



Wisconsin Trout

Spring 2017

Legislative Report

WITU watching, working on numerous issues

We're keeping a close eye on issues such as a trout stamp fees, a high-cap well bill, Great Lakes restoration funding, railroad crossings, dredging and more. Advocacy by members will be crucial to our continued success.

By Henry E. Koltz, National Trustee

It's once again that time of year when multiple political machines engage in law, policy and rulemaking processes. Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, its Advocacy Committee and their leadership are doing their best to address a wide range of issues at the federal, state, administrative and Conservation Congress levels. WITU requests that its members take action on these issues in the name of protecting coldwater resources, and the tens of thousands of jobs, hundreds of millions of dollars in salaries, wages and tax benefits, and billions of dollars of economic impact that they support right here in Wisconsin.

Support a \$5 Inland Trout Stamp increase

As most know, when we trout anglers buy inland trout stamps, the fee we pay is placed into a segregated fund. Segregated trout stamp

funding must, by law, be used to improve and maintain inland trout habitat, or in a limited fashion to conduct trout surveys. To be clear, trout stamp revenues are "special" funds and cannot be diverted for other purposes. In other words, trout stamp funds cannot be used to build highways, support non-trout programs or be diverted into the general fund.

Trout stamps currently cost \$10, and have been at that level since 2006. In short, it has been more than 10 years since trout stamp fees were increased. Despite trout stamp fees not increasing, however, nearly every other cost associated with stream restoration work and trout studies has gone up, from fuel to materials to contractor costs to trucking fees. Trout stamp funding simply has less purchasing power than it did 11 years ago.

Funding from the trout stamp fund is used to repair rivers, to put them back into their natural state, and to repair devastation caused by



Todd Franklin

STREAM RESTORATION PROJECTS RELY ON TROUT STAMP FUNDS

However, those funds don't go as far as they once did, and there hasn't been an increase in 11 years. WITU encourages members to contact legislators and attend the Spring Hearings to support an increase in the fee.

floods and other such events, such as the damage sustained in swaths of trout streams in our state last year. Restoring streams to their natural state, and making them fishable, aids the incredible economy that an-

gling supports in Wisconsin, and helps to draw more than 335,000 non-resident anglers and their tourism dollars to Wisconsin each year.

See **ISSUES**, page 25

It is time to increase the trout stamp fee

By Kim McCarthy

In December 2016 the major outdoor conservation groups convened at a meeting in Stevens Point. The meeting was called by the Wisconsin Conservation Congress to address a major concern shared by all of the groups. That concern is that a lack of funding is now a threat to the conservation programs sup-

ported by each organization.

The threat posed to conservation programs in Wisconsin is largely due to the fact that license and stamp fees have not been raised for many years, and inflationary pressures are making it very difficult to continue conservation programs at a rate acceptable to the groups.

Let's use the Wisconsin Inland Trout Stamp as an example. The

current \$10 rate was established in 2006. During those 11 years the cost of just about everything needed to perform trout habitat work has increased, while the DNR habitat crews have been forced to work on a budget that has not changed. Simple math tells us that our trout stamp dollars are not buying anywhere near the amount of habitat work as they did when the stamp fee was first raised to \$10. Failure to implement a fee increase will only make doing habitat work more difficult in the future. With habitat work being the backbone of the state's wild trout program, Trout Unlimited is concerned about declining rates of habitat work.

Something unusual took place at that December meeting in Stevens Point. Every group in attendance

agreed unanimously that it is absolutely time for fee increases if we are going to protect the conservation programs currently in place. There has probably not been a time in the past when all of the state's major conservation organizations have been in this kind of total agreement.

Groups attending the meeting and asking for fee increases included Ducks Unlimited, Federation of Great Lakes Sport Fishermen, Trout Unlimited, Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association, Wisconsin Conservation Congress, Wisconsin Trappers Association, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association and Pheasants Forever.

Larry Bonde, Wisconsin Conservation Congress Chair, sought advice from each group as to the fee

See **TROUT STAMP** on page 26



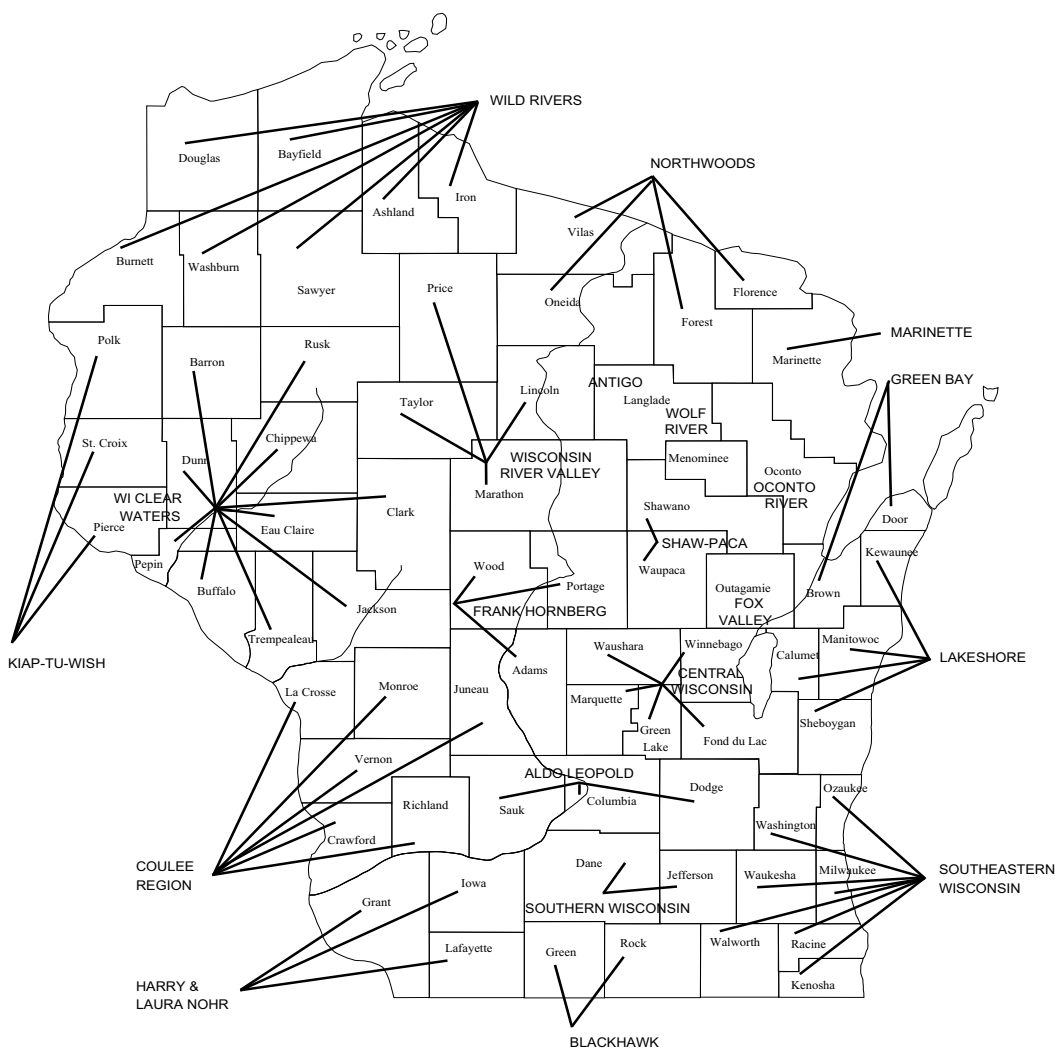
WITU ADVOCATING FOR INCREASED TROUT STAMP FEE

Wisconsin TU members are asked to contact their legislators and attend the Spring Hearings to support an increase in the Inland Trout Stamp fee. A listing of Spring Hearing locations is on page 17.

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Wisconsin TU chapters, presidents and contact info



Visit WITU online at:
wicouncil.tu.org

- Aldo Leopold (#375):** Scott Allen, E4835 N Stoney Ridge Road, Reedsburg, WI 53959; (608) 495-1482; jscottallen12@gmail.com; aldoleopold.tu.org
- Antigo (#313):** Scott Henricks, 213 Mary St., Antigo, WI 54409-2536 (715) 623-3867; henricks51@frontier.com
- Blackhawk (#390):** Terry Vaughn; 4710 E. Creek Road, Beloit, WI 53511; (608) 362-4295; linda.vaughn@att.net; www.BlackhawkTU.org
- Central Wisconsin (#117):** Laura Tucker; N5424 Sunny Hill Road, Saxeville, WI 54976 (920) 622-5401; lbtucker1953@gmail.com; cw-tu.org,
- Coulee Region (#278):** Curt Rees; W5190 Birchwood Lane, La-Crosse, WI 54601; curtrees@gmail.com www.CouleeRegionTU.org
- Fox Valley (#193):** Tom Lager, 1700 Spring Hill Ct., Neenah, WI 54956 (920) 540-9194; tomkarinlager@new.rr.com; www.foxvalleytu.org
- Frank Hornberg (#624):** Matt Salchert, 1800 Minnesota Ave., Stevens Point, WI 54481 (715) 321-1394; MattSalchert@Yahoo.com; www.Hornberg-TU.org
- Green Bay (#083):** Adrian Meseberg, 315 South Michigan Street, DePere, WI 54115 (920) 562-6129; greenbaytu@gmail.com; greenbaytu.org
- Harry & Laura Nohr (#257):** Tim Fraley, 2 Pagham Court, Madison, WI 53719; hm:(608) 271-1733; c:(608)220-0762; grizzly8589@gmail.com; www.NohrTU.org
- Kiap-TU-Wish (#168):** Tom Schnadt, 2174 Commonwealth Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108; 651-245-5163; thschnad@hotmail.com; www.kiaptuwish.org
- Lakeshore (#423):** Gordy Martin, N7601 Royal and Ancient Dr., Elkhart Lake, WI 53020; squaretail@aol.com; www.WisconsinTU.org/Lakeshore
- Marinette (#422):** Dale Lange, N2095 CTH BB, Marinette, WI 54143; 715-582-1135; dhlange@centurytel.net, marinettecounty.tu.org.
- Northwoods (#256):** Jay N. Joppa; 8570 Oak Park Circle, Minocqua, WI 54548; 715-499-1022; jayjoppa@gmail.com; northwoods.tu.org
- Oconto River (#385):** Tom Klatt; 1677 Forest Glen Drive Green Bay, WI 54304 (920) 621-9266; tktklatt@gmail.com; ocontorivertu.com
- Shaw-Paca (#381):** Nate Sipple, 931 E. Fifth St., Shawano, WI 54166; (715) 304-7581; shawpacaTU@gmail.com; Wisconsin-TU.org/ShawPaca; www.facebook.com/shawpacatu
- Southeastern Wisconsin (#078):** Boyd Roessler; 212 S. James Street, Waukesha, WI 53186; boydroessler@sbcglobal.net; 252-896-8471; SEWTU.org; facebook.com/southeastwisconsintroutunlimited
- Southern Wisconsin (#061):** Tristan Kloss; (414) 254-3389; tie.a.fly@gmail.com; www.swtu.org
- Wild Rivers (#415):** Bob Rice 74355 Kaukamo Road, Iron River, WI 54847; (715) 292-1143; bobrice723@gmail.com; wisconsintu.org/wildrivers
- Wisconsin Clear Waters (#255):** Joe Knight 5555 Northwoods Ct Eau Claire, WI 54703 (715) 832-8358 jmktrout@gmail.com; www.WisconsinTU.org/ClearWaters
- Wisconsin River Valley (#395):** Doug Brown, R4800 Timber Lane, Ringle, WI 54471; DougBrown.TU@gmail.com 715-899-0024; www.wrvtu.org
- Wolf River (#050):** Andy Killoren, N1493 Hwy 45, Fremont, WI 54940; (920) 667-5385; akilloren@centurytel.net; WolfriverTU.org

State Council Leadership

State Chair: Linn Beck, 160 W. 19th Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54902 (920) 216-7408; chlbeck@att.net

Vice Chair: Mike Kuhr, 6103 Queensway, Monona, WI 53716; (414) 588-4281; mikek.trout@yahoo.com

Secretary: Tom Lager, 1700 Spring Hill Ct., Neenah, WI 54956; (920) 540-9194; tomkarinlager@new.rr.com

Treasurer: Gary Stoychoff, 1326 14th Ave., Green Bay, WI 54304 garystoychoff@att.net

National Trustee: Henry Koltz, 2300 N. Mayfair Rd., Ste. 1175, Milwaukee, WI 53226 (414) 331-5679 (H); hek@sdelaw.com

Vice Chair, Central Region: Tom Lager, see above

Vice Chair, Northeast Region: Doug Erdmann, 2418 Woodview Lane, Marinette, WI 54143; 715-735-7407; derdmann2@new.rr.com

Vice Chair, Southern Region: Jim Wierzba, 2817 Country Club Drive, Mequon, WI 53092 (262) 238-0282; hoke4me@aol.com

Vice Chair, Western Region: Gary Horvath, 623 W. Pine Street, River Falls, WI 54806 (715)425-8489; magshorvath@comcast.net

Awards: Bill Heart, 29450 Verners Road, Ashland, WI 54806; (715) 209-0431; wwheart@centurytel.net

Communications: Open

Education: Bob Haase, W7949 Treptow Ln., Eldorado, WI 54932 (920) 922-8003 (H); flytier@milwpc.com

Friends of WITU and Watershed Access Fund: Doug Brown, R4800 Timber Ln., Ringle, WI 54471 (715) 899-0024; DougBrown.TU@gmail.com

Legal Counsel: Open

Legislative Chair: Henry Koltz

Membership: Chair Paul Kruse, 500 Saint Jude St., Green Bay, WI 54303 (920) 494-4220; kruser2@new.rr.com;

National Leadership Council Representative: Kim McCarthy, 736 Meadowbrook Ct., Green Bay, WI 54313 (920) 434-3659; KMCCARTHY2@new.rr.com

Trout In the Classroom Coordinator: Greg Olson, 16370 Division St., Lakeland MN, 55043; driftless23@gmail.com

Veterans Services Partnership Coordinator: Mike Kuhr

Water Resources: Bob Obma, 12870 West Shore Drive, Mountain, WI 54149 (715) 276-1170 (H) bobobma@hotmail.com

Website: Brandon Schmalz, 1229 Goss Ave., Menasha, WI 54952; 920-851-8129; Brandon.schmalz@plexus.com

Women's Initiatives: Heidi Oberstadt, 456 Wadleigh St., Stevens Point, WI 54481; 715-573-5104; heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com

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:

Todd Franklin, Editor
2515 Bigler Circle
Verona, WI 53593
(608) 516-3647
toddfranklinwistrout@gmail.com

State Council Officers

Executive Committee includes officers and vice chairs

Linn Beck, Chair

Mike Kuhr, Vice Chair

Tom Lager, Secretary

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Chairman's Column

Involving our youth in TU

By Linn Beck, Council Chair

One of the major points of our newly approved Strategic Plan has to do with getting our youth more involved with Trout Unlimited. This is especially important in several ways. The obvious ones are to get our youth involved with our Trout Unlimited chapters and then help educate the youth in conservation and fishing. Not so obvious are the opportunities available for our youth to learn and grow from.

Trout Unlimited's Headwaters Youth Program has a wide variety of programs that are designed with specific age groups and opportunities in mind:

Stream Explorers

These TU members are 12 and under, and they often connect to TU through a family member or chapter fishing day. Some Stream Explorers find TU through our Trout In the Classroom program. They receive a membership with a discounted rate of only \$12 and is specially tailored just for kids. They get a membership card, TU calendar and special magazine just for them. Stream Explorers are the future of TU.

Trout In the Classroom

(TIC) is an environmental education program for ages K-12 that teaches kids how to raise trout from eggs to fry, monitor tank water quality, engage in stream habitat studies,

learn to appreciate water resources, begin to foster a conservation ethic and grow to understand ecosystems.

Youth camps

WITU now has an annual youth camp, which this year runs from July 20-23. We cover all aspects of fishing and everything they need to be safe on the water. Summer On the Fly encourages chapters to put on summer program to teach youth about fly fishing.

Stream Girls

Stream Girls is a program organized in conjunction with the Girls Scouts of America. The scouts get a chance to learn about fly casting, entomology and conservation.

The TU Teen Summit

The TU Teen Summit gathers teens from across the country to talk about how TU can better engage teen members. Students learn how to become a TU leader in their community, work on a service project and fish. They spend five days with a group of new friends who love fishing, the outdoors and TU as much as they do.

TU Costa 5 Rivers Clubs

The Trout Unlimited Costa 5 Rivers program is a network of more than 65 TU-affiliated college fly-fishing clubs around the nation. These clubs seek to engage current and future fly fishers on college and



STATE COUNCIL CHAIR LINN BECK

university campuses throughout the country. Each club is a division of their respective college's student organization office, and are broadly affiliated with Trout Unlimited. Through their affiliation with Trout Unlimited, clubs plan and participate in variety of events and initiatives in conjunction with their local TU chapter. Some of our chapters are already engaged in a few of

these programs.

As Wisconsin Trout Unlimited moves forward, we encourage chapters to consider engaging in these programs to help them attract and develop younger members.

For more information check out the TU National website and search for Youth Programs.

Thanks for all you do, and please take a kid fishing.

LETTERS

Elect candidates to support our cause

As a TU member, I always look forward to every issue of *Wisconsin Trout*. It's a great source of information about activities throughout the state with contributions from a variety of writers and individual chapters. These individuals who make up local chapters are the backbone for improvements to trout habitat.

In the Winter 2017 issue there was an article that discussed how we should speak to our legislators. I feel that the bigger issue is that we, as trout anglers and voters, need to elect candidates that support our cause. If we did so it would be much easier to hold their feet to the fire on legislation.

Trout Unlimited is a great organization with a wonderful cause. However, its members need to recognize that the first step is to vote for candidates who will support legislation to improve the state's coldwater fisheries.

David Swanson
Platteville, Wis.

Visit Viroqua May 13

Join us at our next Council meeting in the heart of the Driftless Area.

Please save the date on Saturday, May 13 for our spring Council meeting in Viroqua. We like to see at least one representative from every chapter. You don't even have to be a chapter leader to represent your chapter. All members are welcome at all Council meetings. Oh, and the fishing around Viroqua is pretty good, too.

The meeting will start promptly

at 9 a.m. in the basement of Viroqua Memorial Hospital, 507 South Main Street in Viroqua. Meetings usually wrap up by 2 p.m., allowing for plenty of fishing time.

The Council has arranged for reduced-priced lodging at the Viroqua Inn, at \$65 per night. For more information contact Viroqua Inn and Suites, 1325 North Main Street, Viroqua, 800-501-0664.

You haven't ordered your TU license plate yet? Well, wait no longer.




Did you know that the WITU license plate is becoming a major fundraising source for the State Council? Your help is needed, and your vehicle will thank you.

Go to www.dot.state.wi.us/drivers/vehicles/personal/special/trout.htm


TROUT CAMP 2017

APRIL & OCTOBER

SHOW UP, EAT, SLEEP, FISH, REPEAT.



**Black Earth
Angling Co.**


Driftless camaraderie at its best!!

This unique fishing package welcomes anglers of all skill levels and provides a great opportunity to meet new fishing buddies or catch-up with old ones. If you enjoy the driftless area or have been itching to get there, this trip is for you!! Bring your group of buddies or fly solo, either way it's going to be unforgettable.

For more info visit:

<http://www.blackearthangling.com/trout-camp.php>

New TU CARES effort targets Central Region streams

Trout Unlimited - Central Area Restoration Effort for Sustainability follows TU DARE model.

By Tom Lager

TU CARES originated from a brainstorming session at the Annual Planning Meeting of the Central Region TU Chapters in Jan 2016. We were exploring ideas for increasing the amount of habitat work conducted in the Central Region of Wisconsin. An idea that had most interest among TU and DNR fisheries and habitat crew attendees was an undertaking famed Wisconsin fish biologist Bob Hunt proposed a number of years ago, entitled "Central Sand Hills Ecoregion Initiative." This plan called for funding and managing the Central Sand Hills Ecoregion in a manner similar to TU's Driftless Area Restoration Effort (TUDARE) program.

Hunt had been motivated by the lack of state funding to both maintain previous stream restoration sites and proceed with new restoration efforts. He noticed that restored streams were allowed to deteriorate in favor of new restoration efforts.

So at that meeting in early 2016 we formed a team of TU members to further develop the idea and apply it to our intention to enhance habitat work being conducted in Central Wisconsin. A few months after that, this core team of Dennis Drazkowski, Al Johnson, Tom Lager, Nate Ratliff, Mike San Dretto, John Tucker and Laura Tucker attended the TUDARE Workshop on Stream Restoration Project Planning. We sought further guidance

from Duke Welter and Jeff Hasting in order to formulate our plan for Central Wisconsin. The core team worked closely with the DNR habitat crew from Wild Rose, Matt Salchert from the Frank Hornberg Chapter and Nate Sipple from Shaw-Paca chapter to integrate their expertise and ideas and obtain their support for our project.

The outcome of this 12-month exercise, during which we adapted and evolved Bob Hunt's idea into what we now call "TU CARES," is the following goal statement: The goal of the TU CARES program is to protect, restore and reduce the decline in habitat quality for fish, game and non-game species in those restoration projects completed during the last 40-50 years within Wisconsin's Central Sand Hills Ecoregion and its connected watersheds.

The reason we believe we can enhance our habitat work through TU CARES is that we can undertake larger and more complex projects that qualify for significant grants by working collaboratively among Central Wisconsin TU Chapters, conservation groups, county organizations, businesses and our DNR partners.

Our inaugural project is the West Branch of the White River (WBWR), with the objective to assess and implement improvements to the WBWR which will represent the possibilities achievable on streams across the Central Region. The WBWR was selected as the demonstration stream because it typified the



TU CARES TEAM FORMED AT LAST YEAR'S WORKSHOP IN WESTBY

The core team of Dennis Drazkowski, Al Johnson, Tom Lager, Nate Ratliff, Mike San Dretto, John Tucker and Laura Tucker attended the TUDARE Workshop on Stream Restoration Project Planning.

biodiversity and hydrogeography common to the region and has unique features such as self-sustaining populations of all three trout species, ongoing habitat improvements since the 1930's Works Progress Administration, a state-of-the-art fish and wildlife transportation corridor crossing (the Highway 21 bridge), typical land use practices and generous public access.

The next steps, which are currently under way, include:

- Investigating how to conduct an affordable watershed plan.
- Supporting ongoing habitat improvement work with Shawn Sullivan's Wild Rose habitat crew.
- Expanding citizen science monitoring of water quality and quan-

tity

- Conducting macroinvertebrate and herpetological surveys
- Trout video documentation
- Investigating removal of barriers to fish migration
- Further engagement with DNR managers, regional TU resources, other conservation groups and public, business and private organizations.
- Administrative learning is being pursued in areas such as grant preparation, and financial and record management.

Tom Lager has held various roles in TU and is currently president of the Fox Valley Chapter and secretary of the State Council. See the profile of him on page 13.

WITU planning fourth annual Youth Camp

We are excited to be getting ready for our fourth annual youth camp. It doesn't seem possible, as it seems like only yesterday we were in the planning stages and going through the growing pains of putting together the curriculum and corralling all the volunteers needed to fulfil the needs of the camp and campers in year one.

