



Wisconsin Trout

Winter 2019

Banquet Time!: WITU's most important fundraiser February 2 in Oshkosh

Wisconsin TU members encouraged to attend and support the TU mission.

By Mike Kuhr, Council Vice-Chair and 2019 Banquet Committee Chair

The 2019 Annual Meeting and State Council Banquet on Saturday, February 2 is almost here. Please save the date and plan to join us in Oshkosh. We will once again return to the Best Western Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center.

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

The Banquet is our Council's biggest fundraiser of the year. The Banquet's success will allow the Council to continue serving local chapters, fund programs like the Youth Camp and Women's Fly Fishing Clinic, and help administer our Friends of Wisconsin and Watershed Access grant programs.

Tickets are \$35 each (See ad on back page). You may also purchase tickets online at <http://witu.bpt.me>. While we do plan for a few walk-ups every year, ordering tickets in advance or making arrangements to pay at the door and RSVP'ing to mikek.trout@yahoo.com are highly encouraged. This event is open to the public so please consider bringing family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. All are welcome.

Doors open at 4:30 p.m. and

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

The Council would like to thank all of the chapters and individuals who donate prizes for the event. Your generosity makes for a successful banquet and an unforgettable evening for our guests. This year we've assembled more than \$15,000 worth of prizes and we're eager to give them away!

Chapter leaders should plan on attending the State Council meeting earlier in the day to discuss Council business. The meeting will start promptly at 9 a.m. and run until 3 p.m. Please RSVP to Council Chair Linn Beck at chlbeck@att.net if you plan to attend the meeting so we can prepare for lunch.

The Council will also be sponsoring a Women's Fly Fishing Clinic for beginners during the day on Saturday, February 2. This free clinic will run from 9:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Registration is now full, but if you would like to be put on a waiting list for upcoming clinics, please



The Oberstadts

COUNCIL AWARDS AWAIT

Wisconsin TU will recognize a variety of deserving people and organizations at the upcoming WITU Banquet Saturday, February 2 in Oshkosh.

contact Heidi Oberstadt at heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com. These events are a great way to introduce trout stream ecology and the importance of TU's conservation work to a new audience.

Much planning has already taken place and the Council is indebted to the work of the Banquet Committee. An event of this scale simply wouldn't happen without the

efforts of committee members Scott Allen, Linn Beck, Todd Franklin, Paul Kruse, Mike Kuhr and Heidi Oberstadt.

We're focused on planning a fun, entertaining and successful banquet. We hope you'll join us in Oshkosh on February 2 to celebrate cold, clean, fishable water in Wisconsin.

WITU focusing on Stewardship Program, stamp increase

By Mike Kuhr, Council Vice Chair

As the 2018 election cycle comes to a close, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited is looking forward to getting to work on our top priorities: Reauthorization of the stewardship program and a \$5 increase in both the Inland and Great Lakes Trout Stamps. Both of these items will need to be included in the state budget.

Election results show Wisconsin returning to a period of divided government. Democrat Tony Evers will serve as governor while Republicans will maintain their stronghold on both houses of the legislature.

Luckily for us, cold, clean, fishable water is not a partisan issue. Our coldwater fisheries issues tend to cut across party lines.

Stewardship program reauthorization

Our number-one priority, reauthorization of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, has received plenty of bi-partisan support in the past. Recent polls show more than 90 percent of voters support reauthorization. It was last renewed in 2011 for a 10-year period at \$86 million per year. That level of funding has dwindled to \$33 million in recent years.

Wisconsin TU and our partners in the conservation community are asking that stewardship program be renewed for a 10-year period at \$50 million per year. This modest investment will go a long way in ensuring public access to quality outdoor recreation areas for generations to

come.

The Wisconsin State Legislature created the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program in 1989 to preserve valuable natural areas and wildlife habitat, protect water quality and fisheries and expand opportunities for outdoor recreation.

According to the DNR, "The conservation and recreation goals of the stewardship program are

achieved through the acquisition of land and easements, development of recreational facilities, and restoration of wildlife habitat."

Trout anglers should be familiar with one important part of the Stewardship Program – the Streambank Protection Program. The DNR has

See **STEWARDSHIP**, page 17

Diversity/Women's Initiative Committee seeks members

The Wisconsin Council's newly formed Diversity/Women's Initiative Committee is seeking members who are interested in developing a more diverse TU membership base including women and minorities. If you are interested in being involved in this crucial effort, please contact Heidi Oberstadt at Heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com.



Chairman's Beck's Final Column

Leadership role was inspirational

I think back to when I was 18 and my parents talking about how time flies and it keeps going faster and faster as the years pass. Man, they weren't kidding.

Serving as your Council Chair for the last four years was an amazing opportunity, and I thank all of you for putting me in this position. It's been an honor to serve as your chair. Words can't describe how I feel. My term as chair will end at the next meeting in February.

It seems like yesterday that the adventure started, and now four years have come and gone. It has been a wonderful experience working for such a great organization. Being involved and making decisions that help our watersheds was more than I could ask for. The outdoors and everything that encompasses it has been a passion of mine forever, and it's been an honor to improve things the best I can.

The people I have met in TU, the DNR and many conservation groups have been inspiring.

When I began as chair about four years ago, our natural resources were under attack by our legislature. I asked former Chairs Kim McCarthy and Henry Koltz if this was going to be the norm. They said they had never seen anything like it and didn't know what to expect. Fortunately, TU members pulled together, and we weathered the storm. We didn't succeed across the board, but we did get some wins, so it wasn't all bad. I learned a great deal about myself during this period, and I'm a stronger person for it.

I know I have said it a lot during my term and I am going to say it again: Being in leadership with Trout Unlimited is an incredible experience. If you would have asked me 12 years ago when I started to

really get involved with the Central Wisconsin Chapter that I would have ended up here, I would have said that you were kidding me. I know being in leadership isn't for everybody, but you never know until you jump in with both feet and try.

Life is funny and throws a lot of curves as you venture through. If someone asks you to be involved, maybe they see something in you that you might not see in yourself. All I can say is that my experience was over the top in all aspects. I know we all share a passion for conservation and fishing. When you ask yourself if you want to stand up for what you believe, the answer becomes clear: Do what your heart feels, and the rest will fall into place.

Not everyone is ready or wants to take on a leadership role, but there are other ways to get involved in TU. For example, consider representing your chapter by attending a Council meeting. Our next meeting coincides with our annual fundraising banquet on February 2. Banquet proceeds help us fund our efforts involving coldwater conservation, youth, veterans, advocacy and more.

Consider attending or helping out at one of many chapter or council events. Habitat work days, stream monitoring, advocacy efforts, youth events, veterans programs or fundraising activities are all important aspects of TU, and we need volunteers to keep these programs and events going. Please consider helping where you can.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to serve you. The important thing to remember is the journey never ends.

*Tight Lines
Linn Beck*

Support Wisconsin TU and get your Wisconsin TU license plates now. Go to:

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

Support TU and show it off!



Hunters, trappers, anglers unite on wetlands

Wetlands are some of the hardest working and most ecologically valuable features on Wisconsin's landscape. Most take thousands of years to develop naturally. Unfortunately, here in Wisconsin, we have lost nearly half of our wetlands since the time of European settlement.

The approximately five million acres of remaining wetlands in Wisconsin provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat, reduce flooding, filter out pollution and recharge surface and groundwater supplies.

The hunting, fishing, conservation and trapping community recognizes the importance of protecting these wetland ecosystems, and has formed the Sportsmen for Wetlands Coalition to raise awareness among the general public and policymakers.

The mission of the coalition is to engage Wisconsin's hunting, angling, trapping and broader conservation communities in proactive and collaborative wetlands education and conservation advocacy. These efforts are designed to advance a common goal of wetland conservation by member organizations through education, communication and policy development assistance with local, state and federal elected officials and policymakers.

The coalition's work is strictly

non-partisan and relies on the active engagement of the broad constituency of individuals and organizations who value and wish to conserve, restore and manage Wisconsin's wetlands for the use, enjoyment and benefit of current and future generations.

Founding member organizations of the coalition include Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever Wisconsin, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, Wisconsin Wetlands Association and the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation. These founding organizations each have one representative on the Coalition Steering Committee.

The coalition goals are to:

- Raise awareness of the ecological and economic importance of wetlands.
- Promote the outdoor recreational value of wetlands.
- Educate and advise Wisconsin leaders about how wetlands benefit their communities.
- Cultivate a more collaborative and strategic approach to conservation, restoration and management of Wisconsin's wetland resources.
- Increase engagement and investments in wetlands conservation.

Chapters are encouraged to join the coalition. For membership info contact sportsmenforwetlands@gmail.com

Connect with the Sportsmen For Wetlands Coalition on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/SportsmenForWetlands/>

WITU released the following statement at the state capitol in Madison last month:

"Wisconsin Trout Unlimited has more than 5,000 members across the state working to ensure that future generations have access to cold, clean, fishable water. Our members value the recreational opportunities that the woods and waters of Wisconsin offer. We realize that these opportunities are greatly enhanced

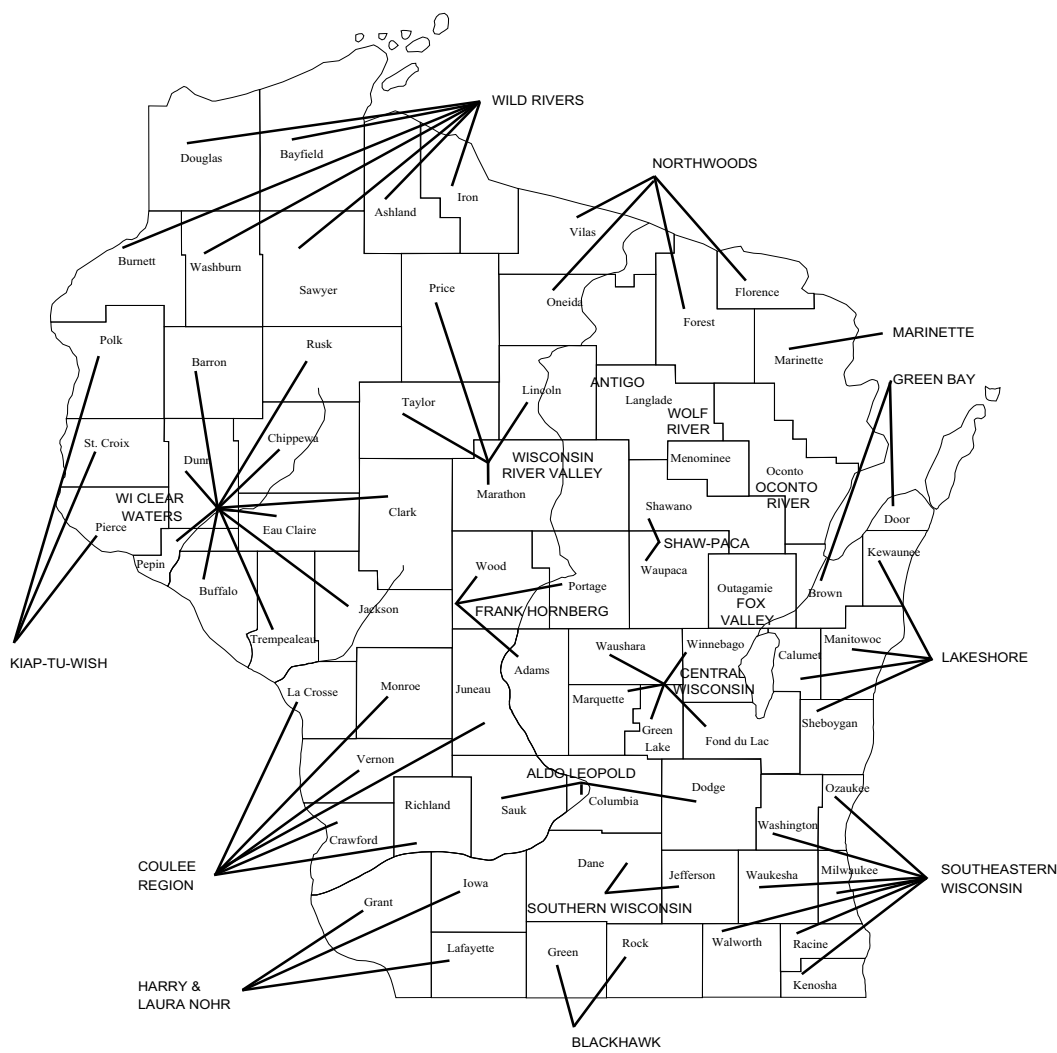
by the ecological benefits of wetlands found throughout our state.

Sport fishing in Wisconsin is big business. Recreational fishing in Wisconsin generates more than \$2.2 billion of annual economic impact. This economic engine runs on abundant, clean water. In fact, Wisconsin is home to more than 13,000 miles of trout streams. These streams rely heavily on wetlands to provide a steady supply of cold, clean water that our trout need to thrive.

WITU is proud to be a founding member of this coalition, and we look forward to working with our partners to raise awareness of the importance of wetlands among the general public and with policymakers here in the Capitol."



Wisconsin TU Chapters, Presidents, and Websites



Visit the Wisconsin State Council's web site at wicouncil.tu.org, or find us on Facebook.

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Veterans Services Partnership Coordinator: Mike Kuhr

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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:

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State Council Officers

Executive Committee includes officers and vice chairs

Linn Beck, Chair

Mike Kuhr, Vice Chair

Tom Lager, Secretary

Gary Stoychoff, Treasurer

Oneida County voters say “no” to sulfide mine

By Allison Werner,
River Alliance of Wisconsin

Thanks to the hard work of Oneida County residents, business owners and sporting groups, including the Northwoods Chapter of TU, 62 percent of the voters in Oneida County said they do not want a sulfide mine in the Town of Lynne.

The referendum question from the Oneida County Board during the November 6 ballot read as follows: “After performing their due diligence, should Oneida County allow leasing of county-owned lands in the Town of Lynne for the purpose of metallic mineral exploration, prospecting, bulk sampling and mining?”

Just like in all of the other communities that have faced potential sulfide mines, local advocates stepped up to educate their friends and neighbors about the issue and the risks this type of mining would bring.

Business owners and homeowners in Oneida County created a local campaign called Protect the Willow, named for the beautiful river and

flowage that would be impacted if the Lynne Deposit is mined.

The Lynne Deposit is only a half mile away from the Willow River. Community members know how vital these waterways are to the \$305 million tourism industry in Oneida County. Healthy and scenic lakes and rivers are one of the main reasons locals and visitors alike have chosen to spend their time and money in Oneida County.

While some Oneida County Board Supervisors are on record that they are taking this vote as a mandate to not pursue sulfide mining in the Town of Lynne, other supervisors are still interested in pursuing sulfide mining.

Protect the Willow, River Alliance and other conservation organizations, will continue to work hard to make sure the outcome of the referendum is upheld by the Oneida County Board. It is equally important for other communities that want to protect their waters from sulfide mining pollution to stay vigilant and learn from this and other sulfide mining campaigns in the region.



WILLOW LAKE, ONEIDA COUNTY

The Lynne Deposit west of Rhinelander is located near the Willow River, which flows through Willow Lake, above, and the Willow Reservoir.

Back Forty Mine update

On November 13, the Coalition to SAVE the Menominee River, Inc. filed a lawsuit in federal court seeking review of the federal government’s handling of the wetlands permit for the proposed Back Forty Mine.

As has been well publicized, the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers have thus far delegated final permitting authority to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality despite the fact that the proposed Back Forty Mine would be located within 50 yards of the Menominee River in Michigan, and an environmental assessment completed as part of the application process determined that there are a number of potential impacts to the Menominee River as well as to Wisconsin residents.

The EPA did lodge numerous objections to the permit but withdrew those objections at the last minute, based on Michigan’s decision to address deficiencies in the permit by imposing material conditions in the permit.

The coalition’s lawsuit is intended to address two issues: (1) Did EPA properly determine that the proposed wetland permit fell within the authority delegated to Michigan; and (2) Was EPA’s decision to withdraw its objections to the permit arbitrary and capricious, an abuse of discretion or otherwise not in accordance with applicable law.

“With so many potential issues affecting Wisconsin, decisions regarding the proposed mine shouldn’t be left to a Michigan state agency. When you have a boundary water and impacts to more than one state, the federal government should be in charge of making permitting decisions and should make those decisions in accordance with the requirements of federal law,” said Dale Burie, President of the Coalition.

The Coalition to SAVE the Menominee River, Inc. is a Wisconsin nonprofit corporation dedicated to educating and supporting citizens regarding environmental issues affecting the Menominee River, including potential impacts of the proposed Back Forty Mine.

For more information contact Dale Burie, president of the Coalition to SAVE the Menominee River, Inc. jointherivercoalition@gmail.com or 615-512-3506.

You can support these legal cases by making a donation to the Coalition to Save the Menominee River through their website, or by attending a fundraiser hosted by Tightlines Fly Fishing in Green Bay on January 12. Learn more at jointherivercoalition.org.

Extraction Handbook helps groups deal with potential mining

By Kim McCarthy

A few years ago I became chair of the TU National Leadership Council’s Mining Work Group. Our first task was to begin a project that would benefit TU chapters and councils for years to come. We decided to create a handbook for chapters and councils facing an extraction project that could potentially damage their coldwater resources.

TU is not opposed to mining, as we need materials for our modern lifestyle. But sometimes the wrong mine is proposed in the wrong location. Then, true to our mission, TU needs to take action.

Often when these issues arise, local TU chapters and councils must rise to the challenge. TU National simply doesn’t have the staff to deal with every local mining issue as it arises.

When the wrong mine in the wrong location pops up, local

groups can be caught by surprise and have difficulty organizing a response. They can be overwhelmed when battling major corporate entities.

The handbook will help prepare chapters and councils in their efforts to oppose a poor project. It covers the basics of what successful oppositions look like and the steps needed to be successful.

The Mining Workgroup Extraction Handbook was released at the last TU Annual Meeting. It is available on the TU web site at TU.org/NLC. Select “Mining” and the Mining Workgroup page will pop up. The handbook link is located at the top of the page.

Feel free to share the handbook with individuals or groups that may not be part of TU, but are opposing a potentially damaging project.

Former Council Chair Kim McCarthy serves as WITU’s National Leadership Council Representative.

TU praises legislation to address abandoned mine cleanups

WASHINGTON D.C. – A bill that would help address the chronic problem of pollution leaking from abandoned mines across the West was introduced recently in both the U.S. House and the Senate.

“Abandoned mines represent the least addressed and greatest threat to water quality in the nation,” said TU President and CEO Chris Wood.

“Abandoned mines affect fish, wildlife, drinking water supplies and thousands of communities around the nation. Congressional action can help solve the problem.”

The Good Samaritan Remediation of Orphan Hardrock Mines Act of 2018 would help address an estimated 500,000 abandoned mines (mines with no one responsible for clean-up) in the American West, 33,000 of which are known to be causing environmental damage. These mines have polluted more than 110,000 miles of streams with acid-mine drainage and metals such as mercury, lead and arsenic.

Trout Unlimited praised the renewed effort by Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner and Rep. Scott Tipton to address this chronic problem through good Samaritan legislation.

“We have more abandoned mine messes than hands to clean them up right now,” said Corey Fisher, senior policy director for Trout Unlimited’s Sportsmen Conservation Project. “We need the help of Good Samaritans like Trout Unlimited and watershed groups that are experts in river restoration to help clean up these toxic messes and restore clean water for important drinking water resources and fish and wildlife. Right now, the law says that if you touch the mess you own it forever and that’s often too much liability for a non-profit organization.”

Under current law, good Samaritan parties can and do voluntarily undertake projects to clean up

“non-point-source” abandoned mines, such as moving contaminated tailings piles away from streams. However, under the Clean Water Act, groups wanting to take on “point-source” mine cleanups—where toxic drainage is leaking directly from the mine opening—face daunting obstacles, including complicated permitting and legal liability in perpetuity for any remaining mine pollution.

The Good Samaritan cleanup bill would establish a pilot program for a permitting process administered by the EPA that would enable qualified nonprofit groups and other third parties to tackle cleanups of abandoned mine sites, in part by providing targeted, limited liability protection for so-called “Good Samaritan” groups who undertake projects designed to clean up water pollution from leaking mines.

State and federal governments have spent billions cleaning up leaking abandoned mines, but there is much more work to do. Good Samaritan legislation would help get a handle on the problem by providing an alternative to relying solely on federal Superfund cleanups, which suffer from a lack of funding and capacity.

“The objective of the Clean Water Act is to restore and maintain the integrity of our nation’s waters; Good Samaritan legislation will move us closer to that objective,” said Steve Moyer, vice president of government affairs at TU. “This bill is a great first step and we thank Senator Gardner and Representative Tipton for their efforts to help solve this vexing problem. We look forward to working with members of Congress and interested stakeholders to refine the bill and build strong, bipartisan support to pass Good Samaritan legislation.”

