thank you to Chapter Secretary Bob Traczyk for chairing the strategic planning com-

mittee.

Board member and chapter meeting organizer Jason Stewart put together some fun and informative meetings for us this past fall. We all met at the Brule River for a lesson in two-handed and spey casting led by Jason and by John Fehnel of Great Lakes Fly Shop in Duluth. Thanks to both Jason and John for the instruction and entertainment on the stream. It was especially nice to have a steelhead rolling over from time to time right in front of where we were learning.

Jason also booked DNR fisheries biologist Craig Roberts from the Spooner DNR office for our November meeting. Craig spoke to us about a couple of streams and a network of stocked ponds in the area. Most of us have never fished any of the waters that Craig spoke about, and we were all grateful to learn about some new water within our chapter’s boundaries.

Our chapter covers a lot of territory in northwest Wisconsin. Getting to know all of the water in the northern counties is always made easier by having one of the many great biologists from the DNR educate us on the fisheries they are working to improve and conserve. Thanks to Craig Roberts for spending the evening with the Wild Rivers Chapter.

Every winter our chapter orga-



James Beccher

DANE COUNTY’S DIEHL GETS SWTU AWARD

Curt Diehl, Conservation Specialist with the Wisconsin DNR, receiving an award from Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited for his outstanding service to our coldwater resource.

nizes tying events in our community. These events are great outreach for the chapter and enable us to put together flies to donate to the State Council banquet February 6.

This year, in addition to the events we host at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center through December and January, we’ve developed a new partnership with the Ashland Parks and Recreation department through new Wild Rivers chapter member and Ashland Parks and Recreation Director Sara Hudson. We will be hosting tying events with Ashland area youth through its after-school programs.

In conjunction with this program there has also been interest from the local youth outreach end of UW-Extension to tag onto this and engage youth from a wider area than just the Ashland area schools. Our first event was in December and I am really excited to see this new relationship grow into an opportunity for our chapter to do more to help nurture area youth to develop a passion for conservation.

I was fortunate to have tying mentors when I was young, and although I never developed the skills that most of them possessed, it has always been thrilling to spend winters tying. Most of us can relate to how tying keeps our minds on streams when weather limits access.

Save the date April 2 for our annual expo. Details are developing over the next month. A big thanks to Chuck Campbell for chairing the committee that is planning the expo. We welcome folks from other chapters. Please contact me if you would like to tie a bunch of flies to donate to Wild Rivers for the expo or if you would like more information about attending. This expo is our primary fundraiser each year. We have a lot of fun during the auction portion.

We also are fortunate to have great support and participation from our area partners, with whom we work throughout each year to take on conservation projects, education and outreach, and member-

ship recruitment. Many of these partner organizations have staffed information tables at the event, and it is a great way to learn in one day, what kinds of conservation efforts are happening in the chapter’s region.

In October our chapter hosted its first Trivia Night at The Spot. The Spot is Ashland’s local bar and wellness center. Owners Charmaine and Josh Swan put together trivia nights several times a month as a way to help nonprofits do outreach, a bit of fundraising, and have a really fun experience along the way. Our topic for the first trivia night covered the full spectrum of watersheds, biology, trout in literature and film, and a bit of “legends of flyfishing” biographical inquiry.

I’d like to give a big thank you to Val Damstra and Kelly McKnight for coordinating the event, and to all the chapter board members who submitted questions for the evening. Taking on that task meant that none of the board members could compete on teams or win prizes, but it also meant that the questions came from the people who are most heavily invested in our chapter’s success. Val, Kelly, Frank Pratt and I all had a lot of fun swapping MC responsibilities. We are looking forward to our next opportunity.

The final thing I’d like to report on is what we are doing to draw public opinion to the potential dangers of Concentrated Agricultural Feeding Operations, and also call attention to our chapter’s efforts to make known to DNR leadership that we understand many of the CAFO-related threats to water quality and the health of our coldwater fisheries. Chapter Vice President Kelly McKnight has been rewriting drafts of a chapter position on CAFO’s as feedback from chapter members and board leadership are given in response to each version. Kelly has completed a draft which takes into consideration all the feedback we have received. It was presented and voted on by the chapter board in December.



Chapter News

Our position paper comes at an important time, as Iowa-based Reicks View Farms has stated their intention to establish a hog CAFO in Bayfield County, and has been following the process of submitting their proposal to the State of Wis-

consin. See the opinion column on page 11 of this issue of *Wisconsin Trout* for more information on this CAFO.

—Bob Rice

Wisconsin Clear Waters

The mission of TU is to conserve, protect and restore our coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. With that in mind it may seem out of order to spend time and money on a 75-gallon aquarium complete with accessories. When I first learned about the Trout in the Classroom (TIC) concept, I was immediately interested. As a retired high school biology teacher, I thought it would be a great hands-on learning process for understanding and appreciating the delicate life cycle of our coldwater fisheries.

Initially the cost of the tank and the chiller and filter was a stumbling block. The biology teacher at the local high school was eager to set the project into

motion, but then a major remodeling of the science labs caused us to wait a while longer.

This summer I received an email note from fellow TU members Tom Schnadt and Greg Olson in the neighboring Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter. They had heard that there was interest in starting the project locally and since they that helped another school, they offered their experience and help. Menomonie Senior High School had just completed their renovation, and timing fell into place. Greg gave me a list of people and permits that I needed to contact. Tom provided an idea for assistance in funding and everything came together. The Wisconsin Clearwaters board gave their sup-

port, plus they had recently received an unexpected grant from TicketPrinting.com. This project seemed like the perfect fit for that money. A local company that has often assisted our TU Chapter, Fairmount Santrol, also liked the educational component of TIC and offered their support. I love it when a plan comes together. Cooperation from at least eight different players has now allowed this project to spawn.

After receiving an OK from area fish biologist Marty Engel, we received fish farm permits from the state. The package of necessary supplies was purchased after receiving a helpful list from TU Headwaters Program Coordinator Tara Granke. Nate McMahon is Menomonie High School's En-

vironmental Science Instructor and will be in charge of the program. After setting up the 75-gallon tank and allowing all processes to smooth and temperatures to get down to the desired level, he will soon receive eggs from a local hatchery.

Students will observe, record data, maintain ideal conditions in the system, and gain an appreciation for the life cycle of the amazing coldwater species that many of us have come to love. This hands-on learning process will serve our coldwater fisheries and watersheds well, as these young people support preservation of the resource by conserving, protecting and restoring watersheds for years to come.

—Dale Dahlke

Wolf River Chapter

In December the WITU Northeast Regional meeting was held at the Wild Wolf Inn along the mighty Wolf River. All funding requests were met by the generosity of the northeast chapters. The Wolf River

Chapter helped finance the Antigo summer brushing crew for 2016.

—Tim Waters

Bills would provide exemption for habitat structures

By Henry Koltz, TU National Trustee

Senate Bill 315, introduced by Senators Richard Gudex (R-Fond du Lac) and Thomas Tiffany (R-Hazelhurst), and its identical companion Assembly Bill 421, introduced by Representatives Robert Swearingen (R-Rhineland), Gary Tauchen (R-Bonduel), Jeremy Thiesfeldt (R-Fond du Lac), Edward Brooks (R-Reedsburg), Thomas Larson (R-Colfax), Bob Kulp (R-Stratford), Mary Czaja (R-Irma), Paul Tittl (R-Manitowoc), Alvin Ott (R-Forest Junction), Daniel Knodl (R-Germantown), and Jeffrey Mursau (R-Crivitz), provide a civil liability immunity for individuals who construct and place, and maintain, habitat structures navigable waterways under a permit or other approval from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

Under this bill, individuals and groups (such as Wisconsin TU and its members) are immune from civil liability for damage to personal property, and for injury to a person or death caused by placing a habitat structure on the bed of a navigable waterway if the structure is placed for the purpose of fish and wildlife habitat creation or protection, and under a DNR permit or in circumstances where no permit was required. The bill further provides that there is no duty to provide notice or warning about the existence of such structures, or to inspect and maintain the same.

This bill also provides the same immunities for fish net pens, but only for non-commercial pens that are used in Great Lakes water bodies or tributaries. The net pens involved here are: 1) only for holding or rearing fish for noncommercial purposes, 2.) where the pen rearing involves fish stocked by DNR, or by a person licensed by DNR, and 3.) where the fish being reared are released into the same body of water where the pen is located. This is not an immunity for commercial operations, and does not promote aquaculture. Rather, this appears aimed at net pens similar to those used by


DNR and sportsmen's groups to encourage steelhead to return to certain streams, for example, by rearing steelhead in pens to imprint them with that stream's characteristics.