Now we're planning our fourth camp and everything has been coming together. We again are hoping for 20 youngsters ages 12 to 16. Chapters again will be asked to sponsor the campers.

This year the camp will be held from Thursday July 20 through Sunday, July 23, ending just after lunch. We will still be at Pine Lake Bible Camp in Waupaca. We will teach the students all aspects of fishing, including fishing with flies, bait and spinners. We

will also cover entomology, fly tying, lure making, water safety conservation programs. We will also have the ever-popular skills contests.

If you know of any youngsters who are interested, please contact your local chapter leaders. Their contact information can be found on page two of *Wisconsin Trout*. Otherwise, feel free to contact Linn Beck and he will put you in touch with your chapter leaders. You can contact him at chlbeck@att.net.

We can always use additional volunteers to serve as mentors, guides, or to just help with the groups. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Wayne Parmley at wparmley@gmail.com.

Strategic Plan ready for implementation

After almost 2 years of working out the best possible plan for Wisconsin Trout Unlimited to be able to grow and prosper, the Strategic Planning Committee presented the plan to the Executive Committee for a vote. It passed with flying colors so now comes the fun part of implementing it.

The plan has 5 major components that will all work together to help make this plan a success. They are as follows:

- Put in place the tools required to ensure State Council sustainability.
- Create a network of Trout Unlimited advocates.

- Increase the number and quality of projects to protect, restore and reconnect trout streams in Wisconsin.
- Institute a program of goal-oriented angler science projects that address issues that further the State Council's mission.
- Develop chapter uniformity for youth membership and youth education growth.

We have started implementing several components of the plan already and have been building on some of the points that we are already practicing. Stay tuned for more information and updates on where we are.

CRASH CAMP

OVERNIGHT ON THE LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER

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<http://www.blackearthangling.com/crash-camp.php>

Black Earth Angling Co.

NRCS commits funding for 29 Wisconsin Driftless Area projects

Wisconsin's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office recently announced \$688,000 in funding for 29 projects in Wisconsin's portion of the Driftless Area. Projects in 10 counties will begin this construction season and some will continue into 2018.

NRCS made the grants under a Regional Conservation Partnership Plan (RCPP) proposed by Jeff Hastings, project manager for the Driftless Area Restoration Effort. Entitled "Wild & Rare," the proposal calls for restoration of oak woodlands, streams and prairie habitat, installation of habitats for a diverse range of nongame species, both native species and those facing special risks across the region. The NRCS, which is a branch of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, focuses much of its emphasis on water quality and soil erosion control.

The RCPP grant promised \$2.9 million over three years to the Driftless Area. DARE and 30 other partners will contribute to the projects. The area has a wealth of unique

species, many of which can benefit from wide-ranging restoration efforts. As a result, it is accorded a high priority by the Wisconsin DNR's Wildlife Action Plan.

The funds will be part of funding packages on private agricultural lands, paired with other programs such as dollars raised by Trout Unlimited and local conservation clubs, state conservation aids, Wisconsin DNR Trout Stamp dollars, transmission line mitigation funding, and labor provided by volunteers to projects. Individual landowners worked with local NRCS offices and partners to develop plans and budgets for their projects. In many cases, TU is able to front the funds and be reimbursed by NRCS at the end of a project.

On these DARE-supported projects, TU and Trout Stamp dollars cannot be spent unless the public has legal fishing access. Public fishing easements are required to be in place before any work is begun.

—Duke Welter

Mudsnail update

By Matt Krueger

As previously detailed in the last issue of Wisconsin Trout, invasive New Zealand mudsnails (NZMS) were discovered last fall just southwest of Madison on Badger Mill Creek, a trout stream and tributary of the Sugar River. This is the second inland discovery of NZMS in Wisconsin, the first being in the Black Earth Creek (BEC) watershed.

These snails have the potential to replace native macroinvertebrates in the food web and negatively affect trout populations. They have the ability to pass through the digestive system of fish unharmed and offer little value as a food source.

The Upper Sugar River Watershed Association (USRWA), in conjunction with TU, Wisconsin DNR, Lower Sugar River Watershed Association and River Alliance of Wisconsin, is mounting a response effort to get information out about NZMS and their impacts. In mid-April, a wader wash station construction work party will occur in the Sugar River watershed. Watch USRWA and River Alliance of Wisconsin websites for details.

This summer the DNR will be sampling southern Wisconsin and Driftless Area streams for NZMS using a process called "eDNA" to determine if it has spread to other bodies of water. Recent research

from Bobbi Peckarsky indicates that not only are densities of NZMS expanding in known infestation locations, particularly South Valley Road on Black Earth Creek, but NZMS are also spreading within BEC. Anglers are likely the culprit.

BEC and Sugar River watersheds are trout fisheries that receive significant fishing pressure, but also see lots of paddlers. This means there are lots of people using these waterways, and every single one of them can inadvertently act as a vector for the spread of NZMS, if they don't take the proper precautions. Abundant wash stations make it easier for anglers to clean and scrub their wading boots, which is the likeliest location where NZMS hitchhikers may hide, and reduce the movement of snails from one waterbody to another.

It is critical that anglers employ "clean angling" practices at all streams they fish, whether or not invasive species are present. Minimally, they should carry a pump sprayer with clean water and a scrub brush to every stream this season, and scrub down before leaving the stream. More clean angling tips can be found at wisconsinrivers.org/mudsnails.

Matt Krueger is the river restoration director for the River Alliance of Wisconsin. Contact him at 608-257-2424, ext. 125, or wisconsinrivers.org.

Six chapters receiving Friends of Wisconsin TU grants

We had a very busy session to review and then vote on several grants from our Friends of Wisconsin TU program. All requests from chapters were for important projects going on this summer. Here are the requests and the amounts that were awarded with these grants, which totaled \$10,200:

- Wisconsin Clearwaters Chapter: \$2,000 for maintenance of prior projects
- Antigo Chapter: \$2,000 for DNR brushing crew
- Central Wisconsin Chapter: \$2,000 for Wild Rose Habitat crew
- Marinette Chapter: \$1,000 for habitat crew for the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forests
- Wild Rivers: \$1,200 for habitat crew for the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forests
- Wolf River: \$2,000 for Antigo habitat crew

Grants for the habitat and brushing crews go to help pay for three DNR LTE crews. The LTE crews are each made up of three people who do brushing and also help on larger DNR habitat projects. Each crew has a base cost of \$15,000, with most of the monies provided by the chapters in the Northeast and Central Regions. Friends grants help the chapters cover these costs.

All the requests were voted on by our regional vice presidents. We were able to fulfill all requests thanks to the generosity of our Friends of Wisconsin TU donors. Thank you all for the continued support of this great program. We still have requests coming in for more grants to support other projects, and it is never too late to consider donating to the Friends of Wisconsin TU program.

—Linn Beck



Volunteers needed for Outdoor Heritage Expo May 17 and 18

This year's Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo is scheduled for May 17 and 18 at the MacKenzie Center near Poynette, Wisconsin.

This is a great event that attracts about 2,500 to 3,000 kids in grades 4-6, and about 500 chaperones. They experience a variety of outdoor activities including archery, forestry, wildlife tracking and game calling, bird dog demonstrations, trapping, parks and camping, outdoor safety and angler education.

Trout Unlimited continues to play an important role in angler education. We have provided hands-on fly casting and fly tying instruction in the past, but had to drop the fly casting because of a lack of volunteer help. We just barely get enough volunteers to provide the fly tying where 800 to 1,000 kids get a chance to tie a fly.

We show them how they can use a spinning float with a spinning rod to use the fly they tied to catch bluegills. We are not trying to make them fly tiers or fly fishers. We want them to catch fish such as bluegills on the fly they tied themselves and hope they get hooked on fishing and the great outdoors.

Trout Unlimited has been talking more and more about getting kids involved in fishing, conservation, and the great outdoors. The Mid-

west Outdoor Heritage Education Expo provides TU an opportunity to reach nearly 3,000 youth in just two days. We plan on teaching the children how to tie flies again this year, but we need about 15 volunteers a day to do this. If there is too large of a waiting line, the kids just move on to a different activity.

There are a number of other activities we could provide for the kids such as knot tying, aquatic insect identification, etc.

We could also have a display of the work we do on the streams and other conservation work we get involved with. There are so many things we could do, but they all involve volunteers.

Tying materials are provided, so volunteers only need a vise and tying tools including a scissors, bobbin, and half-hitch tool. Volunteers should plan to arrive by 8:15 a.m. The event ends about 3 p.m.

If there are a few volunteers to help with knot tying, aquatic insect identification, or putting on a display of what TU does on our streams, please let Bob Haase know so he can help coordinate these additional activities. If you would like to volunteer to help with fly tying or any other activity please call him at 920-579-3858, or email him at flytiter@milwpc.com.



YOU REALLY HAVEN'T GOTTEN YOUR WITU LICENSE PLATE YET? Don't wait any longer. Support WITU. Go to www.dot.state.wi.us/drivers/vehicles/personal/special/trout.htm

Council banquet success continues

By Mike Kuhr, Banquet Chair and Council Vice Chair

Our 2017 State Council Banquet will go down as one of the most successful in recent memory.

More than 200 people gathered in Oshkosh to support coldwater conservation in Wisconsin. We rewarded attendees by handing out more than \$26,000 in prizes. After the bills were paid, Treasurer Gary Stoychoff reported that we raised more than \$21,000.

TU friends and members from every corner of the state came together to honor a deserving group of WITU award winners. Their contributions help the Council continue to advocate for cold, clean fishable water in Wisconsin.

Volunteer efforts and local chapter support were key to the banquet's success.

The Banquet Committee was outstanding in both planning and execution. The Council is fortunate to have Bill Heart, Heidi Oberstadt, Henry Koltz, Jim Wierzba, Linn Beck, Paul Kruse and Todd Franklin working on its behalf.

Our donors really came through this year, and the prize package was our most valuable in recent memory. Thank you to all the chapters that made prize and cash donations. Also, many individuals contributed prizes for the event, including amazing creations from Randy Arnold and Scott Grady. Their donations raised a significant amount of funding for the Council. It would not be possible to assemble that kind of prize package without a huge amount of help from our chapters and the individual donors who care deeply for the work that we do.

This was the first time the Council solicited sponsors for our banquet, and two sponsors stepped up. We'd like to thank Gary Stoychoff and Guideline Studios, LLC for their generous support. We look forward to having more sponsors at future banquets.

The Council would like to thank the many volunteers who helped

plan and execute the banquet. Their efforts are critical to making an event like this run smoothly. From staffing entry tables to selling tickets for bucket or card raffles, to demonstrating how to tie flies, we had an enthusiastic group of volunteers who were willing to donate their time.

This group consisted of Stan Strelka, Paul Kruse, Amy Klusmeier, Gary Stoychoff, Kim McCarthy, Jen Kuhr, Michael San Dretto, Rich Erickson, John and Laura Tucker, Chelley Beck, Jim Vanden Branden, Boyd Roessler, Rick Frye, Nikki Benishek, Brian Oberstadt, Bob Haase, Gabe Stelzer, Mark Rhinerson, and Clay Parmley, among others. The Council would also like to thank the numerous volunteers who tied flies and helped with the Women's Fly Fishing Clinic during the day.

We'd like to thank Henry Koltz for being our master of ceremonies for the evening. Hank did a great job of entertaining the crowd, touting our successes and keeping the event moving along.

Bob Haase ensured that chapters from the central area had custom engraved, wooden fly boxes to fill, and those chapters really came through. Each chapter's fly box went up for silent auction, raising significant funds for the Council.

We also have a very generous group of donors who provided auction prizes. The banquet featured many guided trips and "fish-alongs" from supporters including Damian Wilmot of Fly By Night, Patrick Hager, Charlie Piette of Tight Lines Fly Fishing Co., Duke Welter, Gordy Martin of Tie One On, Geri Meyer of Driftless Angler, Kyle Zempel of Black Earth Angling Co., Nome Buckman, Scot Stewart, Tim Fraley, Gene Mazewski, Carol Murphy and Kurt Meyer. All became highly sought-after prizes. These donations are greatly appreciated and raise a good deal of funding to support our conservation efforts.

The Council would also like to thank Larry Mann from Hayward



COUNCIL BANQUET FEATURED \$26,000 IN PRIZES

More than 200 people gathered in Oshkosh to support coldwater conservation in Wisconsin. We rewarded attendees by handing out more than \$26,000 in prizes. After the bills were paid, Treasurer Gary Stoychoff reported that we raised more than \$21,000.

Fly Fishing Company and the Madison – Gallatin (MGTU) chapter in Montana. We swapped fishing trips with our fellow TU chapter and got to auction off two days of guided fishing and two nights of accommodations in the Bozeman, Montana area. In return we made arrangements with Larry to let the MGTU Chapter auction off two days of musky fishing in Wisconsin at their fundraiser. Now that's "One TU."

For the first time, we held a 50/50 raffle with all proceeds going to support our annual youth camp. We raised more than \$275 for the camp this year, and the lucky winner ended up with a pocket full of cash!

The Council was pleased to have some of our partnering organizations represented at the banquet. Representatives from the River Alliance of Wisconsin, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics, Shabazz Project Green Teen, TUDARE, Reel Recovery and Badger Tenkara were on hand

to inform, answer questions and mingle with the crowd.

The awards program has become one of the highlights of the evening. Wisconsin TU has become a force in the conservation community because of the incredible efforts of many of our members, conservation professionals, corporate sponsors and others. Honoring them gives the State Council a chance to show our appreciation for their efforts. Meanwhile, awards ceremony speaker Steve Born always adds a humorous touch to the event, and we hope he'll continue entertaining us in the years to come.

If you missed the 2017 State Council Banquet, please join us on Saturday, February 3, 2018. We will return to the Oshkosh Best Western Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center for the fifth year. If you'd like to get involved with the banquet planning committee, contact Mike Kuhr at mikek.trout@yahoo.com.

Bill would prohibit commercial aquaculture in Great Lakes

TU members asked to contact their U.S. House members.

By Taylor Ridderbusch

On February 9 Congressman Dan Kildee introduced the "Ban Aquaculture in the Great Lakes Act" (HR 961), which would prohibit commercial aquaculture operations from being placed in the Great Lakes.

The issue was first brought to light in the Michigan State Legislature when representatives brought forward a bill in 2015 which would have allowed net-pen aquaculture in Lake Michigan.

Since that time, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder's administration completed a report that advised against allowing net-penning in the Great Lakes, which was further bolstered by an opinion from Michigan Attorney General Bill Schuette, which stated that state law did not allow permitting for aquaculture within the Great Lakes.

In an effort to avoid patchwork legislation across the basin, Congressman Kildee's bill seeks to draw a definitive line in the sand to ensure protection from the harmful pollution created by these facilities.

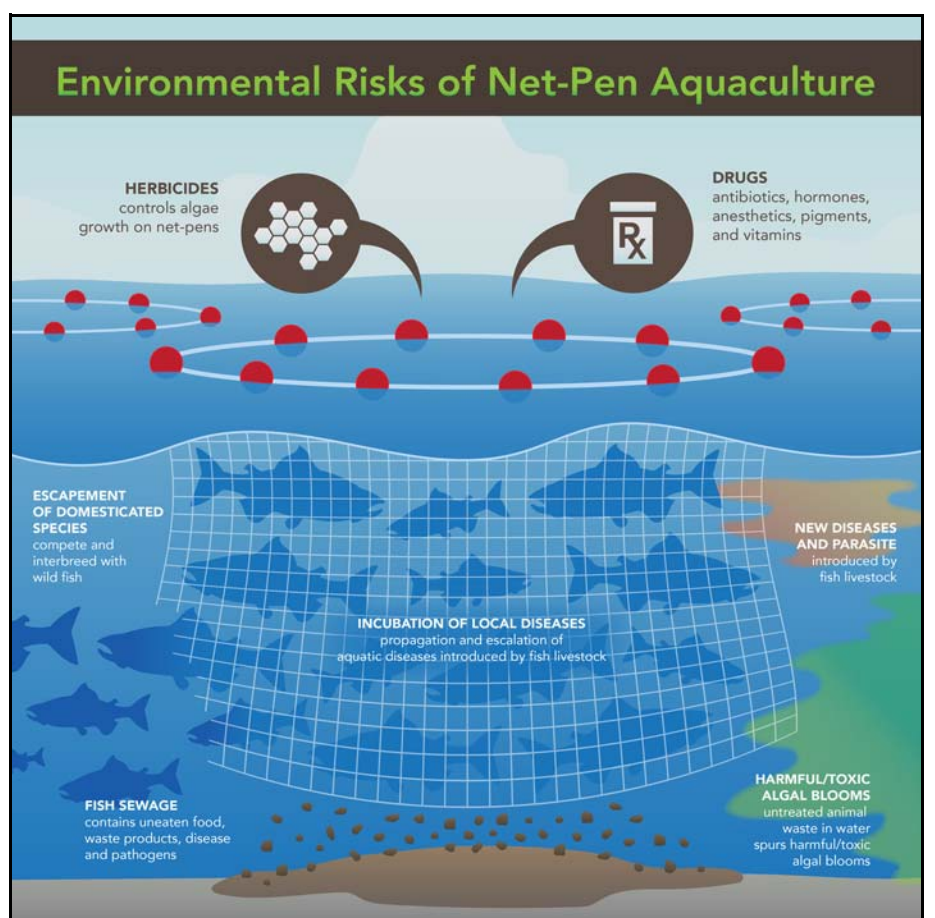
Net-penning can lead to domesticated fish escapement, food and waste settling on the lake bottom, incubation of disease, and can introduce drugs, antibiotics and hormones into the ecosystem.

The Great Lakes supply more than 35 million people with drinking water every day. The system also is home to an abundance of wildlife that drives a significant and crucial part of the Great Lakes Basin economy, which hosts a \$7 billion fishery and a \$16 billion tourism industry annually.

If commercial aquaculture takes hold in the Great Lakes, this all could be in jeopardy.

TU will be proactively working to move this legislation forward and will need the help of Wisconsin TU members to do so. Members can get involved by reaching out to their representatives in the U.S. House of Representatives and telling them to support HR 961.

For more information, please contact Taylor Ridderbusch at tridderbusch@tu.org.



News from the Northwoods

With Laura MacFarland, TU Great Lakes Restoration Manager

Don't miss an opportunity to "hook" someone



We've all been there. Still reeling from a memorable day on the water, you start to slip and tell that friendly faced stranger in the fly shop or at the pub one too many details. Perhaps you learned your lesson the hard way, regretting having said too much, only later to find a half mile braid of matted grass leading to your favorite spot. As an angler, I have learned how to speak the language. Through trial and error (and tough love from fellow TU members), I think I know when to shut my trap.

I admit that I find that line harder to tread as a conservationist. I am just so darn proud of the good work TU is doing that I want to shout it from a mountain top in extreme detail, reciting fish counts before and after our great work, including GPS coordinates).

It is a conundrum. On one hand, I want folks to fall desperately head over heels for every brook and the handsome hues of the native trout darting in and out of her shadows. But on the other hand, I still want to keep her a secret, tucked in my pocket afraid that if the wrong person notices her they will take advantage of her.

Despite all of this, at TU we recognize that in order to sustain our good work, we must continue to engage new anglers, conservationists, and even the general public. Locally and statewide, we need to continue to foster a culture that values clean, free-flowing rivers. And we have to brag about the good work we are

doing and the quality of our fisheries.

Fortunately, our workdays and other restoration projects present us with ample teachable moments, or "hooks," if we take advantage of them. Remember, we need to also be "fishing" for men, women and children to serve as future stewards of the resource. Otherwise, our work is in vain.

Last summer I found myself shopping for "hooks" as I became involved in a restoration initiative on the North Branch of the Oconto River. The Forest County Potawatomi Community, U.S. Forest Service and Wisconsin DNR are partnering to restore native brook trout habitat through the heart of Wabeno.

It occurred to many of us in TU that this was a unique opportunity to engage a community in the restoration of the river in their own backyard. Also, it was going to be vital for the riparian landowners and other local leaders to become stewards if the restoration was going to be a success.

Workdays are natural hooks that literally lead individuals to a stream, get their hands wet and instill within them a sense of ownership of the resource. This, in my mind, is truly the bread and butter of TU and I intend to invite every able bodied volunteer from the community to help before or after the machines do the heavy lifting. However, we have many other tools at our disposal that might engage a broader audience, both young and old.

Last fall Northwoods TU, Green Bay TU, Oconto River Watershed TU and the Nicolet Sportsmens Club partnered to bring Trout In the Classroom (TIC) into Wabeno Elementary. Incidentally, one of the restoration sites is located on school property a few meters from the playground. A couple of adventurous teachers were willing to help rear 100 brook trout eggs in an aquarium in the school's library. As the kids have watched the eggs hatch and grow into fry, they have learned a bit about the biology of brook trout and their habitat in the North Branch.

TIC has also provided us a springboard for discussion about the needs of the brook trout with other members within the community. We

look forward to further engaging youth and their families in the restoration of the North Branch through the continuation and growth of this program.

At least seven chapters in Wisconsin are involved in TIC, including Wisconsin Clearwaters, Harry and Laura Nohr and Kiap-TU-Wish. Together they have brought trout in to at least 16 schools, introducing the next generation to our coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

In some cases, TIC has brought children to the river to wade, pick up rocks and learn about bugs. In the future, we hope to involve students in workdays as well. If your chapter is interested in participating in TIC, I encourage you to contact

Wisconsin TU's TIC Coordinator Greg Olson at driftless23@gmail.com or 651-436-1744.

When you boil it down, TU has a simple approach that we refer to as PRRS: Where rivers are intact, we protect them. Where they are fragmented by dams or culverts or dewatering, we reconnect them. Where they are degraded, we restore them. And to sustain these efforts into the future, we invest in education and outreach, creating a new generation of stream champions to continue our work.

I ask that you not forget the "S." Incorporate an education or outreach component into your next project. At the very least, shout your good work from the mountain top.



WABENO KIDS TAKE PRIDE IN OWNERSHIP

Fourth-grade students from Wabeno Elementary pose proudly with their new Trout In the Classroom aquarium.

We want you, youth coordinators



TU National is encouraging each chapter to create a Youth Coordinator position. This person would help his or her chapter make better use of the incredible information and support available from TU National. Much of this information is available online.

This is a great opportunity to get involved with TU and really make a difference. If you are interested in serving as your chapter's Youth Coordinator, contact your local chapter leaders. Chapter contact information is available on page two of *Wisconsin Trout*.



GETTING WET, HAVING FUN AND LEARNING THROUGH TIC

River Crest Elementary fifth-grade teacher Mr. Mueller (left) and Kiap-TU-Wish board members Greg Olson (center) and John Kaplan (right) with students at Willow River State Park in Hudson, Wisconsin.

Items needed for Youth Camp

The WITU Youth Fishing Camp is in need of some items to help complete our inventory.

The camp needs waders and wading boots of all sizes, not just youth sizes. We have had some larger kids, so we are in need of adult waders and boots. These items don't need to be new. If your donated waders leak, just let us know so we can repair them. They only need enough life in them to be used a couple of times a year.

We will also accept any donations that can be used as prizes for contests, such as rods, reels, flies, lures, nets, and other small items that can be given away.

Lastly, I know everyone gives so much to Trout Unlimited anyways, but any cash donation would be greatly appreciated.

You can mail any items or donations to me, Linn Beck, at 160 W. 19th Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54902.

Thank you for considering this and thank you in advance for your donations.