Visit Standup.tu.org or contact Corey Fisher at cfisher@tu.org or 406-546-2979; Steve Moyer at smoyer@tu.org or 703-284-9406.

Update on Clean Water Rule, Farm Bill, Asian carp

By Taylor Ridderbusch,
TU Great Lakes Organizer

Clean Water Rule

Trout Unlimited announced its strong opposition to the proposed rollback of protections for thousands of miles of streams and many wetlands by the Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency.

The proposal outlines an ill-conceived approach to applying the Clean Water Act by eliminating protection for thousands of stream miles in the country, many which supply drinking water for millions of Americans. It also erases protections for thousands of acres of wetlands, a critical component to functioning watersheds.

The proposal will deregulate a host of development activities, such as pipeline construction that will, over time, degrade hunting and fishing opportunities in every state in the country.

Using the Clean Water Act to protect headwater streams is especially valuable to Trout Unlimited. At a basic level, 59 percent of rivers and stream miles in the lower 48 states are intermittent or ephemeral, meaning they are small or headwater streams that do not flow year-round. However, in the drier southwest, that figure is higher. In Arizona, 96 percent of the waters are intermittent or ephemeral streams. EPA Region 8, consisting of Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas, estimates that only 17 percent of the waters in its states flow year-round.

Headwater streams contribute to

the drinking water supplies for 117 million Americans, protect communities from flooding, and provide essential fish and wildlife habitat that support a robust outdoor recreation economy worth \$887 billion.

Farm Bill

Trout Unlimited applauded the strong conservation elements of the new Farm Bill that has now passed out of the House and Senate and awaits the President's signature.

The new bill provides the following benefits:

Improves the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP), which will allow partners and producers to expand the reach and effectiveness of landscape-scale conservation projects, by cutting red tape and increasing flexibility to attract new partners and encourage innovation in restoration and conservation of trout habitat.

Makes the workhorse Environmental Quality Improvement Program (EQIP) more effective at remedying western drought by enabling western irrigation districts and canal companies to be eligible for EQIP investments in irrigation infrastructure to conserve water, improve reliability of delivery of irrigation water and improve watershed health.

Provides mandatory funding for the Small Watersheds program, PL-566, at \$50 million per year for 10 years, and makes it another flexible tool in the Farm Bill toolbox for watershed improvement and western drought remediation.

Asian Carp

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has released its final recommendation report for improvements to be made at the Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Joliet, Illinois, to prevent the movement of invasive Asian carp into the Great Lakes.

Trout Unlimited supports the final draft recommendation, which includes a few significant changes from the original Tentatively Selected Plan report, which was released in August of 2017.

The changes include water jets being replaced with bubble curtain technology. Mooring cells have been removed, and the cost has increased from \$275 million to \$777.8 million.

The USACE maintained structural and nonstructural measures including an engineered lock fitted

with an electric barrier, an acoustic barrier and an engineered channel to stop aquatic invasive species, while maintaining navigation for shipping.

TU supports the USACE recommendation as it provides for an increased array of protective measures for the Great Lakes and its coldwater fisheries. This is a step in the right direction and will allow legislators and stakeholders more time to address complete basin separation, which will ultimately be necessary to ensure that the Great Lakes are protected.

TU believes this is a justifiable expense for protecting one of the world's largest freshwater systems, which generates \$16 billion through tourism and \$7 billion via angling annually.

WITU Northeast Region chapters pledge \$45,800

By Doug Erdmann, WITU Northeast Region Vice Chair

The Northeast Region Chapters of Trout Unlimited met in December and pledged \$45,800 for 2019 projects. Chapters donating money were Antigo, Green Bay, Marinette, Northwoods, Oconto River, Wild Rivers and Wolf River. The funding included:

- \$17,500 to the DNR's Antigo office to fund a two-person habitat crew and fuel for dredging spring ponds.
- \$15,000 to the DNR's Lakewood office to fund a three-person habitat crew.
- \$6,000 to the U.S. Forest Service supporting a fisheries technician.
- \$5,000 toward the Great Lakes Stream Restoration Initiative.
- \$2,300 to the DNR's Peshtigo office to fund a water temperature monitor.

The money will be used to improve habitat on several trout streams across northern Wisconsin. Streams will be brushed to improve fishability and beaver control will continue. Two more spring ponds will be dredged and the barrier-free platforms on the South Branch Oconto will be repaired/replaced.

Many thanks to everyone who raised money and worked on the 2018 projects. Your dedication is greatly appreciated.



Support Wisconsin TU and get your Wisconsin TU license plates now. Go to:

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

Volunteers, campers sought for sixth youth camp

We are gearing up for season six of the WITU Youth Camp at the Pine Lake Bible Camp.

For the first time, the camp will be August 15-18, instead of July. With the new dates we are anticipating a more flexible eating schedule that will give us more options if the weather doesn't cooperate.

Last year we participated in a CWTU work day, which was very popular. We hope to do that again this year.

As before, we are looking for 20 youth ages 12-16. Chapters have the opportunity to send a youth to the camp and have until April 7 to register their first student. If slots are available after that, chapters will be able to send additional students. We will accept registrations for campers until August 4, unless we fill up be-

fore then. Last year the camp filled fast, so if you have a candidate in mind, please register sooner than later.

We are seeking volunteers to serve as mentors and fishing partners for Saturday night and Sunday morning. A mentor is there for each youth in case they need guidance during all the programs. The fishing partners are there to take the youth and the mentor out to the streams to help with the fishing experience. We could really use some additional fishing partners who are familiar with spin and bait fishing.

WITU will pay for your room and board if you stay at the camp. Please contact Wayne Parmley at wparmley@gmail.com or 920-540-2315; or contact Linn Beck at chlbeck@att.net or 920-216-7408.

5,000

That's how many trout enthusiasts receive a copy of Wisconsin Trout. Plus, copies are distributed at various TU events, fly shops, sporting goods stores and beyond.

Advertise in Wisconsin Trout:

Four issues a year.

1/8-page ad for an entire year, as little as \$180.

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1/2-page ad for an entire year, as little as \$633.50

Full-page ad for an entire year, as little as \$1,188

Contact Todd Franklin at toddfranklinwistrout@gmail.com.

For Sale

Vernon County cabin on trout stream

Fully finished converted pole building on 1.42 acres with frontage on Cooley Creek. Full bathroom, one bedroom, open living room/kitchen. Small work shop. Wood pellet stove. Brand new well and septic tank installed in 2017. Includes new aluminum shed.

Small DNR parcels on each side and large DNR hunting and fishing area across the street, with Cooley Creek running through it. Brook trout and brown trout. Only 10 minutes to the only bridge between Prairie du Chien and LaCrosse, meaning quick access to Iowa trout streams for year-round trout fishing.

Email Todd Franklin at toddfranklinwistrout@gmail.com for additional information. Serious inquiries only, please.



FICTION

The Stand

By Erik Helm

Author's note: This is fiction. The settings and background are historical, but the events were inspired by a stand of pines on a small stream full of wild brook trout here in Crawford county in the Driftless region of Wisconsin.

Part One: The Cutters

My fly-fishing partner Henry 'Heck' Bounty and I had made our way upstream through a road-like cut, the bushes and grasses scrapping and plunking off the underside of his old Ford pickup. We were in Crawford county Wisconsin fishing a pristine stream for brook trout; the day overcast and cool, the trout cooperative, and the scenery immense but quiet and bucolic, as farms gave way to hills, and valleys carved by flowing waters twisted and wound, separated and joined, offering eagles overhead, wildflowers, and a gentle humming of bees.

The path we were following curved uphill to the headwaters of the creek through a narrow opening in a valley, and the hills rose on both sides as the temperature slowly dropped and the sound of flowing water bubbling and trickling provided a counterpoint to the wheels crunching on gravel and vegetation.

We had spent the morning catching native trout up to 10 inches, as wild and old as the land when the glaciers covered Wisconsin, but missed this corner of the state, preserving towering vistas of limestone, and a land full of rivers. Heck decided to drive to the source of the creek to provide shade for our lunch, and to show me the springs that formed this little gem of a stream that he had fished since he was a little punter so many-many summers passed.

He stopped the truck at the end of the cut, and we set up a little camp table under a large shade tree and began making sandwiches and serving the cool beers. As we ate and poured the hissing cold beer down our parched throats, I looked into the distance at the top of the valley where it merged with the surrounding hills and remarked at the enormous stand of white pines dominating the view.

"Those pines mark the very headwater springs of this valley and her braided streams," Heck reminisced. "There is a story in that stand of pines, something very few people know anymore, more local folklore than actual history, but the historic part... well... that is for the record. It's the other part that my grandfather told me one evening when we were camping in this very spot. I probably have forgotten some of the details, but the essentials... well, those are too powerful in image ever to forget. If you have a like for a good story, I can provide one for you right here, as we rest... that is, if you are up for another beer."

I nodded in contentment as well as with curiosity. Another cold beer would go down well, sipped slowly with a background story. As the breeze gently shook the leaves overhead, I nodded and slowly sat back in the camp chair, closing my eyes.

"Those pines mark the end of the logging road, or the remains of it that we drove in on" said Heck. "Back in the day, 1931 to be exact, this hill, and all the surrounding hills were covered in old growth white pines. Many of these towns in the county

were lumber towns. The valleys grew tobacco, and the hills provided lumber, floated down the Kickapoo River to towns like Soldiers Grove, which back when logging was big before the civil war, was named Pine Grove. The logs were sawed up into lumber and shipped off to the cities. These hills probably re-built parts of Chicago after it burned in the great fire. Anyway, some of the hills were still covered with the last of the pine growth in the 1920s and 30s, but logging them presented a problem, as no access roads existed, the hills were steep, and the individual stands of trees were small. The last of the logging was delayed for many years until it became economically viable for



some company or another to come in and cut. The streams in this whole area were often warm and full of silt and suckers back then due to the bare hills where the logging occurred. The floods began around that time too, as the Kickapoo was and is a relatively small and very crooked river, and the rain that used to be absorbed by the forests just ran off the hills and through the row-crops and tobacco fields carrying mud and rock and too much water for the river to carry. Nobody knew any better in those days. The very land the towns were founded on was destroyed by the town's livelihood. The fishing was poor too; except for this hidden valley and its old growth pines and wildflowers and prairie grass. There were only a few farms up this way, and all of them hardy Germans and Norwegians. There was one dirt road in and out. Grandpa Bounty and his friends used to drive up here on Sundays after church for a picnic of fresh bread, fried chicken and freshly caught brookies. He is the one who told me the story of the valley, and the little war that was fought here. That conflict is why those pines remain stand-

ing to this day."

I took a long sip of the refreshing beer, and continued to listen, alert to his every word, and nuanced expression.

"In 1931 a logging company began driving a road up the valley toward the pines. There were no conservation groups in those days, and permits were easy to come by. The first inkling that anyone had that these hills were to be logged was probably when the graders showed up with the bulldozers and dozens of men. Anyway, nobody asked the locals. They cut all summer until they removed most of the pines on the south hills, and then moved up here in the early fall. That's when the troubles began. The company had about fifty workers, mostly town-folk, some of them local. They had a base-camp at the bottom of the valley with a mess tent, and even cabins for the workers. My great uncle Thomas was the

one of the cars belonging to the work-foreman had every bearing removed from it overnight, even in the wheels, and no sign it had been done. Every time something happened, it happened in darkness overnight. At first the company turned inward and looked for sabotage within their ranks. A logger who was half-Indian nearly got hung, until one of the mechanics pointed out that it was physically impossible for anyone to soundlessly remove bearings from vehicles, especially in the darkness and time-frame of overnight. Rumors and murmuring began amongst the workers, and some speculated that this was the work of spirits of dead Indians from the Black Hawk war. How else could the impossible be explained?"

"Soon enough the equipment and vehicles were overhauled and fixed, and the men went back to work. It was a Monday morning when the crew was ready, but before breakfast was even served, some of the guys noticed little ornaments hanging from the trees, and all around the camp. Hundreds of four-inch long little mayflies constructed from a strip of birch bark curled in the back, and with duck-feather wings tied in with a blade of dried grass were suspended from the trees by tiny vine-cuttings, and moving with the morning breeze. The foreman ordered the things removed, but several of the workers had had enough, and left with their equipment, and the rest silently grumbled over breakfast. Their pay was based on the amount cut by each crew, and since nothing much was being cut, no pay was being earned. Smelling trouble, the company foreman gave each worker remaining the equivalent of two-weeks pay to compensate them. The company also hired a retired sheriff and two local hunters to provide security and investigate the strange happenings. Each guard was armed, and the company provided a hefty bounty if they could catch the culprits, for by now, the men and the bosses were convinced that a whole range of natural and supernatural enemies and boogie-men were behind the sabotage."

"The next morning brought new mayhem. The guards were up half the night patrolling, but retired when by three A.M. nothing had happened. At dawn the cook came out of his cabin and was welcomed by animals all over the camp. Skunks and raccoons were everywhere. Small piles and trails of corn mush and sardines mixed with raisins intended for breakfast crisscrossed the camp, and the animals were following the trails devouring the free bounty. Two workers got sprayed, and the cook, armed with a frying pan, was bitten by a 'coon when he tried to wade into the fray frantically swinging at the animals. As he was being bandaged, the guards examined the food-store shack, which they assumed he had left unsecured. The padlock was intact, and no footprints or sign of entry was discovered. One thing was certain though; someone or something had crept into camp, and without leaving any trace, had once again brought the work to a stop. The retired sheriff demanded the key to the lock from the injured cook, and upon opening the storehouse, was greeted by dozens more of those little mayfly creations dangling from the ceiling."

"One wonders what must have been going through their minds, since none of the sabotage acts seemed capable by human hands. The whole crew and the guards became jumpy, and arguments and

carpenter that built some of the cabins and all the outbuildings."

"The company had cut about an acre of pines beginning by the oxbow of the stream at the bottom of the hill when things began to go wrong. The first occurrence was that the saws all went dull overnight. It didn't delay them much, as they had sharpening tools, but the company had to bring in more saws and equipment as the problem continued. There was even a local lawsuit that never went anywhere when the company tried to sue the hardware store that supplied some of the saws. That went on for over a week, and very little was cut down in that time. Eventually the problems grew. Some of the dozers and the trucks broke down after a few hours of morning activity. The mechanic they had with them to service the equipment couldn't locate any problem, until a local guy who worked at an auto-shop took one of the engines apart. One of the dozers was missing all the ball bearings in its transmission. On further inspection, the other vehicles were similarly troubled by missing bearings, and even

fighters began to break out. The foreman even ordered one of the truck drivers to load all the liquor supply and the cases of beer for the workers and take them away for storage somewhere. He was taking no chances. That evening saw silence in the camp, and as the workers smoked after dinner, many of them brought out knives and began sharpening them. The guards retired in shifts, with one guard being on patrol at any time that night. The cabins were locked and secured that evening."

"The final meltdown began the next morning. The retired sheriff woke up just before dawn to relieve his junior for the watch. His holster containing his colt revolver was draped over the bedpost near his head. When he reached for the belt to strap it around his waist, the holster disgorged a dozen of those little hand-tied mayflies. His gun was nowhere to be seen, and the door was padlocked from the inside... The funny thing is that the guy had seen service as a sheriff for something like 20 years down here and had seen it all, from murderous drunks, knife-fights, car crashes, farm implement accidents, bar-fights, and whatnot, but he had never encountered a foe that crept in on the pre-dawn mists, and had no face, no name, and left no footprints. He and the hunters turned guards just up and left the camp. He never spoke a word to the foreman. He just looked at him with a long stare, and shook his head slowly as he turned to leave. He never did collect any money or pay."

"The driver that carried all the booze and beer away was never seen again, although there seemed to be a few rather oddly jubilant local family picnics in the area for the next few years... All in all, the crew was only in camp for less than two weeks. After the beer and guards left, the workers followed, until the only remaining workers were two old stoic Norwegians, the boss, and a truck-driver. They took turns sawing one tree at a time for a few days until they were halfway through a tree and the saw stopped with a metallic grating noise. Thinking that the tree was 'spiked', an old trick used against loggers where large nails and railroad spikes were hammered into trees to cause the saws to fail, the tree was attacked with axes until it fell. The source of the obstruction proved to be a metal strong-box, which was quickly recognized as the pay safe for the operation. There were no hollows in the tree, and no way in hell that it could in reason have gotten in there. Departing for camp, the four of them visited the office, where sure enough, the safe was not in the locked desk, but instead found inside the live pine tree. The money was not missing, but a single one of those eerie little mayflies sat on top of the cash inside the locked box."

"Well, that was it. The camp broke the next morning without further incident, leaving the final pines shading the headwater springs untouched to this day."

I whistled low, popped the cap on another cold beer, and leaned back in the chair as the afternoon clouds darkened and the sound of the rushing waters of the headwaters seemed to increase not in decibels, but in clarity and intensity. One could hear voices in them, if one took the time to listen.

"Did anyone ever find out what or who was behind this?" I asked.

Part Two: The Interloper

"Good question..." Heck replied

with raised eyebrows and a quizzical expression.

"There was an investigation by the Sheriff of the county, but nothing came of it. Officially, the case was closed with a note that the most likely cause was a disgruntled worker or two. They worked them pretty hard in those days."

"Unofficially, my Grandpa figured it out. He was fishing one day when he ran into a tall thin fellow on the creek. The guy was fly-fishing with a bamboo rod he made himself, and with hand-tied flies. He introduced himself as Earl. Grandpa ran into him several times and they talked. Evidently the guy was some sort of educated gentleman from back east... college and so forth. He owned a cabin in the woods at the top of the hill above the springs, and hunted and fished in the surrounding land. Now Grandpa was a farmer, but he was also a reader, what you might call a self-educated man, always with a newspaper or book and a slow pipe to smoke while he read in the evenings. Somehow he and Earl got to talking, and Earl invited him back to his cabin."

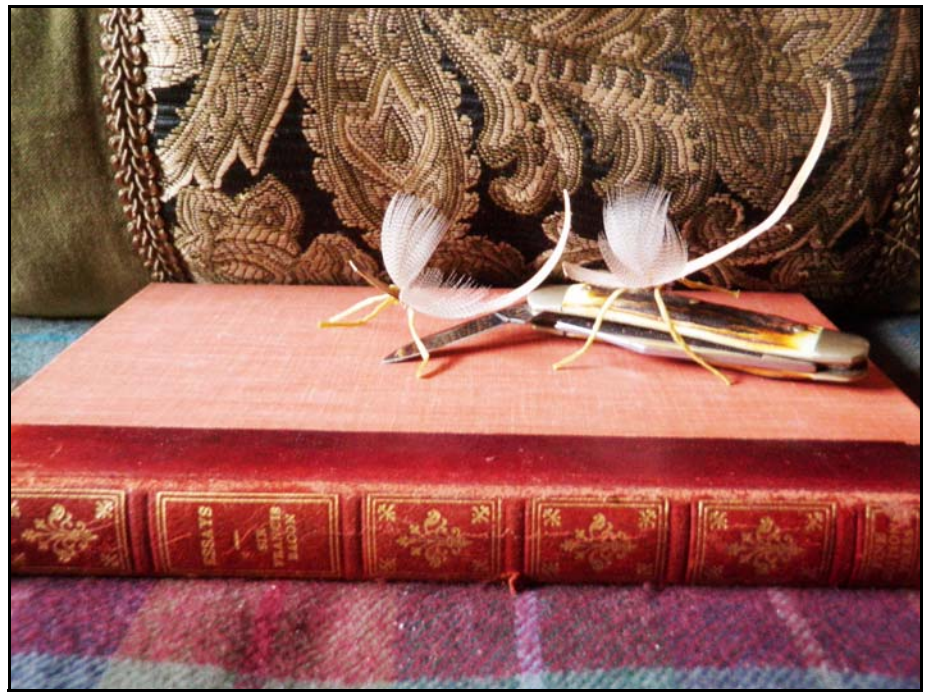
"As he described it, the cabin was full of interesting stuff: a large library, a wine cellar all home-made, bottles of herbs, and antique firearms and even a wooden long-bow. He had artwork on the walls too. Not just everyday Saturday Evening Post cutouts badly framed, but actual art from Europe and back East. He served grandpa imported cheeses and home-baked bread and venison sausage and he talked of his love for the poetry of Robert Service while a phonograph played opera, La Boheme he remembered it as. That sort of thing was kind of unheard of back then. Some guy living in the woods who was educated and cultured, and who turned his back on the world. Apparently he was also some sort of amateur magician too, for while several bottles of wine disappeared legitimately, Earl also made several vanish into thin air and then made them appear again. Who knows why he turned his back on society, or what made him pull up roots and move to a hill in Crawford County, my Grandpa never did find that out."

"What made your Grandpa think it was him?" I asked.