The foregoing facts were carefully considered by Wisconsin TU's Legislative Committee, as obviously any time the phrase "net pen" appears our ears perk up. Given that

the net pens at issue are more akin to those used by local sportsmen's groups to aid in wild fish stocking, and are not commercial, aquaculture related pens, the Legislative Committee found that the significant protections liability immunity protections afforded by this bill warranted its support.

We ask our volunteers to engage

in a tremendous amount of stream work year after year in Wisconsin. Trout Unlimited carries insurance which protects its volunteers. This bill, if signed in to law, would further protect Wisconsin TU's volunteers, and ensure that they have litigation protections. On these bases, Wisconsin TU supported these bills by written letter.



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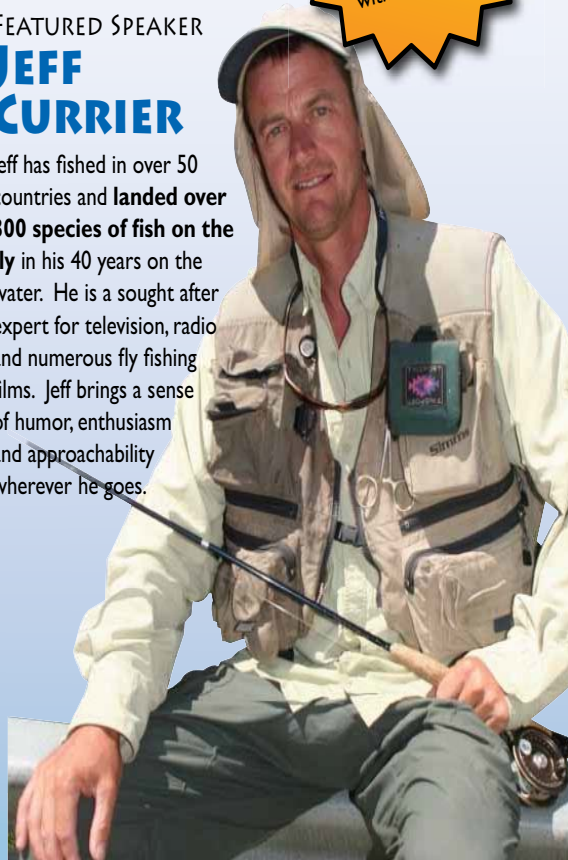
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FOR MORE INFORMATION: SWTU.ORG

FEATURED SPEAKER
JEFF CURRIER

Jeff has fished in over 50 countries and landed over 300 species of fish on the fly in his 40 years on the water. He is a sought after expert for television, radio and numerous fly fishing films. Jeff brings a sense of humor, enthusiasm and approachability wherever he goes.



Highlights of October Council meeting

By Tom Lager, Council Secretary

Representatives from 13 of 21 TU chapters attended the October 24 State Council meeting held in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Please consider attending the next meeting. All members are always invited. The next meeting is Saturday, February 6, 2016 in Oshkosh, followed by our annual banquet.

Finance and operations

The Council continues to be financially sound, with funding covering expected expenses. We will present a complete report on license plate revenue at the February meeting.

Chapter re-chartering in 2015 was completed by seven chapters; six are scheduled for 2016. The WITU Executive Committee carried the following motions:

- Financially supporting the STREAM Girls program
- Established official positions on the spring ponds and groundwater bills.
- Selected Tom Lager as Central Region vice president

There is now an expectation that regional vice chairs submit quarterly reports to the State Council at the spring council meeting. The vice chair role is to represent their region to the Council Executive Committee and help fulfill the vision of "One TU" and help unite chapters within regions.

National meeting and NLC

Linn attended the TU National meeting. The National Leadership Council implemented a new Chapter Efficiency Index (CEI), which places more credit on chapter volunteer hours, education and veterans programs. The NLC instituted a change to the financial accountability process, which now requires a second person within each chapter to conduct a monthly review of financial transactions. It is recommended that each chapter select a youth coordinator. There is plenty of information at tu.org.

Women's events

Heidi Oberstadt discussed the Woman's Initiative group. Their goals include encouraging women to step up to accept TU leadership positions, involve new women and those currently in chapters, and help teach chapters to be welcoming to women. Chapter are encouraged to nominate a Women's Initiative Chair and designate her on tu.org. Chapters can also host women's events. For help and ideas contact Heidi, heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com.

Legislative update

Henry Koltz updated the council on the status of proposed sales of state land and asked that all members keep communicating our concerns to the DNR and legislators. Several bills relating to ground water and high-capacity wells have required Henry to spend many hours at the Capitol in Madison talking to legislators.

Education Committee

Bob Haase called for new committee members and Curt Rees and Heidi Oberstadt volunteered. The next steps are to gather information about each chapter's education programs, define education opportunities and share methods. Council Vice Chair Mike Kuhr will be drafting guidelines for our Trout In the Classroom efforts.

Strategic plan

Regarding the recent survey of members, Council Chair Linn Beck reported that 56 percent of members responded to the survey. One common theme among respondents was to encourage more women and youth to get involved. A final plan will be available in 2016.

DNR report

DNR Trout Coordinator Joanna Griffith reported on the early season, which begins January 2, 2016. Regulations will now be on-line via Webmap.

They are currently drafting their Trout Management Plan, and TU input will be requested. The plan will identify constraints, guide trout program charges and priorities and plan for directing resources. The management plan topics include habitat protection and rehabilitation, trout stream classification, monitoring and evaluations, angler use, angler access, outreach and education, research and integration.

The goals are to create an inte-

grated systems approach to protect, restore and enhance sustainable aquatic habitat and trout populations, provide a variety of opportunities for diverse and sustainable recreation and commercial trout fisheries-based activities. Other goals include promoting public awareness, engaging new and existing trout anglers, making trout management decisions on best available data and science, while incorporating social and economic perspectives, and recruit, hire, retain, develop and support a world class fisheries staff and program.

The trout stamp contest in 2016 will now include other art media as well as paintings, and may include both youth and adult categories.

Upcoming events discussed

SWTU's Icebreaker event will be in Madison on January 16. Fox Valley TU's Cabin Fever Day is January 23.

The Council's February meeting and annual banquet is Saturday, February 6 at the Oshkosh Best Western conference center. The WITU youth camp is July 14-17 and is open to 12-16 year olds, with a maximum of 20 students and a sponsorship cost of \$250 per student. This year we are adding aquatic entomology and invasive species to the curriculum.

TU National's next Regional TU Meeting will be in Illinois in 2017.

Watershed Access Fund

Winter 2016 update

By Doug Brown

The 2015 Watershed Access Fund campaign was as successful as ever and I can't Thank You enough for your financial support! We raised just shy of \$9,000 from 81 contributors and three TU chapters. Thank you so much for your support!

With the recent political climate and discussions of selling state lands, the Watershed Program is even more important these days to secure permanent fishing access. All contributions will be used solely for Wisconsin acquisitions.

The current grant request is \$7,500. Because two chapters may each request for a single acquisition and each chapter would have to match at 50 percent, the new limits would provide as much as \$15,000 for a single purchase or easement. The matching 50 percent from chapters can be in the form of volunteer hours.

By now, you should have received the 2016 Watershed Access Fund appeal letter. Please consider making a generous contribution. The need for access is critical for anglers to continue their passion for trout fishing. Access is also critical for Trout Unlimited to continue its successful stream improvement work.

I hope you all had a joyous holiday season.