—Linn Beck, State Council Chair

Get to know Greg Olson, our new Trout In the Classroom Coordinator

Interview by Mike Kuhr, Council Vice Chair

Hi Greg, thanks for volunteering to be WITU's TIC Coordinator. You've done some great work with the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter TIC programs and we're excited to have you. When and why did you decide to join TU?

I fished for trout with gear and worms as a kid and then as a teenager for whatever reason, decided to target larger fish with bigger teeth. About 10 years ago, I started fly fishing and rediscovered the area trout streams of my youth. Some were better with time, and some were worse. The ones that TU had been heavily involved in were much better. I wanted to be a part of that, and insure my kids and grandkids could experience the trout fishing we now have.

How many TIC programs are you currently working with through the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter? What grade levels do you have tanks set up in?

Currently we have five programs: two in Amery, two in River Falls and one in Hudson. Four are in fifth grade classes and one is in the Amery High School.

Have the local school teachers embraced the TIC programs?

They really have. They use the program to teach lessons in math (calculate the amount of food to give), English (all kids keep a TIC journal), biology, entomology and ecology. The kids tell me that the first thing they do every morning is check in on the trout. The Amery fifth graders have their tank set up in a common area of the school, so everyone can easily check the progress. These kids might not become trout fishers or join TU, but they are all becoming aware of the need for cold, clean water and some day they will be old enough to vote.

When I visit, the kids ask such good questions and know so much more about trout at the end of the school year. It is amazing.

We also do "Bugs in the Classroom" with Dr. Dean Hansen, whereby kids get some hands-on time with aquatic insects. Dean does a great job.

We have "Release Parties," whereby the kids release their trout in the Willow River at the end of the school year, and we give instruction with fly casting. The Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter members have been incredible by volunteering for all of this. All agree that you get out more than you give. It is really fun interacting with these kids!

What do you think the kids enjoy most about the TIC programs? Eggs hatching, checking water quality, release day?

Egg hatching is definitely the first exciting event, followed by daily feeding, but release day is the highlight. For the Hudson class we release the fish in the Willow River State Park, after a hike down to the river. We waded out and turn over rocks, looking for the bugs that Dr. Hansen identified for us. After the release of the fry we have a picnic and fly

casting instruction. It is a very fun field trip.

Can you recall a moment in your childhood when you made a special connection with fishing or the outdoors?

As a boy I delivered the paper early in the morning and biked to the Willow River just after sunrise to do some trout fishing almost every day. When I came back after learning to fly fish, it was like seeing an old best friend from decades ago. Feeling that moving water around my legs brought back so many fond memories.

Sadly, the Willow is not what it once was, and luckily we have other rivers nearby such as the Kinni and the Rush. However, it is kind of like I have come full circle with these TIC trout releases into the Willow. Getting enough cold water back into the Willow is complicated, but it would be cool if some of these kids that have gone through the TIC program come up with some solutions some day down the road.

What's the most unusual fish you've ever caught?

Nothing too crazy. As a kid, after fishing the Willow in the morning, the afternoon would often find me fishing in the St. Croix River below the dam that backs up the Willow forming Lake Mallilieu in Hudson. Throwing out a crawler in the seam between the outflow and the adjacent eddy could result in any number of species: carp, sheephead, gar, walleye, smallmouth, pike, and even sturgeon. The majority were sheephead, but it was always exciting to get that first glimpse, and see what you had on the end of your line.

If you could go anywhere in the world on an all-expenses-paid trip, where would you go?

I was actually lucky enough to do this last summer. My friend was guiding up in Alaska and his lodge let him bring up a friend or two, all expenses paid for a week. My son got to go and we fished with my buddy for cohos, sockeye, arctic char, grayling and pike. I had never been to Alaska, never caught any of those species before, except pike, and was overwhelmed with the beauty of the surroundings and the fishing. I would definitely go back.

Aside from your top-secret fishing spots, do you have any favorite getaway locations closer to home?

I don't think the rivers I fish are top secret, but I consider myself very, very lucky in that I can have my boots wet in the Kinni, just 15 minutes from my house. I can get to the Rush in a little more than 30 minutes, with the Trimble in between. Afton State Park in Minnesota is five minutes away and Willow River State Park is 10 minutes away.

Do you have any sage advice for those looking to start a TIC program in their area?

The first step would be to con-



GREG OLSON IS THE STATE COUNCIL'S NEW TIC COORDINATOR

He has been a key leader in developing the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter's TIC efforts. As the Council's TIC coordinator, Greg will advise other chapters that want to set up, expand or improve their TIC programs.

tact your DNR fisheries biologist in your area to see if they would allow stocking of trout in any of your area rivers, ponds or lakes. Then contact me, I would love to help. Email would probably be

best: driftless23@gmail.com.

Thank you for sharing your insights with us, Greg. We look forward to working with you to expand Trout In the Classroom.



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Wisconsin stream access laws summarized in wallet card

Having trouble remembering what Wisconsin law says about stream access? Stream access laws have changed twice since 2001, so WITU has created the wallet card below to summarize your rights.

The card below gives a concise summary of your current rights and responsibilities regarding stream access.

The WITU State Council hopes this card will come in handy to settle any disputes you may have with landowners who feel you are trespassing.

Confusing recent change

Anglers and other stream users may remember that Wisconsin law was changed in 2001 to allow people to walk the exposed banks of rivers up to the

“normal high-water mark.”

However, that expansion of rights was *reversed* just two years later, and anglers have ever since been required to follow the old “keep your feet wet” rule while fishing.

Of note in the current law is that anglers can legally walk on private property whenever they encounter an “obstruction.”

The DNR has interpreted an obstruction to not only include such things as fallen trees, but also “deep water.”

This obstruction provision is not yet widely known, so this wallet card will help fishers and land owners better understand the current law.

Wisconsin State Council of Trout Unlimited Stream Access Wallet Card

Keep this handy stream-access wallet card with you when you fish. It describes your rights and responsibilities when accessing public waters that flow through private property.

Can I fish streams that flow through private lands?

Yes, all trout streams are considered “navigable” and, therefore, are public property. Streams are public even though the land on both sides of them may be private. Without permission, you may not cross private lands to enter or leave a stream. Enter the water at bridge crossings, public lands, or private lands under public easement.

Do I have to stay in the water?

Yes, but there is one exception. Wisconsin law was amended in 2001 to say you may exit the water “to bypass an obstruction.” Re-enter the water after the obstruction has been passed.

What counts as an obstruction?

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

Can I walk on the exposed shoreline up to the “ordinary high water mark”?

No, that provision in the statutes was only in effect for two years. Anglers must now follow the previous “keep your feet wet” rule. But you may still leave the water legally to bypass obstructions.

What if I come upon a fence across a stream?

Landowners may not obstruct navigable waters in a way that “impairs the free navigation thereof.” If you can pass under or over a single strand of barbed wire, the stream remains navigable. However, if several strands of wire or some other intentional obstruction prevents passage, the land owner is in violation of the law. Do not cut the wire. Instead, contact the DNR to investigate the illegal obstruction.

How does the “no interference” with hunting, fishing, or trapping statute apply to my fishing?

Animal right activists have generally preferred to harass hunters and trappers instead of anglers. Nevertheless, fishing is included in a 1989 Wisconsin statute that makes it illegal for someone to “interfere or attempt to interfere with lawful hunting, fishing or trapping with the intent to prevent the taking of a wild animal...”

This statute not only protects you from physical interference, but it protects the animals as well — someone cannot interfere with your fishing by “harassing a wild animal.” For fishers, this may be interpreted to mean that someone cannot interfere with your fishing by throwing rocks into water you are about to fish. Land owners blocking your legal access or preventing you from navigating around obstructions may also be violating this statute.



Spring 2017 update

The 2017 Watershed Access Fund campaign is in full swing and the response has been incredible so far. Through your generous contributions we are already approaching \$5,300! Thank you so much for the support.

Last year this fund helped secure an important easement link in the “Horseshoe” section on the North Fork of the Bad Axe River in Vernon County. Without your continued support of this program, we may have missed this opportunity to obtain a public fishing easement.

Chapters seeking to secure public access with the support of Watershed Access Fun grants can request up to \$7,500. Two chapters can pair up and each request a grant for a single acquisition, providing up to \$15,000 to secure an important easement.

Please consider making a generous contribution to the Watershed Access Fund this year. The ability to secure easements that may only be available for a short time is critical. Generations to come will thank us for securing places to enjoy the passion of fishing. Additionally, public fishing easements allow TU to support stream restoration efforts on those waters.

I wish you all a great 2017 fishing season!
Thank you,

Doug Brown, Wisconsin TU Watershed Access Fund Chair

Paul Feldhake	Port Washington WI	Dr. C. Emil Mueller	Boscobel WI
Joel Fisher	Birnamwood WI	Keith Nelson	Waunakee WI
William Flader, M.D.	Madison WI	Eric Nelson	Chili WI
Richard Galling	Hartland WI	Herb Oechler	Wauwatosa WI
Daniel Geddes	Appleton WI	Winston Ostrow	De Pere WI
Don Glanzer	Loganville WI	Scott Quandt DDS	Green Bay WI
James J. Goodwin	Sturgeon Bay WI	Carl Rasmussen	Neeah WI
Colleen Grant	Eden Prairie MN	Bob Retko	Cedarburg WI
Dan Grauer	Wausau WI	James Ruether	Mosinee WI
John Gribb	Mt. Horeb WI	Michael San Dretto	Neeah WI
Jack Halbrehder	Sparta WI	Jeff Schmoeger	Cottage Grove WI
Stephen Hawk	Madison WI	Glen Schmadt	Richland Center WI
Ashton Hawk	Madison WI	P.R. Schumann	Hartford WI
John Hawk	New Holstein WI	Frederick W. Seybold	Madison WI
Donald Heinzen	Verona WI	Edwin Shultz	Prairie du Sac WI
Walter Hellyer	Egg Harbor WI	Michael Stockman	Poynette WI
Jerone Herro	Kimberly WI	Wayne Stockman	Spring Valley WI
Cline Hickok	Hudson WI	Thomas Towne	Rosendale WI
Nancy and Dan Hill	Spencer WI	Dennis Vandembloomen	Eau Claire WI
John Hoar	Ashland WI	Carol Vendt	Oconto WI
Charles Hodulik	Madison WI	John Voorhees	Hazelhurst WI
Harold Hoffman	West Salem WI	Dick Wachoski	Eau Claire WI
Scott Homann	Roscoe IL	Don Wagner	Gillett WI
Phyllis Hunt	Waupaca WI	Janis Watson	Thiensville WI
John & Judith Hutchinson	Sun Prairie WI	Donald Wellhouse	Kaukana WI
William Johnson	Hudson WI	Paul Wiemerslage	Hudson WI
Cliff Kremmer	Sparta WI	Stephen Wilke	Marinette WI
Larissa Lyon	Janesville WI	Dan Wisniewski	Middleton WI
Thomas Lyon	Fontana WI	Don Wolf	Madison WI
Brian Madsen	Ellsworth WI	Jared Wunderlich	DePere WI
Kevin Mahaney	Middleton WI	Wendy & Fred Young	Roscoe IL
Charles Martinson	Mt. Horeb WI		
Peter Meronek	Stevens Point WI		
Fred Mikolajewski	West Allis WI		
Robert Moser	Milwaukee WI		

Here is my contribution of \$100 or more to the Wisconsin TU 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 _____

2016 Contributors

Louis Arata	Whitefish Bay WI	Edward Brockner	Beaver Dam WI
Henry Barkhausen	Winnetka IL	Russell Cison	Phillips WI
Ed Barnes	Middleton WI	William Creasey	Muscatine IA
Charles Barnhill	Madison WI	Terry Cummings	Rhineland WI
Jim Bayorgeon	Appleton WI	David Darling	River Falls WI
Michael Benish	Oregon WI	Bruce Davidson	Wauwatosa WI
Ron & Jolene Berg	Chippewa Falls WI	Steve Deery	Coloma WI
Mark Berggren	Madison WI	Richard Diedrich	Grafton WI
Blaine Biedermann	Madison WI	Richard Duplessie	Eau Claire WI
		Mike Duren	Mazomanie WI
		Jack Ellingboe	Prescott WI
Richard Boda	Boyceville WI	Harley Erbs	Rhineland WI
Stephen Born	Madison WI		

Fishers & Farmers:

A fish habitat partnership that benefits trout habitat conservation

By Matthew Mitro

The National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP) is one of the current success stories in trout habitat conservation. The NFHAP idea began in 2001 as an attempt to address the nationwide crisis of fish habitat loss and degradation. Modeled after the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, NFHAP was signed in 2006 and currently works to create strong local and regional partnerships to address important fish habitat issues. NFHAP is administered by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and a key role is to provide funding to Fish Habitat Partnerships for on-the-ground (and water) projects to benefit fish and their aquatic habitat.

Workhorses of NFHAP

Fish Habitat Partnerships are the workhorses of NFHAP, and there are currently 19 of them across the United States. Some were formed around important aquatic habitats and geographic areas, and others around species of fish, such as trout. Here in Wisconsin we have four Fish Habitat Partnerships: the Driftless Area Restoration Effort, the Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, the Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership, and the Fishers & Farmers Partnership for the Upper Mississippi River Basin.

TU DARE is a Fish Habitat Partnership formed under NFHAP to address the loss and degradation of coldwater stream habitat in the Driftless Area. Other trout-related Fish Habitat Partnerships include the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture and the Western Native Trout Initiative.

The Fishers & Farmers Partnership addresses trout, as well as other stream fishes. In 2010 I volunteered to represent the Wisconsin DNR on the steering committee of Fishers & Farmers. I currently serve as co-chair of the partnership, along with Rod Ofte, who is a fourth-generation farmer, a Wisconsin Grass-fed Beef Cooperative general manager, and a Wallace Pasture Project consultant. Ofte owns a ranch in southwest Wisconsin where he practices and advocates for rotational grazing as a clean water solution for improving soil and strengthening rural economies.

The partnership is in large part held together by the service of our coordinator, Heidi Keuler, of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Created to address needs of farmers and fish

Fishers & Farmers was created to address the needs of both farmers and fishes across the Upper Mississippi River Basin. Agriculture is significant in shaping our landscape and our communities, and fish are important as both a natural resource and an indicator of the ecological health of the basin. Fishers

& Farmers is unique among the Fish Habitat Partnerships in that representatives of natural resource agencies and agricultural communities sit at the table as equals to work towards our mission of healthy farms, healthy streams and healthy fish.

Agriculture is important in our region. About two-thirds of land in the region is used for agriculture. Fishers & Farmers recognizes that sustaining both farms and fish requires finding common ground, and the partnership offers a way toward that goal. This is what drew me to the partnership. It was a chance to connect with farmers, to learn about their perspectives on land use and conservation, and to collaborate in achieving our goal of helping farms and fish thrive together.

Fishers & Farmers provides a number of services that help meet our goals of healthy farms, streams and fish in our region. We have a science team led by Alex Prentice of Missouri, which has provided project monitoring assistance and regional mapping tools to support conservation and project decision making.

Our communications efforts, led by Nancy North of Minnesota, include outreach through stakeholder engagement and public farm events, a new website at fishersandfarmers.org and the development of the Watershed Leaders Network.

We annually allocate NFHAP funding through a competitive process to support farmer-led projects. I encourage you explore the Fishers & Farmers website to learn more about the partnership, our funded projects, and to hear the stories of the many landowners and farmers who have led local efforts to lessen the impact of agriculture on soil, water and fish, while keeping farms viable.

Benefits to all water types

Fishers & Farmers projects have benefited waters ranging from warm rivers to cold streams, with some explicitly helping trout. Water storage systems and bioreactors were installed to reduce ravine erosion, sedimentation and nutrients entering Seven-Mile Creek in Minnesota, which supports a brown trout fishery. Also in Minnesota, water management drainage structures, strip-tilling, and cover crops were used to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff into Rice Creek, which supports a brook trout fishery.

Kickapoo River watershed

In Wisconsin, the Kickapoo River Watershed received project funding to establish a demonstration site for best farm-management practices, to host landowner discussions about the economic benefits of best practices, to restore 30 acres of tilled floodplain to permanent cover, and to conduct water-quality monitoring. We also anticipate funding a new Wisconsin project in

2017 that will further improve farming practices that will benefit trout.

A work in progress

Fishers & Farmers is a work in progress, and it has been exciting to see the partnership grow and reach out to agricultural landowners across the Upper Mississippi River

basin. The basin is big and the footprints of our projects are relatively small. But farmers and fishers are making connections, sharing conservation success stories, and helping to support farms that support healthy fisheries.



ROTATIONAL GRAZING HELPS FARMERS AND TROUT STREAMS

Farm tours like this one near a Driftless Area trout stream help teach participants about the benefits of rotational grazing.



Matthew Mitro is a fisheries research scientist with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Based in Madison, Matt has been working with the DNR on statewide fisheries issues since 2003. Matt's work focuses on trout in Wisconsin's inland streams, including stream habitat restoration, trout stocking and propagation issues, angling regulations, fish ageing, population modeling, parasites and environmental change. Matt previously worked as a population ecologist with the EPA, as a stock assessment biologist with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and did his doctoral work on rainbow trout in the Henrys Fork, Idaho. Matt graduated from Montana State University (PhD, MS), University of Vermont (MS), and Colgate University (BA). He is also the program committee co-chair for the Wild Trout Symposium XII.



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Donate to Wisconsin TU via Thrivent Lutheran Financial

If you are a TU member and have investments with Thrivent Lutheran Financial, you may have the ability to make charitable donations to groups of your choosing through Thrivent Financial's Thrivent Choice program. The Wisconsin Council of Trout Unlimited is now a listed entity within the

Thrivent Choice program.

If you are a Thrivent member and have the ability to make Thrivent Choice donations, we would be honored if you'd consider including the Wisconsin Council of TU within your charitable planning, and making a donation to our cause.

Word on the Women's Initiative

With Heidi Oberstadt, WITU Women's Initiative Chair

Events, activities and recruiting efforts seeing success

Hello, WITU members! I hope you have all had the chance to get out there this past winter and freeze from your nose to your toes. I've been out, breaking the ice off my guides, smiling all the while. This is a great time of year to discover any pinhole leaks in your waders!

Our women's initiative is growing, as we have ambassadors from across the state, and we're recruiting new women all the time. I need to specifically thank the Fly Fishing Film tour crew and Tim Landwehr from Tight Lines Fly Fishing, for allowing me a few minutes during intermission at the Green Bay show to share the stage with women and teenage girl members of our initiative, connect with the women in the audience, and sign up a few new interested women!

I'm happy to report that our third annual WITU beginner fly fishing clinic for women was a resounding success. The wonderful instructors from the Wisconsin

Women's Fly Fishing Clinics, affiliated with the Southern Wisconsin chapter, came up to Oshkosh February 4 and spent the day teaching our attendees everything from gear and etiquette to casting technique and a few fishing secrets.

Here are a few quotes from women who attended:

"Deepest gratitude for supporting women in the sport."

"Thank you for the wonderful opportunity."

"Thank you for changing women's lives!"

I am forever thankful for the support of our State Council, both in funding and in logistical terms, for helping us grow our community.

Please stay tuned to our website, wituwomen.org, as we are planning on putting together a few regional fishing days this summer, and I'll update the events page as we have more information.



COUNCIL HOSTED WOMEN'S FLY FISHING CLINIC IN OSHKOSH

Gerri Wagner gives casting advice to a student at the Women's Fly Fishing Clinic in Oshkosh in February.

The Oberstadts

Book Reviews by Duke Welter

Tying tips and Riff-Raff

Two local authors share tying advice and trout stories.

Before we undertake this review of two just-printed books from Wisconsin writers, let's start with a disclaimer: There's no way you'll get an objective view from me here. I know and like both these guys and admire all they've contributed to our enjoyment of the outdoor life in Wisconsin. Besides, you'll get a lot out of each book, in different ways. So there.

Bob's Fly Tying Tips & Techniques

Bob Haase is familiar to *Wisconsin Trout* readers for his wealth of fly-tying knowledge and techniques.

A member of Central Wisconsin TU, itself a hotbed of great tyers, he is one of the most dedicated teachers of fly-tying to kids that you'll ever meet. Each year he coordinates WITU's tying program for thousands of kids and explains how to fish flies with a casting bubble so they can catch a fish with a fly that they tied themselves.

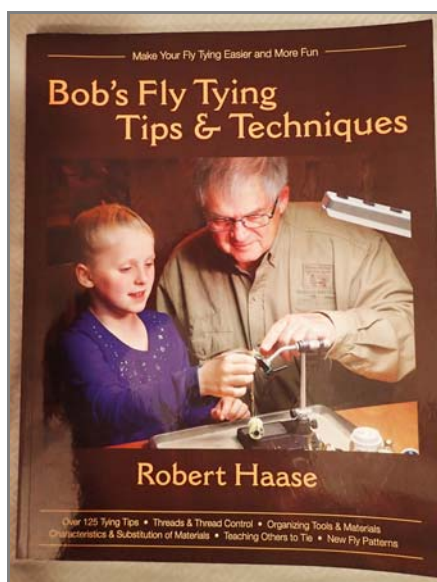
His well-presented book, "Bob's Fly Tying Tips & Techniques," is a collection of those tips, but it's more than that. His enthusiasm and commitment come through in the methods he suggests for putting together tying teaching packets for kids and adult classes.

He must also be a master scrounger among the bargain bins at craft shops and in the way he uses

castaway items for useful tying tools. Want to cut out some foam beetle bodies? Use a small hammer to partly flatten an empty pistol cartridge, and then cut bodies from foam sheets with a tap of the same hammer. Need a cheap brush for picking out dubbing? Attach some hook sticky-backed Velcro to a Pop-sicle stick and pick away.

Now, I've been tying for more than 30 years, picking up techniques here and there and lately watching a lot of YouTube tying videos for new knowledge. But from this book I learned lesson after lesson about tying: How to flatten and sharpen your threads for various purposes. How to design a tying bench and tying area. Tips for tying on location. He covers fly design, teaching adults and kids, and a unique "whip-hitch" knot. I'd bet you a beer you'll find techniques you haven't used before. Whether you are a new or experienced fly-tyer, it's worth the read.

"Bob's Fly-Tying Tips & Techniques;" Robert Haase, 2017, (Available via Amazon.com for \$25) 124 pages. It is also available directly from Bob for \$25 plus \$5 for shipping and handling. Send a check in the amount of \$30 to Robert Haase, W7949 Treptow Lane, Eldorado, WI 54932. Include the name and address you want the book sent to.



Trout Friends And Other Riff-Raff

Once upon a time, now 40 years ago, I came to appreciate the newspaper columns of a guy named Bill Stokes, first in Madison and Milwaukee, and then the Chicago Tribune. He could write features and columns with a jaunty lilt on just about any subject.

One of his subjects was trout fishing, especially with his friends in central Wisconsin's Sand County streams. He favored Springer Spaniels for his bird hunting dogs, the hands-down best hunting dogs anywhere, even with the mere modicum of training we both favored.

And we'd grown up a county apart in northwest Wisconsin, fishing some of the same streams at different times together, the Clam and Yellow rivers, and others. I don't think he ever got to my secret Washburn County stream, though.

Almost 20 years ago, Bill wrote a nice book of stories of his outdoor pursuits, especially trout fishing, and the characters with whom he did them. When he came up to Eau Claire on his months-long book tour, he signed one copy for me and called me "a reporter gone bad." I think he meant how I abandoned journalism for a law career. And I think he may have been right.