"It was those little mayfly things that gave him away. See, Earl had a sort of thing... a mobile I think you call it, full of dozens of those birch bark, feather and grass legged mayflies hanging from the ceiling over his table. Every time the breeze blew in, they danced up and down and twirled. Earl said he liked to watch them late in an evening. Said they reminded him of spring on his little stretch of river."

"Did your Grandpa ever report him, or tell anyone?" I asked.

"Nah..." Heck smiled... "Nobody would believe him anyway, but he only told dad and me, and that was after a few pulls of local whiskey. See, Earl did some good for the valley. Those pines are still there because he took a stand. He single-handedly defeated a logging company, and did it all non-violent. Other than the damage to equipment and the bite the cook got from the raccoon, nobody ever did get hurt. He haunted that valley and those hills himself. He was a one-man conservation group. How the heck he did it nobody will ever know, but Grandpa always referred to him as 'special'. That magic he knew must have been special too, but anyone who read as much as he did, and knew about math and architecture, plants, and built all his own tools and fly-rods, and the cabin too probably knew a



MAYFLIES CREATED FROM BIRCH BARK AND MALLARD FEATHERS

As Grandpa described it, Earl's cabin was full of interesting stuff: a large library, a wine cellar all home-made, bottles of herbs, and antique firearms and even a wooden long-bow. It also featured a mobile with dozens mayflies created with birch bark, feathers and legs of grass.

thing or two most men don't know, and never will. Most folks can't think beyond their own nose, much less imagine things and ways that may exist beyond our little mundane world."

"That is one amazing story... too bad there is no real evidence that it was true."

Heck smiled and turned to me. "Come on, I will show you something. Just a short hike up the hill."

We slowly ascended the steep incline in the shade of the pines, passing the springs and seeps that formed the creek, and found ourselves in a sort of clearing near the top of the ridge. At the center amongst the raspberry bushes and cow parsnip were the foundation re-

mains of a wood cabin. Hanging from a small apple tree next to the ruins were a dozen or so of those little hand made mayflies, looking fresh and newly created, and blowing in the breeze like they were dancing.

"Earl must have left several years after that stand he took. Nobody ever saw him again anyway, Grandpa included. He may have left those 85 or so years ago, but part of him, that special part must never have left. Something of him is still here, looking over his pines and the creek, a sort of river-keeper spirit... and watching his little mayflies... dancing into eternity."

*"The meaning of life is to find your gift.
The purpose of life is to give it away."*

William Shakespeare

Remember TU as Part of Your Legacy

Have you considered making Trout Unlimited part of your legacy? For loyal TU members, making a bequest to TU in your will or trust is a wonderful way to continue supporting clean water and healthy trout populations. Help assure that TU is able to continue its good work now and into the future.

Should you decide that TU is worthy of a legacy bequest, be sure to specify in your will or trust if the bequest is intended to benefit National TU, the State Council or your local chapter.

Thank you for considering Trout Unlimited in your estate planning.

2018 flooding data

Stream data loggers in several Driftless Area streams captured an amazing rise and fall during last year's flash flood events.

By Matthew Mitro, DNR

In late August and early September of last year, heavy precipitation events caused flooding and damage to infrastructure, property and streams across portions of the Driftless Area. You can view a summary of the rainfall and flooding events of August 27-28 at the National Weather Service website at <https://www.weather.gov/arx/aug2818>.

Here I present water level data from a few Driftless Area trout streams to show the magnitude of the flash flood events.

I have been collecting continuous water temperature and water level data from a selection of Driftless Area streams in a project I began with Dave Vetrano in July 2007. Our original intent was to document trends in stream base flow, but as we quickly found out following the August 2007 floods, the data loggers, when they survived flooding events, captured the rapid rise and fall of floodwaters.

Water level is measured by a six-inch by one-inch cylindrical data logger anchored to rebar near the stream bottom. The data logger has a sensor set to measure water pressure every hour. When combined with air pressure data from a similar data logger placed nearby the stream, water pressure data are converted to a measure of water level above the data logger. A rating curve is used to convert water level to water flow, but only for water levels where we can safely wade to collect flow data.

In Timber Coulee Creek, near the access at County G and County P, at the northern edge of Vernon County, the water level peaked at 17.9 feet above the data logger at 3 a.m. on August 28. The water level increased from 2.5 feet at 8 p.m. to 10.7 feet at 11 p.m., peaked at 3 a.m., and fell to 8.0 feet at 11 a.m.

On September 3 we witnessed a second flash flood event, only somewhat less in magnitude. The water level increased from 2.9 feet at 8 p.m. to 6.3 feet at 11 p.m., peaked at 16.0 feet at 1 a.m., and fell to 5.4 feet at 11 a.m.

The stream at this location held up quite well. Stream restoration work from more than a decade ago included sloped banks that open the stream to the flood plain, thereby minimizing flood damage to the streambanks.

In Mormon Coulee Creek, just west of Timber Coulee Creek in La Crosse County, the water level peaked at 18.6 feet above the data logger at 4 a.m. on August 28 near the Justin Road bridge.

The water level increased from 2.5 feet at 8 p.m. to 6.6 feet at 11 p.m., peaked at 4 a.m., and fell to 4.9 feet at 11 a.m. During the second flash flood event about a week later, the water level peaked at less than half the level of the earlier flood. The water level rose from 2.9

feet at 8 p.m. to 3.4 feet at 11 p.m., peaked at 8.1 feet at 3 a.m., and fell to 3.4 feet at 11 a.m.

In the North Fork of the Bad Axe River, downstream from the Esofea and Springville branches in west-central Vernon County, the water level peaked at 8.4 feet at 3 a.m. on August 28 and at 8.2 feet at 11 p.m. on September 3. The rise in flood levels happened quickly (e.g., from 2.8 feet at 8pm to 7.8 feet at 11pm during the first flood) but the fall in flood levels was slow and drawn out over several days.

Water levels are defined by the volume of water in the context of the physical constraints of the stream. Mormon Coulee is highly entrenched and the increase in water volume had nowhere to go but up. The peak water levels measured in Timber Coulee Creek and the North Fork of the Bad Axe River put the water well above the banks, spreading out across the flood plains.

Not all data loggers survived the flooding. Spring Coulee Creek upstream of the Spring Coulee Road bridge was hit particularly hard. A stream data logger at this site was either washed away or buried. The air data logger attached to a tree away from the stream channel was missing because the tree was washed away.

Despite the intensity of the dual flood events, the trout likely fared well overall. We surveyed two trend sites in Spring Coulee Creek in October about two months after the floods. We saw plenty of trout, but could not reach them. A 200-meter site further upstream was still wadeable and sustained significantly less damage from the flooding.

We captured 44 young-of-year brown trout and 305 age-1 and older trout (including a 19¾ inch female brown trout). A year earlier in October 2017 we captured 160 young-of-year and 225 age-1 and older brown trout at the same site. The observed year-to-year increase in older brown trout numbers could be a combination of higher recruitment from the 2017 year-class (which was a good recruitment year) and a redistribution of trout following the flooding.

We expect large-scale flood events to reduce the survival of small, young-of-year fish, and that may have been a factor here, though we did see similar year-to-year declines in young-of-year trout in other Driftless Area streams less affected by flooding. A relatively small flood event in early May could also be a contributing factor to reduced numbers of young-of-year trout this year. A benefit of the flooding, however, was the increase in available gravel substrate suitable for spawning, which could mean higher young-of-year production for 2019.

Symposium to focus on dealing with floods

By Duke Welter

Recent floods across the Driftless Area caused serious damage to habitat projects, dams, roads and communities, totaling several hundred million dollars of damage. Dramatic events and significant damage took place in the Kickapoo, Baraboo, Little La Crosse rivers and Black Earth and Coon Creek watersheds. Government leaders are scratching their heads trying to find ways to address the many challenges tied to climate change.

"Building for Resiliency" will be the theme of the 2019 Driftless Symposium February 5-6 at the Radisson Conference Center in La Crosse. Speakers will address many topics related to current challenges, including University of Iowa Engineering Professor Larry Weber talking on "Assessing Water Quality and Flood Risk with the Iowa Watershed Approach."

Stream restoration specialists will report on their work to rebuild

recently damaged projects in anticipation of future flooding events, and on how fisheries are holding up after recent catastrophic rainfalls.

Scientists have been assembling a white paper on the science and techniques of watershed restoration in the Driftless Area, and will report on it at the symposium.

Other topics include the latest in brook trout genetics across the area, brown trout resiliency, importance of human dimensions research in stream restoration and more. Other attractions include a social hour at a nearby watering hole and a showing of the movie "Decoding the Driftless."

Online registration is available at <https://gifts.tu.org/driftless>. The location is 200 Riverview Plaza, La Crosse. A block of rooms is being held at the Radisson Hotel (1-608-784-6680). More information and an agenda will be posted at darestoration.com. For more information contact DARE Project Manager Jeff Hastings at jhastings@tu.org.

Upper Midwest Regional Rendezvous March 29 - 31

Weekend of dialogue, presentations, fishing, camaraderie will be held in Zion, Illinois

Join fellow anglers and TU members and volunteers from across the Upper Midwest on March 29 - 31 in Zion, Illinois for some great steelhead fishing, enlightening presentations, inspiring dialogue and engaging camaraderie with those who share your dedication to TU and our mission.

TU regional rendezvous are occasions to be inspired by the work of TU staff, lessons from chapter and council volunteers and conversations with newfound friends. They are also an excellent opportunity to discuss the unique issues facing the region as well as a chance to network and build relationships with fellow TU members and volunteers who share your passion.

Friday: Hosted Fishing

Free day of hosted steelhead fishing in Wisconsin and no-host dinner with local Illinois and Wisconsin TU volunteers.

Saturday: Workshops and Seminars

Saturday's full-day session will include breakfast networking, group discussions, concentrated workshops and opportunities for council and chapter leaders to share successes and discuss common challenges.

Saturday night: Dinner and Illinois Council Fundraiser

Following the day's meetings, join your fellow TU members, volunteers and staff from for a great dinner and chance to network with

one another. The Illinois Council will host a fundraiser to support local efforts.

Sunday: Wrap Sessions & Conservation Tour

Sunday's morning sessions will conclude the weekend's formal activities and wrap shortly before lunch. A boxed lunch will be provided to all attendees and an optional off-site conservation tour and hands-on discussion will be offered to all who are interested.

Lodging

Accommodations for the Upper Midwest Regional Rendezvous are provided by Illinois Beach Hotel, located right on the shores of stunning Lake Michigan. Call (847) 625-7300 to reserve your room.

Registration is available online at www.tu.org/Midwest-Regional

The total cost of registration is \$125 and includes:

Participation in all seminars and workshops on Saturday and Sunday
Breakfast and lunch on Saturday and Sunday

Group dinner and networking event on Saturday night

Optional, free hosted fishing trip on Friday

Optional conservation tour and site-walk on Sunday afternoon

You can register for the entire weekend, or register for one day only at a discounted rate. Attendees may bring spouses/guests to the dinner on Saturday night.

For more information go to www.tu.org/Midwest-regional

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.

Wisconsin's Fly Tyers

Rich Osthoff ... Guide, author and fly tyer

Recognizing some of Wisconsin's great fly tyers, this series provides information on the role they played and are currently playing in the art of fly tying. We will learn more about them, the flies they tied and their tips to make us better tyers.



RICH OSTHOFF AT HIS TYING BENCH

By Bob Haase

Rich Osthoff is a good example of a fly tyer who uses time spent on the water to design and tie flies that attract fish. He spends more than 100 days a year fishing and guiding, mostly in southwest Wisconsin. He has also made more than 150 trips to the western states fishing all kinds of waters, from mountain streams to high-elevation lakes.

Rich brings the knowledge gained on the water to the tying bench, where he creates new patterns and modifies flies to catch fish.

Rich is also the author of three books. His first book, "Fly Fishing the Rocky Mountain Backcountry," is based on more than 150 backpacking trips in the wilderness areas of the Rockies. It covers where to fish, how to fish and is a good book for anyone looking for new waters to fish in the western states.

"No Hatch to Match" and "Active Nymphing" are technique books that include information on fly selection, fly patterns, fishing techniques and where to fish. These books are based on sub-surface techniques more than top water fishing.

For more information on these books, custom-tied flies and guiding services, check out his website at richosthoff.com.

How long have you been tying flies and how did you get started?

I have been tying for around 40 years. I started out fishing trout with live bait, switched over to spinning gear and then got into fly fishing in my early twenties. Fly fishing quickly dovetailed into fly tying and I have been tying ever since.

Do you remember who taught you how to tie your first fly?

I took a TU fly-tying course in Madison with Dick Berge. He was the first person to teach me how to tie a few flies and get me started.

Do you remember any of the other tyers who helped you develop the tying skills you have today?

In the beginning I was probably more influenced by books. We didn't have as many shows where you could learn by watching other tyers.

Doug Swisher and Carl Richards were kind of a natural match for me because they were midwestern tyers, and I also read books by Jack Dennis. Dick Talleur was pretty influential to me with his book, "Mastering the Art of Fly Tying," which was an actual fly-tying book that was more technical and very useful.

Many tyers develop a preference to the styles and kinds of flies they tie. Do you have a preference on the styles and kinds of flies you tie and fish?

It depends on the fishery. In the Driftless Area I have a reputation of being more of a sub-surface guy. I believe that you are going to catch more and bigger fish sub-surface than on top. I catch most of my fish in the Driftless Area on just 6 or 7 different patterns. I might take something like the beadhead squirrel and run those in different colors and sizes from 10-16, but it is all one style of fly.

People often ask why I tie my own flies rather than just purchase them. Do you think there is an advantage in tying your own flies?

From a functional standpoint, tying your own flies puts you in control of every aspect of that fly, from the quality of the hook, how you weight it and the type of materials you use. You can control the design, weight, size, color options and things like that. You get a degree of control in your flies that you just can't get when you purchase them.

Many talk about the satisfaction in catching a fish on a fly they tied. The next step up is to catch fish on flies you designed for your fishing. A lot of the articles I have written revolve around taking established patterns and tweaking them to some extent. If you look critically at fly design, you can often make a fly fish better. Fish don't care who designed the fly. They care what it looks like and how it performs, and tying your own gives you control over this.

There have been a lot of changes in fly-tying materials and tying techniques over the years. What are some of the changes you have made based on these changes?

Certain flies are really based on improvements in materials like the

soft hackle woolly worm that I tie quite a bit commercially. That fly you really couldn't tie like I do now until they came out with genetic hen necks that were long enough to palmer four or five times around a stout nymph hook.

There are a lot more synthetics now than there used to be 30 years ago. I once used natural rabbit dubbing, but now I often blend it with a synthetic such as ICE dubbing to step up the translucency and sparkle in a fly. I blend a lot of my own dubbings using a standard coffee grinder.

Many of us have a confidence fly that we prefer to use most of the time. Would you mind sharing with us one of your confidence flies?

That would vary with the fishery. In the Driftless Area I really like the squirrel nymphs such as the Pink Squirrel. I do a series that I call the squirrel bead heads which are based on this fly, but I do some alterations. I customize them to my own fishing such as size, color, weight and the way I tie them. If you are prospecting in the Driftless Area, those patterns are pretty hard to beat.

You guide and spend a lot of time on the stream. Do you think the time you spend on the stream helps you with designing and modifying flies?

I think one of the big advantages of spending more than 100 days on the water is that over time you get a feel for what really works. Sometimes in two or three modifications you kind of nail things down and perfect them. Many times they don't change that much from the original, but little changes made based on your observations on the stream helps you tweak the fly.

Do you have any tips on designing or modifying existing fly patterns?

I like to play around at the vise using a lot of different materials and learning the characteristics or prop-

erties of the materials. Playing around with different natural and synthetic materials has a lot of advantages.

How important is it to learn how to fish your fly patterns based on the pattern itself and the conditions?

How you fish them, how you weight them and how you tie them is critical, especially on certain flies like buggers. I tie my soft-hackle buggers with weight on the hook shank and a cone head, and when I fish it, I actually slip a tungsten bead on the tippet and let it go right against the cone head. I want that fly to be head heavy so when I impart a little slack it drops right back to bottom. Overweighting a fly like that allows the fly to get right down into pockets quickly. On small streams I often weight my flies heavier than I do on big water. On big water you have a long enough drift to sink a fly and on small waters you often have to drop the fly vertically to get in the pockets to be effective. I also want that fly to look wounded and vulnerable.

Do you have any tips for anyone just starting out tying flies?

Set your vise up where you can use it regularly. You will end up tying more often and improve your skills much faster. Don't pack it up in a box where you have to take it out every time to tie. When you tie a well proportioned fly and it turns out the way you want it, set it aside and save it as your reference fly for that pattern. When you sit down to tie a Hare's Ear, don't just tie one. Tie two or three dozen and compare them for size and proportion. It will help you become more uniform and consistent in your tying. Also keep your tying fun.

See how to tie Rich Osthoff's beadhead squirrel nymph on page 14.

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Bob, bob, bobbin' along

An overview of today's strike indicator options. And, no, they're not "bobbbers."

By Jonathan Jacobs

"1982: Gary Berger and George Anderson publish the article "Strike Indicators" in the April 1982 issue of Fly Fisherman. Howls rise from traditionalists about what is, and is not, "proper fly fishing." The rest of us suddenly begin catching a lot more trout."

— From an article by Ted Leeson in a recent *Fly Fisherman* magazine on significant developments in fly fishing in the last 50 years.

I was among the rest of us those who suddenly began catching more trout. I took up fly fishing for trout one year before the referenced article and, like most beginners, I struggled. I didn't learn about indicators until I began hanging out with my friends Andy Lamberson and Craig Mason, who were, in the modern parlance, early adopters of indicator technology. Lucky me, both for the friendship of these boon companions and for what they taught me.

Let me stake out some territory right now: I have no use for the argument that fly fishermen say "indicator" to avoid the use of "bobber" and that word's baitfishing connotations. A true bobber controls depth of float while most indicators are set up in a way that has little effect on the depth at which the fly runs. Also, I spent my formative years marveling at the mystery of some unseen animal source connecting to me via a bobber.

One evening Andy took me out to the Race Branch of the Willow. He attached a piece of fluorescent-coated foam tape from a company named Palsa to the upper section of my leader, which had a weighted nymph on the tippet, and had me toss the setup up into the current. As the rig proceeded downstream, Andy would say, "I'd hit that" whenever there was any hesitation in the descent of the indicator toward us. I was gobsmacked, as these hesitations were mostly imperceptible to me. Eventually, I picked up on it, though, and was gobsmacked again when I had a trout on the end of the line.

Craig, one of the most analytical anglers I've ever known, used as indicator a "corky," a small brightly colored sphere with a hole in its center that was originally developed to suspend bait off the bottom when used in some fishing method that I don't understand. He threaded it onto the leader and fixed them in

position with a piece of a toothpick. Craig pointed out that a sphere had the least surface area for any given volume, which translated into good flotation and ease of casting.

Both the corkys and the Palsa indicators are still on the market, but a plethora of other options have become available over the years. There are two basic types; either their leader passes through the indicator or a loop in the leader holds the indicator.

Advantages and disadvantages accrue to both types. The loop on style indicators are easy and quick to install and adjust easily, but often put a nasty kink in the leader. They may cast awkwardly, too, due to poor aerodynamics and a hinging effect on the leader. The "pass through" styles don't kink the leader, but may be awkward to install or remove, particularly if you use knotted leaders. Pictured are several styles of each with brief comments about them.

You may have noticed that the monofilament in the photos is fluorescent red. It's Sunset Amnesia and it's also available in fluorescent yellow. My friend Larry builds his nymphing leaders out of these materials, using the contrasting colors in the first two sections. The blood knot joining the two sections serves as his strike indicator.

Because there are endless variations on the theme, not pictured here are dry/dropper combinations. These most often involve some sort of highly buoyant dry fly, such as a Humpy, foam beetle or grasshopper with a length of tippet tied off the bend to which is attached a nymph. This setup is wildly popular in the mountain West and can be adapted to use on our local waters, but it's not for deep nymphing.

I mounted a defense of strike indicators in my opening paragraph, but while researching for this article I found an indecency that's beyond the pale for even an angling reprobate like me. That abomination would be a fly called Griffin's Stimulator, which is an ordinary stonefly imitation with an orange foam ball mounted at the head of the hook, making it sort of a Rudolph the Rednosed Stimulator. It's not for the genteel angler, to be certain.

Author's note: I thank my main man Paul Wiemerslage, a world-class angling apparutenance junkie, for the loan of several of the artifacts pictured here.

See photos on Page 15.

Looking to get involved? Tell us about your skills.

Wisconsin TU membership skills inventory

TU's strength comes from volunteers like you. Wisconsin TU is creating a list to inventory the skills of our members who want to share their time with their chapter or the State Council in support of the many activities that TU performs. By completing this questionnaire you are not obligating yourself to volunteer. You can also remove yourself from this list any time you want.