2015 Contributors

Henry Barkhausen	Winnetka IL	Bruce Davidson	Wauwatosa WI
Edwin Barklay Shultz	Prairie du Sac WI	Dave Drewiski	Hudson WI
Charles Barnhill	Madison WI	Richard Duplessie	Eau Claire WI
Phil Blake	Fitchburg WI	Pat Esselman	Weston WI
Stephen Born	Madison WI	John Ewen	Neenah WI
Edward Brockner	Beaver Dam WI	Cindy and Alan Finesilver	DePere WI
Will Burlington	Madison WI	William Flader, M.D.	Madison WI
Leigh Cherveney	Sheboygan Falls WI	Richard Galling	Hartland WI
Lawrence Clowry, M.D.	Wauwatosa WI	Ralph Gaudio	Desoto WI
Terry Cummings	Rhineland WI	Scott Geboy	Fox Point WI

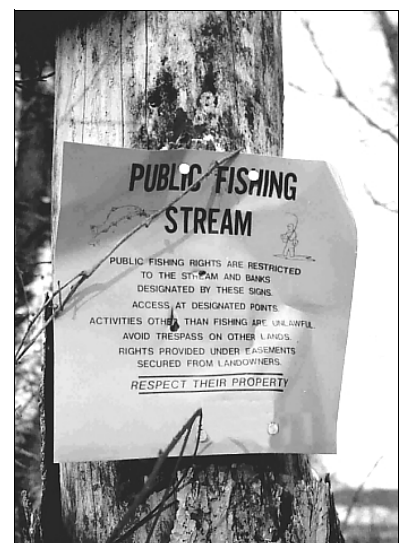
Colleen Grant	Eden Prairie MN	Thomas Rogers	Princeton WI
John Gribb	Mt. Horeb WI	Michael San Dretto	Neenah WI
Chris Gultch	East Troy WI	David Schiebel	Abrams WI
Stephen Hawk	Madison WI	Jeff Schmoeger	Cottage Grove WI
Ashton Hawk	Madison WI	Richard Schumann	Hartford WI
John Hawk	New Holstein WI	John Shillinglaw	Madison WI
Bill Heart	Ashland WI	Greg Smith	River Falls WI
Jan & Mark Heifner	Appleton WI	Stephen Somerville	Green Bay WI
Nancy and Dan Hill	Spencer WI	Michael Spittler	Minneapolis MN
Charles Hodulik	Madison WI	Charles Stuedel	Mineral Point WI
Jonathon Jacobs	Hudson WI	Wayne Stockman	Spring Valley WI
Thomas Janssen	Appleton WI	Wayne Strelow	Appleton WI
David Kinnamon	Bayside WI	Taylor Struwe	Altoona WI
Barb and Joe Kruse	LaCrosse WI	Ronald Suslick	Peshtigo WI
Jim Larson	LaCrosse WI	Gary Tielens	Athelstane WI
Chris Long	Mazomanie WI	Bill Vanden Elzen	Appleton WI
Randy Lueth	Marshfield WI	Carol Vendt	Oconto WI
Larissa and Thomas Lyon	Janesville WI	Marten & Karen Voss	Eau Claire WI
Janice and Randy McGrath	Janesville WI	Doug Wadsworth	Madison WI
John McMullen	Tomah WI	Don Wagner	Gillett WI
David Menke	Bristol WI	Raymond Weiss	Grafton WI
Peter Meronek	Stevens Point WI	Robert Welker	Glendale WI
Fred Mikolajewski	West Allis WI	Dan Wisniewski	Middleton WI
Harold Moilanen	Glendale WI	Robert Wyman	Beaver Dam WI
Frederick Motschman	Appleton WI	John Zei	Wausau WI
J. Peter Mullen	Prairie du Sac WI		
Keith Nelson	Waunakee WI	Badger Fly Fishers	Stoughton WI
Herb Oechler	Wauwatosa WI	Kiap TU Wish TU	
Winston Ostrow	De Pere WI	WI ClearWaters TU	
Eric Ratzlaff	Grafton WI	Marinette Co. TU	
Bob Retko	Cedarburg WI	May Close, New London, in Memory of Jay Close	
Steve Robertson	Verona WI		

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
Attn: Doug Brown
R4800 Timber Ln.
Ringle, WI 54471

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____



Keep 'em wet

There's a lot more to safely handling fish than simply catching and releasing

By Kyle Zempel

Catch-and-release fishing has been on the rise for some time now, whether it be through regulation or common practice. The bottom line is that we are putting our catch back to fight another day. Thanks to advances in science, we are gaining a better understanding of the impacts catch-and-release has on the fish we seek to chase. It is our responsibility as anglers to take what we know and put it into practice, ensuring that if we choose to catch and release, that we do so correctly, and with minimal impact on the fish. The "Keep 'em Wet" initiative strives to promote awareness of proper handling, photographing, and ultimately the release of fish.

What is "Keep 'em Wet?"

The "Keep 'em Wet" concept is about releasing your catch with minimal impact upon the fish. The whole point of catch-and-release fishing is to first catch the fish, then release that fish to fight another day. You get the enjoyment of the take, the fight and the photograph. You release with hopes that you or someone else will have the privilege to dual with that same—and hope-

fully larger—fish again in the future. It is a pretty simple concept which in most situations has created outstanding fishing opportunities.

Again, the whole point of the release is to allow your catch to return to fight another day, if the fish dies due to poor handling, the whole concept is compromised. Scientific data regarding the impact of releasing a fish has brought about

"Keep 'em Wet's" three core principles: Minimize air exposure, eliminate contact with dry surfaces and reduce handling.

Principle #1: Minimize air exposure. Imagine running a marathon, and as you cross the finish line someone grabs you and sticks your head under water. After the heavy exercise, all you want to do is catch your breath and bring your heart rate down. The same goes for a fish. Fish experience exercise-induced stress that effects their muscle functionality, which is why a fish tires after a certain period of time. In order for the fish to recover, it most pump oxygen into its system, which can only be done if the fish is in the water. Even short periods of time (10-20 seconds) out of the water can have a negative effect on the health of the fish. Whenever possible try to keep the fish out of water no longer

than 10 seconds and try keep the head and gills submerged while handling your catch.

Principle #2: Eliminate contact with dry surfaces. Fish are slimy for a reason. Fish have a protective mucus that protects them from diseases. When fish come in contact with dry surfaces, whether it be your hands, dry grass, rocks, etc., that protection is compromised. Fish, as most of you know, have a tendency to flop around when not in the water. This flopping, especially on dry surfaces, can easily lead to injury ultimately effecting the health of the fish.

Try to do the following:

- -Land your fish in the water.
- -Wet your hands prior to touching the fish.
- -Hold fish in or slightly above the water, away from dry or hard surfaces while photographing.

Principle #3: Reduce handling. Ultimately, the less the fish is handled the better. One can reduce handling with a little preparation. Use barbless hooks, have your tools at the ready, and keep the fish in your net. The following tips can greatly reduce the amount of handling needed.

Keep'em Wet Tips and Tricks

Minimize angling duration

No one can deny that fighting a fish is a blast, but it is best to keep it within reason. As a guide I often tell my clients to "put the stick to'em." Basically it means once hooked into the fish get it to the boat as soon as the fish allows. If the fish allows you to bring in line, then bring in line. Use a properly weighted rod for the species you are chasing and use the lifting power of the rod to get the fish to the net.

When fighting a large fish, change the angle of your rod from side to side. This keeps the fish from gaining the upper hand and allows you to gain line, ultimately getting the fish to hand faster.

Carry a net

If you plan to photograph fish, then a landing net is an absolute must-have. A net helps you land the fish quickly and allows the fish to remain in the water while you get ready to proceed. Rubber nets have been proven to have the least impact on the fish, so if you are in the net market, then consider rubber.

Use a long-handled net and stick the long handle into the soft bank with the netting dangling in the water (see photo). You've just created a livewell for yourself. Now your hands are free to get your camera out and snap a photo. If there isn't a soft bank nearby, then use a rock or two to prop your net in the same position.

Mash your barb

Although the law doesn't require barbless hooks, you should mash your hooks out of safety concerns for the fish, yourself and the ones around you. Using a spinner or crankbait? Mash the barbs and your hook removal time will be cut in half. The bottom line is, if you are planning to release the fish your barb should be mashed down. They come out of the fish with minimal handling and effort. When fish are

really on the feed you will often find your hook deep in and around the gill area. A barbless hook in this situation can be the difference between a safe hook removal versus the ultimate death of the fish.

If your fish happens to swallow your hook deep and you are unable to remove it, cut your line if you intend to release the fish. Data has showed that a fish is more likely to pass the hook than recover from damage done trying to remove a deep hook.

Carry forceps

They are one of the most important pieces of your equipment. Forceps make removing hooks easy and minimizes the amount of handling. Keep them on the ready so you are not searching for them once the fish is landed.

Handle fish with care

Keep your hands out of the gills. Each fish requires a little different handling but one should always use two hands. One to carefully grip the fish and the other to support the rest of the body. When handling fish try to keep them close to the water and never hold over dry or hard surfaces.

When holding smaller fish use the hand cradle technique. Put finger tips under the fish and carefully lift using the palms of your hands to keep the fish upright. This is one of the best ways to hold an average-sized fish.