Anyway, this present book is a

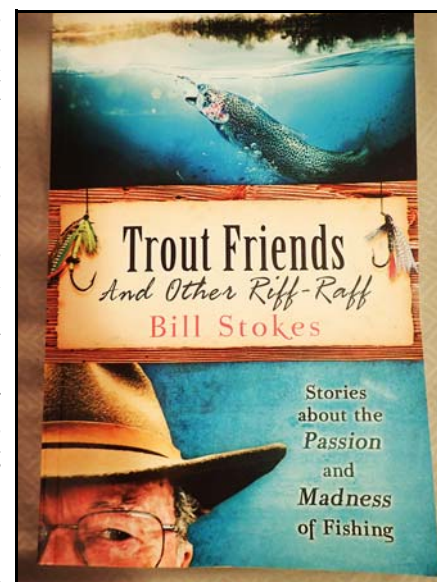
revamp of the earlier one, with an entertaining introductory essay drawn from the experience of a veteran angler who's looking at his obsession with trout fishing from the perspective of 20 more years of life.

He writes fondly of fishing, and bird hunting, with his friend John Lawton along Wedde Creek and the Mekan and White rivers in central Wisconsin, all the areas where I'd lost my first flies on skeeter-filled summer evenings.

As I read this book, I almost constantly found myself chuckling, nodding and commiserating. This book was huge fun to read while sitting by a warm fire. Stokes' characters don't just laugh, they "laugh that

laugh, that booming, whopping, head-throw-back, eyes closed, mouth open, tongue-glistening laugh that filled a room or a car and bounces against your ears like a drum beat...laughing with such abandon that you knew that he wasn't thinking about anything, just laughing." One who can write like that consistently makes me smile. And laugh out loud.

"Trout Friends and Other Riff-Raff: Stories about the Passion and Madness of Fishing", Bill Stokes, Stokes Creative, Madison WI, 2017, 218 pages, (Available via Amazon.com for \$9.99). Visit his Amazon Author Page and see all his books at <http://amzn.to/2f9TZRB>.



VACANT LAND FOR SALE BY OWNER near Avalanche, WI. Short walk down a small creek that runs from the spring on this land to the West Fork of the Kickapoo River. Call, text or email Ruth at 608-606-2866 or info@LoganMillLodge.com

Volunteer Leader Profile

Making a difference is the Mike San Dretto way

By Bob Haase

When we wake up in the morning we are all faced with a number of different choices and decisions that we will need to make during the day. The choices we make can have an impact on our lives. It can also have an impact on those around us, especially future generations. The decisions we make can also affect our environment and outdoor sports such as fishing.

Mike San Dretto is the past president of the Central Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited. When Mike began his two-year term as president, we knew that the chapter leadership was in good hands. We knew this because of Mike's previous involvement in chapter activities. We knew that he had good leadership and decision-making skills and worked well with others.

Mike could have turned down the office of vice president and then president, but I think he wanted to try to make a difference. There are members in all organizations that can come up with a number of reasons why they can't help. When Mike was faced with the decision of taking on leadership roles in CW-TU, we are glad he decided to say "yes." I think the fish are even happier with his decision because they benefitted from the stream restoration work that was accomplished during his term.

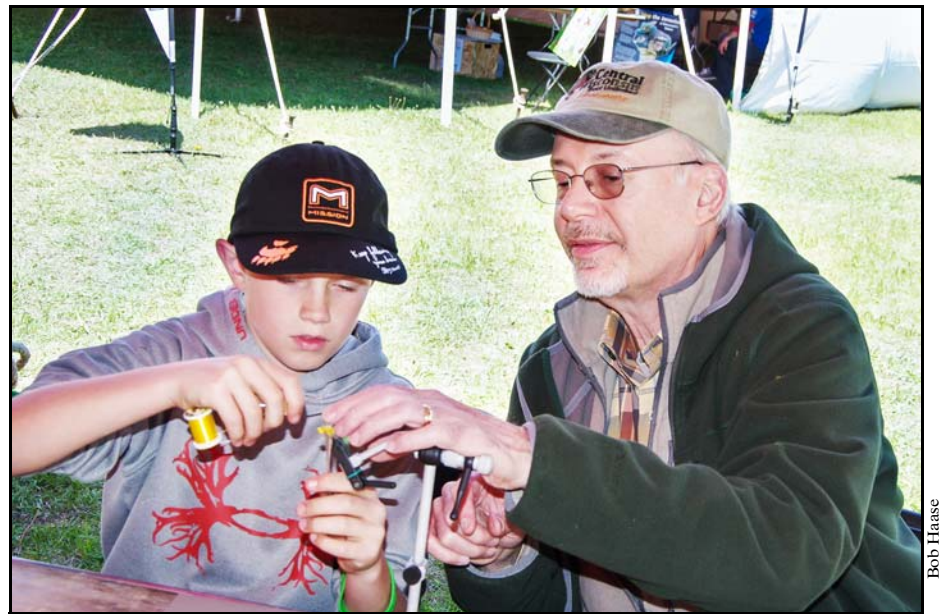
A couple years ago CWTU was

asked if they wanted to participate in the first Great Outdoors Festival in Oshkosh. Thinking it would be good exposure for the chapter and a way of generating new members, Mike presented the idea at the next meeting. He offered to organize the event if there was chapter support. He was able to solicit the support needed from the members and made it a successful event.

Mike loves to tie flies and is one of the members who always seems to find time to help when we have youth tying programs. He has helped at the Milwaukee Sentinel Sport Show, the Outdoor Heritage Expo in Poynette and other events.

At this year's State Council Banquet, the Central Wisconsin chapter of TU was recognized for having the most volunteer hours during 2016. Mike's leadership and the hard work of all the members who donated their time helped make this possible. When asked, they said "yes" and helped make a difference.

It is not all work and no play for Mike. He is a fun person to fish with. I had the opportunity to travel and fish with him at the Sowbug tying event in Arkansas last year, and we had a great time. I like fishing with people who are flexible and seem to have fun, even when the fish are not biting. Mike will be part of our foursome on this year's western fishing trip to Wyoming and Montana. I can't wait.



MIKE ALWAYS FINDS TIME TO HELP WITH YOUTH

Mike San Dretto shows a youngster how to tie his first fly at last year's Outdoor Heritage Education Expo in Poynette

It's time to add a little "bling" to your vehicle, while helping TU

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Volunteer Leader Profile

A committed leader at all levels

Tom Lager is one of the most committed leaders for Central Wisconsin TU and WITU.

By Rich Erickson and Jim Jenkin

The Fox Valley TU chapter has been very fortunate to have many energetic and highly committed individuals lead the chapter over the years. FVTU's current president, Tom Lager, exemplifies those qualities to the highest degree.

Tom grew up in the town of Baudette on the Rainy River in northern Minnesota. The outdoor environment of northern Minnesota provided the background for what has been Tom's love of nature and the environment both in his working career and in his recreational activities.

Tom's education includes a Bachelor's degree from Bemidji State University and an MS in Aquatic Ecology from St. Cloud State University. He worked for the Minnesota DNR and worked on the Copper/Nickel Project in the Ely area of northeast Minnesota.

Tom's interests in aquatic ecology lead him to the Fox Valley area as a Research Fellow with the Institute of Paper Chemistry (IPC) in Appleton. He did environmental monitoring for the pulp and paper industry to determine what effect those industries had on the water quality of the rivers where those industries were located. Tom said that when he started in that position that is when the "Bug Guy" was born.

Tom left the IPC and joined Kimberly Clark as an entry level technician. He worked there for 30 years and ended his career there as a research/technology leader.

Those who read the Fox Valley TU chapter newsletter, "Trout Talk," are familiar with the entomology lessons of Tom and his "Let's Talk Bugs" articles. Tom has shared many of his experiences of lifting rocks and turning over water-

logged branches that are in the stream beds of central Wisconsin to find out what is living down there.

Tom does much more than his "bug work" for Trout Unlimited and the environment of the streams and waterways in central Wisconsin. Tom has been highly involved with the stream work and the habitat work of Fox Valley TU for more than 25 years. Tom has been a leader and role model for all of the members of Fox Valley TU because he has served in many different capacities including board member, treasurer, vice-president, and he is currently completing his second term as president. Tom has also represented the chapter at various community events and has used his wise and tying materials to help young people tie their first fly.

The last four years Tom has been responsible for the management of the bucket raffle and silent auction portions of Fox Valley TU's very successful Cabin Fever Day. He has assembled an excellent assortment of fishing and non-fishing items for those who have attended the event. This is reflected in the funds that the raffles and auctions have raised to support the chapter's projects.

Tom has also been very active at the state level by serving as Council secretary and vice chair of the Central Region.

Tom has also been an organizer and promoter of the newest initiative for TU, the TU CARES project. TU CARES is "Central Area Restoration Effort for Sustainability." He has provided the leadership to move the project forward and has been able to gather the support of four TU chapters in Central Wisconsin: Fox Valley, CWTU, Shaw-Paca and Hornberg, as well as the DNR fish management crew from Wild Rose. The project is based on

the TU DARE project and the initial work will focus on the West Branch of the White River.

Tom started brainstorming sessions for the TU CARES project in January of 2016 with intentions to use Bob Hunt's ideas for maintaining and improving the stream work that was completed 40 to 50 years ago by TU and the DNR.

He held monthly meetings throughout 2016. In January 2017 the plan was approved and implementation will begin this year. Tom says the reason the group chose the West Branch of the White River is because most of the adjacent land is currently owned by the State of Wisconsin, and all three species of trout inhabit those waters.

Tom is now retired from Kimberly Clark, which allows much more time for him and his wife Karin to travel and visit with his sons, Will, Mike and Jim, and their families in Minneapolis, Neenah and Madison. Tom's retirement has also presented other opportunities for him to pursue his love of the outdoors. He is able to spend more time exploring new fishing environs, promoting and advocating for the environment and teaching about aquatics and bug life.

The Fox Valley TU chapter and WITU are fortunate to have Tom, a man of integrity and drive, involved with these organizations.



A DEVOTED VOLUNTEER, TOM LAGER ALSO HAPPENS TO ENJOY FISHING He's a trout expert, bug expert, local and state TU leader and so much more. He's also a skilled drift boat "captain," as he shows here on the Missouri River, near Craig, Montana.

Invasive Species: Purple Loosestrife

Purple loosestrife is abundant, and bad news for ecosystems.

What is it?

Purple loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is a wetland plant, growing in freshwater wet meadows, marshes, river and stream banks, pond edges, reservoirs, and ditches. It prefers moist soils but can tolerate a wide range of conditions. It can withstand shallow flooding, and tolerates up to 50 percent shade. It flowers from July until September or October. A mature plant produces about 2,700,000 seeds a year.

Where is it?

Purple loosestrife has been reported in all 72 counties in Wisconsin. It has also been reported in all of the states that border Wisconsin – Minnesota, Iowa, Illinois and Michigan (Upper Peninsula).

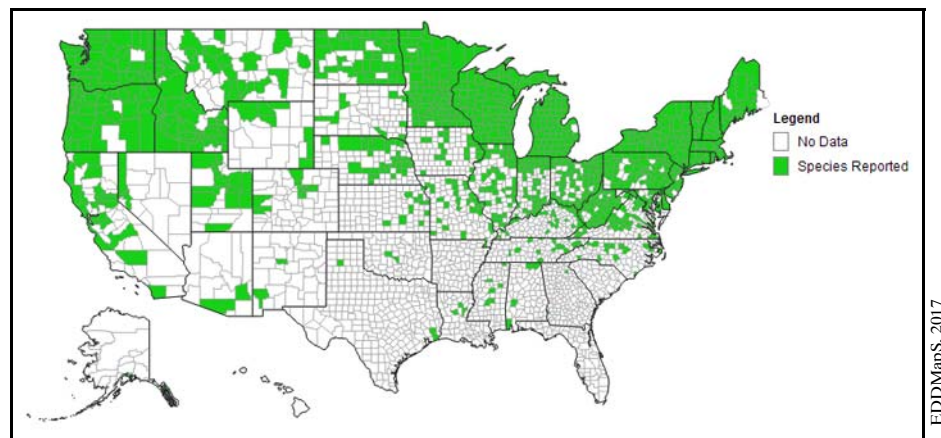
How does it spread?

Purple loosestrife was likely brought to North America in the 1800s both intentionally, as an ornamental plant, and unintentionally, by ships dumping ballast or European raw sheep wool that contained

seeds. Humans have continued to transport it throughout the U.S. as a landscaping plant and as a food source for bees due to its nectar-producing capabilities. Purple loosestrife spreads naturally through either vegetative spread or through seed dispersal. Additionally, animals and humans can be a vector of transport when seeds stuck in mud are attached to bodies, equipment or vehicles.

Why do we care?

Purple loosestrife can form monotypic stands that outcompete native wetland plants and can change the soil and water chemistry of the ecosystem. It can have a negative impact on tadpoles and birds, such as black terns, least bitterns, pied-billed grebes and marsh wrens. Additionally, other marsh birds that prefer to nest in native marsh grasses are negatively impacted by purple loosestrife stands since the native grasses, sedges and flowering plants supply a higher quality of cover, food or nesting sites.



PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE DISTRIBUTION MAP

The dark areas are where purple loosestrife has been identified.

What can we do?

Removal by cutting and pulling before flowering begins and seeds are developed is recommended for small populations only. Herbicides, such as Rodeo or Roundup may be used. The best technique is to cut the purple loosestrife stems at knee level and then to apply the herbicide directly onto the stump of the cut stem. Biocontrol is recommended for heavy infestations. The rear-

ing and release of *Galerucella* beetles, used for biocontrol, can be done by volunteers. Wisconsin's Purple Loosestrife Biocontrol is a long-standing, successful beetle-raising program.

This information was kindly provided by the River Alliance of Wisconsin. We thank the Alliance for their efforts to educate us about invasive species.

Council bestows awards at banquet

The Wisconsin State Council of Trout Unlimited honored many individuals, one chapter and one corporate supporter at the annual banquet in Oshkosh on February 6. The council has been presenting awards since 1984. Thanks go out to Bill Heart for overseeing the banquet awards committee and for assembling and editing the following award narratives. Other award committee members include Henry Koltz, Mike Kuhr and Todd Franklin.

Thank you to the Oberstadts for taking photos of award winners, the meeting, the banquet, the women's events and more.



LINN BECK RECEIVES GOLD TROUT AWARD FROM MIKE KUHR

Gold Trout Award: Linn Beck

For years Linn Beck has been a Trout Unlimited stalwart. Linn has previously served as workday chair, vice president and president of the Central Wisconsin Chapter. More recently, Linn has also served as the Wisconsin State Council's Central Wisconsin regional vice president, vice chair, and is the current Wisconsin Council chair.

Several of Linn's achievements deserve special attention, however. As most know, concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) are a significant issue which confronts Wisconsin's ground and surface water resources. Under Linn's leadership, the Wisconsin Council, after significant debate, and numerous revisions, accepted and approved its first CAFO position statement.

Linn was also directly responsible for establishing and leading the Wisconsin Council's annual Youth Fishing Camp. In 2014, Linn and others realized that the Wisconsin Council was among a minority of TU councils without a yearly youth camp. Linn led a band of dedicated volunteers who stepped up and created a camp, which has now been held for the past three years outside of Waupaca.

Most recently, in his role as State Council chair, Linn led reorganization of Wisconsin TU's regions. This reorganization has resulted in a common-sense grouping of chapters, which has led to greater regional cooperation. This cooperation is most obvious in the northeast and central regions, but has recently aided conducting regional TU issue advocacy training as well.

Finally, Linn has recently led the Wisconsin Council's strategic planning process. Linn himself drafted the currently-circulating Wisconsin Council Strategic Plan, and will see it brought to final form and passed by the executive committee in the next six months.



TOM LAGER EARNS GOLD NET AWARD

Tom's incredible work at all levels of TU earned him the Gold Net Award.

Gold Net Award: Tom Lager

The people who read the Fox Valley TU chapter newsletter, Trout Talk, are familiar with the entomology lessons of Tom Lager and his "Let's Talk Bugs" articles. Tom has shared many of his experiences of lifting rocks and turning over water-logged branches that are in the stream beds of central Wisconsin to find out what is living down there.

Tom does much more than his "bug work" for Trout Unlimited and the environment of the streams and waterways in central Wisconsin. Tom has been highly involved with the stream work and the habitat work of the Fox Valley Chapter for more than 25 years. Tom has been a leader and role model for all of the members of his chapter. He has served in many different capacities including: member of the chapter board of directors, chapter treasurer, chapter vice-president, and he is currently completing his second term as chapter president. Tom has also represented the chapter at various community events and has used his vise and tying materials to help young people tie their first flies.

Tom has also been very active at the state level by serving the State Council in a number of capacities including secretary of the council and the vice chair of the Central Region.

Tom has also been an organizer and promoter of the newest initiative for TU in the State of Wisconsin, which is the TU CARES project. He has provided the leadership to move the project forward and has been able to gather the support of four TU chapters in central Wisconsin and the DNR fish management crew from Wild Rose. The project is based on the TU DARE project and the initial work will focus on the West Branch of the White River.

Tom's thoughtfulness and quiet leadership style have certainly earned him the Gold Net Award.

Joan & Lee Wulff Award for Outstanding Conservation Leadership: Gene Van Dyck

Gene retired from the Fisheries Management Program of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in June, 2016 after serving the people and fisheries resources of Wisconsin for 48 years. Gene began his career in April of 1968 stationed in Boscobel with what was then known as the Wisconsin Conservation Department. He moved over to the Dodgeville area office for the remainder of his career, spending all 48 years managing fisheries within the southwestern Wisconsin Driftless Area.

Gene managed more than 680 miles of classified trout water within his management area with an enthusiasm that was unequalled. He surveyed fish populations on the streams and could recite the results of that year's population and compare it to previous year's results without coming up for breath. Gene used the survey results and desires of anglers to conduct what seemed like an endless number of habitat improvement projects to make the fish populations under his supervision even better.

Gene was instrumental in helping acquire miles of public fishing easements and involved with trout habitat projects on 44 streams averaging close to three-quarters of a mile per year for his career. As a pioneer for managing trout populations using stream-specific regulations, Gene helped develop our modern trout regulation structure. In 1972 Gene was a founding member of what is now known today as the Trout Species Team for the State of Wisconsin. Gene's dedication to Wisconsin's coldwater resource has helped it evolve into the great resource it is today.

Outside of fisheries work, Gene can be found hunting with man's best friend for upland game and waterfowl or enjoying a day of angling chasing one of several southern Wisconsin fish species. Gene is a beloved husband, father to his three children, and respected girl's softball coach.



JOAN AND LEE WULFF AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP WAS PRESENTED TO GENE VAN DYCK

Gene was instrumental in helping acquire miles of public fishing easements and involved with trout habitat projects on 44 streams averaging close to three-quarters of a mile per year for his career. As a pioneer for managing trout populations using stream-specific regulations, Gene helped develop our modern trout regulation structure.



LONG-TIME TU SUPPORTER DAMIAN WILMOT/FLY BY NIGHT GUIDE SERVICE RECEIVED THE BUSINESS SPONSOR AWARD

Business Sponsor Award: Fly By Night Guide Service

Damian Wilmot grew up in Superior, Wisconsin and began fishing the Bois Brule River at an early age. After honing his skills, he realized that he could possibly make a living sharing his knowledge of the Brule River and its varied fishery. In 1989 Damian started Fly By Night Guide Service and has been offering guide trips primarily on the Brule River ever since. Damian offers upper river brook trout trips in his restored 1911 Joe Lucius Canoe, to lower river spring and fall steelhead runs. Damian's other passion is his German shorthair pointers and offers guided hunts for woodcock and grouse during the fall.

Damian has been very generous to Trout Unlimited. He has been a member of the Wild Rivers chapter since the turn of the century and has graciously donated a trip for the Wild Rivers Fishing Expo pretty much every year. He has also donated guide trips to be auctioned off at the State Council Banquet for about 15 years, and to many other chapters throughout the state. He has also been a speaker at a number of chapter events.

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited is proud to present the 2017 Business Sponsor Award to Fly By Night Guide Service and Damian Wilmot.



FISHERIES BIOLOGIST MARTY ENGEL RECEIVED THE ROBERT HUNT RESOURCE PROFESSIONAL AWARD

Robert Hunt Resource Professional Award: Marty Engel

Marty Engel is a highly professional fisheries biologist who has worked closely with the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited since 1988. His passion for rivers and wild trout is outstanding. He retired from the DNR on January 3, 2017.

Few people have done as much trout stream monitoring as Marty. He's done hundreds of surveys at 42 trend sites that are monitored annually in this area. He and his crew of technicians did rotation monitoring where every named stream was surveyed at least twice every 8 to 10 years. He also did many pre- and post-project monitoring surveys.

In 1999 Marty, retired DNR fisheries biologist Jim Holzer and Duke Welter of TU worked to develop a trout habitat crew with heavy equipment and operators. Duke Welter pushed to raise the Trout Stamp to \$10 and use those funds for stream habitat work. With increased Trout Stamp funding, they could then do two to three projects per year.

Marty said one of the most satisfying parts of his job was getting the trout stream crew going on multiple projects each year. He was then able to focus more on survey work and real estate acquisition.

When asked about how trout fisheries management could be improved, Marty said that fisheries managers have only so many tools. Educational efforts really pay off in the long run. Habitat improvement projects are great because so many people buy into them and trout populations respond well. Marty said, "I really appreciate TU. I always looked forward to working with them. They are a talented, professional organization and we have accomplished a lot together."



ON BEHALF OF THE DNR'S BEN HUESSNER, SEWTU'S BOYD ROESSLER ACCEPTED BEN'S ROBERT HUNT RESOURCE PROFESSIONAL AWARD.

Robert Hunt Resource Professional Award: Ben Heussner

Ben is a fisheries biologist with the Department of Natural Resources, working out of the Waukesha Field Office.

Each year Ben works closely with the SEWTU habitat committee while planning several work days. In a region that does not have many coldwater streams, Ben understands how valuable these resources are, and routinely helps SEWTU improve habitat at Rosenow Creek, Scuppernong Springs, Paradise Springs and the Mukwonago River. These projects include activities such as bank stabilization using bio-logs, re-meandering stream channels and removing elodea and brush from streams.

For the past three years Ben has co-planned SEWTU's Family Day. One of the most popular parts of the family day is the electro-fishing demonstration conducted by Ben and his crew. It is wonderful to see the enthusiasm displayed by children as they closely observe and handle trout.

Ben has been instrumental in setting up and maintaining Trout In the Classroom programs. He has assisted teachers with the acquisition of required permits and licenses, inspected tanks, delivered trout fry to schools, arranged the release of trout that were raised in schools, and helped troubleshoot any issues involved with raising the fish. Ben has also visited classrooms to speak about careers in fisheries, trout biology and coldwater resources and he has provided teachers with educational materials.

Finally, Ben assists SEWTU and other groups that organize and participate in "kids' fishing clinics" by arranging loans of rods and other materials for children to use.

His efforts and commitment make SEWTU's workdays and educational/outreach programs successful and popular. These events would not be nearly as effective without Ben's contributions.