Your chapter and the Council will use this inventory to develop a list of people to call when help is needed.

Even if you can only help one time a year, every little bit of volunteerism helps your chapter and council accomplish even more. Volunteering is a great way to meet fellow members and find new people to fish with.

Please consider completing this Skills Inventory form.

Name: _____
Chapter: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Please put a "C" on the line in front of the volunteer activity if you are willing to volunteer to help on a chapter level. Put a "S" on the line if you are willing to help volunteer for that activity on a statewide basis. Put a "C" and a "S" if you are willing to volunteer to help with that activity on both a chapter and statewide level. An "S" also means you would be willing to help out with activities in nearby chapters, as chapter cooperation seems to be a growing trend.

_____ I would like to help with stream work activities.

_____ My age and health would allow me to perform most physical activities.

_____ My age and health might limit my physical activities but I could do light duty activities and things like preparing or serving food, etc.

_____ I have photographic skills and could take pictures to document the work performed.

_____ I would like to attend a work day to see what is involved before committing to help in this area.

_____ I would like to help with stream water monitoring to help assess the health of our streams. This would be part of the State Water Action Volunteer program and training would be provided for those that are interested.

_____ I tie flies and would like to help teach others to tie flies. This might be at chapter activities, youth fly tying programs, workshops, shows, etc. This might be at activities like our Youth Trout Camp, Milwaukee Sentinel Sport Show, Outdoor Heritage Education Expo in Poynette, or other programs like this.

_____ I fly fish and would be willing to help teach others how to fly fish for trout.

_____ I can help teach others how to fly cast.

_____ I fish with spinning gear and would be willing to teach others how to spin fish for trout.

_____ I fish with live bait and would be willing to teach others how to fish with live bait for trout.

_____ I would like to help out with special events such as Chapter Banquets, State Council Banquets, Shows, Workshops, and other fund raising activities.

_____ I am a photographer and would be willing to take pictures of work days, stream monitoring, and other chapter activities to be used for publicity and promotional activities.

_____ I am a writer and can help write articles about chapter activities, trout fishing, and other educational activities for publicity and promotional activities.

_____ I use and am familiar with social media as a means of communications and can help others understand and use social media for publicity and promotional activities. (Facebook, Twitter, Snapshot, etc.)

_____ I have experience in writing for and working with grants and other funding sources and would be willing to help write for grants to help TU fund programs to preserve, protect, and enhance our cold water streams.

_____ I have skills in other areas that might help with the mission and activities of Trout Unlimited and have listed them below.



Get your WITU license plates!

Support Wisconsin TU and get your Wisconsin TU license plates now. Go to www.dot.state.wi.us/drivers/vehicles/personal/special/trout.htm

Please return completed forms to your local chapter. Chapters should forward information on state-level volunteers to Bob Haase. His contact information is on page 3.

\$15K in 2018! Thank you for supporting Friends of Wisconsin TU!

The 2018 Friends of Wisconsin campaign is beginning to wind down and this year has been another stellar year in donations. We are approaching 150 generous donations totalling nearly \$15,000.

Stream project plans are in the works all across the state, from the Driftless Area to the northeast corner of Wisconsin. Your donations are a critical part of this valued work and your support goes directly back into the streams. The next round of grant applications will be reviewed and approved at the Annual Business Meeting and Banquet in Oshkosh on Saturday

February 2.

Many of our generous donators want to know that their money is spent on habitat work. Please know that there are no overhead costs for this program. 100 percent of the funds go directly back into various grants for stream work.

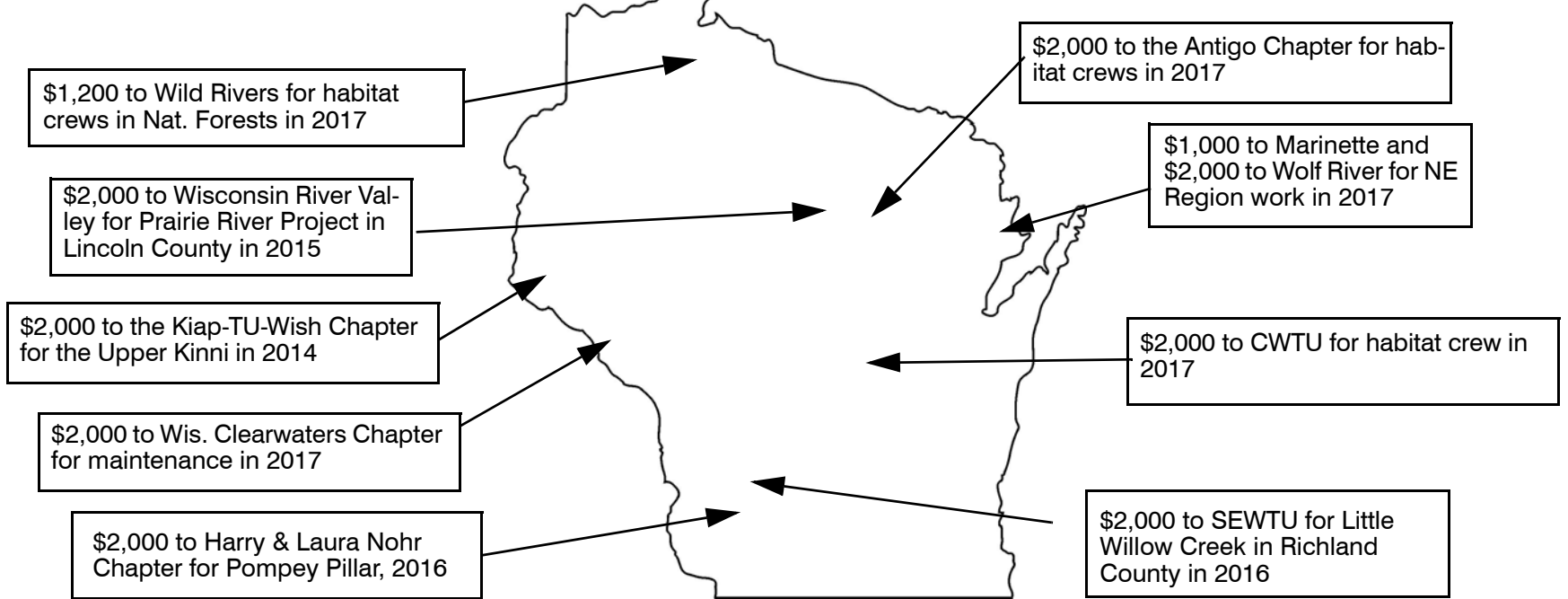
I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and that your 2019 fishing season treats you well.

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.



Here are our Friends of Wisconsin TU

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| John and Susan Bleimehl | Verona WI |
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Special Thanks to Todd Hanson for the donation from the sale of his books.

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

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Stories from the river

Montana's Flathead River float trip of a lifetime

Words and photos by
Jonathan B. Levine

We broke camp quickly on our last morning in the Great Bear Wilderness of Northwest Montana. This was our last day in the wild and our tents did not require a shake out. Breakfast dishes were stowed unwashed. This morning, I did not sort my clothes and doodads. Civilization would require its own sorting. The upper section of the Middle fork of the Flathead River flowed about 10 feet from my tent door. It was quite a view, but I was ready to go.

We had a safe trip, and hot showers were close. The fish had cooperated every day, the wilderness acted wild and folks on the trip were good companions.

The celebration in my raft began as we floated away from camp. Our oarsman pulled a boombox from his dry-pack. "Hendrix was a fly fisher," I joked.

"No he wasn't," our oarsman said. Well, his poetry now suggested he had been here.

"Strange beautiful grass of green,
With your majestic silver seas

Your mysterious mountains I wish to see closer

May I land my kinky machine?"
(Hendrix, Third Stone From the Sun.)

I tried to cast in rhythm, not to rising cutthroats, but to bass lines and drum beats, which bounced off narrow canyon walls. Jimmy's riff cut through the noise of wind and water. Music in the boat? Don't be too judgmental. This morning, it felt right.

The trip started without music, five days earlier. Wild, protected and free flowing, the Middle Fork of the Flathead rises in the Bob Marshall Wilderness and flows northwest into the contiguous Great Bear

Wilderness.

The primitive upper stretch is accessible only by plane, mule or on foot. Those three options were mentioned in the outfitter's literature, and I hoped for a plane, but, at the outfitter's camp at West Glacier, we learned we were walking the six-mile Granite Trail through the Flathead National Forest. The mountain snowpack had all but disappeared on this second week in July and most of the rivulets and seeps still running off the mountain walls would be dry in a week or two.

We forded a few small cold streams, and the grade was mostly gentle at about 4500 feet; still, my body and I seem to remember the climbs and descents most vividly. There was majesty here, but I was working too hard to appreciate it much. I will have to return to identify the wild flowers and birdsong.

After several hours of work and sweat, I noticed that my pants began to fit. Our trail was through subalpine terrain, mostly on mountain ledge, not scary, provided you did not look at the valley below. Most of the time, the fast way down was masked by shrub and vegetation on the low side so, out of sight, out of mind.

Eventually, the path turned right and a towering mountain face came into view directly ahead. We stopped to look. We knew that the Middle Fork ran far below, between that almost vertical wall of sun-lit pines across the way and the shadowed mountain shelf where we stood. The river was ahead, all right, but descent to the valley floor was not as close as first thought. Imminence was a joker. We had a way to go.

Tents, packs and provisions went in by mule line, led by wranglers who carefully gathered, weighed and distributed the loads for each mule at trail head. I wish they had



MOUNTAIN GOAT MEMORIES

Getting a glimpse of these mountain goats added yet another amazing memory to an incredible western float trip.

organized me! We humans travelled ahead, by foot, and I carried too much weight and too little experience. I carried a hydration pack, filled, an extra water bottle, a fixed blade knife, a ferro rod and compass, sun and mosquito spray, bear spray with holster, a rain jacket and pants, some first aid supplies and a personal locator beacon, a four-weight fly rod in its tube, a reel and kit, (to fish before the mule train arrived,) a candy bar or two that I never had the energy to eat

About 30 minutes from the river, I turned my ankle on a gentle incline. This was a preexisting weakness and was not severe, but I saw that the last portion of the hike was over a boulder-lined dry stream bed. So, I decided to sample mule travel. The wranglers, who were traveling about a half mile behind us human load bearers, were notified by walkie talkie that I wanted a ride. They soon brought up Molly, who had apparently been saddled

and put in the line just for this possibility.

There is a definite protocol when a mule train approaches you on a narrow mountain trail. The humans proceed until they find a spot on the low side of the trail where they can step off to make way. We are to remove our scary looking packs, put down paddles or rods, and talk softly to the mules as they approach.

The train came to a halt at the small clearing where we stood. Molly was tall and the stirrups were high. A wrangler instructed me to move to the high side and climb a couple of yards up the mountain to gain elevation relative to the saddle. With a little help from my friends I climbed on board.

Molly was gentle and surefooted, and she protested not at all that I violated government guidelines for weight based on age and height. She got me to the river. Dearest Molly.

Montana by train: the Empire Builder

Mike and I had planned to drive to northwest Montana so we could see the country at ground level. Then we had a better idea. At the Milwaukee Intermodal Station we boarded Amtrak's famed Empire Builder, which travels from Chicago to Seattle and Portland.

The ticket price was reasonable, especially after considering the cost of gas, food and lodging and also the fatigue we would have arriving at West Glacier after hours of highway driving. So, we boarded the west-bound train, broke out our refreshments and had a couple of toasts even before Tomah. Then we went for a walk to explore.

I had reserved the very last "roomette" about a month before our travel. This consisted of two comfortable seats which fold down into bunk beds. For two non-amorous (with each other) people, the room was snug but okay. Because we were in a sleeper car, meals in the dining car were included in the fare. A car attendant made our meal reservations, prepared the beds, helped with luggage, and was available to apologize for deficiencies in the rolling stock as was sometimes required. Ultimately, we only paid coach fare, because the air conditioning failed in our car during the hot July night and Amtrak provided a refund of the sleeping car premium.

But you could see out the windows, and what you saw was your country, and creation. What a show. We reached the Mississippi River at dusk and we followed it, or a tributary, for about half an hour. We followed a canopied back water

which was separated from the main river by wooded islands. Breaks in the foliage offered glimpses of the main river. As the light fell, glassy water changed color and dusk masked an earthen lock dam in the distance. Fishing boats sped along side us, on their way home before dark.

We woke up the next morning to a vast, flat land with no trees, hills, cattle, people, farm buildings, cars or tractors, in short, nothing we had seen from the same windows while crossing Wisconsin the afternoon before. But we saw bare earth and short grass to the horizon, and for me, this had a positive emotional effect like watching the sea. These were the Great Plains of North Dakota.

Perhaps there were slight rises on the horizon, and maybe there were rivers in fissures we could not see. But mostly the land just rolled on. Eventually we saw an occasional pumpjack, the seesaw-like devices which pressurize oil wells and an occasional shed. Below us was the Bakken Formation, an important oil source with the advent of hydraulic fracturing. But over a couple of hours at least, I saw not one pump in operation.

The Plains flowed into Montana and occasionally the train would stop in a small town and we could look out the window, or stroll the platform, to determine if these traveling westerners looked any different from us. (They did not.) Sometimes a small store would advertise dinosaur bones. A dozen or more young Amish people traveled the route for a while, and I wish I

had struck up a conversation.

Here is why on-time performance is important for the Empire Builder experience: Toward the end of the second day on the train, the Rockies appear out the window, large and suddenly, ranging north to south. There is no warning, no overture of foothills or fanfare of changing topography. Simply, there is flat land one mile, and high mountains the next. You don't want to miss this spectacle because you arrived after dark.

The train slowed as we entered the Rockies, the sun having already set behind a mountain to the northwest. Our route was along the southern edge of Glacier National Park and our destination was the western entry to the park. The traverse across the park was about two hours. At one point, looking closely out the window at streams and valley and forest, we saw a small rectangular sign which said, "Continental Divide." Sure enough, after that sign, we started to descend.

Our station, West Glacier, was simply a platform. By prearrangement, a Kalispell car rental company had left a car for us with the key in the ignition. The next day we drove to the park, less than a mile from our motel, and took a shuttle tour on the Going to the Sun Road. This is not to be missed. Once again, leaving the driving to others allowed us to concentrate on the grandeur without Mike yelling at me to keep my eyes on the road.

—Jonathan B. Levine

Fishing was excellent. The water was green and blue like the Caribbean and the crystal clarity meant you could see a fish swim a distance to attack. There was no excuse to miss the eat. Unless, of course, you missed it.

Throughout my fly-fishing career, I have found that the best way to raise a fish, anywhere, is to day dream and look at scenery. This accounted for a few missed fish, but there were other things not to miss. Canyon walls above clouds, snow on the peaks, white-spotted bufflehead ducks swimming down river. Mountain goats, forest and moving water. Sometimes the wind changed direction suddenly, or had the river changed direction? The power of winter avalanches, seen now, in July, by the broad ski-slope shaped paths they had scoured through mountain forest. Evidence of past burns. Sometimes, a guide could state the name and the year of a fire. The green regeneration on the avalanche path and the forest floor were more good reasons to miss a fish.

I caught as many fish as I wanted. It did not take great technical skill. These fish, mostly westslope cutthroat, were takers, not sippers, and typically 10 to 15 inches. Still, combatting drag with frequent mends was important in a moving raft. One time, I caught two cutthroats simultaneously, on two dry flies. Occasionally we would see the shadow of a large bull trout following the hooked cutthroat. Bull trout are in the char family, rare, storied, and in trouble for various reasons. It is illegal to target them.

Another fisherperson caught a brook trout and this was discussed later, among the guides. Brook trout are trash fish in this watershed, feared as invaders and displacers. For one thing, a brookie will mate with the bull trout, yielding sterile offspring. This disrespect for the brookie was understandable, but unsettling. To each his own native range.

The Flathead, at least our stretch of the Middle Fork, is not fertile. The fish are opportunistic, and the best dry fly was whatever you liked, which usually meant any large bushy concoction, or a Wulff-style. To imitate the sparse but usually present gray drake dun, a somewhat less visible size 14-16 parachute worked well.

A five-weight rod was ideal, given the wind and size of the barbless flies. At camp our expedition entomologist, Abby, produced a bright-green caddis larva, well segmented, say size 12. Why didn't we see cad-

dis on the water then, we asked? Abby pointed out the lack of aquatic plant life and said that because of the sterility of the mountain water, there were very few species of caddis present and this one wasn't ready to rise.

The third day was time for helmets and a safety briefing, which our trip leader called "the price of admission." We had arrived at a series of class IV and V plunge pools known as Spruce Park. At each pool, the guides hiked down river to scout and confer. What were the hydraulics? What is the best line of attack? Where can an oarsman catch an eddy to rest, if necessary? What is the rescue plan and who will shoot first, to wait downstream with the rescue line and throw bag? Should the customers take the ride or walk the mountain?

We were advised to kneel in the raft and use the rope handrails. We learned what to do if we fell out of the boat, if our partner fell out or if the oarsman fell out. We learned the oarsman's hand commands should we get stuck in an eddy or, even worse, trapped by a sweeper. We learned hand signals if we fell overboard, and instructions on how to swim the rapids. As the trip leader showed me how to tighten my helmet, I mentioned that I had neglected to sign his company's release of liability back at West Glacier. I think he laughed.

The pools were taken one raft at a time and, once through, the rafts would congregate at the bottom to wait for the rafts which followed. You had to look up hill to see upstream. A raft would come into view and we could watch as it descended the steps of the pool, one level, then another, sometimes disappearing for a moment and sometimes twirling as the oarsman prepared his or her angle through the next chute. In my Western white-water experience I have noticed an interesting gender difference. Male oarsmen shoot white water with brute strength and sometimes they need all of it. Women oarsmen, less muscular and powerful, rely on technique. Their execution is almost always smoother, straighter and true. The male oarsmen I have talked to agree on this. Do not fear a woman oarsman.

One time, we were waiting for the other rafts to descend when a bewildered-looking otter pup came riding down the pool, head up, chest erect, paddling, but at the mercy of the river. He looked right and left, right and left, chirping loudly, a natural swimmer, of course, but not in control in this



THE REWARD! HUNGRY WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT!

The fish are opportunistic, and the best dry fly was whatever you liked, which usually meant any large bushy concoction, or a Wulff-style. To imitate the sparse but usually present gray drake dun, a somewhat less visible size 14-16 parachute worked well.

plunge pool. It was obvious he did not intend to be there. When he reached quiet water below the pool, he swam behind a boulder just downstream from our raft. He continued to chirp, presumably calling for mom and dad. Every 20 seconds or so, he would swim out from his boulder into the main current, look up stream, and call out. Then, he swam back to his boulder shelter. We assume he eventually found his way up and over land to rejoin his family. At least that's the happy ending we hoped for as we pushed off down river, distress chirps still constant.

Our group was congenial, mostly from nearby Kalispell, two father-daughter pairs, a couple celebrating their anniversary and a couple of guys from Milwaukee. Each day, the pack raft oarsman would float ahead and set up our camp before we arrived. I had never had someone pitch a tent for me, but I can get used to it. Food was cooked on a fire pan which we carried, and our Wisconsin craft beer compared favorably to Montana brews. I was not amenable to St. Louis beer, however. We had lunches on the small beaches along the river, and I learned to like Hormel pepperoni even though we were paying hand-carved prosciutto prices. Happiness sometimes means you go with the flow.

The Great Bear Wilderness is aptly named. Several guides carried bear spray on their belts and at least two guides holstered .45 semiautomatics. No scrap of food was ever knowingly left on the ground and food was stored in metal boxes. Also, pursuant to forest service regulation, at least one guide always slept outdoors with the food. We heard a few stories about bears in camp, but none which involved shots being fired.

Someday, I would like to be so in tune with my surroundings that I am the first person to spot an anomaly, the deviation in the wild which reveals something exciting. A tailing fish, perhaps, or nervous water, a fish shadow, or in this case a head too large to be a typical swimming mammal. "Yes, that's a bear," I answered. Of course, there was nothing subtle about the yellow/brown head making way toward our side of the river, about a football field upstream. The matted hair emerged as about 500 pounds of grizzly, slow moving, graceful and oblivious to us. It crossed the narrow beach and started a slow climb up the steep scree face of the mountainside.

Midway up, there was a scrawny tree, the only tree on the cliff, and the bear stopped there for a mo-

ment. To rest? Big Paw continued up, slowly. Eventually, with a small extra push of its fat furry rear legs, the bear crested the lip of a ridge, perhaps 200 feet above the beach. The edge crumbled some under the weight and there was a small rock fall. Then it disappeared. The ridge ran down river. We were down river. While we sat in our rafts, stunned and mostly silent, I noticed that there was a gully from the ridge down to the gravel beach next to our raft. Why, I asked myself, would a bear climb all the way up that cliff simply to descend again? Still, as we waited for the upstream rafts, I kept looking over my shoulder.