Photograph wet fish

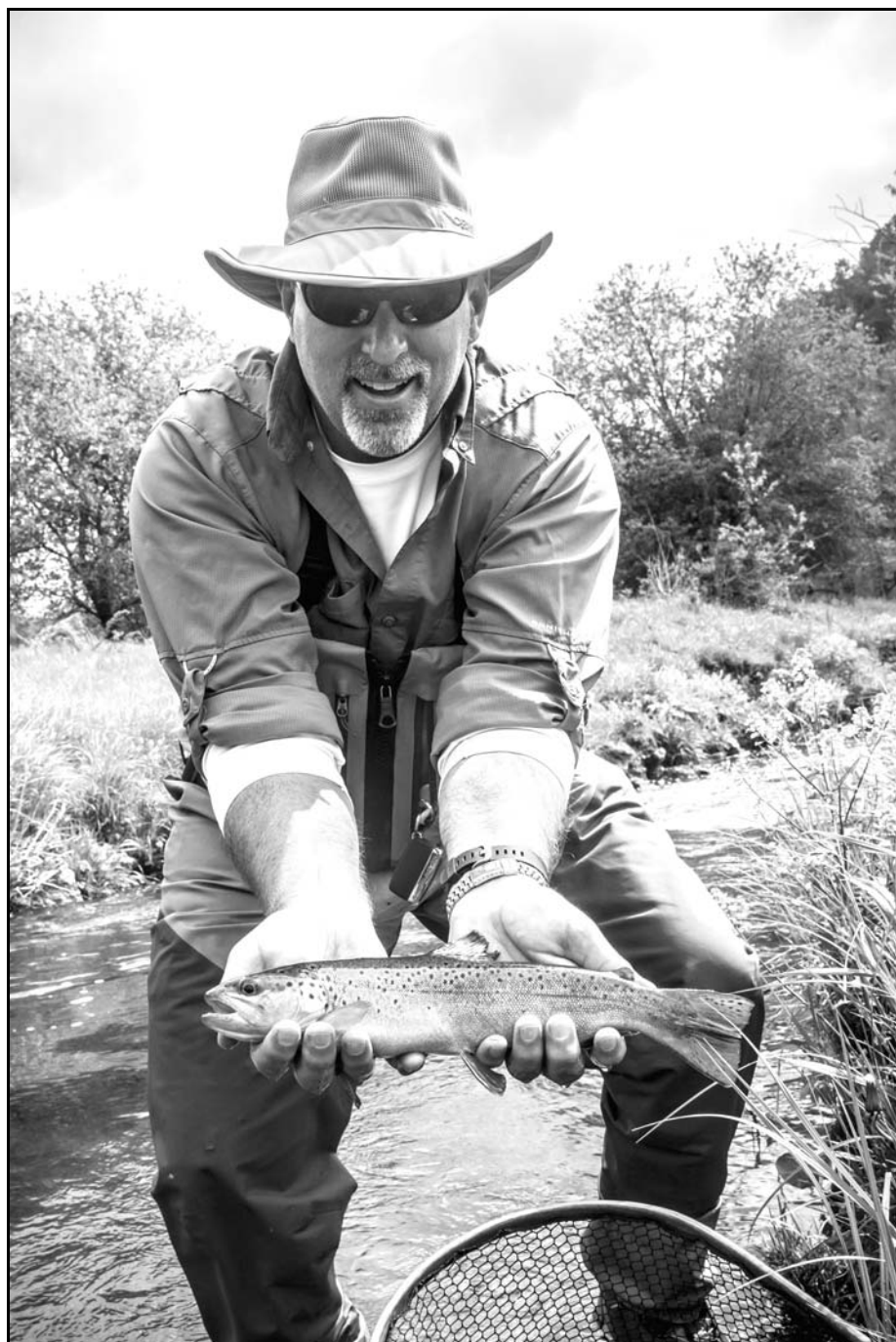
Number one, it just looks better. The reality is, you will remove a fish from the water to photograph it from time to time. This is okay if done carefully and thoughtfully. Think "Keep 'em dripping wet." Within 10 seconds the fish is no longer dripping wet. The person holding the camera should be in charge and direct the subject when to remove the fish from the water. Use a count. 1, 2, 3, lift...CLICK...fish back in the water. Check your shot, if you need another repeat. You shouldn't be checking your shot while the fish is out of the water.

Talk it out. You've landed the fish and it is recouping in the net, in the water. Talk out who is going to take the shot and what will be in the frame (grip and grin? just the adipose fin? A certain marking? the eye? etc.), how the person should hold the fish, etc. Everything should be talked out before the fish comes out of the water. This will allow you to capture the photograph you would like while keeping the fish out of the water for less than five seconds.

Revive them

Do not move the fish back and forth. I see it all the time, it is incorrect and can cause damage to the fish. The fish has just had a traumatic experience and needs to be revived before release.

Point the fish's head upstream so that water flows through the mouth out through the gills. This is a one-way system. Avoid holding the fish by the mouth during revival as mouth movement is crucial to their breathing process. In slack water situations move the fish in a head first figure-eight motion.



IF YOU MUST HOLD THE FISH, CRADLE IT GENTLY

When holding smaller fish use the hand cradle technique. Put finger tips under the fish and carefully lift using the palms of your hands to keep the fish upright. This is one of the best ways to hold an average-sized fish.



Black Earth Angling Co.

INSTANT LIVEWELL FOR TAKING PHOTOS

Use a long-handled net and stick the long handle into the soft bank with the netting dangling in the water. You've just created a livewell for yourself. Now your hands are free to get your camera out and snap a photo. If there isn't a soft bank nearby, then use a rock or two to prop your net in the same position.

Palmered Windings:

"Of wader patches and marital bliss"

By Benbow Cheesman

Palmered Windings?

I have often wondered about the origin of the term "palmering" for the technique of spiral-wrapping hackle on a fly. I knew that, in the Middle Ages, pilgrims who had been to the Holy Land returned with palms as botanical proof of having been there, and thus were called "palmer". It seems that caterpillars have filaments wound about their bodies in a spiral. The resemblance to the palms carried by pilgrims led to the critters being called "palmer". Enter the flytier, who saw and imitated the spirals by wrapping hackle around the fly. Thus: "palmered hackle." My middle name is Palmer, and these articles will "wind around" the general subjects of flyfishing, flytying and folks of my acquaintance who share those interests with me. "Palmered Windings," therefore, seems an appropriate title for the column.

This story – the best kind, I think – is based on a real incident, as will be others. On occasion, there will be episodes from "The Thurlow Chronicles", a series of anecdotes about me and my friend and fishing buddy, Thurlow, whom I met years ago in West Virginia. I hope you enjoy reading them as much as I enjoy writing them. Thank you for allowing me to share them with you.

"Of wader patches and marital bliss"

Michigan's famed AuSable is a sand river, which means that, among other things, you can wade out to the crested center, which is shallower, and fish a dry fly downstream into the deeper water near the bank. Lazy fishing, which, given the choice, I'll always choose over having to work for it.

So there we were, my bride and I, married three years and enjoying a week in our home-made VW camper. The camper deserves special mention, particularly in that Herself was the chief design engineer and construction manager, and the tools

were only a hand-saw, manual drill and screwdriver.

With those in hand, Her Ladyship, with some assistance from Your Humble Servant, constructed and installed a folding bed platform made of 2x2's, brass hinges and a piece of 4'x8' 3/8" plywood, which we sawed by hand into two sections, seven feet long and 2 1/2 feet wide, hinged along the center cut. The 2"x2" legs folded under while the van was underway, and folded out to support our double sleeping bag at night. It was a thing of beauty. And, like many things of beauty, treacherous. More on that later.

The brown drakes were hatching, and I set out well-rigged to fish downstream from our campsite several hundred yards, then back upstream to arrive for supper. Herself was comfortably settled with her choice of novel or needlework, and waved me fond farewell for the duration. The fish were cooperative, and I was having a grand old time with them, when I realized that the left leg of my waders had sprung a leak and was allowing very cold water to enter upon my person.

This was before the era of breathables, so I was wearing heavy neoprene, or was it rubber? No matter: it was heavy and boot-footed. One may ask why I did not wade ashore, empty the waders, patch them and continue fishing.

First of all, there are no real "banks" on that river, at least not just downstream from Grayling. The shore is colloidal mud, thickly populated with downed cedar trees locally known as "sweepers," from their being swept back and forth by the current. To paraphrase Gertrude Stein, when it comes to the "banks" of the AuSable, "there's no 'there' there."

The second reason is that I'd left the wader patch kit back in the car. So I did what any young fool of a fisherman would do under the circumstances: I kept on fishing. Very bad move, but you already knew that.

"A pint's a pound the world

around," they say, so by the time I turned to go back upstream to camp, I was lifting and moving about twelve pounds of very cold water against the current. But I was young and strong in those days, so once I reached camp, I heroically sloshed ashore, doffed and emptied my waders (Did you ever hear a bull moose urinating in a lake?) and joined my "lovely" for dinner. There was wine, and I anticipated a good night's sleep. Wrong, but again, you already know that.