BOB TRACZYK EARNED THE MOST UNSUNG VALUABLE TROUTER AWARD

Most Unsung Valuable Trout Award: Bob Traczyk

Every chapter has a member who seems to be present and active in so many things that it is difficult to isolate the one main thing they do that makes the chapter great, other than to simply be a member of the chapter.

For Wild Rivers, that member is Bob Traczyk. Bob is the Wild Rivers Chapter's secretary. He handles all membership communications and social media for the chapter. He coordinates the publication of the monthly newsletter. Bob has participated in every habitat project or fish population survey that the chapter has helped support in the last year. Bob is always one of a few people providing help at tying and kids fishing day events. Bob is hesitant to take credit for the many things he does for the Wild Rivers Chapter, and always directs the credit to the entire chapter.

In 2016 the Wild Rivers Chapter committed to develop and implement a strategic plan that would declare our mission, and build a vision, values and goals that would best allow his chapter to be successful in the fulfillment of its mission. Bob chaired the strategic plan committee and coordinated with facilitator Allison Werner of the River Alliance of Wisconsin, to ensure that the finished product was of phenomenal quality.

Although he doesn't like to take credit for all the things he is doing for his chapter, the chapter is stronger because of Bob's contributions. Bob truly stands out as that unique and wonderful kind of member who simply does what is needed when it is needed to be done. The Wild Rivers Chapter is greatly indebted to him for his contributions to the chapter, and to Trout Unlimited.



KIAP'S GREG DIETL RECEIVED CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Certificate of Appreciation: Greg Dietsl

Greg Dietsl has provided the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited with leadership through his volunteer efforts for more than a decade. After getting acquainted with the chapter through regular attendance at chapter meetings and by participating in chapter stream improvement activities, Greg stepped up to become chapter president in 2006. He served three consecutive one-year terms as president. Under his leadership, chapter membership increased and meeting attendance grew.

While the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter has always prided itself for its involvement in stream improvement projects, the scope and scale of those projects grew remarkably under Greg's leadership. These larger projects required funding at a level that the chapter had not approached previously, but Greg sought grant resources and recruited within the chapter to find individuals with the skills and experience to obtain those grants. This continues to be one of the chapter's fortes.

He also further developed the chapter's relationship with the DNR, other TU chapters, private enterprises, private landowners and area land trusts. The Pine Creek Restoration Project is perhaps the most prominent example of the results of that effort, but chapter projects on the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River and the Eau Galle River were also notable successes.

Greg championed volunteerism in his time as president and encouraged chapter members to bring forth their ideas for making Kiap-TU-Wish a more effective force in coldwater conservation.

After his last term as president, Greg continued to serve the chapter on its board of directors and continues to this day to serve on the chapter's Holiday Conservation Banquet committee and as an active stream improvement work day volunteer.



JIM ERICKSON RECEIVED A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

Certificate of Appreciation: Jim Erickson

Although he's a fairly new board member, Jim has provided yeoman's service to the Clear Waters Chapter. From the time he first arrived at a chapter meeting, he has added all kinds of needed energy to this chapter. Jim has had years of organizational experience and he has jumped in to help in almost every part of our chapter.

He organizes and runs our annual fundraising banquet; he is our email, Facebook, and (soon-to-be) website guru; Jim has taken the lead in finding and communicating with presenters for our chapter meetings; and he is instrumental in formulating future chapter fundraising and mission planning. Additionally, he is active at, and instrumental in, stream work days and outings. Our chapter profits greatly by his expertise and efforts.

Jim is the Executive Director of the non-profit Safety Advocates For Tent & Special Events and we have no idea how Jim finds additional time to do all this work for the chapter and go fishing, but Jim does find time for the prime Wisconsin trout fishing in the spring and fall. He really gets serious during the hot summer months when it is time to get out his kayak and fish for smallmouth on most of the warm water rivers within a hundred miles of Eau Claire.

Jim is one of those special tireless TU members that a chapter is lucky to have come along once in a while, and we sure appreciate everything Jim does for the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter.



RETIRED DNR WARDEN DAVE ZEUG RECEIVED A CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION FOR HIS EFFORTS ON CRYSTAL BROOK

Certificate of Appreciation: Dave Zeug

The Public Trust Doctrine, part of our state's constitution and laws, recognizes that the waters of our state belong to the people. However, across Wisconsin, access to many of our trout streams is limited by long-time private owners, some of whom use various means to keep anglers out.

One person who has recently challenged that situation is retired DNR warden Dave Zeug of Shell Lake. For almost a century, access to Crystal Brook, a Class I brook trout stream near Spooner, has been limited by the Cargill Trust, an arm of the Cargill family based in the Twin Cities. Caretakers would confront anglers who portaged canoes over two small dams impounding part of the creek, suggesting that they had no right to fish those waters.

For nearly 100 years, the trust has held a private fish hatchery license issued first by the Wisconsin Conservation Department and later renewed by the DNR. The trust used it as an excuse to limit angler access, even though it doesn't raise any fish and the purpose of the permit is for "private, personal fishing".

Dave Zeug researched the history of the permit, studied the underlying law, and challenged the permit. The upshot? DNR clarified the permit and required placement of a sign showing recreationists just where fishing will be allowed from now on. It isn't perfect, but it's a great improvement, and reminds us that, as the Wisconsin Supreme Court stated in 1915, "The wisdom of this policy ... carefully preserved to the people the full and free use of public waters cannot be questioned... [and] they should be free to all for recreation, including hunting and fishing."

Are you getting emails from TU?

Did you receive an email recently announcing the State Council upcoming banquet in Oshkosh?

Did you receive any email announcements from your chapter this past year regarding work days, banquets and other important chapter events?

Did you receive any email announcements recently from TU National regarding important environmental issues affecting TU members?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, then you are truly missing out on much of the activity of TU.

TU National manages the mailing list for Wisconsin TU and the chapters, so if you want to receive emails, you need to make sure that TU National has your current email address.

Go to tu.org and log in, then go to email preferences and make sure they have your current email and mailing address. If you have questions about this process call 1-800-834-2419.



CWTU's WAYNE PARMLEY RECEIVED THE TOMORROW'S ANGLER AWARD FOR HIS EFFORTS WITH THE YOUTH CAMP

Tomorrow's Angler Award: Wayne Parmley

Wayne Parmley has been active in the Central Wisconsin Chapter, serving on its board of directors, and helping with a variety of programs and activities.

Wayne has a background in graphic communications and he has helped design and construct displays and printed materials to help improve communications both internally and externally. His leadership and involvement in chapter activities has helped the chapter meet our mission and plan for the future.

At the state level, Wayne volunteered to co-chair the third annual Wisconsin TU Youth Fishing Camp. He took what worked best for the last two years and combined it with some new ideas to make the camp even better. Wayne would be the first to say that it is volunteers who make the camp work so well, but his leadership skills and ability to interact with others brings out the best in everyone, especially the youth participants. The importance of his planning for the "what if's" made the 2016 camp one of the best camps ever, in spite of weather problems and last-minute changes in accommodations.

Wayne has looked at the camp evaluations, and talked with the volunteers and participants of last year's camp and is working hard to make this year's camp one of the best in the nation.

When you see the smiles on the faces of the participants and the smiles on the faces of the parents during the wrap-up and presentation of completion certificates, you know how special this camp is.

His involvement in the youth camp and other youth activities has and will continue to leave positive memories for participants and volunteers as well.



DALE LANGE ACCEPTS THE MARINETTE COUNTY CHAPTER'S SILVER TROUT AWARD FOR CHAPTER MERIT

Silver Trout Award for Chapter Merit: Marinette County Chapter

The Marinette County Chapter of Trout Unlimited is this year's recipient of the Silver Trout Award for Chapter Merit. The chapter achieved this status primarily through fundraising, engaging the public, conservation efforts and persistence. For more than three decades the chapter has focused on its annual banquet to fund various projects in northeastern Wisconsin. Since 1983 the Marinette County Chapter has raised \$340,000 for Trout Unlimited. Each year the Marinette County Chapter holds Kids Fishing Days in three area communities, a Learn to Trout Fish program, taught local Boy Scouts how to tie flies and spinners, and held information and casting booths at local outdoors events. Chapter members have put programs on for children at a local library about trout and their environment. Valuing the importance of various conservation programs, they have sponsored children to attend the Sand Lake Conservation Camp in Marinette County and the WITU Youth Fishing Camp.

Trout Unlimited memberships were purchased for several local libraries so that people who may not have heard about Trout Unlimited can learn about TU through the Trout magazine and the *Wisconsin Trout* newspaper.

Recognizing the importance of working in partnerships, Marinette County TU worked with other TU chapters and state, local and federal agencies on various habitat projects in northeast Wisconsin.

Even though Marinette is a small chapter, they have never wavered in their determination to protect our coldwater resources. The chapter knows the importance that youth in our communities play in protecting our environment and they are already looking for new ways to engage more children in Trout Unlimited's mission.

DNR Spring Hearings and Wisconsin Conservation Congress County Meetings are at 7 p.m. on Monday, April 10, 2017

Adams County: Adams County Courthouse, County Board Room, 400 Main Street, Friendship, WI 53934
Ashland County: Ashland High School, Auditorium, 1900 Beaser Avenue, Ashland, WI 54806
Barron County: Barron County Auditorium, 335 E. Monroe Street, Barron, WI 54812
Bayfield County: Bayfield County Courthouse, Upstairs Board Room, 117 E. 5th Street, Washburn, WI 54891
Brown County: Northeast Wis. Tech. College, Executive Dining Hall, 2740 W Mason Street, Green Bay, WI 54307
Buffalo County: Alma High School, S1618 State Road 35, Alma, WI 54610
Burnett County: Burnett County Government Center, Room 165, 7410 County Highway K, Siren, WI 54872
Calumet County: Calumet County Courthouse, Room B025, 206 Court Street, Chilton, WI 53014
Chippewa County: Chippewa Falls Middle School, Auditorium, 750 Tropicana Blvd, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
Clark County: Greenwood High School, Cafeteria, 306 W Central Avenue, Greenwood, WI 54437
Columbia County: Wayne Bartels Middle School, Gymnasium, 2505 New Pinery Road, Portage, WI 53901
Crawford County: Prairie du Chien High School, Auditorium, 800 E Crawford Street, Prairie du Chien, WI 53821
Dane County: Monona Grove High School, Schwan Fine Arts Center, 4400 Monona Drive, Monona, WI 53716
Dodge County: Horicon International Education Center, N7725 State Highway 28, Horicon, WI 53032
Door County: Sturgeon Bay High School, Commons, 1230 Michigan Street, Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
Douglas County: Northwestern High School, 4751 County Road F, Maple, WI 54854
Dunn County: Dunn County Fish and Game Club, 1600 Pine Avenue, Menomonie, WI 54751
Eau Claire County: CVTC Business Ed Center, Casper Room 103, 620 W Clairemont Ave., Eau Claire, WI 54701
Florence County: Florence Natural Resources Center, 5631 Forestry Drive, Florence, WI 54121
Fond du Lac County: Theisen Middle School, Auditorium, 525 E Pioneer Road, Fond du Lac, WI 54935
Forest County: Crandon High School, 9750 U.S. Hwy 8, Crandon, WI 54520
Grant County: Lancaster High School, Hillary Auditorium, 806 E Elm Street, Lancaster, WI 53813
Green County: Monroe Middle School, Enter via Northside Door, 1510 13th Street, Monroe, WI 53566
Green Lake County: Green Lake High School, Multi-purpose Room, 612 Mill Street, Green Lake, WI 54941
Iowa County: Dodgeville Middle School, 951 W Chapel

Street, Dodgeville, WI 53533
Iron County: Mercer Community Center, 2648 W Margaret Street, Mercer, WI 54547
Jackson County: Black River Falls Middle School, LG1 Room, 1202 Pierce Street, Black River Falls, WI 54615
Jefferson County: Jefferson County Fair Park, Activity Center, 503 N Jackson Avenue, Jefferson, WI 53549
Juneau County: Olson Middle School, Auditorium, 508 Grayside Avenue, Mauston, WI 53948
Kenosha County: Bristol School District #1, East Gymnasium, 20121 83rd Street, Bristol, WI 53104
Kewaunee County: Kewaunee High School, 911 3rd Street, Kewaunee, WI 54216
La Crosse County: Onalaska High School, Performing Arts Center, 700 Hilltopper Place, Onalaska, WI 54650
Lafayette County: Darlington Elem. School, Large Group Room, 11630 Center Hill Road, Darlington, WI 53530
Langlade County: Antigo High School, Volm Theatre, 1900 Tenth Avenue, Antigo, WI 54409
Lincoln County: Merrill High School, Auditorium, 1201 N Sales Street, Merrill, WI 54452
Manitowoc County: UW Manitowoc, 705 Viebahn Street, Manitowoc, WI 54220
Marathon County: DC Everest Middle School, Auditorium, 9302 Schofield Avenue, Weston, WI 54476
Marinette County: Wausaukee High School, Auditorium, N11941 Highway 141, Wausaukee, WI 54177
Marquette County: Montello High School, Community Room, 222 Forest Lane, Montello, WI 53949
Menominee County: Menominee County Courthouse, W3269 Courthouse Lane, Keshena, WI 54135
Milwaukee County: West Allis Central High, 8516 W. Lincoln Avenue, West Allis, WI 53227
Monroe County: Tomah High School, Cafeteria, 901 Lincoln Avenue, Tomah, WI 54660
Oconto County: Suring High School, Cafeteria, 411 E Algoma Street, Suring, WI 54174
Oneida County: James Williams Middle School, 915 Acaia Lane, Rhinelander, WI 54501
Outagamie County: Appleton North High School, Auditorium, 5000 North Ballard Road, Appleton, WI 54913
Ozaukee County: Webster Transitional School, Commons, W75 N624 Wauwatosa Road, Cedarburg, WI 53012
Pepin County: Pepin County Government Center, Room 101, 740 7th Avenue West, Durand, WI 54736
Pierce County: Ellsworth High School, Cafeteria, 323 Hillcrest Street, Ellsworth, WI 54011
Polk County: Unity High School, Auditorium, 1908 State Hwy 46, Balsam Lake, WI 54810

Portage County: Ben Franklin Junior High, Auditorium Rm. 1208, 2000 Polk Street, Stevens Point, WI 54481
Price County: Price County Courthouse, County Board Room, 126 Cherry Street, Phillips, WI 54555
Racine County: Union Grove High School, Auditorium, 3433 S Colony Avenue, Union Grove, WI 53182
Richland County: Richland County Courthouse, 181 W Seminary Street, Richland Center, WI 53581
Rock County: Ramada Inn, 3900 Milton Avenue, Janesville, WI 53546
Rusk County: Ladysmith High School, Auditorium, 1700 Edgewood Avenue East, Ladysmith, WI 54848
Saint Croix County: Saint Croix Central High School, Commons, 1751 Broadway Street, Hammond, WI 54015
Sauk County: UW Baraboo - Sauk County, Giese Lecture Hall A4, 1006 Connie Road, Baraboo, WI 53913
Sawyer County: Hayward High School, Auditorium, 10320N Greenwood Lane, Hayward, WI 54843
Shawano County: Shawano Middle School, Room LG1, 1050 S Union Street, Shawano, WI 54166
Sheboygan County: Plymouth High School, Auditorium, 125 Highland Avenue, Plymouth, WI 53073
Taylor County: Taylor County Fairgrounds, Multipurpose Building, Hwy 64/Hwy 13, Medford, WI 54451
Trempealeau County: Arcadia High School, Room 219, 756 Raider Drive, Arcadia, WI 54612
Vernon County: Viroqua High School, Commons, 100 Blackhawk Drive, Viroqua, WI 54665
Vilas County: Saint Germain Elementary School, 8234 Hwy 70 West, Saint Germain, WI 54558
Walworth County: Delavan-Darien High School, Large Meeting Room, 150 Cummings Street, Delavan, WI 53115
Washburn County: Spooner High School, Auditorium, 801 County Highway A, Spooner, WI 54801
Washington County: Washington County Fair Park, 3000 Pleasant Valley Road, West Bend, WI 53095
Waukesha County: Waukesha Co. Tech. College, Richard Anderson Center, 800 Main Street, Pewaukee, WI 53072
Waupaca County: Waupaca High School, Auditorium, E2325 King Road, Waupaca, WI 54981
Waushara County: Waushara County Courthouse, Board Room 265, 209 S Saint Marie Street, Wautoma, WI 54982
Winnebago County: Webster Stanley Middle School, Auditorium, 915 Hazel Street, Oshkosh, WI 54901
Wood County: Pittsville School District Admin. Building, Auditorium, 5459 Elementary Ave, Pittsville, WI 54466



Chapter News



Scott Allen

ALDO CHAPTER HELPS KIDS LEARN HISTORY AND MUCH MORE

Trout In the Classroom is under way at Pineview School in Reedsburg. Two fifth-grade classes are participating and visited Nevin Fish Hatchery in February for a tour and to pick up rainbow trout fingerlings.

Aldo Leopold Chapter

The Aldo Leopold Chapter wrapped up its annual fly-tying class in Portage in March.

Trout In the Classroom is under way at Pineview School in Reedsburg. Two fifth-grade classes are participating and visited Nevin Fish Hatchery in February for a tour and to pick up rainbow trout fingerlings. In May the kids will have a field trip to Dell Creek for release of the trout and an electroshocking demonstration by DNR fisheries biologist Nate Nye. It is trout that will be electroshocked.

Manley Creek, a brook trout stream in eastern Sauk County, is receiving a facelift. Repairs to existing log structures and additional rock structures have been added to the stream channel. The work was initiated by the property owner, Riverland Conservancy, and funded through mitigation grants from the American Transmission Company to offset lost wildlife habitat from the construction of a transmission line along the I-94 corridor.

The chapter will again partner with the Southeast and Coulee

Chapters for a work day at Tainter Creek on Saturday, June 10. This will also be a weekend of fishing adventure and campfire lore in the Driftless Area. A group campsite has been reserved at West Fork Sports Club in Avalanche. Feel free to join us for the day or the weekend.

Join the chapter for the annual picnic fundraiser on Tuesday evening, July 11, for tasty barbeque and a chance to win the many raffle prizes. Author Bill Stokes will be present to share a few pearls of wisdom from his new book "Trout Friends and Other Riff-Raff."

Current Chapter Vice President Mike Stapleton will assume the presidency at our spring elections and board meeting Wednesday, April 12 at Suzy's Steak House in Portage. Dinner is at 5:30 p.m., with the meeting to follow. Mike is no stranger to the position, as he is a past president of the Central Wisconsin Chapter.

—Scott Allen

Antigo Chapter

It's the time of the year that we can't stop thinking about spring. We held our annual fundraising banquet March 25 at The Northstar Banquet Center. We had fun raffles, auctions, door prizes and a great meal. Virgil Beck was again here to paint an original brook trout painting that was raffled off at the end of

the evening. We raised a lot of money for the coldwater resource.

We started our first Trout In the Classroom program last fall, with the help of Mike Werdeo a high school biology teacher. This has really been a lot of fun setting up and working with Mike and the school kids. Our chapter is already working



ANTIGO CHAPTER JOINS THE TIC MOVEMENT

The Antigo Chapter started its first Trout In the Classroom program last fall, with the help of Mike Werdeo, a high school biology teacher. The chapter is already talking with two other districts about adding TIC.

with two other school districts to see if we can expand our TIC schools in the next year.

Saturday, June 10 is our annual Kid's Fishing Day at the city park. It's a fun day for everyone. Kids can catch trout under the tent, and fish for prizes. There will also be a DNR-run casting contest. The day is topped off with hamburgers, hot dogs and soda for everyone. Last, but not least, we give away a girls and boys bicycle. We can't thank the area community enough for their support.

During the winter we made a \$2,000 donation to the city of Antigo to help start the installation of a

handicapped walkway to the fishing dock at Remington Lake.

Two projects that we helped fund for this summer are \$3,000 for fuel for the DNR dredge that will be working on the Mayking flowage. We also donated \$4,000 to help the Antigo DNR brushing crew, which is also supported by other chapters in the northeast. These crews work on miles of area trout streams.

We also hope to work on the outlet area of the Mayking flowage to lower a rock dam to help increase the water flow.

We hope you all have a nice spring and summer. Think warm!

—Scott Henricks

Blackhawk Chapter

January's chapter meeting brought forth Dave Patrick and John Lusk's illustrated program, "Affordable Trout Fishing in the Western States." In February, Bob Trevis from the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter came down and led us through "Driftless Trout - West of the Mississippi." Both were very informative and entertaining.

Chapter members Ron Machajewski and Don Studt were instructors for our annual 10-week fly-tying class held in Janesville each January-March, and eight students graduated this year.

Don Studt, Harley Whitt and Joe Kincaide gave fly-tying demonstrations at Madison's Orvis store for two days in January, and Dave Patrick and Dave Brethauer followed up doing so for two days at Cabela's in February. Lots of folks stopped by to watch, and to ask questions.

Continuing our support for the Weister Creek Restoration Project, the chapter has donated \$5,000 again, this time for Phase 4. Paul Krahn, Vernon County Conserva-

tionist, expects the Phase 4 work to be completed by the end of June this year, since another 3,000 feet of the stream bank has already been cleared, and rock was being hauled on "ice roads" during the winter months. Reports continue to come in that this restoration is awesome!

We already have two tentative work days scheduled for 2017, for the lower end of Gordon Creek, near Blanchardville. One will be on March 25, the other on May 6.

But between those dates, the important date of note is April 24. That's the date for our annual Spring Banquet. As usual, it will be held at the Pontiac Convention Center in Janesville at 5:30 p.m. The cost is still \$50 each or two for \$90, and includes a fine meal. This year we've added a 50/50 cash raffle and a hat raffle. Here's your opportunity to acquire watercraft, tools, crafts, trips, bicycles, Amish craft, and fishing tackle, and at the same time, help us to continue funding those great TU restoration projects.

—Dave Hinde

Central Wisconsin Chapter

CWTU did a good job of predicting the worst weather of January this year. If we had an event planned, we ended up cancelling and rescheduling. That's what to expect in Wisconsin, but it all worked out.

Our January program was "Beetle Mania: The Night of the Beetle and Water Boatman." It was well attended despite being rescheduled. Ten fly tyers demonstrated their favorite beetle patterns. Tom Lager of Fox Valley TU presented the entomology of these bugs. Charlie Piette of TightLines Fly Fishing Company talked about strategies for fishing the fly patterns. Thank you, Bob Haase, for organizing this program.

Twelve people took our introductory fly-tying course in January. Due to the weather, we rescheduled two of the classes, and they ended up in February. However, all involved made it work. Those taking the course enjoyed the sessions and learning to tie flies. Dave Pable organizes and plans the course but also enlists seasoned fly tyers to help. The students appreciated the one-on-one assistance.

There was some overnight snow before TroutFest, our annual free winter show, but not enough to stop people from coming. You might ask why would a Trout Unlimited Chapter ever put on a show and not charge admission? The answer is people come who are just curious and don't show up at other trout or

fly fishing events. We reliably sign up about a dozen new members each year at this show. We give them a small gift if they join at the show. This along with the TU offer of half off the first year's membership makes for a good deal. While the people who come don't have to pay admission, they usually buy a few tickets for the bucket raffles. While not a true fundraiser, we collect enough on the raffles to cover our costs. Everyone has a lot of fun.

At the February 4 WITU State Banquet we learned we were the chapter with the most volunteer hours last year. We were not expecting to hear that because we think the stuff we do is normal for a TU chapter. One factor is probably our workdays. The other is our water monitoring program, the River Keepers.