On our last day, our oarsman worked much harder as a gusty wind funneled up canyon. Sometimes, it was all he could do to keep us from floating upstream, and sometimes, we were blown upstream. I could just sit there and listen to the music.

We knew we were close to put out when we started to see folks walking the shore up river. We turned a corner and there was an asphalt boat ramp where the river meets U.S. 2, the southwest corner of Glacier National Park on river right and the Flathead National Forest on the left. The trip was over, except for the feeling in my heart while remembering and writing this journal.



LAST SET OF RAPIDS. THROW BAG AT THE READY.

At each pool, the guides hiked down river to scout and confer. What were the hydraulics? What is the best line of attack? Where can an oarsman catch an eddy to rest, if necessary? What is the rescue plan and who will shoot first, to wait downstream with the rescue line and throw bag? Should the customers take the ride or walk the mountain?



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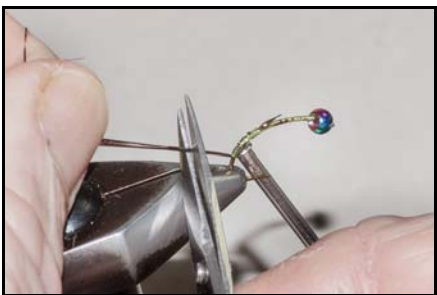
Rich Osthoff's Beadhead Squirrel Nymph

Tied by Rich Osthoff

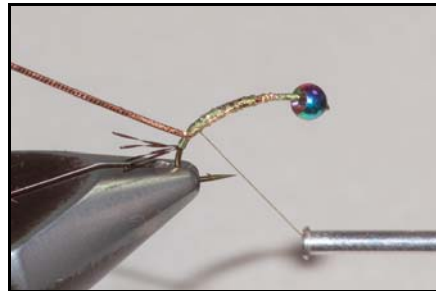


- Hook:** Nymph hook of your choice #14,#12, #10
- Thread:** Tan or brown
- Bead:** Rainbow color sized for hook used
- Tail:** Krystal Flash (4 strands)
- Body:** Dubbed natural squirrel
- Ribbing:** Oval tinsel copper color

Rich's Beadhead Squirrel Nymph is fairly simple to tie and has that "buggy" look that the fish like. It is one of his favorites for prospecting the streams in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin. A natural squirrel color dubbing is used for most of the body and squirrel belly color is used just behind the bead. After it is tied, it is picked out to make it look even more buggy. You can tie these in a number of different sizes and color patterns. Consider changing the weight by using brass beads or tungsten beads, and even adding wraps of lead or lead-free wire to the hook shank.



Step 1 – Place bead on hook and insert in vise. Start thread and advance to middle of shank. Tie in 2 strands of Krystal Flash folded over to make 4 strands. Tie down on back of shank and trim.



Step 2 - Tie in a strand of copper colored oval tinsel.



Step 4 – Wrap the tinsel through the dubbing and tie down.



Step 3 – Dub the body fairly heavy with natural squirrel dubbing. You can blend in some ICE dubbing into the squirrel dubbing, if you desire. Stop about 1/8" before the bead.

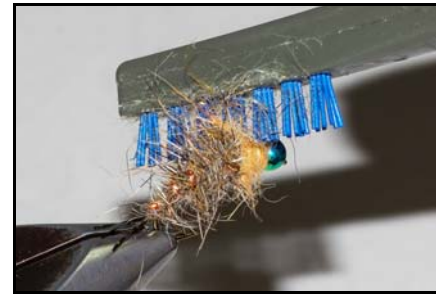


Step 5 – Using a lighter color such as squirrel belly hair, continue dubbing up to the bead and tie off.

Step 6 – Pick out the dubbing to make it even bugger looking.

You can use a brush as shown, or any other dubbing picker.

You are now ready to get it wet and catch some fish.



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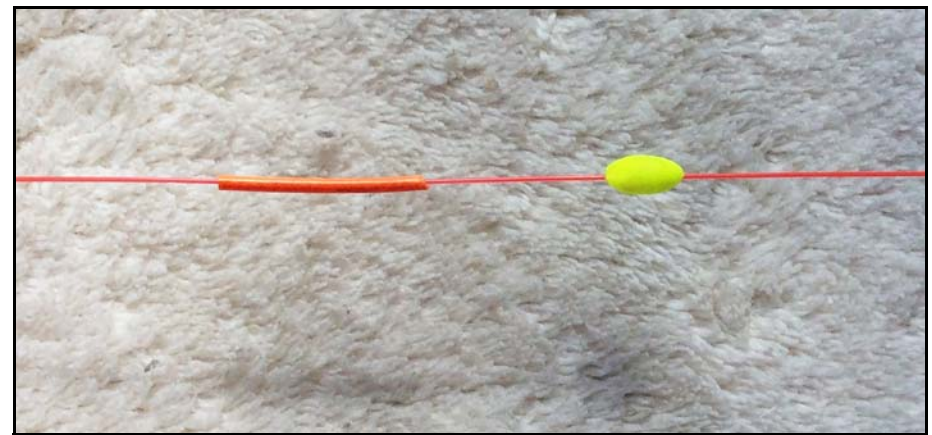
Above are "loop on" style indicators. At left is a New Zealand Strike Indicator. A small piece of wool is affixed to the leader in a loop retained by a short section of vinyl tubing. I'm impressed by them, primarily because they cast superbly and land more quietly than any other indicator I've tried. They also kink the leader less than one might imagine. An explanatory video that's also fun to watch is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PuMkTyGfyHU>. The two indicators to the right are variations on a theme. The big yellow fuzzball is synthetic yarn while the miniature whiskbroom is comprised of foam strips. In practice the yarn is treated with floatant, while the foam floats unaided. They land quietly, but present considerable air resistance while casting. Next, we have the classic Thingamabobber. They are available in several diameters and colors, have incredible buoyancy, are easily adjustable but stay put decently and are durable. They're great for flinging heavy nymphs and split shot, but don't hit the water with much grace. On the far right is a Bentley's Ball. It's a hard foam indicator that offers typically good flotation. It attaches to the leader via a double length of rubber band that drawn up into the indicator. I believe these are available from chapter friend Andy Roth at Gray Goat Fly Fishing.

We come now to two highly specialized indicators. On the left is a length of Kahuna LT indicator material from Rio Products. It's a specialized kind of level floating flyline with extra flotation built in. It's sold in lengths of approximately two feet. On the right is a ball formed from strike putty (The material pictured is from Orvis and is no longer available, but Loon Outdoors markets a functionally identical product under the trade name Biostrike). The salient feature of both materials is the delicacy with which they land on the water. This can be critical in specific situations. My friend Craig was masterful at recognizing when fish rising in thin, flat water weren't taking naturals on the surface as it appeared, but instead taking, say, emergent blue-winged olive nymphs from just under it. He'd rig a small unweighted soft hackle nymph on a light tippet and put just the smallest dab of strike putty 18-24 inches above the nymph. It was amazing to see how well this worked.

INDICATORS, FROM PAGE 10



Above, from left: A Palsa foam indicator. Palsas are easy to use but may lose their grip on the leader. They are strictly a one-use item and appear to have about the same half-life as Carbon 14 when discarded at streamside. Next is a Thill Ice n' Fly. It's durable, casts decently, offers good flotation and the contrasting paint scheme is easy to track on the water. There is no slot in it, so installing it or removing it can entail some effort. In the center is my personal favorite, adapted from a Lindy Rig component. I buy a pack of these for next to nothing at the local "Man's Mall," saw a slot down the length with an Xacto saw and pin it to the leader with piece of flat toothpick. They're easy to install, adjust or remove, hit the water quietly and cast well. Durability is so-so, but, again, they're cheap. The fluorescent raspberry "football" next to it has a length of stretch tubing through its center. The tubing grips the leader and hold the indicator in place via a friction fit – theoretically. I've seen several of them fly off in vigorous casting. On the far right is an Air-Lock strike indicator. This is an offshoot of the nearly ubiquitous Thingamabobber. It has a slot in a threaded extension through which the leader passes. A small plastic nut threads down atop the assembly to hold the indicator in position. This indicator offers tremendous flotation and doesn't kink the leader, but the slot is narrow and it's easy to drop and lose the plastic nut in the heat of battle.



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DAVID ROWE, FISHERIES SUPERVISOR, WI DNR

David is a native of Middleton Wisconsin, and began his career with the WDNR in 1998 as a Fisheries Research Technician and is now the Fisheries Team Supervisor for the Fitchburg Fisheries Team. He is responsible for WDNR fisheries management for all of Southwest Wisconsin and is happy to share the status and trends of our local fisheries.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: SWTU.ORG

FEATURED SPEAKER
RICH OSTHOFF

Rich guides fly-fishers for trout in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin. He has fished extensively throughout the Rocky Mountains. His first book, *Fly-Fishing The Rocky Mountain Backcountry*, is considered by many anglers to be the bible on backcountry fly-fishing. His other books, *No Hatch To Match* and *Active Nymphing*, not to mention his many instructional YouTube videos make him a speaker you won't want to miss!

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Chasing TU's Utah Cutthroat Slam

By Heidi Lewis

When Heather Hodson calls I know things are about to get good. I don't see her often, but when I do, it often means an epic fishing adventure is in the works.

Heather volunteers as TU's Western U.S. Diversity and Women's Initiative Ambassador. She also started United Women on the Fly, an online community helping women anglers and would-be fly fishers connect with other women for fishing trips, advice and fun.

Heather was taking a cross-country trip from Tennessee to Montana with Jen Ripple, editor of DUN magazine, and Geri Meyer of The Driftless Angler in Wisconsin. They wanted to spend some time in Utah along the way. The Utah Cutthroat Slam immediately came to mind.

TU and the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources created the Utah Cutthroat Slam to encourage anglers to explore new places in Utah while fishing for the state's four native cutthroat trout species in their native range. I was only one fish shy of completing the slam, and I knew where to take these gals to fish. The only kicker here was that we only had 72 hours to catch four different cutthroat in their native drainages.

If you know fly fishing, you know why it's called fishing and not catching. There are no guarantees, except that we'd have fun along the way. That I didn't doubt.

I brainstormed with TU staffer Brett Prettyman, who helped create

the slam, and came up with a plan. Brian and Brooke Harris were also in on the planning. They have each completed the slam multiple times and their help was invaluable.

I wouldn't say any location was "easy," but everyone caught fish. As we continued to the last day, and the most technical fishing, for Yellowstone cutthroat, we were almost done with our adventure. The streams where the Yellowstone cutthroat live are tiny. We fished for the Bonneville, Colorado and Bear River cutthroat. They are eager to eat a dry fly, but setting the hook under a blanket of brush is challenging.

The day was drawing near. I wanted to make sure the others caught fish, but I had to finish. As the other gals were focused on landing their fish, I walked down stream. I needed to get a fish in the net to complete the slam.

The only unfished water in walking distance was limited, and the brush was beyond thick. Memories of my childhood in Wisconsin and fishing with a stick, line and a worm cane to mind.

I grabbed a stick, tied on a 5x tip-pet and sailor ant pattern. I swung the ant upstream over a small log and let it drift. As I twitched it upstream I felt a hit, but could not see anything under the log. Miss! I tried again, and missed again. It turns out you can't quite feel the hit with a streamside stick. I twitched the ant upstream and the fish ate again. This time I set the hook a bit harder and landed a beautiful little Yellowstone cutthroat. It worked!



Brian Harris

UTAH CUTTHROAT SLAM GANG

Heidi Lewis, left, took her friends Heather Hodson, Jen Ripple and Geri Meyer (left to right) on a Utah Cutthroat Slam adventure this summer.

I had a minute to reflect on what I had done: I caught four distinct cutthroat trout subspecies in their native range.

The real bonus of the slam is the experience you can have with your friends and all the amazing places you get to visit. I know there is so much more of Utah to explore, and next time I attempt a slam I will do it in entirely different places. That's exciting.

Sharing my home state and the many dirt roads that led us to these beautiful trout was the biggest joy. It was a bit of a challenge catching fish in small streams with technical

casts. These fish are not necessarily picky, but they like a gentle presentation of a dry fly and a natural drift.

I think the next time I "guide" fly fishers on the slam it will be my two daughters. I may even make them use a streamside stick like I did.

Heidi Lewis is the diversity and women's initiative leader for the Utah Council of Trout Unlimited. She lives in Salt Lake City with her husband and two daughters. She also started the Utah Women Flyfishers group. Heidi ended up becoming the 300th participant to complete the Utah Cutthroat Slam.

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Invasives update

By Natalie Dutack, Watershed Groups Manager, River Alliance of Wisconsin

We have had great success partnering with TU chapters to build and install wader wash stations across the state.

In 2017 we partnered with the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association, DNR and the SWTU to build and install 30 wader wash stations in Dane County to prevent the spread of New Zealand mudsnails (NZMS) and other invasive species. We have helped provide educational signs, station designs and materials to groups seeking to add stations at access points on priority waters.

This work is increasingly important, as we end 2018 with news of NZMS spreading to two new streams.

NZMS was first discovered in Black Earth Creek in 2013, and has now spread to five new locations, all within Dane and Columbia counties: Badger Mill Creek (2016), Rowan Creek (2017), Mount Vernon Creek (2017), and most recently the Oregon Branch of Badfish Creek (2018) and Brewery Creek (2018).

While steam is the only effective way to kill NZMS, implementing clean angling practices is critical to preventing the spread. Building wader wash stations across the state is a critical step in this fight.

As we move into 2019 we are looking to “re-boot” the wash-station program, adding more options, updated signs and station maps. In

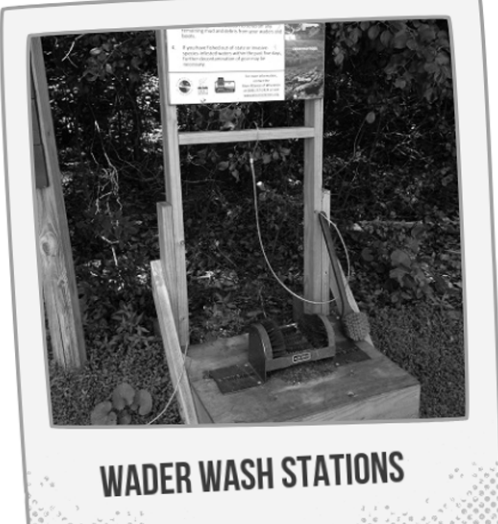
addition, will be introducing our “Adopt-a-Wader Wash Station” initiative. To make this program a success, River Alliance needs your help.

How can you help?

- Find stations near you: Using our current inventory, participants in this station scavenger hunt will help us confirm locations in the field as well as their conditions.
- Report the stations you know and/or maintain. If there is a station that is not on our inventory, we need to know. Reporting stations you know exist will help us find any “lost” locations. Similarly, if your chapter has stations they help maintain, we are working on matching these two pieces together.
- Orphaned stations: Some stations need stewards. We will seek to place these candidates with groups who can maintain them through our “Adopt-a-Wader Wash Station” program.
- Build more stations: We are looking for groups interested in building wader wash stations for 2019 and recommendations for new station sites.

If you are interested in volunteering for any of these efforts or would like more information on our clean angling programs, please contact Natalie Dutack at ndutack@wisconsinrivers.org or 608-257-2424 x 111.

HAVE YOU SEEN ME?




Are there Wader Wash stations in your community?

Know a site that could use one?

Interested in becoming a station steward or helping to build more?

Help track Wader Wash stations across the state!



Please contact Natalie Dutack:
ndutack@wisconsinrivers.org

STEWARDSHIP, from page 1

used funds in this program to secure more than 230 miles of public fishing easements on streams and rivers throughout our state. Indeed, trout fishing and the stewardship program go hand in hand.

It's time to re-authorize the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and make the investments needed to maintain Wisconsin's proud outdoor heritage.

License fee increase

Wisconsin TU (along with 14 other sporting organizations) is supportive of a fee increase proposal that would raise the state's Inland Trout Stamp fee to \$15. Under this proposal, other user fees would increase as well, such as the Great Lakes trout stamp, waterfowl stamp and trapping license.

Wisconsin's inland and Great Lakes trout stamp fees have remained at \$10 since 2006. These self-imposed user fees provide valuable funding for much of the trout stream restoration work happening in our state. These trout stamp dollars are often matched by federal

grants and private groups (like TU) to maximize the impact.

While the funding generated in the Trout Stamp account has been flat for more than a decade, the cost of doing stream improvement projects continues to rise. A price increase in raw materials, labor and equipment results in less restoration work as more of the budget is eaten up by these costs.

A \$5 increase would put the program back ahead of inflation – and more in line with the cost of a trout stamp in Iowa (\$14.50) and Minnesota (\$11). This modest increase, about the price of a spinner, a couple of flies, or two dozen night crawlers per angler, would generate more than \$700,000 of stream restoration funds.

It will be imperative as we move through the budget process that we make our legislators aware of the benefits these fee programs provide.

Please watch for Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Action Alert emails with more information about reaching out to your representatives regarding these issues. Thank you for staying informed and speaking up on behalf of our coldwater resources.

February 23, 2019

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Chapter News

Aldo Leopold Chapter

At our October board meeting, we approved, for the second time, a pledge of \$500 to the Riverland Conservancy for a wetland restoration project on the Merrimac Preserve, through which Manley Creek runs. A grant proposal for this project failed to secure funding in 2017, and the Conservancy, under the guidance of new Director Jessica Renley, is submitting a new application for this proposal. We were happy to add our support to this new grant application.

On November 3 I attended the Conservation Field Day at the Merrimac Conservation Club to speak to a group of young hunters about TU, the activities of the Aldo Leopold Chapter and the wonderful opportunity available to them at the 2019 WITU Fishing Camp in Waushara County. I handed out copies of *Wisconsin Trout* with its timely feature article on the 2018 camp. I encouraged them to consider the camp, and that our chapter would sponsor them.

We recently pledged \$250 toward a River Alliance grant application aimed at preventing, controlling and monitoring aquatic invasive species in Wisconsin streams.

The grant would provide education on clean angling practices, installation of signage and wader wash stations at key stream locations. With New Zealand mudsnails already having become established in Rowan Creek, we are definitely on board with in supporting the River Alliance in their excellent work to minimize the spread of these invasives.

We have had issues this past year

with beaver activity on both Bear and Rowan Creeks. While squeezing in an end-of-season angling session on Bear Creek, I ran into Dalton Herold, who works for USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), doing beaver control. He was checking on a dam on Bear Creek where beavers had been removed and the dam had been breached. He said several beavers had already been trapped on Rowan and that dam had also been opened up as well, just in time for fall spawning activity.

Although we are lucky to have the APHIS responding quickly to beaver problems on our streams and their excellent work is much appreciated, we are disappointed to report that a recent viewing of the Rowan Creek dam revealed that it has been rebuilt and water is being impounded again, though not quite as high as before.

In addition to that discovery, DNR Fish Manager Nate Nye just informed us of a new dam located just upstream from East Street and the Poynette Village boundary. More trapping is called for before removal of the dams will be anything but temporary.

ALCTU is once again on the list to fill a fly box list for the 2019 State Council Banquet in February, so chapter fly tyers are once again challenged to crank out a half dozen or more of their best stuff so we can fill a box once again. Flies can be brought to our January 9, 2019 board meeting or mailed to Mike Stapleton (address on page 3) by the date of that meeting.

—Mike Stapleton

Antigo Chapter

We are finishing up the year-end things. Just a few weeks ago we brought brook trout eggs to the three high schools we are serving this year: Antigo, Witt-Burn and Bowler.

We attended the WITU's Northeast Regional meeting in December. It was good to see everyone again. The region again did itself proud in funding DNR and U.S. Forest Service staff to work on cold-water projects. Our chapter was

able to provide \$8,000 for these projects.

We are working on our annual fundraising banquet which is Saturday, March 30 at the Northstar Banquet Center.

One project we are working on is with the Moose Lake Association, to help fund and replace a culvert on Crestwood Road that is set to high and limiting fish movement and limiting water flow.

—Scott Henricks

Blackhawk Chapter

The Blackhawk Chapter held its annual fundraising banquet in September at Boundaries in Beloit. Everyone had a fun evening full of good food, bucket raffles, door prizes and more. Duke Welter shared the importance of the many conservation projects BTU has been part of and the importance of continuing Trout Unlimited's efforts to protect coldwater habitat in Wisconsin. Thanks to everyone's hard work, the banquet was a big success.

At our November meeting Chris Newberry, Conservation Technician with the Green County Land and Water Conservation Department, provided an update of conservation projects in the area.