The platform was unfolded, always with praise for the builder, and the double sleeping bag arranged. As I sleep on my left side, I got the inside space, and we zipped the bag closed for coziness.

Food for thought

As a fly-fishing photographer I look for new angles and approaches to photographing fish.

Most publications out there want nothing to do with your classic grip and grin. Next time you catch a fish, ask yourself, "Do I really need my face in this photo?" If it is your biggest fish ever or maybe a new species, then be sure to capture that milestone moment.

However, most fish caught during the course of an outing fall into the category of average fish, not to

say these fish are not important, but do you really need a pic with them? A beautiful Wisconsin brook trout doesn't look so beautiful when your hand is covering half its body. Why photograph it in a way that isn't capturing its true beauty? To prove you caught a fish? To me, the gorgeous coloration, the stark white on the fin, the unique markings are the things that should be captured and focused on.

Thinking outside the box

Next time you're out on the water with your camera, try capturing something other than you and your catch. The capabilities of today's camera phones and point and shoot cameras allow you endless possibilities to capture a piece of art. Try taking an underwater photo. Try taking a macro photo of the great red spots of that beauty brown. Challenge yourself to tell a story with your photograph. Focus on the tiny details of your catch. Capture the fish leaving your buddy's hand during the release. There are endless ways to photograph a fish all while meeting the principles of "Keep 'em Wet."

As Lee Wulff said, "Game fish are too valuable to only be caught once."

member me, slowly, but Herself screeched back that she could handle it and told them to go back to whatever bikers do in the wee small hours. Several more trees lost their skins, but I blessed her for it. While that was happening, we simultaneously lunged for the zipper, and with my elbow I again struck her in the process, or wherever.

The platform was well-constructed, but never intended to support two people cantilevered over its edge. It collapsed, dumping both of us on the floor. Murphy must have been too busy laughing to notice, so I reached the zipper first and exited the van, only to fall face-first into the mud. Did I mention that it was raining? Of course it was raining!

I slithered to the nearest (bark-denuded) tree and hauled myself up while Herself considered whether to try to wrest the axe from the cutting-stump. That gave me enough time to call out "leg cramp!," whereupon She became all solicitous. I walked the cramps out while she heated water in which to soak a towel to placate the abused muscles, and we finally made it back to a quiet night and peaceful rest.

Next morning, the bikers showed themselves as decent folks from Detroit, on a trek around Lake Michigan. We explained what had happened, laughed, shared stories, and all was well. They joined us for a breakfast of bread, fish and good wine. It was Sunday, and we all knew what was happening, but nobody felt the need to wrap stained glass around it. It was good, and good was enough. Later that day, I patched the waders, and had a week of excellent dry, and dry-fly, fishing.

So, you young fisherman, if you be wed and accompanied by your Lady, take heed. Always check your waders before embarking upon the waters, and always carry your wader patch kit with you. Your fishing, and your marriage, will be the better for it.

Benbow Cheesman is an active member of the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter.

Inside the sleeping bag, she realized that if I exited first, I would have access to the axe, hatchet, mallet and splitting wedge at the edge of the fire pit, with which to wreak havoc upon her person. This, she concluded, was not going to happen. She let out an arpeggio of screeches. Did I mention there were bikers in the adjacent campsite? There were. O death, where is thy sting? The bikers offered to come over and dis-

Book Reviews by Duke Welter

Book covers history of Driftless streams

“Historical Agriculture and Soil Erosion in the Upper Mississippi Valley Hill Country”

I've been savoring and learning from a couple of books on very different aspects of the Driftless Area, each focusing on a particular valley.

The first is Prof. Stanley W. Trimble's "Historical Agriculture and Soil Erosion in the Upper Mississippi Valley Hill Country" (CRC Press, 2013), a remarkable story focused on the Coon Creek system in Vernon County.

Trimble, an emeritus professor of geography at UCLA, has been studying the area since the early 1970s, often with a team of graduate students doing field work. His book may have a dauntingly dry title, but is a remarkable piece of detective work and a resource that should be found in every public and school library in the region.

Bad Axe River “cool, clear sparkling”

The historic descriptions of Driftless streams in the 19th century dug up by Trimble are remarkably uniform. For instance, he reports an 1884 resident, recalling waters of the Bad Axe River (often murky today, and warmed by upstream dams) had earlier been “ever ... cool, clear and sparkling and bright, and the trout that darted through its crystal waters, very large, lively fellows, and of a superior flavor.”

These streams, he reports, were very stable in their channels, flowed over gravel and sand and carried very slight sediment loads.

You've probably heard summaries of the massive erosion that plagued this region by the 1890s, but the book amply documents it with

soil borings, interviews, newspaper articles and photos from descendants of settlers and local history sources. It is truly amazing, to think of the astonishing transformation of the coulee region over a four-decade period, when land use and abuse finally led to a cascade of soil that carved out deep ravines, flooded out towns and clogged valleys, and disrupted society and agriculture.

In the Coon Creek valley, scientists estimated that each year in the 1920s and 1930s, 12,000 tons of soil per square mile per year was deposited on the valley floor, raising flood plain levels a remarkable six inches each year.

In the Coon Creek valley, scientists estimated that each year in the 1920s and 1930s, 12,000 tons of soil per square mile per year was deposited on the valley floor, raising flood plain levels a remarkable six inches each year. Trimble observes that the deep-rooted pre-settlement vegetation held soil in place and led

to stable crystal-clear stream systems. But plowmen who broke that sod for grain crops and overgrazed the deforested hillsides didn't take into account the rainfalls that were much heavier than in Europe. A 100-year rain event in Britain, he observes, would be a one-year event here.

Crop rotation was infrequently found, and many farmers followed a “plowing ethic” by which they were judged by the straightness of their rows, rather than plowing with contours.

It took the period from settlement in the 1850s and 1860s until the 1890s for the “disastrous” cascade of erosion to begin. When it did, it threatened the new society across the region. Towns and counties were spending their entire budgets replacing ruined bridges and trying to keep roads cleared of sedi-

ment. The settlements on valley floors were finding their buildings half-drowned in mud.

The gully erosion led to ravines 30 to 50 feet deep that were migrating uphill a quarter to half mile each year. The LaCrosse & Southeastern Railroad line built from Stoddard to Westby opened in 1904, much of it set on a 12- to 15-foot embankment. But by the 1930s, much of it was under several feet of sediment, and it had to be abandoned. The valley floor near Chaseburg is now over 15 feet higher than when the town was settled. A huge flood in 1907 raised the floor of Coon Creek four feet through Chaseburg.

On top of those infrastructure losses, agricultural productivity suffered across the region. It may be more often reported that the cutover of Wisconsin's northern forests represented a major human-caused ecological event, but the catastrophe experienced in the Driftless is at least of similar scope and impact.

Conservation begins

In the 1930s, upland conservation practices like contour farming began to take root, especially after the nation's first soil conservation program around Coon Valley, and farmers began to take their grazing cows off the hillsides. Other practices added to reduce upland erosion, and by the 1950s a major turnaround was under way.

But today we are seeing corn and bean agriculture lead to the loss of contour strips and hay, with a tenfold increase in soil loss. And many more acres are being planted without contour plowing or contour strips, which doubles soil loss.

No-till farming has become the tool of choice, and Trimble believes it to be useful in reducing upland erosion. In areas hit with the extreme flooding of 2007 and 2008, when as much as 12 inches of rain fell in 24 hours, he found little or no evidence of soil loss off upland fields. Where fields had not been

protected by no-till or other conservation measures, or where hillsides were overgrazed, severe erosion took place.

Trimble offers a number of interesting points to ponder, past and present. Most of the deposited soil, he believes, ended up in the lower and lower middle parts of stream valleys, rather than the Mississippi River: “As yet, there is no evidence that 75 years of soil conservation in the Hill Country has reduced sediment inflow to the Mississippi River.” And, he believes, places with heavy deposits of migrating soil, such as Arcadia, are “set up for a disaster” of a flood. Other valleys with similar threats include the lower Kickapoo, Trempealeau and the Root River in Minnesota.

Some river scientists, including Trimble, are critical of stream restoration that intends to mimic those pre-settlement stable channels, and provides overhead cover that benefits quite a few species as well as trout. They'd prefer to let the incised channels simply erode away across the soil deposited in valleys, taking however long in geological terms was necessary (“centuries, even millennia”) to flush out that blanket of sediment. But their criticism, though perhaps grounded in principles learned in many less-degraded river systems, could leave our streams clogged with sediment and eroding banks, migrating across their valleys for centuries to come.