If you are not monitoring your streams right now, it is worth considering. Good stream quality data makes a difference. You will find people beyond your members who are interested in doing this. Many of our stream monitors are landowners concerned about maintaining the health of their streams. With grants available, no chapter funds are needed to support the program. Great information is available at <http://watermonitoring.uwex.edu/wav/index.html> or search Wisconsin Water Action Volunteers.

—Mike San Dretto

Chapter News



Coulee Region Chapter

Our annual chapter banquet was February 24 at the Cedar Creek country club in Onalaska. The weather outside was frightful, but more than 100 attendees came to the banquet to enjoy a good meal, share fish stories and take home excellent prizes. As usual, the custom-built Sage fly rod from Rick Kyte sold out quickly in our raffle. Other hot items were a day on the water with Duke Welter and photographer Dave Durochick, another Driftless guided trip from Mark Kowaliw, and a walleye trip on the Missouri River in South Dakota with Curt Rees, Sr. Our attendees had a great night and we were able to bring in resources to support our chapter's work in the Coulee Region of Wisconsin.

Jeff Hastings from TUDARE was the guest presenter at our chapter meeting on March 15. Jeff shared information about all the work that is happening with TUDARE and how people can be involved in restoring and protecting our coldwater resources in the Drift-

less Area.

March 25 was the highly anticipated 3rd annual Cozad's Driftless 1Fly tourney sponsored by CRTU. Sixty anglers on 15 teams participated in the event to raise money for youth outdoor events in the Driftless Area. Lots of fish were caught and released for a good cause. This is an event to put on your calendar for next spring.

Looking ahead to the summer, CRTU will work with the SEWTU and Aldo Leopold chapters to do brushing work on Tainter Creek on June 10. We will work hard in the morning, have a hearty lunch, and then go fish all afternoon.

Trout Fest in Coon Valley is scheduled for July 22. The Coulee chapter will coordinate the kids fishing event on Coon Creek.

Find us at facebook.com/coulee-tu/ and Instagram (@couleeregion-tu) to see all that happens with our chapter.

—Curt Rees

Fox Valley Chapter

The winter months of January and February have been a very busy time for the Fox Valley TU chapter. We had our chapter fundraiser on January 14, a chapter meeting February 2, the State Council meeting and banquet on February 4, and another chapter meeting on March 16.

We are currently planning for an April chapter fishing weekend, the May 20 Special Needs and Handicapped/Disabilities Persons Fishing Day, and this year's Habitat Days.

We held another successful Cabin Fever Day fundraiser on January 14 at the Grand Meridian in Appleton. The chapter thanks all of the vendors, fly tyers and presenters including Israel Dunn, Bill Schultz and Damian Wilmot. Thanks to Scott Grady for donating his hand-made cane rod. Thanks also go out to chapter volunteers and those who attended the event.

There were people from Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Norm Christnacht, Al Johnson, Tom Lager, Joe Bach, Chuck Knoeck, Steve Heuser, Roger Genske and Optima Graphics did a fantastic job making sure that the event was successful. Thanks to all of these individuals, the FVTU chapter was able to raise \$9,000 for coldwater fisheries and their watersheds in Wisconsin. We are in the early planning stages for the 17th annual CFD event January 20, 2018 at the Grand Meridian in Appleton.

Our February 2 chapter meeting featured a presentation by Chef John Balistri and several students at Fox Valley Technical College. Our chapter records indicate that this was either the 27th or 28th annual presentation by the students from the Culinary Arts program at FVTC to the FVTU chapter. While we were enjoying the meal, Roger Genske and Jen Erickson made several presentations to various chapter members and friends of the chapter, thanking them for their ongoing support of chapter activities.

Numerous chapter members attended the State Council annual meeting and banquet in Oshkosh February 4. Congratulations to Tom Lager for receiving the Council's Gold Net Award. Tom has contrib-

uted a great deal of time, effort and leadership to both FVTU and the Council.

Our March chapter meeting featured the DNR's Shawn Sullivan, who highlighted the work that has been completed and what is being planned for the Central Sands Area of Wisconsin. The four chapters from the Central Sands Area — FVTU, CWTU, Shaw-Paca and Frank Hornberg — have been working with the Wild Rose DNR fisheries crew to create a project called TU CARES. There is additional information about the TU CARES project in this issue of Wisconsin Trout.

The meeting was also the annual meeting, and we held elections for officer and board positions. There was also a vote to approve modifications to the chapter constitution/amendments.

Roger Genske, Dan Geddes and Don Clouthier are planning our third annual fishing trip to southwest Wisconsin from April 20-23. Fish, dine, fish, learn, fish and camp for one or all four days. Details about the trip are on our website and Facebook page.

Our chapter Habitat Days begin April 29. As we have done for many years, we will meet with Elward Engle on Davies Creek. Davies Creek feeds the Pine River and this is the location of one of the first Habitat Projects that FVTU participated in years ago.

Our May-September Habitat Days will be joint efforts with other TU chapters. All of these Habitat Days will be the third Saturday of the month, with the possibility of a couple of additional days added to the schedule. Monitor our website for information.

We will also be partnering with The Rawhide Boys Ranch and work with them on stream projects on Davies Creek. Those will be monthly events held on Tuesday mornings. Please check our website for specific dates and offer your assistance as you are able.

On May 20 we are sponsoring the 39th annual Fishing Day for People with Disabilities at the same pond we used last year. We have partnered with the Appleton YMCA

and will be using their Camp Shiock Pond for our fishing day. Find additional information and a map on our website and Facebook page. Please call any of the FVTU board members if you know of a disabled or handicapped individual who would enjoy a couple of hours of fishing, conversation and a picnic lunch on an early May morning.

The chapter will be involved in other activities throughout the

spring and summer months. Again, please check our website at foxvalleytu.org and our Facebook page.

Old Man Winter is starting to lose his grip on us so as you plan for the spring and summer that will come, enjoy our beautiful streams, creeks, rivers and lakes. As our late chapter president Tony Tremblé would close his columns and comments, "We'll see you on a trout stream."

—Rich Erickson

Frank Hornberg Chapter

The Hornberg Chapter sponsored a fly-tying workshop in February at Clancey's Stone Lion in Custer. Our thanks to chapter members Brian and Jacki Clancey for making the facility available to us. We heartily recommend the Stone Lion for their memorable Friday fish fry and for Jacki's home-made soups and desserts.

We will start filling out our schedule of workdays on local rivers when the weather turns favorable. We have already identified a few locations where repairs are needed on previous stream modifications.

We extend our thanks to chapter member Dan Holland for his ongo-

ing financial contributions. Two businesses, The Worth Company and Shooters Supper Club, have also been very generous in their financial support of our chapter.

SentryWorld in Stevens Point and Shooters Supper Club in Plover made rooms available to us for meetings during the past year. We thank them both.

Our 2017 Fly Fishing School will be on Saturday, May 20. Students in past years have complimented us for the one-on-one instruction, the practical tips and the reasonable price. We plan to continue those traditions.

—John Vollrath

Green Bay Chapter

The Green Bay Chapter continues to remain busy in the pursuit of clean, cold water. We twice teamed with Cabelas for community outreach. On the weekends of December 10-11 and January 21-22 we set up tables near their fly-fishing department to teach visitors how to tie flies. This also provides a great opportunity to share our chapter's efforts and goals. There happened to be Packer games on both weekends, but we were still able to reach many people. Big thanks goes to Cabelas' Nicole Hanley, as well as Brian Mease, Tom Dretzka and all our volunteers. Without their help and support, we would not be able to successfully pull off these events. We also held one in late March.

In January Don Niles of Peninsula Pride Farms spoke to our chapter about Peninsula Pride and their work to improve farming practices that have, in the past, contributed to harming water quality. The group is made up of mostly Door and Kewaunee County farmers.

In February Badger Tenkara's

Matt Sment spoke to our chapter about the style, equipment and origins of Tenkara Fishing. Tenkara is similar to fly fishing but without a reel. This style is common in Japan and quickly gaining popularity in the United States.

Also in February was our 42nd Annual Conservation Banquet at Stadium View Bar and Grill. This year we had an incredible turnout of about 350 attendees. This is our premier fundraiser. A huge thanks goes to committee members Bruce and John Deuchert, Stausch Gruszynski, Dennis Gusick, Laurel and Wally Heil, Pat Hill, Jeff House, Jack and Arlene Koivisto, Adrian Meseberg, Lee Meyers, Matt Norem, Dave Ostanek, Mike Renish, Doug Seidl, Janet Smith, Jim and Kim Vanden Branden and Carla Zimmermann. We also need to thank our emcees, Henry Koltz and Gary Stoychoff. We also thank our sponsors, Stadium View, banquet attendees and donors. All these folks really help us make our work possible. Early indications are the



Mike Renish

GREEN BAY TU TEACHES TYING AT CABELA'S

Dori Goddard shows three curious onlookers how to tie a fly. GBTU twice teamed with Cabelas' for community outreach this past winter.



Chapter News



FIRST TIME USING A BOBBIN

This little Vikings fan focuses all his attention on his first fly, thanks to Green Bay Chapter's outreach tying events at Cabela's.

banquet was a big success!
Thanks to everyone who helps make Wisconsin's inland trout wa-

ters some of the best!
—Adrian Meseberg

Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

Our project for 2017 includes a new property which has about 4,500 feet of the Blue River above Bower Road. We have obtained a TU fishing easement and have permits.

We are also looking at a piece of ground with access to 1,800 feet of Borah Creek by Lancaster above Bluff Road.

The Trout In the Classroom program that Kurt has helped us set up in the North Crawford school district has had a good hatch with few losses.

In February the Grant County Sports Alliance had their Outdoor Skills Day at Southwest Technical College in Fennimore. We partici-

pated with fly casting and tying instruction. More than 500 attended the event. To see more what this organization does, check them out on Facebook.

Our annual member meeting with reports from our summer interns will be April 12. This will be on the UW—Platteville campus or other facility to be announced.

We are planning for our annual banquet May 5 at the Castle Rock Inn on G, north of Highway 18 between Montfort and Fennimore.

—Brian Larson



NOHR CHAPTER HELPS OUT AT OUTDOOR SKILLS DAY

In February the Grant County Sports Alliance had their Outdoor Skills Day at Southwest Technical College in Fennimore. We participated with fly casting and tying instruction. Here Kurt Meyer works with some new tyers.

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

As a change of pace from our traditional chapter meetings, we held a "Kiap-on-Tap" event at Rush River Brewing in February. Chapter members, artists, writers, guides and fly tyers were invited to attend, enjoy a hand-crafted beer and talk about trout and all things trout-related. Feedback was positive and we'll probably plan something simi-

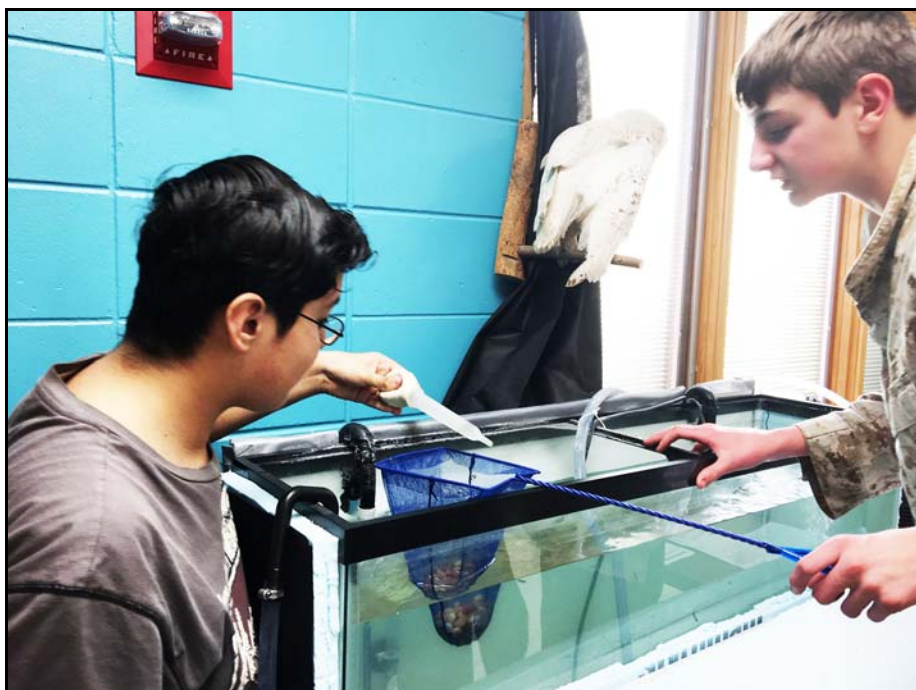
lar in the future. Thanks to Scott Wagner, John Kaplan, Tom Schnadt and Maria Manion for helping to organize this gathering.

On March 3 our chapter displayed TU information at the River Falls Fly Fishing Film Festival. The show included a wide variety of fly fishing films and gave us a good chance to share TU's conservation



GREEN BAY CHAPTER HOSTS 42ND CONSERVATION BANQUET

In February GBTU held its 42nd Annual Conservation Banquet at Stadium View Bar and Grill. This year they had an incredible turnout of about 350 attendees.



NOHR CHAPTER HOSTING TIC PROGRAM

The Trout In the Classroom program that Kurt Meyer helped set up in the North Crawford school district has had a good hatch with few losses.

message with a younger crowd.

Kiap-TU-Wish members attended the State Council banquet in February and were particularly proud when two of our own received special recognition. Long-time chapter member Greg Diel received a certificate of appreciation for his many years of service to TU. Marty Engle, our region's recently-retired fish biologist, received the Robert Hunt Resource Professional award for 30 years of conservation work.

All five classrooms that are running TIC programs had successful egg hatching. The fry are swimming well and, as the students have noted, they like to face upstream and rest behind rocks and pebbles. The four elementary schools will hold a "Bugs in the Classroom" day with Dean Hansen in May.

Our brushing work started a bit later this year as volunteer chainsaw operators needed a safety training course. We held a course in January, hosted by the landowner, at our current project site. About 15 people attended. Everyone learned something new, including Randy Arnold, Kiap's chainsaw cutter extraordinaire. Since the training, Kiap has held frequent workdays clearing the banks on the Trimble River. A to-

tal of 660 volunteer hours have been logged so far.

On March 9 many Kiap-TU-Wish members attended the second of six technical talks presented by the City of River Falls' Kinni Corridor project. The crowd heard Matt Mitro, a coldwater researcher with the Wisconsin DNR; chapter member Kent Johnson with the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan Council; and Marty Melchoir of InterFluve. Carrie Jennings, a water resources professor at the University of Minnesota, talked about river ecology.

The panel was asked six questions, with each lending their insights based on their experience and expertise. Topics covered urban environments and their impacts to streams; the importance of stormwater management and maintaining healthy riparian corridors; and the movement of sediment and contaminants. These "Tech Talks" are intended to educate, inform and engage the community in the planning process, which will be used by the city council to design future amenities, natural areas and determine the fate of the two dams on the Kinni.

—Maria Manion

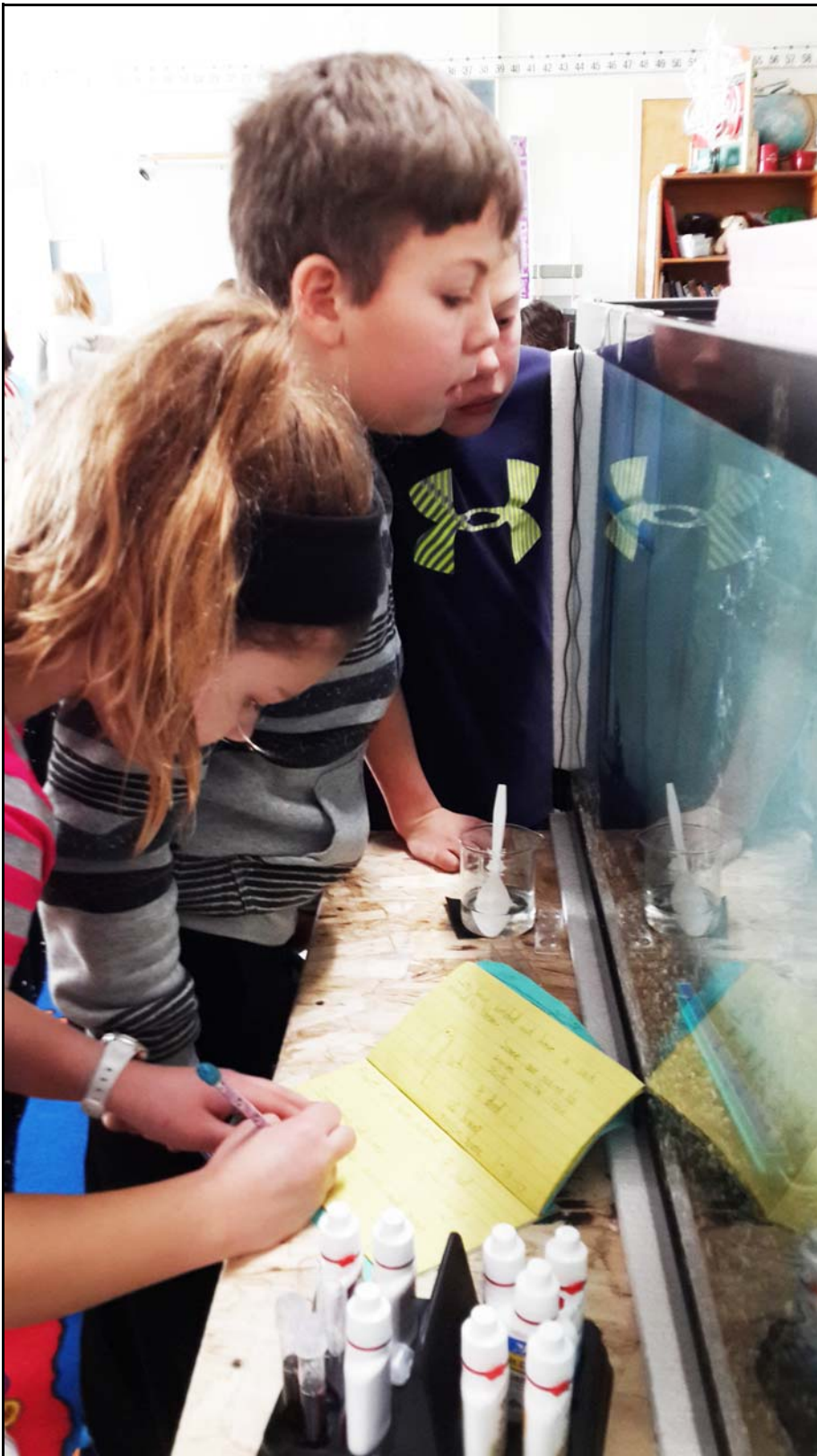
Marinette County Chapter

Winter was a busy time for the Marinette County Chapter. We presented a "Learn to Trout Fish" program, worked on the upcoming banquet, and planned projects for this summer.

At the State Council banquet in February, the Marinette County

Chapter received the Silver Trout Award for Merit. We achieved this award through our fundraising efforts, engaging the public, working with various agencies on conservation projects, and persistence. We want to thank everyone who made our fundraising efforts a success. In

Chapter News



KIAP-TU-WISH HELPS ROCKY RUN ELEMENTARY WITH TIC

These are students from Joe Young's class at Rocky Run Elementary School in River Falls, taking notes and watching the fry.

the past 33 years, we raised more than \$340,000 for Trout Unlimited.

Our "Learn to Trout Fish" program this winter was a success. The four-part program included trout habitat and biology, equipment, fly tying and fly casting. We are pleased to report that more than half of this year's attendees were women and children. Our thanks to those who helped with the program.

We are working with the Wisconsin DNR to brush walk-in access trails to the Pike River system. Our hope is that if people are able to get to the river, they will be better able to utilize this amazing resource. A summer stream electro-shocking day by the DNR is also in the works for the North Branch of Beaver Creek. This will be very educational for the entire family. Watch our website for details.

The annual fundraising banquet

Northwoods Chapter

In March we had a presentation by Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Technician Brad Shucha. Brad spoke about the Woodruff Fish Hatchery operation, the merits of stocking, who chooses where the fish go and

will be Monday, April 24 at Little River Country Club, south of Marinette. Tickets are \$35. Contact Dale Lange for tickets or information at 715-582-1135. This is our only fundraising event for the year. Please help make it a success so that we can support future projects and programs.

Our monthly meetings run September-May. We take the summer off to go trout fishing. Please check our website for summer workdays and other activities at marinette-county.tu.org.

Are you passionate about trout fishing or do you enjoy the places where wild trout live? Could you invest some of your time to help with our programs or habitat projects? If so, please contact Doug Erdmann at 715-735-7407 for more information.

—Doug Erdmann

the quantity of fish to be stocked.

Our April 11 meeting features Henry Quinlan, fishery biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He has seen and done a lot when it comes to Lake Superior



NORTHWOODS CHAPTER MEETING APRIL 11 FEATURES QUINLAN

Our April 11 meeting features Henry Quinlan, fishery biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. During the past 20 years he has had the opportunity to assess and provide management recommendations for coaster populations at Isle Royale National Park, Michigan, and at Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin. Henry will share data on the status of coaster brook trout in Lake Superior and insights on coaster life history characteristics. He will discuss management successes and lack thereof, and provide insights into the future prognosis for coaster brook trout populations in the Lake Superior basin.

coaster brook trout. During the past 20 years he has had the opportunity to assess and provide management recommendations for coaster populations at Isle Royale National Park, Michigan, and at Whittlesey Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Wisconsin.

He and his crews help state and tribal natural resource departments assess brook trout in Lake Superior and in tributaries in Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota. Henry has had the good fortune to feel the tug of a few coasters at the end of his line and, and may even share some advice on how to find them.

Henry will share data on the status of coaster brook trout in Lake Superior and insights on coaster life history characteristics. He will discuss management successes and lack thereof, and provide insights into the future prognosis for coaster brook trout populations in the Lake Superior basin.

The meeting will be April 11 at Trees For Tomorrow, 519 Sheridan Street East, Eagle River. For further information about chapter activities contact Jay Joppa at NorthwoodsTU@gmail.com.

—Terry Cummings

Oconto River Chapter

The banquet committee is preparing for the annual fundraising banquet April 27 at Romy's Holiday Inn at Kelly Lake. Banquet Chair Dan Sumnicht said prizes are being accumulated. Letters will be sent to past banquet participants. Ticket information is available from Dan at 715-745-6969.

The chapter is seeking young people from the Oconto River area to attend the environmental camps offered by UW-Stevens Point. Various camps for kids ages 7-15 are offered. An application is available from Moni Brunner at 920-855-6669. Campers will be announced at the chapter banquet April 27. Youth can also apply for the WITU Fishing Camp to be held in July.

Plans are being made to participate in DNR and USFS work days

planned in our area. Members will work with Green Bay and Wolf River chapters placing brush bundles, rocks and logs to improve habitat.

The chapter is also planning a summer outreach event which will include a family fishing day, picnic and youth contests. The program will be designed as a fun day, share what TU is about and how we support our coldwater resources. Dates and locations will be published in the chapter newsletter.

Our chapter meetings are held monthly (excluding May and November) on the first Wednesday of each month. Meetings are held at the Lone Oak Gun club just North of Gillett starting at 7 p.m.