Chris reviewed past work on Hefty Creek, the Little Sugar River, Ward Creek and Sawmill Creek. He also shared plans for future projects including work on

Sawmill, plans for Skinner Creek and the Little Sugar River. Chris mentioned several opportunities for Blackhawk to help with vegetation removal on areas of Dougherty, Sawmill and the Little Sugar River.

Ron Machajewski and Don Studt are conducting the chapter's winter fly-tying classes in 2019.

Classes will be held on Thursdays beginning January 3 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Basics Cooperative Natural Foods in Janesville. Classes continue January 10, 17, 24; February 7, 14, 21; March 7, 14, 21. The low, low price of \$20 helps offset the cost of materials.

If you're interested in learning how to tie, improving your skills, or maybe just telling a few fishing stories, come out and join the group.

—Phil Kirker



SPECIAL AWARD

At the Central Wisconsin Chapter's recent banquet, Dan Harmon III received a Special Appreciation Award from the State Council.

Central Wisconsin Chapter

CWTU is having a stellar year thanks to our volunteers.

CWTU has been busy maintaining and restoring our precious water so the next generation can enjoy. We had five work days this year. Our volunteers are phenomenal. Workday Coordinator Dennis Drazkowski makes the workdays flow smoothly. Our members performed a total of 922 volunteer work and travel hours.

We are grateful for the leadership of the DNR's Shawn Sullivan and his crew for making the work days successful. We could not accomplish the great restoration work without great leadership. We are grateful for the partnerships and financial contributions from individuals and chapters dedicated to conserving, protecting and restoring Wisconsin's coldwater fisheries. Other TU chapters participating in the 2018 CWTU workdays were Fox Valley, Elliott Donnelly, Shaw-Paca and Frank Hornberg chapters.

Habitat restoration projects took place at three locations in 2018: the White River, West Branch of the White River (WBWR), and the Pine River. Special highlights of the year included a plant identification contest created by the DNR's Jamie Ruppel, shore-side music by Al Sanders playing his fiddle, a black bear and the help of the WITU Youth Fishing Camp students.

Workday committee members include Dennis Drazkowski, Tom Meyer, Laura Tucker and Chris Northway. Restoration projects have now been completed on those rivers. Together we are able to make a difference.

Our last workday was in September on the Pine River in Waushara County. Nearly 30 individuals attended from CWTU, the Fox Valley Chapter and the DNR. Volunteers were divided into three DNR-led work crews. One crew built and installed in-water wood deflectors to encourage stream flow into the two bank covers constructed during the August workday. Another crew built brush bundles from the brushing and removal of invasive vegetation, e.g., glossy buckthorn. And the third crew placed protective covering and fencing and trees that were newly planted in May during the Trees for Trout workday. Lunch was prepared by Dennis Drazkowski. The Pine River project is now complete.

Planned workday in 2019 will focus on Bird Creek, with restoration efforts beginning adjacent to Bird Creek Park in Wautoma. Work will include brushing, building new bank covers, mending braids and exotic and invasive species removal. Funds for this project were obtained from grants awarded by the Trout and Salmon Foundation, Embrace-a-Stream, donations from the Elliott



RIVER KEEPERS OF THE YEAR

Lynn and Frank Druecke receive the River Keeper of the Year Award from by Bob Jozwowski.

Chapter News



Donnelly TU chapter and the Jeffrey Wilcox Memorial Fund.

The Riverkeepers were busy monitoring the streams and rivers monthly. They are 97 volunteers strong, monitoring 55 sites, thanks to the efforts of Bob Jozowski, our Riverkeeper coordinator. The monitoring of the streams was completed after the September monitoring occurred. The monitoring kits have been recollected and will be resupplied by Bob and his crew in preparation for 2019.

The Riverkeepers appreciation dinner was held in November at the Fin and Feather in Winneconne. Frank and Lynn Druce received the honor of Riverkeeper of the year for their hard work. We thank them for their donation of time and expertise. If you wish to make a difference, join the Riverkeepers. We are always looking for new participants. You do not need to be a CW-TU member.

Our educational programs started again in September. The public is welcome at no charge. In September we had a presentation on Spring Ponds by Jim Hauer and Tony Garvey. October was our Annual Conservation Banquet. In November Bob Haase presented "Is It The Fly Or The Presentation?" In December the theme was "Successful Fly Fishers and Their Favorite Piece of Gear."

Upcoming programs include:

January 8: Nymph fishing with Jim Bartelt

February 23: TroutFest 2019

March 12: Steelhead Fishing with Jeff Treu

April 9: "Wisconsin Hatches—The Bugs and the Flies to Imitate Them," by Tom Lager

May 14: Bob Hunt Science Program; "A Night with Linn Beck," with interviewer John Gremmer

Our 47th conservation banquet was held in October at the Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center in Oshkosh. It was an enjoyable event hosting 128 attendees. Gerry Strom entertained us on the piano. Shawn Sullivan helped host the event and gave an authentic, entertaining and action-packed review of the 2018 work days plus an introduction to plans for 2019. Great things have happened under Shawn's leadership. CW-TU is blessed to have Shawn Sullivan and the DNR crew, leaders in their field, guide us with their restoration plans and projects.

We presented awards to Gerry Strom, Bob Jozowski and Dan Harmon III. This year had a new format. Instead of the walk-around raffle, raffle boards were presented with more winners. Wayne Yoder entertained the crowd with his "soft voice" during the live auction. Ira Giese won the Kayak raffle. This year's attendees received a neck gator, tick remover and CW-TU logo window sticker. The 2018 CW-TU Stream Restoration Recognition award winner is Roger Genske of the Fox Valley Chapter. Many thanks to Fox Valley for their support of the 2018 work days.

This year's CW-TU Bill Beck Memorial Scholarship/Grant Program recipient is Nathan Nozzi, who

is pursuing his M.S. in Biology at UW-Oshkosh starting the fall of 2019. He came highly recommended by Professor of Biology, Robert Stelzer. Nathan's Master's thesis project will focus on assessing thermal barriers for brown trout and other coldwater fish species in lake outflow reaches of streams in Central Wisconsin. Emmons Creek near Fountain Lake will be a starting point, but 2-3 additional streams in Central Wisconsin will be included in the study over time.

Beginning Fly Tying Class will once again start in January 2019 under the leadership of Dave Pabel. Check the CW-TU website for more information and registration.

The Master's Fly Tying class will also be held starting in January 2019 and is coordinated by Tom Meyer. This class is already full.

TroutFest is Saturday, February 23 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Fin

'N' Feather, 22 W. Main St., Winneconne. This is a day of education and fun related to trout fishing and conservation. Free admission to all.

The CW-TU Dan Harmon III Annual Fly Fishing School will be held at the Riverside Bible Camp on the Waupaca River in Amherst June 1-2. Another great year is planned. Is there anything better than being next to the water, learning about fly fishing from some of the best mentors? Jeff Treu, John Gremmer and many others work hard to provide a memorable hands-on experience of a lifetime, carrying on the experience created by Dan Harmon III.

Thanks again to all our volunteers for making our chapter awesome. The chapter would not be successful without the talent and effort of our members.

—Laura Tucker

Coulee Region Chapter

In December we tried a new venue and event for our monthly meeting and gathering. We met at the Pearl Street Brewery tasting room for delicious beverages, fly tying and rod building and repair. Cy Post led the demonstrations for tying and then we had several other stations set up to allow novice tyers to try it out. Plenty of other folks were there with their own gear to tie and help out the new folks. John Townsell gave a nice demonstration on how to build or repair a rod. Pearl Street was a fun venue and we look forward to doing it again.

This month's meeting is January 16 at the American Legion in Viroqua. Duke Welter is the guest presenter and he will discuss stream projects that are in the works in the near future. Dinner and drinks start at 6 p.m. and then the presentation is at 7 p.m. Jason Freund is our guest speaker for the March 20 meeting at the Westview Inn in West Salem. Jason will discuss the use of streamer flies in the Driftless Area, including which patterns to use and when and where they are most effective. The April meeting is a can't-miss event with featured

Fox Valley's TIC students learn about tagging

TIC students in the Chilton schools have a feature to add to the learning process and the study of trout in Stony Brook, the last remaining trout stream in Calumet County. Adam Nickle, fish biologist with the DNR in Oshkosh, was able to obtain two pit tag array systems, which will allow students and the DNR to track the movement of trout upstream and downstream from the point where the tagged trout are planted. Students kept back 50 trout from the brood raised last winter. The trout were tagged and released in September.

We needed \$1,500 for the tags and associated materials, cases and batteries. Private donations from FVTU members, Calumet County Groundwater Guardians members, landowners along Stony Brook and the president of Oregon RFID, Inc. (the supplier of the pit tags) provided \$1,050. The Chilton school system covered the balance.

The next challenge to make this system work was for volunteers to monitor the Array System weekly to recharge batteries and download tracking data. Science teacher Tracy Bartels and students would monitor the systems during the school year. Joe Bach from Fox Valley TU and Danielle Santry, water resources specialist for Calumet County, volunteered to manage the systems during school breaks and vacations. However, Bartels obtained solar panels for the system and now it's easier to manage. Plus, students learn about solar energy systems and their installation.

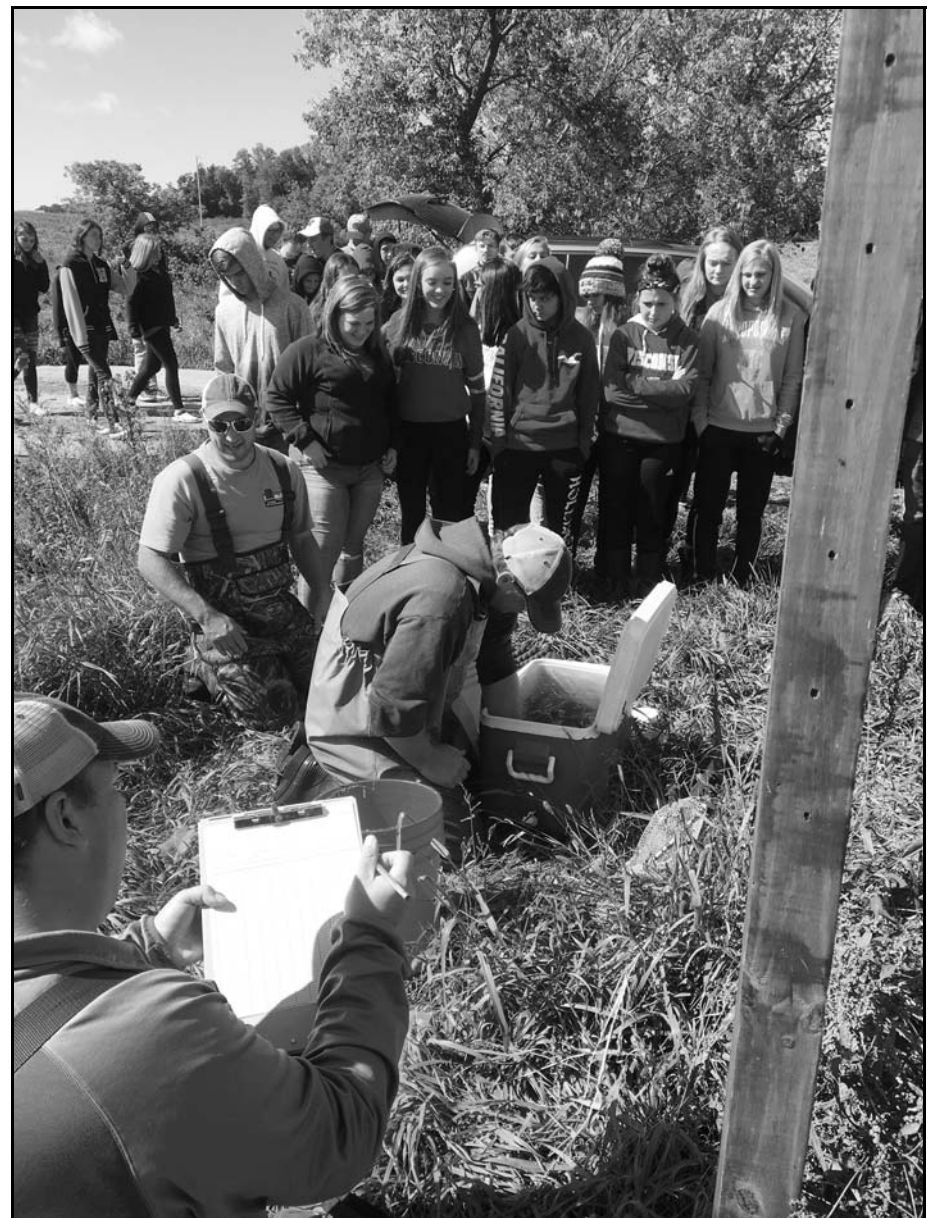
This system of tracking the movement of planted trout adds depth to the education and experience of the TIC program. A system of aquaponics, growing plants using the water from the aquariums, has been installed and plants are thriving. Tagging, planting and electro-shocking, along with WAV monitoring, all add to the educational experience of the students.

Signage placed on the Sohrweide property where the trout have been planted for the past three years was developed and built by Chilton students. The next course of study for students will be in the "Stony Brook Classroom." The course will be called "Stream Improvements 101."

In November stakeholders were really pleased to receive construction details from Shawn Sullivan for the first phase of Stony Brook, where easements are in place off Shady Lane. Three landowners have granted easements to TU and the DNR, while another is in process. The next steps are to create an estimate and solicit funding. There is a considerable amount of work that can be done at little or no cost by volunteers. Steve Devitt from the DNR is applying for permits so we can start the first phase of improvements in 2019.

It is very exciting and rewarding to see the community come together in an effort to educate our youth about the conservation, restoration and preservation of our coldwater resources. This effort is involving students, teachers, counselors, landowners, businesses, environmental groups, Calumet County, the DNR and TU.

Anyone interested in participating can contact Joe Bach at joebach1g@gmail.com or 920-570-2632. There is a lot of work to do and funds to be raised. Your help will be greatly appreciated.



FOX VALLEY TIC STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT TAGGING

Adam Nickel WDNR fish biologist and crew tagging trout raised in the classroom at Chilton schools.



Chapter News

speaker John Bethke, creator of the legendary pink squirrel fly. John has fished the area for more than 30 years and we look forward to learning from him. This meeting will be at the Legion in Viroqua. All of our meetings are open to the public, so feel free to share these events with anyone else you know who might be interested.

There is no February meeting, but we will have our annual chapter banquet on Friday, February 22. Tickets will be available for purchase in early January. CRTU members will receive a mailing with banquet info and you can also find the details at couleeregiontu.org. We are on the lookout for banquet prizes, so feel free to search your

closets and basements for trout gear and books you no longer need. For questions about the banquet contact Curt Rees at curtrees@gmail.com or 608-317-3747.

We recently received \$5,000 from the Madison Fishing Expo, which will be used for the final phase of the Weister Creek project in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. We are very appreciative of the support from the fishing expo that enables us to finish off this multi-year project.

We would also like to thank the Ritz Family Foundation for their generous donation to the Coulee Region chapter.

—Curt Rees

Fox Valley Chapter

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

Our October meeting featured a presentation by Charles Mitchell, a chapter member and a local artist/illustrator. Charlie described his life growing up in Chicago and his interests in natural art. His slide presentation included many examples of his paintings of the various trout species and pictures of several state trout stamp and Great Lakes trout stamp competitions he has won over the years. He has been tying flies and trout fishing the streams of Waushara and Waupaca counties for years. The book, "Le Shack," written by Jim C. Chapralis and based in Waushara County, was illustrated by Charles. Many chapter members brought their copies of the book to the meeting to have Charlie autograph.

On October 11 several chapter members met with a DNR crew to plant 9,000 fingerlings in the Waupaca River. Nancy Rose, who owns some property on the Waupaca River and allows TU chapters to gather on her property, provided coffee and some homemade carrot cake to the crew before they started the planting process. The stocking had to be completed by hand from the various bridges on the Waupaca because the water level and high flow conditions made for unsafe scatter planting from canoes, the preferred method.

Our November meeting featured a presentation by Charlie Plette, shop manager of Tight Lines Fly Fishing Co. in De Pere. Charlie talked about the latest gear for fly fishing, including advice for the selection and use of switch rods, new fly line options, improvements in

rainproof packs and sling packs, and the technology that is improving the performance of fly lines and leaders.

Our December meeting was our annual Tie and Lie Night. Members and friends tied flies and told stories/fibs/lies about the past fishing season. There were competitions for biggest/best lie and most original fly. All tyers received the same materials and had a 30 minutes to come up with a fly using only those materials.

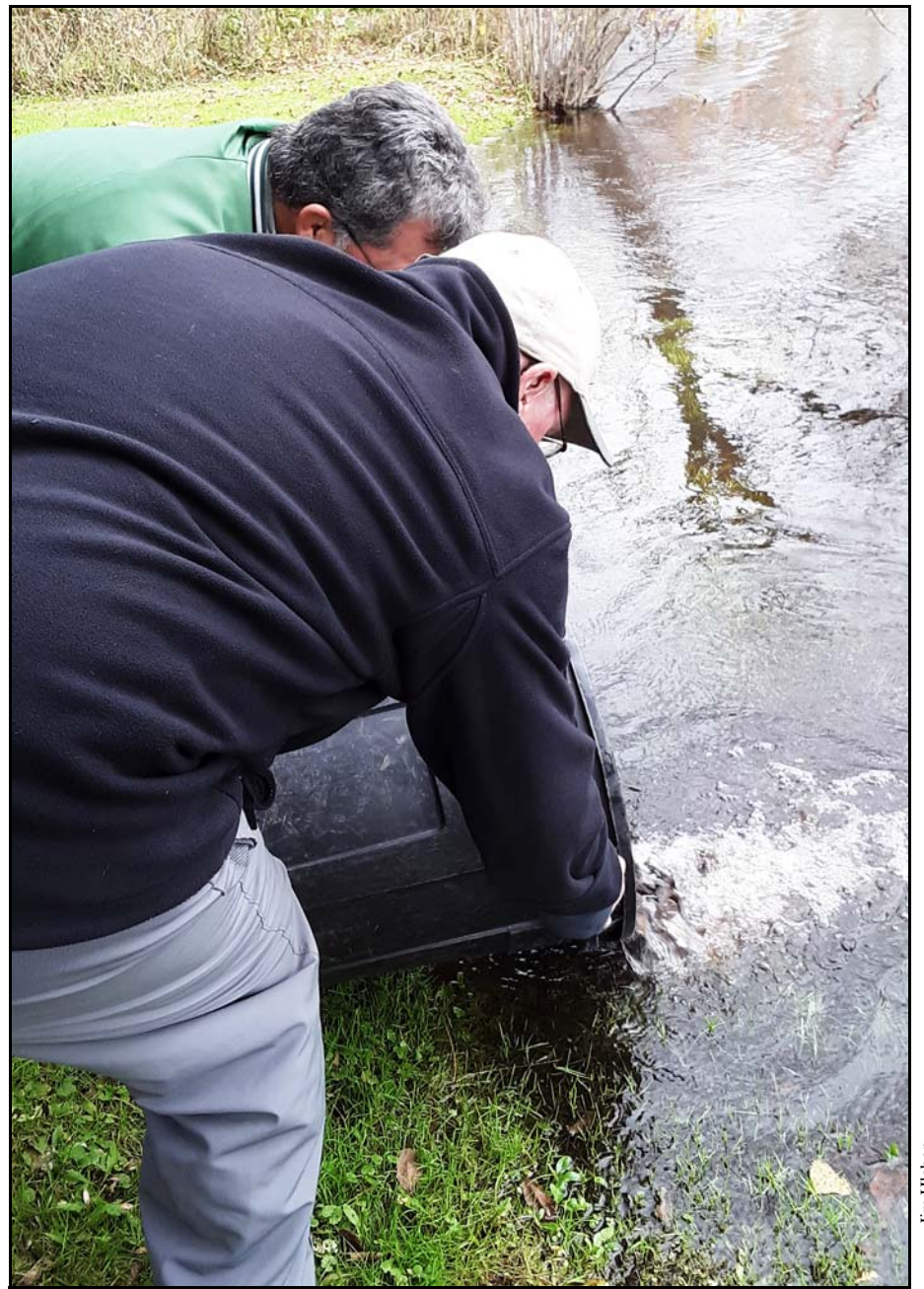
Our chapter meetings for the months of September through December and the March meeting are held at the Capitol Centre in Appleton. Please check our website for dates and times.

We are also planning and preparing for Cabin Fever Day January 19 at the Grand Meridian in Appleton. This 18th annual event will have many new and interesting presentations and vendors. The bucket raffle and silent auction items are some of the best offerings that we have ever assembled.

This event provides an opportunity for us to help fund the DNR LTE crews that work in northcentral and northeast Wisconsin during the summer months. Please check our website at www.foxvalleytu.org for additional information on Cabin Fever Day and our other activities.