With restoration techniques, instead, we can benefit the biologic community, reduce streambank erosion, expand the diversity of plant (and insect, bird and mammal) species along the stream corridor, and buffer streams from inputs of nutrients and the remaining upland sediment. It's not an approach that will solve every problem, as continued deposition from upstream can raise banks and cause recurring incision, but it addresses many of them. And while not every stream in this region needs or warrants this restorative attention, many of them do.

Historical perspective on Kickapoo Valley

Another Driftless-centric book for those of us interested in the unglaciated area is Lynne Heasley's “A Thousand Pieces of Paradise: Landscape and Property in the Kickapoo Valley.” (UW Press, 2005) Heasley looks at the Kickapoo Valley from social and ecological history perspectives, examining the fondness of its residents for this “enchanted Coulee land, this friendly and hospitable paradise,” in the words of one local author.

But she balances it with some of the harsh conditions the region imposed on its residents, and quotes a 1913 diarist who wrote, “We look around to see what is around us and our thoughts come fast as we ask our sephs...who will meet disaster and death some by floods and that by the hundreds on the home near a river or rivers and trapped like rats in a trap to drown.”

Her book offers three case studies to examine our attachments to land, on three almost adjacent townships in the Kickapoo Valley.

In Liberty Township in the 1980s and 90s, two unscrupulous real estate developers used fraudulent pitches to sell little pieces of paradise to out-of-town buyers. Eventually, due in large part to the persistence of Madison newspaper reporter Susan Lampert Smith, kingpin Thomas White went to prison, from which he eventually escaped and has never been found. But historic family farms had been divided up and unusable lands sold to unsuspecting buyers in the process.

In Clinton Township southeast of Cashton, Old Order Amish from eastern states began buying farms and land in the 1960s, eventually leading to the state's largest Amish community. Land use and conservation have been hot topics over the years in the area, as many Amish landowners removed contour strips on erodible hillsides, and often grazed forested slopes. Neighbors saw those moves as contrary to the long-established methods of holding soils in place.

But in recent years Amish farmers have been lauded for keeping cows on the land, preserving pastures and hay production, moving toward sustainable uses and with a strong focus on their community's simple way of life and low-impact living on the land. “We're more alike than we often acknowledge,” says one neighbor to the Amish community.

Finally, in Stark Township, Heasley covers the controversial history of the Lake LaFarge project, which would have dammed the river and created a huge reservoir of dubious water quality. The Corps of Engineers purchased more than 8,500 acres from local landowners for a lake which, it

promised, would control flooding and create tourist revenue. Though the Corps began the dam and almost completed it before it was finally halted by opposition from Wisconsin's governor and senators, who had initially supported it, the project had created massive change in the area.

Many locals believed it should continue, and that outside interests such as environmentalists and recreationists, had torpedoed it. Eventually, further study of impacts concluded priceless ecological communities would be lost, water quality would be marginal, and human artifacts flooded forever.

By the 1990s, the abandoned federal lands were transferred to the State of Wisconsin and Ho-Chunk nation, which co-manage them along with a citizens' board of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. As the reserve has matured, it has wide public support and increasing environmental value as a natural area. Now, Heasley observes, a landscape-wide vision for the reserve reflects a communitywide agreement that values its protection and responsible public use. Not a lengthy read, but an engaging and challenging story, well told.

Two unscrupulous real estate developers used fraudulent pitches to sell little pieces of paradise to out-of-town buyers.

Upgrade now for free family memberships

WITU encourages all members to consider TU National's new Free Family Membership Upgrade offer to any existing TU member, which is for a limited time only. By signing up and adding the names and information for the family members living in your household at www.tu.org/familymembership, you will enjoy the benefits of a TU family membership for the duration of your regular membership for free.

These benefits include:

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- All members of the household will be able to create a unique member profile on www.tu.org to engage in our online community, join discussion groups, access member-only content such as the digital version of TROUT Magazine and more...

Groundwater bills

Continued from Page 1

consin Senator Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay). This bill is large and technical, and contains several components which would significantly impact groundwater in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin TU, along with our traditional conservation partners, and other groups including lake associations and agricultural groups, have formed an informal cadre in support of some of SB 291's provisions, and to seek that others be changed.

Numerous Wisconsin TU leaders, including Mike Kuhr, Mike Sandretto, Matt Krueger, Heidi Oberstadt, myself and others have traveled to Madison and spoke at public hearings regarding this bill. In addition, Mike Kuhr and myself have traveled to Madison on numerous occasions to discuss Wisconsin TU's position regarding SB 291 with legislators and their staff. Behind all of that, countless Wisconsin TU members have been active in responding to email calls for legislative contacts, and supporting our position. Thank you to all who have helped Wisconsin TU's cause.

Examining every provision of the 20-page SB 291 would be exhaustive, but here are some of the most-discussed provisions, and Wisconsin TU's position regarding them.

High-capacity well permits near trout streams

First, the bill would increase the threshold distance in which special environmental reviews are required for high-capacity wells when located near trout streams. Currently, a special environmental review is triggered when a proposed well is within 1,200 feet of a designated trout stream. Under SB 291, that distance is increased to 1,600 feet. Wisconsin TU obviously supports this component of the bill.

Establishment of Sensitive Resource Areas ("SRA's")

It is undeniable that surface water and groundwater are interconnected.

Nowhere is this more clear than in the Central Sands area of Wisconsin. In the Central Sands, the interplay between high-capacity wells, water use, weather conditions and other factors has led to streams running dry and trout being left to die, lakes disappearing, and residential wells ceasing to appropriately function.

This bill creates a process by which "Sensitive Resource Areas" (or "SRA's") are created. Generally, SRA's are specially designated geo-

graphic areas of the state where, after DNR study, tailored groundwater management measures may be put in place to ensure groundwater and surface water levels and protections.

The process by which SRA's are created, however, is lengthy, politicized (in that a designation requires legislative approval), and has numerous points at which the process may be stopped. Some estimate that achieving an SRA status could take up to a decade.

In addition, it is apparent to Wisconsin TU that there are numerous areas of the state where SRA's should be immediately created, notably in the Central Sands region. Under SB 291, no SRA's are immediately established.

Wisconsin TU strongly supports the SRA concept, and applauds its inclusion in SB 291. We believe that the process by which SRA's are created, however, is too lengthy and should be de-politicized. Additionally, Wisconsin TU strongly believes that SRA's should be immediately created where needed, notably in Wisconsin's Central Sands area.

Wisconsin TU strongly believes that SRA's should be immediately created where needed, notably in Wisconsin's Central Sands area.

Cumulative impact

Under SB 291, the DNR's authority, including public trust duties and rule-making authority, would be strictly statutorily governed when permitting high-capacity wells. As such, DNR would

apparently no longer be able to consider cumulative impact, meaning how newly proposed wells function in existence with already existing wells, when reviewing high-capacity well applications.

Wisconsin TU is strongly opposed to this component of the SB 291. Wisconsin TU believes that it is simply common sense that well permit applications must be reviewed in real world terms, and not in an artificial vacuum where the draws of already-existing high-capacity wells are ignored.

Periodic review

One common concern heard from Wisconsin's agricultural community is that a re-permitting process must be engaged in order to repair, reconstruct, or transfer existing high-capacity wells. The agricultural community notes that if a well fails, it is often a delayed process before repairs can be done, and there is a risk that a crop may be lost as a result of such delays. SB 291 exempts existing wells from re-permitting under such circumstances.

Currently, the activities which SB 291 would exempt from review are some of the only circumstances under which existing high-capacity wells are reviewed. In many instances, high-capacity well permits are ef-

fectively perpetual.

Wisconsin TU is opposed to the proposed exemptions precisely because they are currently one of the relatively rare occasions on which an existing high-capacity well is required to be reviewed. Accordingly, Wisconsin TU has taken a compromise position, and has asserted that such exemptions should only be allowed if all high-capacity wells are subject to periodic review, rather than simply being granted perpetual permits.

Wisconsin TU agrees that scien-

SB 291. Moreover, Wisconsin TU requests that their members contact SB 291's sponsors, Senators Robert Cowles (R-Green Bay), Luther Olsen (R-Ripon), Jerry Petrowski (R-Marathon), and co-sponsor Rep. Scott Krug (R-Neekosa), and express Wisconsin TU's positions.

As always, be polite, thank your legislators for their work and be mindful that your voice represents Wisconsin Trout Unlimited. Thank you for all that you do for Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.



A PIER TO NOWHERE...AT LEAST NOWHERE WET

Waupaca County's Long Lake, near Plainfield, was once a trophy bass lake, but now suffers from a lack of water. In 2006 it dried up completely.