—Tom Klatt



Chapter News

Shaw-Paca Chapter

The ShawPaca Chapter is in the final stages of planning and organizing its annual spring banquet Thursday, April 6 at the Northwinds Banquet Hall, 1103 N Main Street, Marion.

Doors will open at 5 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door and are \$30 each. Door prizes, silent auctions, live auctions, raffles and ca-

maraderie will be abundant! Artist Virgil Beck will also be in attendance and doing a painting, which will be auctioned off near the closure of the evening. This is our primary fundraiser for the year. Funds go directly to conservation projects in our area, so we'd love to see you all there.

—Nate Sipple

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

The Southeast Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited (SEWTU) holds chapter meetings the fourth Tuesday of each month at Thunder Bay Grille in Pewaukee. The meetings begin at 7 p.m. but many members arrive for an optional dinner and socializing period that begins around 6 p.m. The meetings are open to the public, and include chapter updates and news, as well as guest speakers. Please feel free to stop by and join us.

We've had great speakers at our recent meetings. In January, Craig Amacher from Fontana in Madison spoke to our members about techniques, tactics and equipment for fishing in the Driftless Area of southwestern Wisconsin.

Craig's enthusiasm and passion for trout and trout fishing were apparent during the entire presentation, and his talk was a great motivation for our members to participate in the early trout season.

At our February meeting Abe Downs, an Orvis endorsed guide and owner of Great Northern Fly Fishing, was our speaker. Abe's presentation, which was very informative, was about fishing for smallmouth bass and musky from a drift boat in northern Wisconsin rivers. He covered tackle, techniques and locations.

Our March speaker was Kyle Zempel of Black Earth Angling Company. Kyle's presentation focused on smallmouth bass fishing on the lower Wisconsin River. We learned about smallmouth fishing adventures that Kyle refers to as "The Crash," while also enjoying some of his fine photography.

SEWTU continues to be active in outreach programs, particularly fly-tying opportunities.

The Oak Creek Fly-Tying group,

led by Greg Schick, continues to meet on the first and third Tuesday of each month. SEWTU members also organized and participated in six fly-tying sessions at Cabela's in Richfield. Thanks to organizer Al Dalphonso, and all of the SEWTU volunteers who helped make these sessions successful.

In addition, George Batcha continues to organize and lead weekly fly-tying opportunities for Project Healing Waters and TU Veteran's Services. Several other SEWTU members including Al Dalphonso, Ken Wojak, Don Putning, Jim White and Randy Gulley visit the Milwaukee VA Hospital's Spinal Cord Injury Unit two times a month to provide lessons and opportunities for tying flies.

Jim Folda, Chuck Beeler and Jay Zawerschnik deserve a great amount of credit for coordinating, setting up and running the SEWTU booth at the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel Sport Show in March.

This is a great opportunity to share the mission and goals of SEWTU to a large audience. The following SEWTU members volunteered to help at the show: Stan Strelka, Chuck Urban, Tim Fuller, Roger Bell, John Koivisto, Al Dalphonso, Jeff Bideout, Tom Albrecht, John Rennpferd, Dave Wunrow, Dave Menke, Nick Schmal, Herb Oechler, Rick Larkin, Bob Estlund and Jim Wierzba. Thanks, everyone!

On March 8 the Fly Fishers Fly Shop Owner Pat Ehler sponsored the IF4 Fly Fishing Film Tour. Pat, along with SEWTU members Kyle Klamer and Josh Radlein, planned and organized this popular event at the Sprecher Brewery in Glendale.

This was a very busy evening and Jim Wierzba and Stan Strelka

helped things run smoothly by working at the admission table and running the SEWTU raffle. We'd like to thank the many SEWTU members who supported this event by attending and donating items for the raffle.

SEWTU member Nick Schmal has initiated a partnership program between SEWTU and the Boy Scouts. Nick has arranged for our members to receive training from the Boy Scouts that will lead to Angler Educator Certification. This will allow our members to assist Boy Scouts while they acquire fishing merit badges. A training session will be offered in April.

Now that spring is here, SEWTU activities such as workdays and outreach programs will increase. Our first workday of 2017 will be on Saturday, April 22. We will be participating in the River Clean-up at the

Menominee River near Miller Park. Our habitat co-chair, Andy Avgoulas, organizes SEWTU's participation in the River Clean-up.

Also on April 22, SEWTU members will be volunteering at the Kid's Fishing Clinic in West Bend. Rick Frye, our education chair, organizes this activity for SEWTU. On April 8-9, Jay Zawerschnik will be organizing and running an SEWTU booth at Cabela's in Richfield during their annual Fishing Classic.

It is a pleasure to work with such dedicated volunteers. SEWTU members provide outreach opportunities to help educate others about our mission, and are committed to restoring and preserving coldwater resources. As my term as president draws to a close, I realize how fortunate I have been to work with such a fine group.

—Boyd Roessler

Southern Wisconsin Chapter

SWTU has hit the ground running in 2017, beginning with a very successful Icebreaker event. We were pleased to hear from Landon Mayer, who did an exceptional job of entertaining and educating the attendees. We all left inspired to try new tactics and waters. Many thanks as well to our local speakers, Geri Meyer, Mike Miller, Ben Lubchansky and Dave Barron. And thanks to everyone for the prize donations, fly-tying demonstrations, stream partner engagement and more.

We appreciate everyone who traveled from near and far to attend the event, especially those who lent a helping hand in ways large and small. Together we raised thousands of dollars that will be put to good use for education and restoration of our coldwater resources. A tremendous thanks goes to Amy Klusmeier, who once again chaired the

successful event. We'll do it all again next January, so watch for details.

Our "Stream Team" is set to hit the waters this spring to plant and prune and pick up litter. We'll be working to improve waters new and old and could use your help. Find dates and details in our newsletter or on the calendar at swtu.org.

Planning for our annual free Riversmith Casting Clinic is well underway. The event is being run by Matt Sment this year and anyone is welcome to come learn about casting, reading the water, fishing gear and more. We can also use help from experienced fisherfolk. Visit our website for the date, location and more.

Soon we will have a new website worth checking out at swtu.org. A great many thanks to Kevin Graeme for lending his web-weaving expertise to the transition.

—Drew Kasel

Wild Rivers Chapter

The Wild Rivers Chapter has had a fairly quiet winter, although things are picking up as the snow recedes and rivers fill with runoff.

In January we had another "Bar Flies" tying event. Big Water Coffee Company in Bayfield allowed us to take over the shop a bit before closing time and linger for a few hours after business hours. We had a dozen folks who aren't involved in the chapter sit with a half-dozen chapter tyers. It was an awesome event. I want to thank chapter member Charlotte Edminster for coordinating the event and Big Water store manager Aimee for opening the shop to us and making us feel so welcome and comfortable. We look forward to another event at Big Water soon.

We have also been having periodic Saturday tying events at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center. We have been using the events as a way to have chapter tyers gather to put together donations for our spring expo. Our expo is Saturday, April 1 at Northland College in Ashland. This is our primary fundraising event each year, and we have a lot of fun throughout the day. This year, staff from the Bad River Watershed Association will be presenting on the impacts that last summer's massive July rain event has had on fish passage in our chapter's coldwater fishery watersheds.

Area guide and Wild Rivers chapter member Damian Wilmot will be giving our second expo presentation. He will discuss the Brule River fishery and his years of experience guiding for resident trout and steelhead on the river. Damian was recognized by Wisconsin Trout Unlimited for his generous support for the State Council and chapters. We are all grateful to Damian for his generosity, and we look forward to him presenting at our Wild Rivers expo.

Bob Traczyk was another chapter member recognized at the State Council banquet, receiving the Most Unsung Valuable Trout award. Bob is an officer on our board and deserves a lot of credit for ensuring that the monthly responsibilities of the chapter get done. As chapter president, I am incredibly grateful for his willingness to take on so much to help the Wild Rivers chapter be a strong and able group as we conserve, protect and restore. Congratulations on the recognition so well deserved, Bob, and thanks for all that you do.

I have been grateful for the opportunity to sit on the legislative advocacy committee for State Council this year, and I can't emphasize enough how important it is for us to follow the lead of that committee to engage our legislators on issues that promise to have a serious impact on



Ric Gentile

SWTU HOLDS ANOTHER GREAT ICEBREAKER

The chapter appreciates everyone who traveled from near and far to attend their annual Icebreaker event, especially those who lent a helping hand in ways large and small. Together SWTU raised thousands of dollars that will be put to good use for education and restoration of our coldwater resources. A tremendous thanks goes to Amy Klusmeier, who once again chaired the successful event.

Chapter News



Bob Rice

WILD RIVERS CHAPTER HOSTS TYING EVENTS

Charlotte and Rawley learn to tie hoppers after a Dick Berge tutorial.

our coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

As Wisconsin Trout and State Council leaders send out communications asking us to engage legislators on issues, please take the time to write your state and federal legis-

lators and representatives. Without hearing from us, there is no way to ensure that our elected officials are aware of the concerns we have regarding the impact that bills will have on our coldwater fisheries.

—Bob Rice

Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter

This winter's activities for the Wisconsin Clear Waters chapter have included our monthly meetings. At our January meeting DNR fisheries biologist Joseph Gerbyshak discussed a trout transfer project the chapter is funding on Duncan and Elk creeks, and on planned projects for the upcoming two years in the Eau Claire area.

In February veteran spring creek guide Jim Bartelt talked about fishing Driftless Area streams. Our March speaker, Jeff Bartynski of Eau Claire, took us further afield with a program on trout fishing in Alberta and British Columbia. Jeff also instructs a fly-tying class each year, sponsored by the chapter. Other members help out. This year they had 12 students.

Several chapter members met on a January evening with Kiap-Tu-Wish Chapter members and various federal, state and local agency representatives to discuss future streams projects in western Wisconsin. Duke Welter of TU DARE coordinated this event at the Kyote's Den Bar and Grill West of Menomonie.

Three of our chapter members attended a chainsaw safety course required by the DNR for work on stream projects where they have easements or land. This was coordinated by Randy Arnold, volunteer coordinator for Kiap-Tu-Wish. We were well represented at that event. One of our attendees, Jim Erickson, maintains he just went along to take photos and has no intention of op-

erating a chainsaw.

At our February work day on Sand Creek, Jim played the important role of preparing a field lunch. The ratio of chainsaw-wielding brush cutters to brush carriers was better on that day than on past work days. Nobody fell in the creek until the very end when one of the youngest helpers took a plunge. His dad found some dry clothes.

Regarding Sand Creek, DNR had planned to work on this project this summer, and the chapter had work days, but that has been postponed until next year because by the time the project was approved it was too late in the winter to get the rock moved. We are contributing to that project through our own budget and with an Xcel Energy grant.

Our 45th annual banquet was March 30 at the Clarion.

Stephen Wisner of Eau Claire Anglers Fly Fishing Adventures is organizing the Eau Claire One Fly Tournament for August 11-12, patterned roughly after the famous "one fly" competition in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. One difference in the Eau Claire version is that it won't be limited to trout. Warm water fish and rough fish caught within a 50-mile radius of Eau Claire will be eligible. Wisner has decided that any profits made should be donated to a nonprofit, and they chose the Wisconsin Clear Waters chapter. We are supporting this project. For more information check out our website at wcwtu.com.

—Joe Knight

Wisconsin River Valley Chapter

Greetings from the Wisconsin River Valley Chapter. In January Bob Pils gave a presentation on "A Bugs Life." Illustrations at the presentation were also drawn by Bob. If you don't already have a copy, you may want to check out Bob's illustrations in Gary Borger's 1980 book "Naturals."

In February we had a visit from Kyle Zempel from Black Earth Angling. Every chair in the room was filled as he made his presentation

on Trout Angling in the Driftless Area and Smallmouth on the Lower Wisconsin. "The Crash!," Kyle's video, can be seen on Facebook.

In March we gathered at Sconni's Alehouse in Schofield for a video presentation on Euro Nymphing by Lance Egan.

May 19 is the Taylor Sportsman's Youth Outdoor Expo at the Fairgrounds in Medford. We will demonstrate fly tying and casting. This event draws more than 200 stu-

dents, plus teachers and mentors. More volunteer help is always appreciated. If you are able to help, please let us know through our Facebook page.

We will do some brushing on Spring Creek north of Merrill on Sunday, May 21. We will be joined

by DNR fisheries technician Ben Rolling and the summer habitat crew. Details are still being worked out so watch for information on the website or Facebook page if you would like to give us a hand.

—Linda Lehman

Wolf River Chapter

The Wolf River Fly Tying Consortium at the Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort on January 28 was well attended by chapter members and a group from UW—Stevens Point Fly Fishing Club. Pictures from this fun event are posted on the Wolf River Chapter Facebook page. A big thank you to Zach Buchanan for coordinating the consortium. Check our Facebook page early in 2018 as he plans to make this an annual event.

On March 4 the Wolf River Chapter Annual Membership Meeting was held at the Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort with a pulled pork lunch. Attendance was great. Thank you to all who made the trip, as many of our members do not live year round on the Wolf River. Chapter members were so pleased that charter member Dr. Pence and his son were there.

Plans for our 2017 activities were discussed and firmed up. The Wolf

River Meet and Greet will be held on May 20. Go to our Facebook page to see the flyer for this fun fly-and spin-casting event fishing the Wolf River with Wolf River chapter members. The chapter also plans to purchase a metal park bench with a plaque as a memorial to Herb Buettner, and details on placement are still being worked out. We are in the planning stage for building and maintaining Wader Cleaning Stations for the Wolf River area. Tim Waters made a presentation on the water monitoring that he has been doing for the past several years on the Wolf River and several tributaries. His full report can be found at wolfrivertu.org on the events/projects page.

With days getting longer and March behind us, I am hopeful that soon I will be hearing tales of spring catch-and-release fishing by chapter members.

—Laurie Zen Netzow

Oak Brook Chapter

The Oak Brook Chapter's 2017 conservation activities include financial and volunteer support for projects in both Wisconsin and Michigan in support of Trout Unlimited's mission of conserving, protecting and restoring coldwater fisheries and their watersheds in the Midwest.

The chapter's Wisconsin financial commitments this year include TU DARE, Weister Creek restoration in Vernon County and continued stream restoration work in Sparta.

"We plan to continue the important conservation work on our chapter's priority projects in support of Wisconsin's Driftless Area," said Dave Carlson, Conservation Committee chair. "The Conservation Committee is also pursuing partnering with other TU chapters on projects and is looking for new opportunities closer to home.

"Several work days are planned, which provide an opportunity for fun and friendship, along with making a valuable contribution to stream conservation. As our projects are several hours from Chicago,

we try to coordinate carpooling, lodging and fishing opportunities for interested members," said Dave Carlson.

The Weister Creek project is a multi-year effort to restore a 2.6-mile section of an important tributary to the Kickapoo River. Our contribution is financial, with the restoration work done by DNR contractors. The project is a combined effort drawing funding support from many different organizations, including numerous Wisconsin and Illinois TU chapters.

Near Sparta, ongoing stream restoration projects will encompass work to reduce soil erosion and phosphorus discharge within the city limits. Since 2014, OBTU has provided both volunteer and financial support that has been leveraged to get large government grants. This year, a work day to install LUNKER structures along with bank stabilization on the upper reach of Beaver Creek is planned for June or July.

—Jim Schmiedeskamp



OAKBROOK CHAPTER HELPING WITH WEISTER CREEK PROJECT

Rock and wood for natural habitat structures has been positioned this winter for work at Weister Creek in Vernon County.

From the fly-tying desk: Bob's rainbow-bead zebra midge

By Bob Haase

A zebra midge is an easy fly to tie and very effective. A few years ago Hareline Dubbing came out with a multi-hued rainbow bead in brass and tungsten. I know color can and does make a difference at times, but I did not expect it to make this much of a difference. I had the best day of trout fishing in my life, catching big fish on this fly when they were turning down a similar fly with a gold bead. I used the same color body and ribbing with a gold bead, but it was not as productive as the rainbow bead. I had similar results on other streams before and after this event. My best size was #18 and #16 on a Mustad C49S, but have also had good results using a standard nymph hook. A black body with a chartreuse or fluorescent pink wire ribbing was my best color combination, but a red body with black wire also worked well.

MATERIALS LIST

Bob's rainbow-bead zebra midge

Hook: Mustad C49S #18 to #14

Thread: 80 denier

Body: thread

Ribbing: small Ultra Wire

Bead: Hareline's multi-hued rainbow bead.



Step 1 - Place the bead on the hook using the appropriate size bead. Start and wrap the thread from behind the bead to the point shown in the picture.

Step 2- Wrap a piece of small ultra wire on top of the hook shank from behind the bead to the point in the bend of the hook as shown. Wrap the thread over the wire back to the bead forming a tapered body as shown.



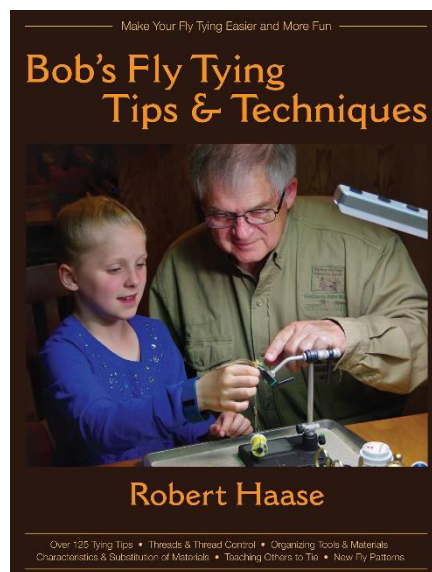
Step 3- Wrap the wire over the thread body to the bead trying to make the spacing somewhat even. Tie down the wire and wiggle the wire to break it close to the hook shaft.

Make a few wraps behind the bead and tie off.



Step 4- Apply a coat of UV-set polymer over the body and wire. This makes it very durable and the wire will not move. Maybe it is the UV Polymer coating that makes the fish like it?

Comment- I still wonder why the fish take this zebra midge so well. Is it the rainbow-hued bead, the color combination of body and wire, the UV polymer coating, or something else? I don't believe there is one fly that will work consistently all the time, but this has become one of my confidence flies. It is easy to tie and catches fish, so tie a few up and try them. This fly is another good reason to learn to tie because you can't buy them in any fly shop.



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Bob Haase

Simple flies, little changes, big results

I enjoy tying all kinds of flies, from tiny number 22 midges to huge musky-pike flies. Some of the flies are very elaborate and others are extremely simple. In most cases the complexity of a fly does not make it fish any better. All it does is make it more difficult to tie. Most of my more successful fly patterns are those that are very simple to tie.

I have also noticed that sometimes a simple change can make a big difference in how well it fishes. We don't need to completely redesign it. We just need to make minor changes. It can be as simple as a change in material, color or size. Or it might involve adding or eliminating something.

An example is the simple zebra midge pattern. A few years ago Hareline Dubbing came out with a multi-hued rainbow bead. I experimented with them, wondering if that color might make a difference. Over the course of two years, I experimented using that bead instead of the standard gold or single colored bead. I could not believe that tying the same exact zebra midge and using the multi-hued bead could make that much of a difference.

A couple years ago I was fishing the Frying Pan River in

Colorado. I tried the flies that were recommended by fly shops in the area, with no success. A few anglers around me were catching a fish here and there, but the action was not that fast. I decided to switch to my zebra midge with the multi-hued bead and was quickly rewarded with a nice 17-inch fish.

After catching one fish after another on that midge pattern, I gave my partner one and just like that we had a double going. A guy upstream walked down and inquired about what I was using and offered me \$10 for one.

Over the course of a couple of hours I caught more than 20 fish ranging from 17 inches to just under 25 inches. The biggest one did not even fit in the net. It turned out to be the best day of trout fishing that I had ever had for big fish. The only difference in the zebra midge that I was using and the ones my partner and the guy upstream was using was the color of the bead.

This is just one example of how a simple fly has out-fished more elaborate patterns. That multi-hued, rainbow-beaded zebra midge is included as the fly for this issue so that you can tie a few up. If you don't tie, you might want to consider learning how, because you can't buy these at a fly shop.

Once Upon A Dream

I see a crystal stream

Deserving of great fame

I see it dashing on its way

How I wish I knew its name!

Along its grassy banks

An angler casts his line

Lo a trout rises to his fly

Wish that fly were mine!

I watch him land the fish

And then he lets it go:

Smiling does he turn to me,

As if to say "hello."

It was then that I awoke

To find 'twas all a dream;

Yet to this day I travel far

Still searching for that stream!

From A Poet's Gift To Anglers by Daniel O. Holland

ISSUES

Continued from page 1

A movement has emerged to increase the inland trout stamp fee to \$15. WITU voted on this issue and all 21 of its chapters supported an inland stamp fee increase, although two chapters had caveats. As a result, WITU is strongly in favor of this movement, and has two requests for its members:

First, WITU asks its members to contact their legislators, and to speak in support of this fee increase, and the good work that segregated inland trout stamp funding performs.

Second, WITU urges its members to attend Conservation Congress hearings and to vote in favor of this increase.

Email and social media blasts will be made regarding this issue, and we ask our members to engage with their elected officials regarding this matter.

The current proposed federal budget would reduce GLRI funding by 97 percent, from \$300 million to \$10 million.

Great Lakes aquaculture

WITU and Trout Unlimited in general have been active in supporting a bill which would prohibit net-pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes at the federal level. Representatives of WITU and the national office have lobbied in support of this bill to provide for the protection of the Great Lakes, and the huge fishing economy, estimated at \$7 billion annually, that the Great Lakes provide.

We will continue to keep our members updated regarding this matter as the bill moves through the Congress.

A full report regarding this issue is on page six.

Support the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

It is well settled that political regime change brings policy change. Such is the case at the federal political level, where the recent presidential election and its results have led to some significant proposed changes in the federal budget.

Perhaps the most significant proposed change currently impacting WITU is funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). GLRI commenced in 2010, and provides funding to “protect and restore the largest system of fresh surface water in the world – the Great Lakes.” GLRI’s Action Plan calls for funds to be distributed to remediate Great Lakes areas of concern, prevent and control the spread of invasive species, reduce nutrient runoff and associated algae blooms, and to restore habitat in order to benefit native Great Lakes species.

These objectives clearly fall within Trout Unlimited’s mission, and the funds that GLRI provides have directly aided the retention of staff in northern Wisconsin who work to reconnect streams, as well as fish passage efforts on the Menomonee River near Miller Park in Milwaukee, which have reopened more than 25 miles of stream to fish passage.

GLRI funds have also resulted in numerous toxin removals such as on the Sheboygan River, as well as invasive species control, notably Asian carp, nearshore health, wetland and habitat restoration, and other projects right here in Wisconsin. Expenditures in support of these objectives is a sound investment, as

the value of the Great Lakes fishery has been estimated at \$7 billion annually.

These projects put locals to work and bring funds to local economies. GLRI funds also reduce local financial burdens. In the north woods, for example, when GLRI funds help rebuild stream road crossings using best available scientific techniques, such crossings are engineered to outlast “ordinary” crossings, such that local governments will have reduced future repair and replacement costs.

The current proposed federal budget would reduce GLRI funding by 97 percent, from \$300 million to \$10 million. WITU, as well as Trout Unlimited’s national office, via its Great Lakes advocacy organizer, have lobbied Wisconsin’s federal delegation in Washington, D.C, and here in Wisconsin, regarding this issue.