The five plus inches of snow on the ground and the homes and businesses decorated for the Christmas and Holiday season that we are now entering remind us of the special times that we will be having with family and friends over the next few weeks. Relax and enjoy this great season. Even though you will receive this after the first of the New Year - All of us from Fox Valley TU - wish you and your families A Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

—Rich Erickson



Jim Hlaban

FOX VALLEY MEMBERS HELP PLANT FINGERLINGS

Jerome Herro and Dan Kastner help scatter plant trout fingerlings into the Waupaca River.

Frank Hornberg Chapter

Our chapter's final work day of 2018 was in December. We assisted UW-Stevens Point Natural Resources students and members of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation with a brushing project on the Little Plover River. This is a class one native brook trout stream in Portage County that has received national attention recently. On dry years over the past 15 years or so, a section of the Little Plover River has completely dried up, killing stranded trout for the first time in history due to extensive groundwater pumping in its watershed. On this work day we assembled brush bundles to be placed in the river at a later time.

Our other December event was our annual Holiday Dinner at Shooters Supper club in Plover. Members of the chapter and their guests were able to renew old acquaintances and meet new people. Also, the buffet, including broasted chicken, ham, fish, pasta and numerous side dishes, was a real treat. Our thanks to Gene Schulfer, the owner of Shooters, for making the facility available. Gene has a long history of supporting our chapter, and we appreciate his beneficence.

Two members of the Frank Hornberg Chapter received favorable mention in recent issues of Trout, the national magazine of TU. In the Fall 2018 issue, John Gierach describes a day of Muskie fishing on the Wisconsin River, guided by our own Dan Boggs. In "A Good Year for Muskies" John tells us that, among other things, "Dan knows more jokes than anyone I've ever met."

In the Winter 2019 issue, our own Heidi Oberstadt is named as a TU Stream Champion. The article by Samantha Carmichael needs an entire page to list all of Heidi's personal and professional accomplishments along with her contributions to the workings of TU. The Frank Hornberg Chapter is pleased to see the activities of our members recognized on the national level.

We may not be in the water during the winter months, but we can still tie our Pass Lake flies, reread our copy of "Big Two-Hearted River," sit by the fire and dream of summer evenings on Flume Creek, the Pine River, the Little Wolf and our beloved Tomorrow River. Holiday greetings to all.

—John Vollrath

Green Bay Chapter

The Green Bay Chapter has gotten back into the swing of our fall and winter sessions. We are once again having our board and general membership meetings on the first

Thursday of the month. At our October meeting we had guest speaker Taylor Ridderbusch, TU's Great Lakes Coordinator. He spoke about culvert projects here in Wisconsin,

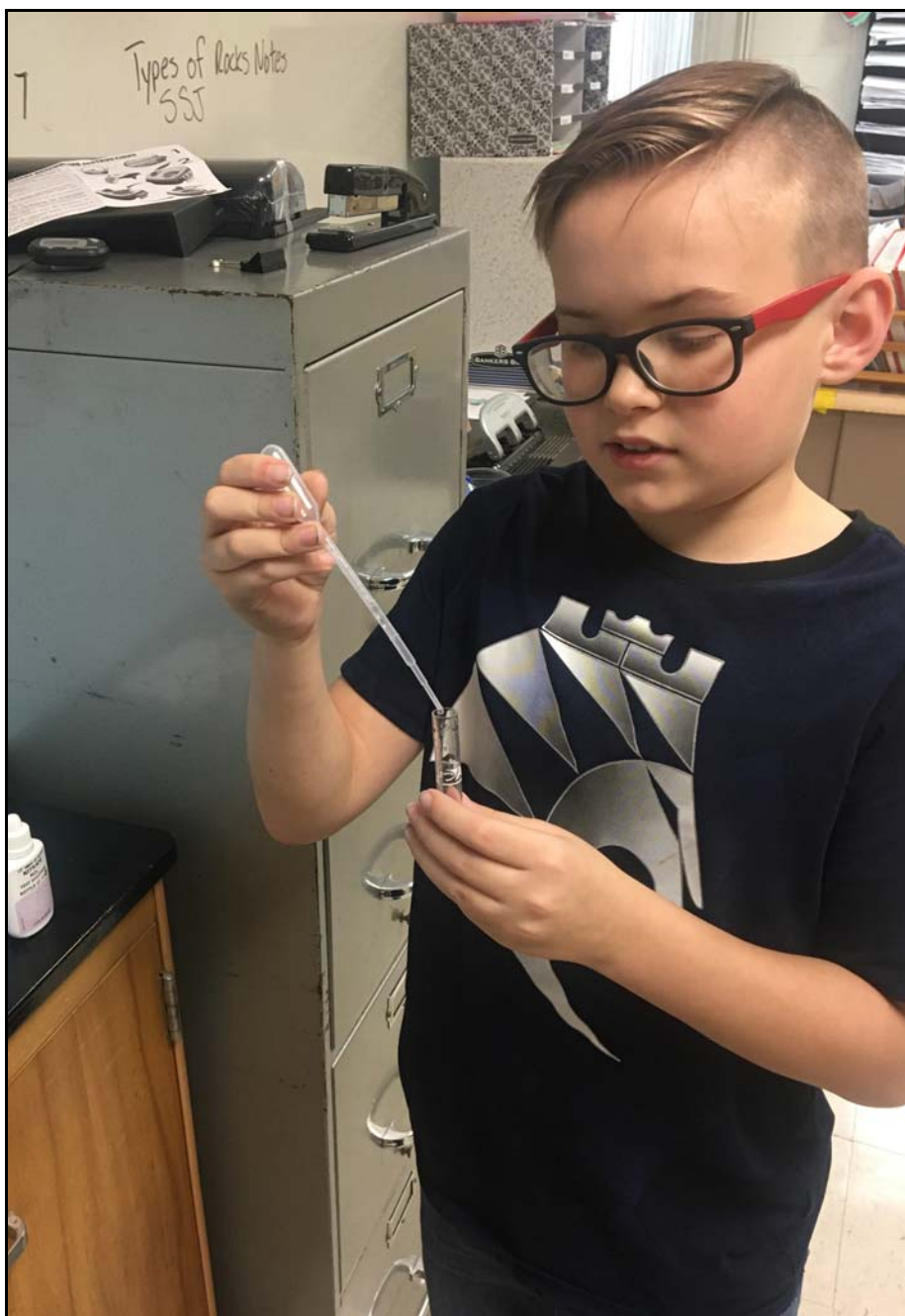


John Vollrath

HORNBERG MEMBERS WORK ON THE LITTLE PLOVER RIVER

Hornberg members worked with UWSP students and members of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation assembling brush bundles for the Little Plover River on December 8.

Chapter News



Kurt Meyer

NOHR'S TIC PROGRAM HELPS TEACH LIFE, EARTH SCIENCES

Nohr's tank is set up for TIC in Fennimore. Eggs came in November from the St. Croix hatchery, so the fry can be stocked. They will focus on life sciences with sixth graders and earth sciences with the seventh graders, who will study the sand the karst topography of the Driftless Area.

the studies of Asian Carp in the Great Lakes that he and his colleagues are working on, and also information and facts pertaining to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Taylor gave us some great insight and it was great having him join us.

Our November meeting had two guest speakers. First we had Aled Griffiths present to us about his trip and involvement in the TU Teen Summit this summer. Aled expressed that he learned a lot about leadership and his responsibilities going forward. He also said the trip to Virginia allowed him and the other teen leaders the opportunity to fish, which from his pictures proved to be quite successful.

The second speaker for the November meeting was Chip Long, a DNR fisheries biologist. Chip's main discussion was on work being done on Beaver Creek, north of Green Bay. This work included culvert proposals and other improvements. He had mentioned earlier work on this waterway is proving to be successful and shared some of

the statistics from their studies.

December brought us our annual Holiday Party. This was a great evening at the Townline Pub in Howard. The evening is a casual get-together where we can connect with members and celebrate the great members we have. There were about 45 attendees this year. This year we gave out four awards, recognizing Mike Renish and Mathew Norem for our Distinguished Members, Glen Tilot of the Brown County Human Services PALS program for our Unsung Hero award. Jeff Gross was the deserving recipient of the Member of the Year award. Thanks to these four gentlemen for their hard work.

February 21 is our annual fundraising banquet at the Stadium View Bar and Grill on Holmgren Avenue. Doors open at 5 p.m. with dinner at 6 p.m., followed by great prizes. Please consider joining us and supporting our chapter. Also follow us on Facebook and Twitter to keep up with all that's happening with GB-TU.

—Dave Ostanek

Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

Work on Six Mile Branch could not start in September due to heavy rains. We may bring in some rock and move some dirt this winter. Work on the Blue River by and in the Snow Bottom Natural Area will have to wait until mid-2019 also.

The tank is set up for Trout In

the Classroom in Fennimore. Eggs came in November from the St. Croix hatchery, so the fry can be stocked. They hatched around Thanksgiving. We will focus on life sciences with sixth graders, monitoring water ph, hardness, nitrates and performing data collection on

growth rate, water changes and feeding schedules.

The seventh graders will focus on the earth science aspect of the water cycle and the karst topography of the Driftless Region.

We received a \$3,000 TU Embrace-A-Stream Grant for the work

on Six Mile Branch and about \$2,600 in donations and prize money from the EAS competition. Thank you to all those who donated and forwarded the donation information.

—Brian Larson

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

The Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter held our annual Holiday Conservation Banquet at the Lake Elmo Event Center. Kudos to the banquet committee of Deb and Mike Alwin, Bob Diesch, Allison Jacobs, Greg Dietl, Tom Schnadt, Scott Wagner and Benji Kohn for putting on a very successful event. The new, less formal buffet-station format generated a fun atmosphere to mingle with friends. An outstanding selection of silent auction items, raffle prizes and games gave the guests ample opportunities to support coldwater conservation with their purchases.

The chapter presented well-deserved Silver Trout Awards to Sarah Sanford, Paul Johnson with Laughing Trout and Dave Norling Jr. and Dave Norling Sr. Chapter stalwart Mike Alwin received a well-de-

served Golden Trout Award. The chapter also presented Certificates of Appreciation to Jim Tatzel, Dale Dahlke and John Rock for their volunteer efforts the past year. Events like this are great opportunities to share fishing memories, connect with old friends and support conservation. A sincere thank you to all of the individuals, retail businesses and volunteers who made this event possible.

Last winter about 170 volunteers spent 32 workdays and more than 2,000 hours removing unwanted trees and streamside brush from four different project sites. This winter promises plenty of opportunities to reach or surpass last year's milestone. In November volunteers began by removing sand bar willows on the West Fork of the Kinni. After



Gary Richardson

SARAH SANFORD RECEIVES KIP'S SILVER TROUT AWARD

Kiap-TU-Wish President Scott Wagner presents Sarah Sanford with the Silver Trout Award.



Gary Richardson

MIKE ALWIN RECEIVES KIP SILVER TROUT AWARD

Kiap-TU-Wish President Scott Wagner presents Mike Alwin with the Silver Trout Award.



Chapter News



Gary Richardson

PAUL JOHNSON RECEIVES KIAP'S SILVER TROUT AWARD

Kiap-TU-Wish President Scott Wagner presents Paul Johnson with the Silver Trout Award.



Gary Richardson

NORLINGS RECEIVE KIAP SILVER TROUT AWARD

Kiap-TU-Wish President Scott Wagner presents Dave Norling Jr. and Dave Norling Sr. with the Silver Trout Award.

a short break prompted by the Wisconsin deer hunting season opener, work resumed on November 24 when 13 volunteers cleared box elders and buckthorn which had begun to re-sprout from stumps which were never pulled at the lower end of the Red Cabin easement on the Kinni.

On December 2, 12 volunteers started working at the Boyceville middle school/high school campus on Tiffany Creek where the school is hoping to transform the stream into an outdoor classroom. Work at the Boyceville site is expected to last through the end of December. Efforts will then turn to the far southeastern reaches of our chapter territory when we'll start to clear the banks on Plum Creek's Von Holtum easement, about 3 miles downstream of Plum City. The DNR crew will begin bank work there later next summer after completing work at the Boyceville site.

If you haven't been to one of the

chapter's volunteer workdays, please do so. It's a great way to spend some time on the stream during the winter. Although it might seem cold on some days, once a fire is started and you begin to move around, it can get warm enough to shed your coat and work in shirt-sleeves. Those operating chainsaws need to have completed certified chainsaw safety training, but there is more than ample opportunity to drag slash to bonfire piles, working at your own pace with nobody to crack the whip and tell you that you aren't working fast enough.

Camaraderie with hot dogs roasted over a bonfire, accompanied by a cookie or doughnut, awaits if you at the end of the work session. Even if you only stop by for an hour or two, it all helps and you can say that you were a part of it. Contact Randy Arnold at randyca999@gmail.com if you want to receive future workday announcements.

—Maria Manion

Lakeshore Chapter

These are some exciting times for Lakeshore TU. For the past year we have been working on creating a long-term restoration plan for our area streams with a goal to improve fishing opportunities throughout our region by creating a mix of restoration projects on five local streams. The goal is to work on each stream so that at the end of five years we will have improved enough water to make a significant differ-

ence on all our area trout streams. The project will be managed through a committee of club members with each stream being assigned a stream advocate who will oversee and promote his/her stream to the club for a work project each year.

Additionally, not only are we applying for grant money, we have created and started a fundraising initiative where we will reach out to

area businesses and individuals asking them to assist us monetarily with our restoration projects, Trout In the Classroom education project and membership initiatives.

We have also developed a relationship with a local business, Aventuron Outdoors. Aventuron is a local bike, camp and off-road shop that is now offering fly fishing gear at their store and online. This holiday season they committed upwards of 7 percent of their online fishing gear sales to LSTU through the end

of December.

We have also recently gone live with a new web site at www.lakeshoretu.com, and an Instagram account at [instagram.com/lakeshoretu](https://www.instagram.com/lakeshoretu) to complement our Facebook page.

Finally, our work days on the local streams are held every second Saturday of the month and if any TU members want to join us please reach out to our board at lakeshoretu@gmail.com.

—Stephen Girardi

Marinette Chapter

The Marinette Chapter had a very good fundraising banquet in April and we also participate in the Family Fun Day in Menominee, Michigan, just across the river from Marinette. We put on fly-tying and casting demos free to the public. We

also put on two kids fishing days -- one at the end of May in the Coleman pound area and one in June in Marinette. Both we well attended and the weather and fish did their part. The kids really enjoyed it.

—Dale Lange

Northwoods Chapter

The Oneida County Board of Supervisors placed a referendum question on the November general election ballot for Oneida County residents regarding the leasing of county lands for mining and its related activities.

At our September meeting, the board discussed taking a position on the mining referendum but decided not to take a position at that time. Since then, the board has done additional investigation into the Lynne deposit. At our October meeting, we hosted a presentation by Tom Jerow of Wisconsin's Greenfire on the pros and cons of mining the Lynne sulfide deposit. A couple of board members toured the mine site and attended a presentation by the Protect the Willow group.

The Lynne deposit is in a wetland with groundwater flows to the Willow River. There are also a number of designated trout streams in the immediate surrounding area that could be impacted by mining operations. For example, in Noranda's proposed development, the waste rock and tailings disposal areas appear to be in the Little Rice River watershed, a designated trout stream.

Based on those facts, the board voted to take a position to oppose the leasing of county lands in the Town of Lynne for the purpose of

metallic mineral exploration, prospecting, bulk sampling and mining. The state council meeting was October 6 in Rhinelander, and our chapter provided a lunch of brats and hamburgers. The lunch was a big hit with attendees and was much appreciated. We owe a big thanks to the following chapter members who helped to make the lunch a success: Terry Cummings did most of the planning, purchased all the food and helped with preparation. Also serving as grill masters, providing grills, etc. were Laura MacFarland, Dave Tipple, Jay Joppa and John Zatopa.

Our November chapter meeting was a basic business meeting. The board of directors met at the Blue Heron Restaurant in Eagle River for dinner and refreshments, followed by the meeting. We discussed planning our 44th Annual conservation banquet in Rhinelander April 20 and our upcoming "Trout Summit," a joint meeting with our partners from the U.S. Forest Service, DNR and others interested in trout management in our four-county area.

We hosted our annual Christmas party at the Blue Heron Restaurant on December 18.

—John Zatopa



John Zatopa

ONEIDA COUNTY'S LYNNE DEPOSIT IS NEAR SO MUCH AMAZING WATER
A section of the Little Rice River south of the Lynne deposit.

Chapter News



Oconto River Chapter

We hosted our annual special needs fishing day on Brunner's Pond in Underhill. We provided guests a picnic lunch of burgers and hotdogs. The attendance was about 40 people including anglers, caregivers, volunteers and chapter members. It was a cool day, but the fish were cooperative and 55 fish were bagged.

Cane poles were rigged up for those participants who didn't have equipment. Garden worms, corn and secret baits were used to fool the trout. The fishing went in streaks after a flurry of early activity. The fish that were caught were cleaned and sent home with the participants.

There are always some new faces, even though many of the participants have fished year after year. They support one another and help each other. They even cheer when someone catches a fish. It's a very fun-filled and heartwarming event, with smiles all around.

The chapter has kicked off our "Trout In the Classroom" project by delivering "eyed" eggs to the students at Suring, Oconto, Oconto Falls, Lena, Marion, Gillett, Pulaski,

White Lake, Menominee Indian H/S, Antigo, Witt/Birnamwood and Bowler districts. Dale Halla is coordinating the effort. Eggs began to hatch in early December and will provide a wonderful project for the classes involved. Special thanks to Tim Winkle at Silver Moon Springs Trout Ranch for supplying the eggs to the classes.

Members attended the WITU Northeast Regional Meeting in Polar in December. The chapter allocated \$5,000 to projects in the region.

Our board of directors met in November to complete our financial reports. They will propose a 2019 activity schedule at the upcoming meeting and will prepare a budget accordingly through March 31.

We had a Holiday Party at our December meeting.

Follow us at www.ocontoriver-tu.com. The banquet committee leaders were established, and a tentative date was set for April 25. Our banquet is our largest fundraiser event of the year.

—Tom Klatt



BIOLOGS INSTALLED BY SEWTU ON SCUPPERNONG CREEK

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

It has been a busy and productive fall for the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter (SEWTU). Our members have been busy planning and participating in education and outreach programs, improving habitat at workdays and attending chapter meetings.

The largest event, though, was the annual SEWTU Fall Habitat Fundraiser in October. This is our major annual fundraiser of the year and the proceeds fund the many projects we conduct each year. A special thank you goes out to Stan Strelka and Jim Wierzba, who did an outstanding job organizing this event for our chapter. We had a good turnout with everyone enjoying delicious hors d'oeuvres, socializing and being generous with their participation in a silent auction and bucket raffles.

This event would not have been successful without the generous donations contributed by SEWTU members, friends and local organizations. The number and quality of the items donated is always very impressive, and we want to thank ev-

eryone who contributed items or purchased tickets to attend. We also want to thank Rich Vetrano, who printed the tickets, invitations and mailed them to the SEWTU membership.

We've had some great speakers at our chapter meetings this fall. Our special guest speaker September was Luke Roffler, DNR senior fisheries biologist for Racine, Kenosha and Walworth counties. His presentation was very educational about the work being done to improve the trout streams and habitat in southeastern Wisconsin. He provided updates on the big habitat projects, the new trout stocking locations, and exciting monitoring projects that are taking place in this area.

Highlights included restoration work at Bluff Creek and Whitewater Creek, which are two streams located in the SEWTU Adopt a Fish and Wildlife Area. He emphasized the impressive results that have come from what he describes as "a fantastic collaborative effort." He also shared information on the up-

coming restoration at Tichigan Creek, which will provide additional fish and wildlife area adoption opportunities for SEWTU to help improve brook trout waters in southeastern Wisconsin.

November's guest speaker was Jim Bartelt who is a well-known fly tyer and guide from Madison. He is also a veteran fly fishing school instructor and a professional fly casting instructor. His presentation, "Aniak River, Alaska: A River of Opportunity," shared the story of a rewarding experience of skating mouse patterns for Rainbows and Dolly Varden and connecting with various salmon species and Arctic Grayling.

Our December meeting consisted of our traditional "Holiday Party," with outstanding camaraderie, great food and cheer, some fishing movie entertainment provided by Henry Koltz, Hunger Task Force food drive coordinated by Stan Strelka and an optional gift exchange.

Workdays have also kept SEWTU members active this fall. In September and October, we worked at Bluff Creek, near Whitewater, thanks to the organization and leadership of Andy Avgoulas and John Rennpferd. Luke Roffler has been doing a great job identifying habitat projects and collaborating with SEWTU to improve streams for trout.