SB 239 – Regarding High Capacity Well Permits

Another groundwater bill which is working its way through the Legislature is SB 239, a groundwater bill introduced by Sen. Richard Gudex (R-Fond du Lac).

Under current law, a person is required to obtain approval or undertake certain procedures when making certain repairs to an existing high-capacity well, when reconstructing a well or a replacement well, or when they seek to transfer ownership of the land upon which a high-capacity well is located. These instances constitute some of the only opportunities under which high-capacity well permits are reviewed, and high-capacity well permits are otherwise essentially perpetual.

Under SB 239, all of the activities listed above would be exempt from review.

As such, Wisconsin TU traveled to Madison on October 7, 2015, to speak in opposition to SB 239, as it is currently written, for the reasons outlined above. Wisconsin TU instead offers the compromise position that such activities could be excepted from review if and only if all high-capacity wells were subjected to staggered, periodic review.

Wisconsin TU believes that all high-capacity well should be periodically reviewed using the best available science. As time progresses, so too does our science and our ability to better understand the impacts of high-capacity wells on surface and ground waters. Wisconsin TU believes that it makes sense to periodically review permits to ensure that the impact of all wells is understood, and so that appropriate measures may be put in place to ensure all users certainty.

tific knowledge is always increasing, and that in the future we will be better able to gauge the impacts of high-capacity wells and their impacts on ground and surface waters. Future generations should not be saddled with today's science and abilities forever. As such, reviewing high-capacity wells on a periodic, staggered basis would address the agricultural community's concerns, and would also ensure certainty for all ground- and surface-water users. Wisconsin TU believes that this is a common sense solution that would provide all users a good outcome.

Application to all waters of Wisconsin

Under SB 291, DNR may set conditions on high-capacity well permits, but only to address potential impacts to navigable waterways.

The traditional Wisconsin test for whether a water is navigable is whether it can float "any boat, skiff, or canoe, of the shallowest draft used for recreational purposes." However, this definition may not include small headwaters or ephemeral/intermittent streams. Such non-navigable streams are undeniably connected, and often times critical, to downstream "navigable" trout streams, and in many instances serve as spawning areas. Such areas should certainly be included within the purview of SB 291.

As such, Wisconsin TU strongly believes that SB 291 should be extended to apply to "all waters of Wisconsin," and not just navigable waterways.

Call for action

Wisconsin TU urges all members to contact their legislators and ask that the above changes be made to

Early season

Continued from Page 1

process, as well as many public discussions across the state. The DNR's revised rules passed through legislative review in October.

The new season structure will also extend the harvest season until October 15. As a result of the changes, and similar ones in Minnesota, the two state's trout seasons will nearly mirror each other in 2016, with early January openers and mid-October closures.

Most streams in the northwest, southwest and east central will be open, but only selected streams in the northeast will be open, including several in each county.

Strategies for winter trout

Anglers can expect different experiences in different types of streams across the state. Northern freestone streams have colder temperatures and more ice, while Driftless spring creeks may have warmer water temperatures and more active trout. In past years, even with the March opener, I have encountered zero-degree temperatures and snow depths that made it necessary to fish from snowshoes.

At the same time, the longer trout season gives anglers plenty of new things to learn. Wintertime trout hang out in different parts of the stream, especially gathered in deeper pools, than spring and summer trout. Fishing slow, whether with flies or spinners, will help your success.

In northeast Iowa, Jeffery Skeate of Decorah fishes the entire year, and savors winter fishing for its solitude and often great midge fishing. Entomologists working in the Driftless Area are learning more about the great value of midges as wintertime trout food, even on very cold days. Skeate, a member of the Iowa Driftless TU Chapter and author of three books on trout fishing, likes to fish midges when they're on the water, and streamers when they're not.

"Streamer fishing can be an effective option during the early season months of winter, from New Year's Day through the end of March," he explained. "A traditional across-and-down approach is simple and sometimes works best under cold or harsh conditions. Trout may strike any time during the swing, at the stop or on the retrieve, so it's best to be ready at all times during the cast. It helps to vary the speed, depth and movement of the fly until the angler finds the right presentation on a given day, as conditions, and trout attitudes, change as much and as mysteriously during the winter as they do throughout the season," he added.

"Generally speaking, very fast water can be difficult for winter trout as they may not be able to expend the energy necessary to feed in heavy current. Sometimes it's best to work the seams and outer edges of riffles where the current is not as demanding. The quieter tails of pools can also hold good trout during winter months. Standard wooly buggie patterns are excellent options for winter trout, often with a touch of white or yellow on the body or tail for extra visibility and attraction. The light spruce, an old northwestern steelhead pattern, is also a great choice for winter streamer fishing in the Midwest's Driftless Region," Skeate added.

"Surprisingly, dry fly fishing can also be very good during winter months, though of course not nearly so good as it will become in April and May. Midges often hatch on

winter mornings when the day is at its coldest, and rising trout can be taken with very small size-22 or size-24 dry-fly patterns on 6X or 7X tippet. The male midge in particular sometimes moves very quickly on the water's surface after hatching, so a bit of movement with the fly can be deadly. Griffith's gnats are often fished to represent midge clusters. Occasionally blue wing olives hatch on milder winter afternoons, and in those instances fly sizes might range from small size 24's all the way up to size 16's. Standard Blue Wing patterns work as well during winter months as they do during normal spring and fall hatches."

Skeate continued, "As is the case during more temperate months, the angler will not catch a winter trout if the fly is not on or in the water, and don't forget the hand warmers!"

A little farther north, Brian Smolinski is proprietor of Lund's Fly Shop in River Falls and a member of TU's Kiap-TU-Wish chapter. He has fished Minnesota's limited streams that have been open January 1 in previous years. This year all of that state's streams opened January 1.

Brian likes streamers for early season trout. "Winter trout fishing can be some of the most productive there is, or maybe that's just something we tell ourselves to get a little motivation to get off the couch and scrape off a little cabin fever. Look for fish to hole up in pods of large numbers, usually in the deepest holes in the river. Holes with a lot of spring flow directly in, or with heavy spring water just upstream, will hold even larger numbers.

"A great method for targeting these fish is with a long leader and a multi-nymph rig. Start with a nine-foot tapered leader and attach about 18-24 inches of the next size smaller tippet. At the knot, using a tippet rig, attach some split shot or a wad of tungsten putty. At the end of your tippet, tie the larger, heavier nymph you are using. I like to use about a 14-16 scud, pink squirrel, or other bead head nymph, non-tungsten. Off the hook of that first fly, tie another 18-24 inches of the next size smaller tippet again (I usually use fluorocarbon here). At the end, I typically tie on a size 18 or 20 emerger, zebra midge, or some other kind of midge pattern. Set your indicator high up the leader so the weight at the end of the main leader is near or even bouncing off the bottom. If the weight you use is heavier than the flies used, it will keep your flies from getting snagged even if your weight is bottom-bouncing. Don't forget to mend your line for a drag-free drift and watch for very subtle strikes. Adjust your indicator until you find fish."

Mat Wagner and Geri Meyer of the Driftless Angler Fly Shop in Virgoqua offered plenty of tips. "Slow it all down," said Mat. "Think small, dark and heavy flies, fished slow and deep."

"You don't have to fish early or late, just the warmest couple of hours at midday," added Geri. "Try dead-drifting a leech deep, under an indicator."

"Look for the steam on a cold day, because that's where the water comes from springs and is the warmest in these spring creeks," Mat explained. "And try to fish the second or third warming day in a row, when the water temperatures have had a chance to warm up and stabilize."

Spin anglers can do well fishing early, too. Experienced spin anglers suggest, for example, using a #1 spinner, matching the color to the stream condition: gold if it is stained and silver if water is clear. Or use a



Adam Klusmeier

WINTERTIME FISHING REQUIRES DIFFERENT STRATEGIES

As SWTU's Amy Klusmeier discovers, wintertime trout hang out in different parts of the stream, often gathered in deeper pools, than spring and summer trout. Fishing slow, whether with flies or spinners, will help your success.

Rapala-type crankbait, about 2 3/4 inches long, in brown trout coloration. Others use small micro-jigs ties to imitate common nymphs such as stoneflies or larger mayflies. In either case, fish slow and deep rather than using aggressive, active retrieves. One experienced spin angler suggests clipping off two of the three hooks of a treble on a crankbait, and removing the front treble, to reduce hooking mortality.

Jay Thurston, author of several books on trout fishing, suggests that water temperatures are a key to trout activity, and that may favor

spring creek anglers over those who fish chilly freestone streams. He looks for spring inputs and the warmest time of the day, and his stream thermometer is his best friend on the stream.