Historically, GLRI funding has enjoyed a good deal of bipartisan support across the Great Lakes region. In fact, in a February 2017 letter, nearly all of Wisconsin’s Congressional members signed a letter in support of GLRI funding, including Representatives Sean Duffy, Mike Gallagher, Glenn Grothman, Ron Kind, Gwen Moore, Mark Pocan, and F. James Sensenbrenner. And again this year several Wisconsin legislators from both sides of the aisle have expressed support for continued GLRI funding.

WITU urges its members to contact their representatives and senators in Congress and urge them to support the full refunding of GLRI at \$300 million, without reduction, and to thank them for their current and historical support of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative.

Demand periodic review of high-capacity well permits

At the state legislative level, many reading this will recall that last year both Wisconsin’s Senate and its Assembly passed bills which were aimed at allowing currently permitted high-capacity well owners to move, rebuild, repair and transfer high-capacity wells without review by the DNR. In effect, the bills provided permit holders with perpetual permits, not subject to further review, regardless of changing circumstances, science or water levels.

The bills which passed both houses were slightly different in their form, however. But due to the legislature closing, the bills did not advance for signature.

In the last legislative sessions, WITU engaged in significant lobbying and advocacy in opposition to these bills. Quite simply, WITU believed then (as it does now) that all high-capacity well permits should be periodically reviewed. Science progresses, and permits issued 20 years ago are based on outdated science. Using the best available science to understand how high-capacity wells are interacting with one another, and how they are impacting ground and surface water, is simply common sense. That goal can only be accomplished through the periodic review of permitted wells.

Likewise, having periodic review of high-capacity well permits ensures that all users have certainty regarding their water uses: From agriculture to property owners to businesses to municipal water systems to sportsmen. That certainty will ensure that each user groups’

multiple-billion dollar economic impacts continue to benefit our state, its jobs and its people.

WITU views agriculture as a significant partner statewide. Some of our best projects are done hand in hand with the agricultural community, and WITU is sensitive to the idea that a failed well could result in the loss of a crop if is not repaired or replaced quickly, without a lengthy re-permitting process. Right now, such instances offer one of the few opportunities for the review of existing well permits, however. The workable solution is to simply allow such repairs and replacements so long as periodic review is in place.

In the current Wisconsin legislative session, this bill has now returned as Senate Bill 76. By the time of this printing, WITU leadership and advocacy committee members will have traveled to Madison and testified at a hearing regarding this bill, and requested that periodic review be added as a component.

As most reading this column are also aware, email and social media blasts have been issued on this bill, and we urge our members to contact their state senators and representatives, and to urge them to support adding periodic review as a component of Senate Bill 76, and to urge them to vote against it in the event that periodic review is not added.

Say no to splitting the DNR

In late 2016 WITU was alerted to a proposal to split the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The lengthy plan, when distilled to its essence, would split DNR’s environmental and wildlife management responsibilities and move them into newly created agencies: A Department of Fish and Wildlife and a Department of Environmental Protection. In addition, other functions that DNR has traditionally performed would be moved into already existing agencies, with state park, trails and southern state forests being transferred to the Department of Tourism, and northern forestry operations being transferred to the Department of Agriculture, Trade

and Consumer Protection, and with stewardship operations being transferred to the Department of Administration.

WITU is generally concerned that creating new agencies will be expensive and create multiple sets of regulations which generally govern the same resources and their use. Such new regulations would be subject to different agencies’ interpretations and could create the potential for agency gridlock. This could potentially result in red tape and bureaucracy which would not benefit Wisconsin’s coldwater resources.

Moreover, at a time when funding for trout stream and coldwater work grows ever more slim, creating two agencies and involving three others seems destined to be more expensive than the current model already in place. And, the transition costs alone could be significant. WITU strongly opposes any outcome which would reduce either the protections afforded to our coldwater resources, or funding sources directed to them and their improvement.

Finally, the DNR recently com-

pleted a significant reorganization effort aimed at streamlining its operations and disposing of unused assets. WITU believes that it makes sense to allow these reorganization efforts to be put into practice, and observe their results over a reasonable number of years before engaging in another potentially unnecessary and potentially expensive reorganization effort.

WITU urges its members to make this position clear to their state legislators, and to oppose splitting the DNR.

Opposition to general permit small-scale dredging

In last year’s legislative session, an attempt was made to allow unpermitted dredging in navigable waterways, as part of Assembly Bill 600, which WITU rallied in opposition to. That issue was not signed into law, but now the issue has been moved from the legislature to the DNR as a rulemaking proposal.

The issue currently being considered by the DNR is whether rules for dredging of up to 25 cubic yards should be changed and allowed under a general permit. As the name implies, a general permit is one which sets statewide standards which may be applied in checklist fashion. If the checklist of standards are met, dredging may occur under the permit.

Under current individual permit standards, however, DNR must carefully consider proposed dredging and its impacts on fish, wildlife and habitat, and the unique circumstances that each requested instance of dredging presents. It is fundamental that all water bodies are different, and that all water bodies present unique issues, concerns and wildlife impacts. As much as 90 percent of a water body’s life is found in its near-shore zone, where dredging would occur, and the loosening of sediment and possibly contaminants from such areas could have devastating impacts on stream health, unless carefully monitored and permitted.

In addition, the very bottom of navigable lakes and streams which would be dredged is subject to Wisconsin’s Public Trust Doctrine, and intended to be protected by DNR for the benefit of all citizens, and not only adjoining landowners.

For these reasons WITU’s leadership has registered in opposition to changing current rules which govern dredging, and to placing such processes under a general permit.

Inland aquaculture

In the last legislative session, a bill was introduced making changes to regulations regarding aquaculture facilities in Wisconsin. WITU very actively engaged legislators regarding this bill, and was able to work with the bill’s sponsors and authors to develop several amendments. The amendments ensure that changes made regarding water diversions applied only to existing facilities, and existing diversions (such that the changes were not prospective, but only for already-licensed facilities).

See *ISSUES*, page 26

In effect, the bills provided permit holders with perpetual permits, not subject to further review, regardless of changing circumstances, science or water levels.

ISSUES, from page 25

Second, the amendments ensured that a portion of the bill which would have redefined aquaculture as agriculture, such that aquaculture facilities would have been available to receive state-paid cost sharing on best-management mitigation practices, was removed. Third, the amendments made clear that grading along stream banks would only be allowed when necessary to maintain existing, already-permitted aquaculture facilities.

Ultimately, last year's bill did not pass through the session.

Effectively the same bill has returned this session, however, and WITU worked to ensure that its changes were maintained in the bill. In fact, limitations on water diversions were narrowed even further, to apply in only a limited geographical range. Other conservation organizations similarly worked to secure changes and amendments. WITU thanks the legislature for hearing our concerns and working to address them in the bill.

As present, the bill has not yet advanced through either house, and WITU will continue to do its best to protect Wisconsin TU's interests, and to ensure that we are able to achieve the greatest protections for our coldwater streams as possible. We thank all of our members who actively engaged their representatives on this issue.

Support angler crossings of railroad tracks

In 2005, a large railroad bill package was passed. Within that bill, unfortunately, was a seemingly simple change which made it illegal to cross railroad tracks at non-designated crossings. To outdoor enthusiasts this change had a major impact, as it made it illegal to cross tracks in

the pursuit of hunting, trapping and fishing activities.

We have found little information about what prompted this change, but it does not appear to be aimed at protecting fisherman from train-versus-angler accidents. We have not been able to find a recorded instance of such an event occurring. Instead, it was simply based on an unanticipated negative result.

Late last session a bill was introduced aimed at restoring angler access across train tracks when in the pursuit of fishing opportunities. WITU strongly supported that bill as access is a key issue for our organization. Unfortunately, the bill did not pass out of the legislature.

No bill is currently in the Wisconsin Legislature regarding this is-

sue, but it is anticipated that one will be introduced. WITU will once again strongly support the restoration of angler access across train tracks, and will call upon its members to contact their legislators regarding this matter when the time is right.

Conclusion

It is patently obvious that we ask our members to engage more often now than ever before, and that our members continue to answer our call. Members are urged to be polite, to thank their representatives for their service to the State of Wisconsin, and to respectfully request support plainly and succinctly.

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited thanks all of its members for their activity in support of our causes, and for their continued vocal efforts to protect our coldwater resources and their fisheries. The work that our members perform is good not only for our trout streams, but for our state and its people.

Public Hearing on SB 76 & AB 105**A report from the all-day hearing on high-cap wells**

By Mike Stapleton

SB 76 and AB 105 were the subject of a public hearing in Madison on March 15 at a joint meeting of the Senate Committee on Labor and Regulatory Reform and the Assembly Committee on Agriculture. A packed hearing room spent the entire day hearing the testimony of both supporters and opponents, as well as the many questions committee members had for those testifying.

Supporters of the bills included growers, processors, equipment suppliers, agri-business associations and others. They stressed the need for certainty in the review process that is triggered when a high-capacity well breaks down. They told the committee that in the middle of a hot spell, crop loss can occur within 24 hours upon loss of a functioning well.

Opponents, on the other hand, asked for certainty with respect to water levels in lakes and streams,

their own water supplies, protection of property values for lake properties, and voiced strong objections to creating what was described as a permanent private ownership interest in a public resource while the water rights of others were being diminished.

WITU Vice Chair Mike Kuhn testified as to our position that although the current permit system results in an unnecessarily high level of uncertainty at the time of well failure, a periodic review at a specific point in time is still necessary to allow for adjustments based on science as technology, water use and our understanding of the resource change over time.

A number of people speaking in opposition also maintained that periodic reviews were essential for resource protection. Environmental groups including the River Alliance of Wisconsin, Clean Wisconsin, Friends of the Central Sands and others voiced similar concerns.

George Craft, Professor of Water

Resources at UW—Stevens Point, said that the proposed study areas were "piecemeal" and needed to be made more relevant, a concern voiced by numerous others. He also said the bill, by eliminating reviews, would "take away the one tool that the DNR currently has."

Senator Mark Miller (D-Monona) criticized the lack of cumulative impact review in his testimony, and said that if the Legislature is going to depend on the actions of individuals to defend the Public Trust Doctrine, then "we have failed. It's our job." He said that water is not a property right and the bills are a license to use a public resource for personal gain.

Edie Ehlert of the Crawford Stewardship Project, speaking in

opposition, summed up her comments, and those of many others in attendance, by saying "We want water and we want predictability. What we need is management."

In a call to the office of Sen. Stephen Nass, R-Whitewater, Chair of the Committee on Labor and Regulatory Reform, on Monday, March 20, a staff member stated that an Executive Session would take place within the next week to week and a half. No date has been chosen at this time.

Mike Stapleton is Vice President of the Also Leopold Chapter and a member of the WITU Legislative Committee.

...water is not a property right and the bills are a license to use a public resource for personal gain.
Mark Miller (D-Monona)

TROUT STAMPS, from page 1

increase each group felt was necessary. He has compiled the data, and is now leading the advocacy for the fee increases.

Trout Unlimited has recommended that the trout stamp fee should be increased to \$15. That is very much in line with other states and would raise an estimated additional \$718,000 annually for habitat work. It should also be pointed out that trout stamp fees, by state statute, must be housed in a dedicated account and may only be used for trout habitat work. The account, by law, cannot be raided for other uses. If trout anglers are going to pay additional stamp fees, it is important for them to know that their contributions will only be used for trout habitat work.

The \$5 increase was discussed a couple of years ago at a Wisconsin State Council meeting under past chair Henry Koltz. There was near unanimous support at that time for the fee increase, and the need has become even greater since then.

At this time the governor's office has been informed about the desire to implement fee increases, and members of the legislature have

been informed as well. Champions for this effort who would sponsor legislation to implement the new fees are being sought, and it is the hope of all groups that bills will be introduced and passed in both houses of the legislature and signed by the governor.

We are going to need the assistance of our membership to get the new fees in place. There are certainly legislators who won't look favorably on raising fees. Legislators are going to need to hear from many of us who feel the fees are necessary to continue conservation programs at a high level. The State Council will be encouraging the membership to call or email their representatives to let them know that the fee increase is necessary.

The question about fee increases is also going to be on the ballot at the Spring Conservation Hearings. We will need membership to turn out at the spring hearings and support this question.

While having to pay more is not something anyone loves to do, an extra \$5 spread over an entire trout season seems to me like a small price to pay to keep the trout habitat programs in Wisconsin operating at a high level.

Check out 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 also have a Wisconsin Trout Unlimited State Council "group" on Facebook for people to share upcoming event info and conservation-related news.

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Driftless Rambler

With Duke Welter
TUDARE Outreach Coordinator

A new trout in the mix?

It was bound to happen eventually, a new trout in the mix. It's been observed in a couple of streams around this part of the state, but hasn't shown up in published articles yet.

We've seen quite a few mentions from Driftless Area anglers of the tiger trout they've been catching, some up in the 11-13-inch range, long considered trophy size for these brook-brown hybrids. Ma Nature is doing her own tinkering with trout and related species. You'll most likely find them on streams with healthy reproducing populations of brooks and browns, which both spawn in the same parts of streams during the same late fall period.

On top of that, we've got so many people tinkering with trout these days. For many years in the east, the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's hatchery staff has experimented with various trout hybrids. They've stocked splake, a hybrid of brook trout and lake trout, which is what Wisconsin and Minnesota stock in their Great Lakes. They've also stocked tigers, and the oddball trout of them all, the "Golden Rainbow" or "Palomino Rainbow."

The Palomino is a descendant of a hatchery rainbow from West Virginia spawned in 1954, a genetic coloration mutant with a gold-orange color. I've never seen one in the water, but the pictures make it look like one of those Japanese Koi carp species, standing out among a group of normally-colored rainbows.

We hear occasionally in Wisconsin

about reproducing rainbows. In the Brule River, they began to be stocked in 1895 or so, and have thrived in that river and out in Lake Superior, where they grow big and silver and feisty. In Central Wisconsin, biologists have reported several Sand County streams where rainbows reproduce naturally.

So, I guess, it shouldn't have been a surprise when, a couple of days ago, I ran into this guy in a bar, out near the river. "You a trout fisherman?" he asked, looking at me from his bar stool while sipping a warm drink. He was looking at my waders, I suspect.

"Yeah, but it's not too exciting today," I said.

"What're you chasing?"

"Well, I like to catch brookies, but browns are usually more likely to hit this time of year. Not much today, though. Maybe the water's still a bit cool."

"Ever chase them colored trouts, on that creek that flows into the big river?" he asked. He didn't name it.

That piqued my interest.

"What kind of colors?"

"Well, lots. They've got those pink rainbow cheeks and a line down their sides, but they've got the spots and the orange belly of a German brown. Kind of colorful."

"What size do they grow to?"

"Well, the biggest I've caught was 19 inches, caught out of that little jump-across stream. But you can catch them six inches, too."

It was time to get his beer refilled, and my curiosity satisfied. I asked the bartender to fill him up,

"They've got those pink rainbow cheeks and a line down their sides, but they've got the spots and the orange belly of a German brown. Kind of colorful."



and let my curiosity wander. Was somebody experimenting with different species in a back-coulee pond? Was the DNR dropping their experiments from black helicopters? Or had some other strain of rainbows gotten introduced to the mix?

"Where do they come from?" I asked.

"Well, nobody's really sure, but I've got me a theory," he said, sipping a little foam off the Driftless Dirt Brown in his glass.

"What I think, y'see, is that somebody who's got a place with a pond way up in that coulee got to thinking, 'well, those Brule River steelheads spawn in the fall, at least some of them. Why couldn't I get them crossed with a brown trout and get them established in this little stream? They might thrive here, if I don't let the word get out. Maybe he caught some, and brought 'em down here in his cooler, and got them into his spring pond. And then maybe he added a few local browns for their genetics, and whaddya know: They reproduced. And eventually he let the little ones out into the stream, and they kept on reproducing."

"It would have been a dandy secret, if it could've been kept secret. I'm thinking those DNR guys know about 'em, because they come by and shock all these streams every so often. And a few years after those fish got out, the DNR regs changed

to no-kill on that stream, and a bunch of other little tribbs along that part of the river. What's that tell you? Also, I heard about it from the postal lady; she delivers to both that somebody and to me."

Since then, I've been poking around, asking a quiet question here and there. It's been fruitful. You find an unpublished monograph here, a post on a thread there, just a whisper. The taxonomists are puzzling over the scientific name, though with hybrids they usually refrain from assigning one. If they did, one might suggest, perhaps, *onchorhynchus trutta driftlessii*.

Did I ask him The Question? Nope. For me, the fun will be in the hunt. And this season, beginning the first of this month, promises to be a lot of fun.

Economic survey results coming soon

Stay tuned. An updated economic impact study of the value of recreational angling in the Driftless Area will be released shortly. Keep an eye out in your local and regional media and TU websites for the news on the dollars anglers bring to the region and the number of jobs they support.

Update on spring pond brook trout DNA study

By Robbert Tabbert

The UW—Stevens Point Genetic Lab, with Brian Sloss and Keith Turnquest, are in the process of running the DNA on the brook trout clips from the Willow Creek area in Price County, which we collected last summer.

We are in the process of planning our summer 2017 spring pond brook trout field collecting and clipping program. We need your help. We plan on concentrating on spring ponds that drain into Lake Superior. If any of you have information about the location of spring ponds that have a population of non-stocked brook trout, and which drain into Lake Superior, please share the location and information with us. We need your help. Contact me at rtaab@msn.com or 337 781 3650,

We currently have spring pond brook trout DNA data from spring ponds that drain into Lake Michigan and into the Mississippi River drainage. To complete our data we need clips from the Lake Superior drainage.

The IFFF has funded this study with conservation grants, totaling \$4,500. These monies went directly to the UWSP Genetic Lab to pay for the DNA processing. All field collecting and clipping expenses were paid for by the many volunteers.

I owe a debt of gratitude to the IFFF for their financial support, to Brian Sloss and Keith Turnquest at the UWSP Genetic Lab, for their DNA expertise and to the numerous brook trout spring pond field collectors who helped me with this fascinating study.

An exploration geologist, Robbert Tabbert is a life member of TU and IFFF, chair of IFFF's Coldwater Committee, brook trout DNA, senior conservation advisor to IFFF's board. He spends his winters in Louisiana and his summers in Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin. Contact him at rtaab@msn.com.



Brian Glensinski

TU LEADERS MEET WITH STATE LEGISLATORS

Wisconsin TU members participated in a legislative priority briefing hosted by the Wisconsin Sportsmen's Coalition, which was held with state legislators who are members of the Legislative Sportsmen's Caucus. The priorities laid out by the coalition included: protection of fish and wildlife habitat, Knowles-Nelson Stewardship funding, public land access and DNR funding.

TU members wrapped up their day by meeting with state legislators to advocate for trout stamp fee increases and further protection of public land and access." Pictured (left to right) are TU Great Lakes Organizer Taylor Ridderbusch, Tom Lager, Mike Kuhr, Staush Gruszynski and Matt Krueger.

Spring 2017 Update: Friends of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

The 2016 Friends of Wisconsin TU fundraising campaign was another huge success. Through your generous donations we raised more than \$14,000, continuing this grant program's ability to financially support an amazing amount of habitat work.

We recently awarded grants totalling \$8,200 to support DNR fishery crews that do maintenance, brushing and bundling on miles of streams each year. Also, we awarded a grant to the Wisconsin Clearwater Chapter for maintenance of previous stream restoration projects.

This month we'll be mailing our 2017 donation campaign letter. Please consider making a generous donation.

I encourage you to get out this year and enjoy the bounty of our healthy, productive trout streams. All across the state, so many of these streams have directly benefited from the Friends of Wisconsin TU program.

*Doug Brown, Chairman
Friends of Wisconsin TU*



Friends grants support DNR LTE crews like this one with Doug Weber, Kyle Siebers, DJ Loken.

Providing habitat improvement grants since 1991. The latest projects are...

\$1,200 to Wild Rivers for crews in the Cheq./Nicolet Nat. Forests in 2017

\$2,000 to Antigo Chapter for DNR brushing crew in 2017

\$2,000 to Wis. Clearwaters Chapter for project maintenance in 2017

\$2,000 to the Central Wis. Chapter for the Wild Rose Crew in 2017

\$2,000 to Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter for Pompey Pillar, 2016

\$2,000 to Wolf River Chapter for Antigo habitat crew in 2017

\$1,000 to Marinette Chapter for habitat crew for the Cheq./Nicolet forests 2017

\$2,000 to Green Bay Chapter for a habitat crew 2015

\$2,000 to SEWTU for Little Willow Creek in Richland County in 2016

Here are our Friends of Wisconsin TU

- Jason Anderson Mukwonago WI
- Edwin Barnes Middleton WI
- Charles Barnhill Madison WI
- Jim Bayorgeon Appleton WI
- Jolene Berg Chippewa Falls WI
- John and Susan Bleimehl Verona WI
- Stephen Born Madison WI
- Allon Bostwick Port Washington WI
- Maxwell Burgert Neenah WI
- Rick Christopherson Norwalk WI
- Andrew Cook II Sister Bay WI
- Bruce Davidson Wauwatosa WI
- Mike Duren Mazomanie WI
- Ed Eggers Genoa WI
- Jim Fleisch Fox Point, WI
- Jerome Fox Two Rivers WI
- D. James Fruit Jr. Hartland WI
- Scott Geboy Fox Point WI
- Dan Geddes Appleton WI
- John Gribb Mount Horeb WI
- Gordon Grieshaber Mineral Point WI
- Dean Hagness MD Custer WI
- Ashton & Stephen Hawk Madison WI
- William Heart Ashland WI
- Brian Hegge Rhinelander WI
- Wally Heil De Pere WI
- Bob Hellyer Boulder Junction WI
- Walter Hellyer Egg Harbor WI
- Charles Hodulik Madison WI
- Jeff Jackson Oconto Falls WI
- Charles Jorgenson Oconomowoc WI
- John Kenealy III Waukesha WI
- Lane Kistler Milwaukee WI
- Ralph Klassy Phillips WI
- Mark Kraft Madison WI
- Barb and Joe Kruse LaCrosse WI
- Joseph Kubale Dane WI
- Thomas Lukas Manitowoc WI
- Thomas and Larissa Lyon Janesville WI
- Douglas MacFarland Dousman WI
- Brian Madsen Ellsworth WI
- Anna Magnin Marshfield WI
- Kevin Mahaney Middleton WI
- Kim McCarthy Green Bay WI
- Austin McGuan Green Bay WI

- David Menke Bristol WI
- Cris Meyer Middleton WI
- Steven Miller Sun Prairie WI
- Steve Musser Middleton WI
- Herb Oechler Wauwatosa WI
- Cheryl and Winston Ostrow De Pere WI
- Donald Persons Janesville WI
- Randall Rake Helena MT
- Ron Rellatz Merton WI
- Thomas Rogers Princeton WI
- Tom Ryan Whitefish Bay WI
- Michael San Dretto Neenah WI
- Lisa and Todd Scheel St. Germain WI
- Jeff and Mary Schmoeger Cot. Grove WI
- James Schommer Lodi WI
- James School Kaukauna WI
- Jim and Marie Seder New Berlin WI
- Robert Selk Madison WI
- John Shillinglaw Madison WI
- George Shinnors Antigo WI
- Brent Sittlow Hudson WI
- Michael Staggs Poynette WI
- Mike Stary New Richmond WI
- Gary Stoychoff Green Bay WI
- Rick Szymialis Waupaca WI
- Julie & Todd Templen Dubuque IA
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