During these work days we continued installing habitat features in areas where excavation of the former channel could not be completed as part of the re-meander project because heavy equipment was not able to access the stream. The main focus was enhancement of the existing ditch channel. This included the installation of additional coir logs, as well as cutting, dragging and placement of cut brush. The placement of coarse woody material and half logs where necessary to narrow the channel, direct stream energy, increase water velocities, mobilize soft sediments and provide overhead cover. Other activities included in-stream weed pulling and brushing.

All this work was designed to make the ditch channel more "trout friendly" where re-meander was not possible. These activities will help restore the function and usability of the first Bluff Creek habitat restora-

tion site, which has a proven history of high brown trout abundance and excellent size structure. Additionally, in December Ken Rizzo coordinated a work day on Scuppernong Creek. We installed biologists at this location in July of this year. This workday was planned to backfill the biologists with brush matting. In spite of a cold wind-driven rain with temperatures in the mid 30's, 14 SEWTU members participated. The brush was cut from areas adjacent to the creek with the expertise of members who knew how to identify the correct species for use as backfill.

An additional work day is being planned for May. Thank you to all of our Habitat Committee members who helped plan and lead these efforts, and to all of our members and volunteers who showed up to help get the work completed.

SEWTU members continue to provide educational and outreach opportunities, and there have been several events this fall. In October, SEWTU members, led by Vice President John Rennpferd, set up at the 10th annual Salmon Spectacular at the DNR Root River Steelhead Facility. The facility hosted its public open house to showcase the facility and promote Lake Michigan fishing opportunities. The open house included guided tours, hands-on demonstrations of fish spawning, fish and fishing information stations, interactive fishing, rod casting lessons, knot tying, fly tying, and an onsite fishing boat used on Lake Michigan for trout and salmon fishing. SEWTU members provided fly casting lessons and had an informational table explaining what we do and signed up several new members.

Also in October, SEWTU had an information table and demonstrated fly tying and casting at the Shorewood Fish and Feathers Event at Hubbard Park in Shorewood. Rick Frye, chair of the SEWTU education committee, did a wonderful job organizing for and working this event to provide more exposure to the conservation efforts Trout Unlimited is engaged in.

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



SWTU WORK DAY FROM ABOVE

Here's a new perspective on work day photos: A drones-eye view of a SWTU workday along the Steiner Branch. The work was followed by a picnic and stream survey.

Jim Hess



Chapter News

currently focusing on midge patterns for winter fishing. This is a great opportunity to learn some new patterns and tying techniques, while enjoying a pleasant evening socializing. The future dates are January 15, February 5 and 19, March 5 and 19, April 2 and 16 and May 7 and 21.

Jim Folda is coordinating the SEWTU member support for the fly-tying classes at the Cabela's Richfield store. This effort results in donations and discounts on items for our raffle fundraising efforts that go toward our annual projects and community outreach. The sessions are scheduled for the following Wednesdays: January 23 and 30, February 6, 13 and 20.

SEWTU is a strong supporter of programs that connect veterans with fishing and fly-tying opportunities. Our chapter is very active in the Trout Unlimited Veteran's Services. SEWTU member John Graba and many other members continue to organize fishing trips for veterans and conduct weekly fly tying. This is an outstanding opportunity SEWTU members provide the veterans.

Take a look at our website at sewtu.tu.org and Facebook page to learn more about SEWTU and our events. We hope everyone has a great start to 2019 and that you have a chance to enjoy the early trout season.

—Todd Durian

Southern Wisconsin Chapter

Our annual day-long Icebreaker event is Saturday, January 26.

Local legend Rich Osthoff will be giving two presentations. In addition to his extensive knowledge of our Driftless Area, Rich wrote the book on backcountry fly fishing in the Rockies. He is a terrific teacher and presenter, and will be on hand to talk throughout the day.

Our Wisconsin focus continues with our local speaker: Dave Rowe, fisheries supervisor with the DNR. His "office" is all of Southwest Wisconsin, a place known to have a trout stream or two running through it. Dave will discuss the status of our precious coldwater resources and will be available to take your questions. You are guaranteed to learn something new.

The Icebreaker is for everyone. Whether you spin fish, cast a fly 50 yards or never picked up a fly rod, this event is for you. It will again be held at the headquarters of American Family Insurance, right off the

interstate on the east side of Madison.

Be sure to see our Icebreaker ad in this edition of Wisconsin Trout. The day-long event will also feature some of the region's most innovative fly tyers and a legendary array of silent auction and bucket raffle items including fly collections, craft beer, custom-built rods, high-end apparel, a YETI cooler, fine woodworking, guided trips, artwork and much more.

Kids are welcome, and those under 12 get in free when accompanied by a parent. We also again invite both retired and active military personnel to our event. They will receive free admission with their military ID.

We'll see you on Saturday, January 26 in a friendly, roomy, professional and relaxed atmosphere. Learn more about us, our events and activities at swtu.org or find us on Facebook.

—Drew Kasel



1, 2, 3 heft!

Tree by tree and branch by branch, the SWTU Stream Team makes a difference along the Sarbacher Easement of the Sugar River.

Wild Rivers Chapter

Fall was fairly quiet in the Wild Rivers area. It seemed like it rained four out of every seven days. Most of the rivers remained quite high. The salmon run was quick and short, but I have heard of some nice steelhead being caught in the Brule and other Northshore waters of Lake Superior. Even the musky rivers in the Hayward-Park Falls area were very high and for the most part un-fishable.

In September I received a call from a person whose brother passed away during the summer, and our

chapter was named in his will to be recipient of all of his fishing equipment. Bill Esch lived in Iron River for a number of years and then moved to Muscoda, Wisconsin where he spent most of his time fishing the Wisconsin River and the Driftless Area. Bill was asked to drive to Muscoda to pick up this donation and then itemize everything for the probate.

This turned out to be a very large donation, including a boat and motor outfit, a solo canoe and many tubs of fly fishing equipment includ-

ing rods, reels, flies, fly-tying equipment and materials, and books. There are at least eight Hardy reels, eight fly rods and much fishing equipment. The total worth of the donation is estimated to be more than \$9,000. The chapter is planning to sell some of the reels and better gear on line. We will probably sell the boat and related equipment, worth about \$4,000, in the spring. Much of the small equipment and flies will be sold at the Wild Rivers Fishing Expo Auction April 6.

Our November meeting was held at the Sand Bar in Ashland. We decided to have a fly tying event and just a get-together. Being such a wide-spread chapter, we never know how something like this could turn

out. It was actually a great meeting. Three of our retired board members, Dick Berge, Chuck Campbell and Jim Emerson, brought their tying equipment. Four current board members including Dan Bloomquist, Bob Traczyk, Kelly McKnight, Bill Heart and one new member, Kevin Seefeldt, also attended. Not one fly was tied, but it turned out to be a very nice evening just conversing with likeminded TU'ers.

I will be taking over as Wild Rivers president while Bob Rice takes care of some personal business. So please contact me at wwheart@centurytel.net if needed.

—Bill Heart

Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter

2018 was a busy year for WCW-TU. We saw new faces step forward to take leadership roles, make contributions to multiple stream projects, update and improve our website and reinvigorate our Facebook presence. Also, in cooperation with the DNR, we launched a significant new project on Hay Creek in Chippewa County.

New faces on the Board include Bill Heth, Lon Christianson, Matt Wysocki, Damian Budzinski, and Steve Gausman. Steve and Lon bring expertise from their prior board/officer experience and Bill, Matt and Damian bring a new perspective.

Projects financially supported in the last year include the North Brach of Elk Creek in Trempealeau County, Eagle Creek in Buffalo County, Swinns Valley Creek in Buffalo County, Hay Creek in Dunn County, Wilson Creek in Dunn County and Sand Creek in Chippewa county.

Dunn County streams of the Wilson Creek watershed received great restoration work this summer. Thanks and much credit goes to the volunteers of the KiapTuWish chapter work crews, led by Randy Arnold, who put in countless hours, often in miserable conditions, cutting, brushing, burning and seeding. Work was also aided by the Twin Cities and Clearwater chapter members.

A major project on Sand Creek in northern Chippewa County was completed in the early summer months.

The board approved the Hay Creek project and it's off to a great

start. Hay Creek is a brook trout reserve stream and a thermal refuge for trout in Duncan Creek. Grants have been received from the Friends of TU, Embrace-A-Scream and the FishAmerica Foundation, along with DNR trout stamp funds. While fundraising efforts continue, work on the project has begun with completion expected by the fall of 2019.

Jim Erickson and Tom Sather have done yeoman's work updating and invigorating our website and Facebook presence. Kudos and thanks to each of them. For practical and financial reasons WCW-TU is trying to do all communication by email or through our website and Facebook page. Please make sure we have your current email address so we can notify you of upcoming events. The web page at wcwtu.com has a calendar and list of presenters and topics for chapter meetings.

The annual banquet is scheduled for March 21. This is our primary fundraiser for the year. Banquet tickets and sponsorships can be purchased on our web site. Please try to attend and bring a friend. Please also consider being a sponsor for the banquet, even if you are out of town on a winter vacation or otherwise cannot attend. Funds support our stream projects.

Fly-tying classes have begun and a spring fly-casting class is planned, with dates to be announced later. The annual chapter camping trip to the Driftless Area is planned for May. All are welcome.

—Dick Duplessie



WISCONSIN CLEARWATERS FINISHES SAND CREEK WORK

Jim Beecher

Jim Erickson

Chapter News



Wisconsin River Valley Chapter

In October we assisted Wausau East High School biology, physics and chemistry students on their annual Plover River Stream Study. We had good weather and only a few kids fell in. A few of the groups of critter collectors always manage to find brook lamprey during our outing, but this year found two that were so small I was surprised that they did not escape through the mesh of the net. There were good numbers of stone fly nymphs, mottled sculpins and damsel fly nymphs.

Many thanks to Al Hauber and Kirk Stark for helping the students identify aquatic insects. Many thanks also to Wausau East Biology

teacher Dave Coenen for putting this field trip together and for his grilling skills, making lunch for everyone. The day would not be complete without the DNR staff that traveled from Wisconsin Rapids to give a demonstration of how they shock a section of stream to survey the fish that live there. I am always hoping to see a beautiful brook trout in his bright fall colors. I was not disappointed.

We are still doing some presentation planning for 2019 so please watch our Facebook page for what is coming up.

—Linda Lehman

Wolf River Chapter

Mark your calendars for these upcoming Wolf River Chapter events. The Wolf River Chapter's annual Fly Tying Consortium is 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. January 26 at the Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort. Contact Zach Buchanan for more information at zbuch50@gmail.com or go to our website at wolfrivertu.org to see our flyer. Please bring your own vise and materials or just come to watch fly tying in action and to hear some really good Wolf River fish tales.

Our spring meeting at the Bear Paw Outdoor Adventure Resort is at 10 a.m. February 23. After regu-

lar business and elections, Antigo DNR fish technician Taylor Curran will update us about Wolf River coldwater tributaries. Then Scott Van Laanen, director of the Northern Oconto County Trout Alliance, will speak about their trout-raising activities.

The Wolf River Meet and Greet is May 18. Watch our website and Facebook page for more information on this fun fishing event and fabulous lunch at the Livingston's on the banks of the beautiful Wolf River.

—Laurie Zen Netzow



Jim Erickson

HAY CREEK IS NEXT PROJECT FOR WISCONSIN CLEARWATERS

In the last year the chapter worked on the North Branch of Elk Creek in Trempealeau County, Eagle Creek and Swinns Valley Creek in Buffalo County, and Hay Creek and Wilson Creek in Dunn County.

\$10,700! Thank you Watershed Access Fund Supporters!

The 2018 fundraising campaign has come to a close and your generous donations have made it one of the best ever. We received more than 140 donations totaling more than \$10,700. These funds will one day secure permanent access to critical properties and streams across Wisconsin.

The 2019 Watershed Access Fund campaign begins this month. Please look for the request in the mail.

I hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and enjoy the winter. Wishing you the best in the 2019 fishing season!

Doug Brown, Wisconsin TU Watershed Access Fund Chair

2018 Contributors

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------------|
| Louis Arata | Whitefish Bay WI | Dan Grauer | Wausau WI |
| Charles Barnhill | Madison WI | Gordon Grieshaber | Mineral Point WI |
| Jim Bayorgeon | Appleton WI | Kathryn & James Groves | Webster WI |
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| Barry Benson | Cambridge WI | Dean Hagness | Custer WI |
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| Stephen Born | Madison WI | Ashton Hawk | Madison WI |
| Jim Brawner | Pulaski WI | John Hawk | New Holstein WI |
| Ed Brockner | Beaver Dam WI | Stephen Hawk | Madison WI |
| Damian Budzinski | Eau Claire WI | Bill Heart | Ashland WI |
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Driftless Rambler

With Duke Welter
TUDARE Outreach Coordinator



With snow on the ground, here in Viroqua the informal fly-tying nights have kicked in at the American Legion (almost) every Tuesday night. Last evening about 10 of us dined on the \$2 special burgers and one of their 20 tap beers (19 of them pretty good) while we tied.

A couple of guides from the fly shop, the real pros, were stocking up for winter and spring outings. Winston concentrated on tying a pile of Griffiths Gnats in several deadly variations. My wife Kris is just getting started, so she tied no-hackle caddis. Three of our group were pretty much beginners, so they had plenty of tutoring.

An eighth grader brought his dad, and while we tied we chatted about the stream that runs through his family's nursery business. Our new tyer went home with some nicely proportioned caddis, several hooks to keep him going until he finds more in his Christmas stocking, and plenty of dubbing and other materials. He attended the Wisconsin TU Youth Fishing Camp near Waupaca last summer and soaked up the lessons. Now he may be interested in TU's National Youth Summit, set this June for a site near Shenandoah National Park.

When you tie with a group, it seems almost everyone brings more materials than they need. Australian Opossum? Someone will have it, in five colors. Fur from the little "Wild Things" shop in Rockton, where you

can get scraps of most anything from their scrap box? Sure. About the only caveat is to make sure that if you are gifted some roadkill, or materials of any nature, you make sure they've been stored and handled cleanly with no hitchhikers. My corner of the table often smells like moth crystals or borax, but I can say I've never had to contend with an infestation of any sort. So burn some incense, and quit kvetching.

Somehow, in a group of less than a dozen people, we were able to have more than six conversations going on at once. I can't quite figure that out, but then I am not a geometer.

Throughout the state our TU chapters and other partners offer plenty of opportunities for tying flies. Whether you want to learn to tie or just get together with others who tie, check out your local chapter's website or Facebook page or ask a TU member what's out there. I'll mention a few later in this column.

My first learning was part of the Southern Wisconsin TU chapter's beginner course around 1982. Previously, I'd owned (and mostly lost) two dozen flies sold by a little garage outfit in Nebraska for about five bucks. I think it was called "Cabela's." I wonder where they are now? The SWTU course had two instructors who led a dozen of us through their little handbook of maybe 16 flies, two a week. Instruc-

tor Larry Meicher remained a friend of mine through the rest of his life. Chuck Amacher died a few years after I took the course.

A sordid group of hangers-on tied in a corner and occasionally offered one of their patterns. They were all former presidents of the chapter, I think. Dick Berge showed us his Bullet-head Hex, and another showed us the Chuck Hair Caddis. Henry Haugley's artistic Muddler was the cover of the handbook. We had so much fun in that course that I decided I wanted to be associated with this group. A fateful life decision, one might say. Now, 35 years later, I've tied something like 12,000 flies, a seemingly hefty number but not much compared to some of these folks who tie thousands each winter, or tie commercially or for their own guiding.

After moving to Eau Claire and joining the local chapter, I saw another excellent beginner's course in action, with long-time instructors and a basic set of flies that included some seldom seen in other parts of the state, like the Palmer Cricket. We didn't have an outlet for experienced tyers, and so began the "Single Malt Gang," which munched the host's appetizers or soups and sampled some brown drink as we went. We had a couple of hiccups with that approach, one that involved pulling a truck out of a snowbank, but it was an enjoyable wintertime endeavor. It still happens a couple times a winter.

There are lots of reasons for tying in these winter periods. Tim Meyer of the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter, and one of the founders of the Single Malt Gang, says he enjoys wintertime tying groups for reasons all related to aging:

- You have to keep moving, and it's harder in the winter to find reasons to leave the recliner.
- I never did much ice-fishing and am certainly not going to start now.
- It's nice to socialize with good old friends when fishing opportunities with them are few.
- As the original Single Malt group realized, you have to get those older, more experienced tyers juiced up a little before they give out a few secrets.

Those "secrets" can sometimes expose you to new patterns with which people are experimenting, local patterns effective in your area streams, and theories about fly design or fishing. On top of that, of course, is the tremendous amount of money you can save by tying your own flies. ("In your dreams," a voice from a prior life tells me.)

Across the state, chapters have some attractive offerings. Some informal "Lie & Ties" are potlucks on

a mid-winter Saturday. Several chapter meetings will showcase expert fly tyers like Fox Valley's "Stone Fly Socials," Clear Waters' "Round Robin Tying" nights or Kip-TU-Wish's "Dry Fly Dick Frantes Memorial Fly-Tying night" in April.

Other events seem to gravitate toward places you can tie with a beer handy, such as the "Drinking with Scissors" events from SWTU and Kyle Zempel of Black Earth Angling Company. Several other fly shops, including Lund's in River Falls and Tight Lines in DePere, have their own classes. Just across the border in the Gopher State, Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop offers classes and the excellent tyers of Laughing Trout welcome tiers at the Wayzata American Legion on Wednesday nights. Most are free, but some might ask a charge for materials.

SWTU offers both beginner's and advanced fly-tying courses. Phil Anderson, one of the long-time instructors, tells me the tying handbook is available through the swtu.org website at <https://www.swtu.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Fly-Tying-I-Instructional-Booklet.pdf>. It still features Henry's Muddler on the cover, and has step-by-step photos for tying 17 useful flies as well as other good info.

Many other chapters offer beginning fly-tying courses. The Eau Claire Fly-Tying Club and Green Bay's Classic Anglers of Wisconsin both have tying events scheduled for the winter.

One of the most intriguing advanced classes is Central Wisconsin TU's Master's Fly Tying Program, which has five sessions in January and February, each featuring an experienced tyer who demonstrates two or three patterns. CWTU member Tom Meyer, who organizes it, reports the 25-person class is already full, and usually 80 percent of its attendees are repeaters. Why not? They can learn a bunch of flies from an expert teacher and have a bunch of fun. Its enduring success begs the question: why wouldn't another chapter emulate it?

Try as I might, I didn't find a wintertime class offered by a TU chapter for making spinners, and I don't know if it's an activity pursued much in these parts any more. Chapters who offer monthly speakers occasionally feature a spinning expert like author Jay Ford Thurston of Viroqua. Staush Gruszynski of Green Bay TU reports a speaker demonstrated how to build spinners for GBTU a few years ago. Perhaps some of our members who fish spinners, and make their own, would be interested in sharing their skills at a chapter meeting or class in their area. They'd certainly be welcome at our Tuesday tying nights at the Viroqua Legion.



Willie's Elk Creek Caddis was developed over several years of experimenting by Clarence "Willie" Wilson of Eau Claire, who taught Ojiblean (now WI Clearwaters) tying classes for many years. He used it as an illustration of designing with the "Game of Nods" design approach of Ed Marinaro: try it with this feature, then without, to see which gets a nod from the trout.



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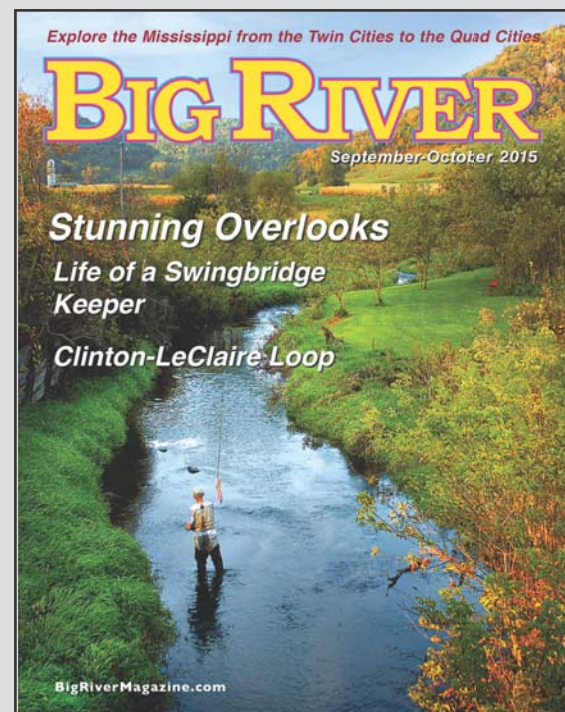
- 10am Kyle Zempel
Trout Fishing the Shoulder Seasons (Winter, Spring - Fall)
- 11am Tim Landwehr
Smallmouth: Modern Fly Fishing Methods, Tactics and Techniques (Summer)
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