Leeches can be effective, as can scuds in various colors (even an orange or orange-pink scud can be quite effective this time of year). And remember, if you're fishing while wearing snowshoes, it's best to fish from the bank.

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January 2016 Friends of Wisconsin TU Update

By Doug Brown, Friends of Wisconsin TU Chair

The 2015 Friends of Wisconsin TU campaign is having another fantastic year, with nearly \$16,000 in donations, which all finds its way into stream improvement projects across the state! A huge "Thank You" to everyone for the 135 donations, and thank you to the seven chapters who made contributions. This is the 25th Anniversary of the Friends of Wisconsin TU program, and the support remains as strong as ever.

The incredible habitat work that this program supports is only possible by the generous

donations that come into the Friends program. The monies raised during this fundraising year will be used for grant requests that come in this winter for stream improvement projects this summer.

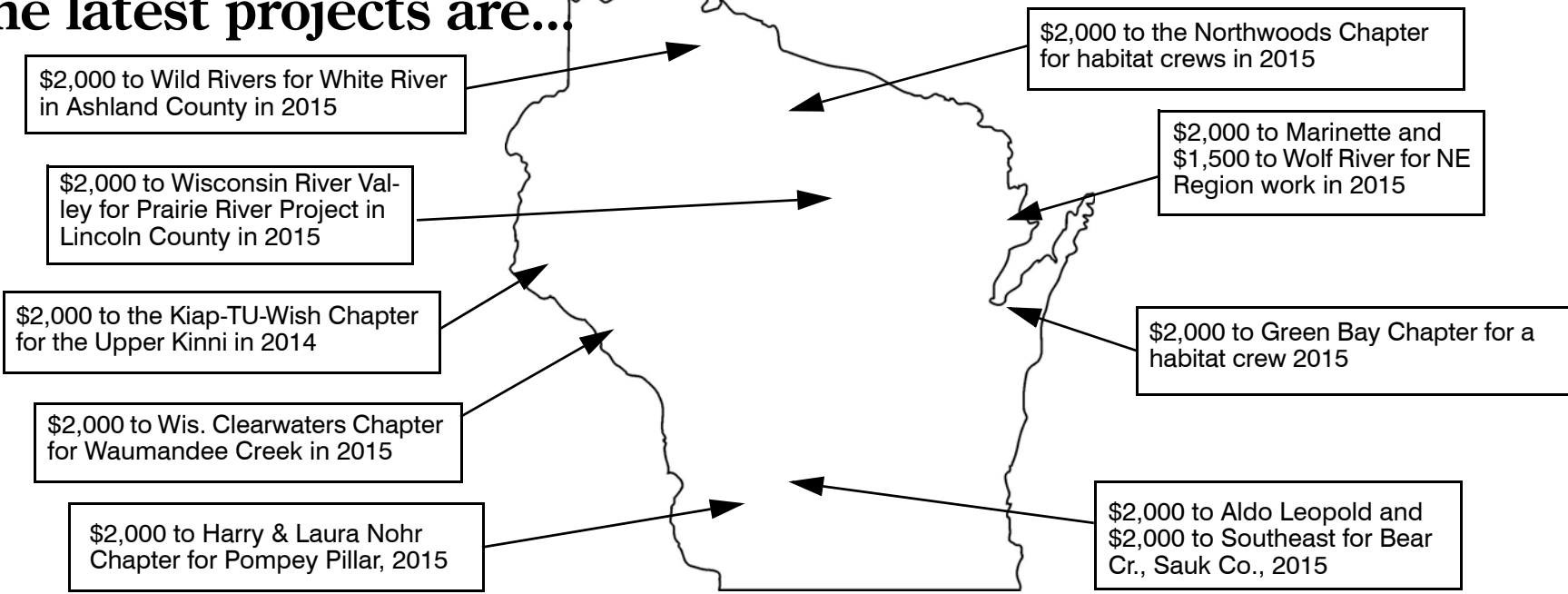
I hope you had a great 2015 trout fishing season. Now that the early season has opened, please get out there and enjoy some of the stream improvements that the Friends program has supported.

Tight Lines.



FRIENDS GRANTS SUPPORT HABITAT CREWS
Chapter funds, along with Friends grants, support LTESs like Ben Thome and Colton Zdroik.

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Here are our Friends of Wisconsin TU

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| Allon Bostwik | Port Washington WI | Cheryl and Winston Ostrow | De PereWI | Frederic Young | RoscoeIL |
| Jerry Bristol | Ellsworth WI | Richard Pfiffner | AmherstWI | Dean Ziemendorf | Elcho WI |
| Casey Calkins | BrookfieldWI | Randall Rake | Helena MT | | |
| Lynn Christiansen | MiddletonWI | Ron Rellatz | MertonWI | TROUT UNLIMITED CHAPTERS | |
| Rick Christopherson | NorwalkWI | Bob Retko | Cedarburg WI | Aldo Leopold | |
| Andrew Cook II | Sister BayWI | Glenn Ringwall | New Berlin WI | Antigo | |
| Terry Cummings | RhinelandWI | Thomas Rogers | Princeton WI | Coulee Region | |
| Bruce Davidson | WauwatosaWI | Dan Rorabeck | HudsonWI | Kiap-TU-Wish | |
| Leonard Debee | Menomonie WI | Michael Sandretto | Neenah WI | Lakeshore | |
| Pete Dramm | Manitowoc WI | Jeff and Mary Schmoeger | Cottage GroveWI | Marinette County | |
| Richard Duplessie | Eau Claire WI | James Schommer | Lodi WI | Wisconsin Clearwaters | |
| Ed Eggers | Genoa IL | James School | KaukaunaWI | | |
| Harley Erbs | Rhineland WI | Delmar Schwaller | Winneconne WI | IN MEMORIAM | |
| John Ewen | NeenahWI | Robert Selk | MadisonWI | In memory of John Higley by the Wisconsin Clear- | |
| Jim Flesch | Fox Point, WI | John Shillinglaw | MadisonWI | waters Chapter of Trout Unlimited | |
| Scott Geboy | Fox Point WI | George Shinnors | Antigo WI | | |
| Dan Geddes | Appleton WI | Brent Sittlow | HudsonWI | In memory of William R. Kruse by Paul Kruse of | |
| Donald Grade | Mosinee WI | Robert Smith | Milwaukee WI | Green Bay | |
| John Gribb | Mount Horeb WI | Arthur Sonneland, M.D. | DePere WI | | |
| Gordon Grieshaber | Mineral Point WI | Michael Stapleton | Pardeeville WI | In memory of Roger Moon by Betsy Wilson | |
| Dean Hagness | CusterWI | Gary Stoychoff | Green BayWI | of Madison | |
| Jon Hanson | Madison WI | Michael Stupich | WatertownWI | | |
| Henry Haugley | Sun Prairie WI | Rick Szymialis | Waupaca WI | In memory of Roger Moon by Peggy Yessa | |
| Ashton Hawk | Columbus OH | Robert Tabbert | Lac du FlambeauWI | of Madison | |
| Stephen Hawk | Madison WI | Charles Velie James | Milwaukee WI | | |
| William Heart | Ashland WI | GregVodak | StoughtonWI | | |
| Brian Hegge | Rhineland WI | Ken Voight | Sugar Grove IL | | |
| Mark Heifner | Appleton WI | Doug Wadsworth | MadisonWI | | |
| Walter Heil Jr | De PereWI | Don Wagner | GillettWI | | |
| Bob Hellyer | Boulder JunctionWI | | | | |
| Holtz Lime, Gravel & Excavating | Loganville WI | | | | |
| Jeff Jackson | Oconto FallsWI | | | | |
| Thomas Janssen | AppletonWI | | | | |
| Paul Jones | Wausau WI | | | | |
| Charles Jorgenson | Oconomowoc WI | | | | |
| Frank Kearney III | Neenah WI | | | | |
| Daniel and Sheree Kehoe | Madison WI | | | | |
| Lane Kistler | MilwaukeeWI | | | | |
| Barb and Joe Kruse | LaCrosse WI | | | | |
| Paul Kruse | Green Bay WI | | | | |
| Rick Lindroth | Madison WI | | | | |
| Tim Logeman | Wausau WI | | | | |
| Tom Lukas | Manitowoc WI | | | | |
| Douglas MacFarland | DousmanWI | | | | |
| Anna Magnin | MarshfieldWI | | | | |

*Yes, I want to join the "Friends" of Wisconsin TU.
Enclosed is my check, payable to Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.*

MAIL TO: Friends of Wisconsin TU
% Doug Brown
R4800 Timber Lane
Ringle, WI 54471

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Address _____
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