



Wisconsin Trout

Spring 2021

Budget proposal shows strong support for Stewardship Program

On February 16, Governor Tony Evers delivered his second biennial budget, which included a recommendation to reauthorize the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program (KNSP) for 10 years at \$70 million per year through bonding. KNSP is Wisconsin's iconic public lands initiative and has served us well for more than three decades. WITU applauds the Evers administration for putting forward a long-term reauthorization that includes a funding level commensurate with the demand on the program.

Currently, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program is funded at approximately \$33 million per year and is set to expire next year.

Major increases in the program budget come in two critical areas: local unit of government grants and maintenance for existing Knowles-Nelson properties. Last year, the local grants portion of the program saw funding levels at \$6 million but had requests for three times that amount. The Evers budget seeks to meet that level of demand by recommending \$18 million per year for the next 10 years.

These grants have been used to fund projects around the state, such as Bird Creek Park in Wautoma, Esofea/Rentz Memorial Park in Vernon County and the Prairie River Dells Park near Merrill, to name a few. With the amount of restoration that WITU does every year, we recognize the need to maintain the investments made by governments, non-profits and private citizens. Additionally, with as many people as ever using our parks and natural areas, we are pleased to see the administration's commitment to the upkeep and improvement of existing properties, as they proposed an increase from \$3.25 million to \$22 million annually.

In a press release from Gov. Evers, he stated, "During its three-decade existence, the Warren Knowles-Gaylord Nelson Stewardship Program has been a popular and successful way to preserve land for future generations. The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship program has a demonstrated history of improving access to outdoor recreation opportunities, protecting critical habitats and environmental health, improving water quality, and building flood resilience, as well as supporting state and local economic development."

WITU is urging the Wisconsin State Legislature to show strong support for KNSP as it writes its own budget later this summer. WITU is committed to working with the governor's office and with the legislature to ensure that the KNSP continues benefiting Wisconsinites well into the future. With robust funding, as recommended, WITU sees the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program as a worthy investment in Wisconsin's outdoor heritage that cannot be lost.

Visit knowlesnelson.org for program information and action alerts.
—Mike Kuhr and Taylor Ridderbusch



PRAIRIE RIVER DELLS, FOR ALL TO ENJOY

Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program grants have been used to fund projects around the state, such as Bird Creek Park in Wautoma, Esofea/Rentz Memorial Park in Vernon County and the Prairie Dells Park and Scenic Area near Merrill.

Council online auction begins April 18

<https://go.tulocalevents.org/wicouncil2021>

Since we weren't able to hold our annual fundraising banquet, please visit our online auction, bid and support coldwater conservation in Wisconsin. The list of great merchandise and services is growing, here's a sample of what's on the auction block:

- Fly casting instruction by FFI Certified instructor Terry Cummings
- Fly boxes brimming with dozens and dozens of flies donated by Scot Stewart, Kiap-TU-Wish, Aldo Leopold, WI Council and more
- Sling packs from Todd Franklin and Frank Hornberg Chapter
- Five weight Echo, Lamson, RIO rod package by Aldo Leopold Chapter
- Five-weight St Croix rod donated by Antigo Chapter
- Simms and Fishpond wader bags donated by Green Bay Chapter
- Custom John Beth bison horn knife donated by WI Council
- Rotary vise and tools donated by Kiap-TU-Wish
- Guided fishing trip with the Driftless Angler donated by Coulee Region Chapter
- Guided trip with Dan Boggs of Flying Musky Guide Company
- Thank you to Antigo Chapter for its \$200 cash donation and to Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter for its \$1,000 donation

We need more auction items, so if you or your chapter would like to make a donation, please contact Scott Allen at jscottallen12@gmail.com

2021 will be a big year for Friends program

The Friends of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited grant program has a long history of helping to finance a variety of trout habitat projects around Wisconsin. It looks like 2021 could be one of the best years the program has ever had.

Following the January 15 submission deadline, the state council vice chair and regional chairs approved 10 grants that will enhance trout habitat all around the state.

Approved chapters and their projects are:

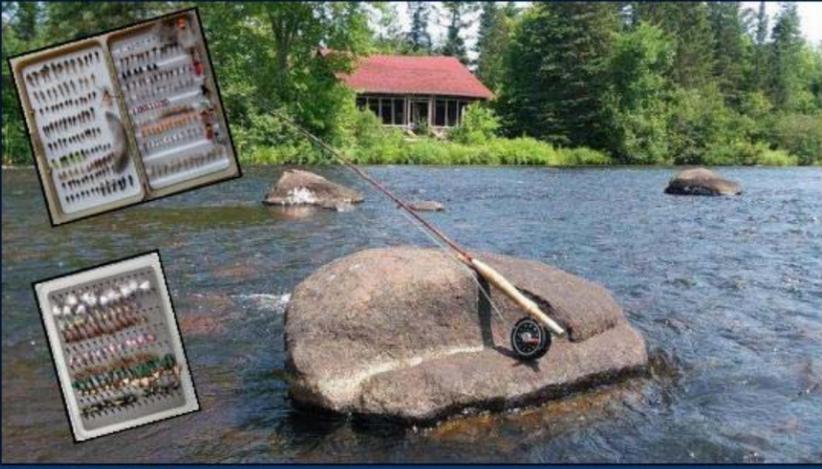
- Antigo Chapter: Antigo Area Habitat Crew
- Central Wisconsin Chapter: White River habitat work
- Coulee Region Chapter: Conway Creek habitat work
- Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter: Blue River and Six Mile Branch habitat work
- Marinette Chapter: Lake-wood Habitat Crew
- Oconto River Chapter: Lake-wood Habitat Crew

- Southeastern Wis. Chapter: Warner Creek habitat work
- Wild Rivers Chapter: Lake-wood Habitat Crew
- Wis. Clear Waters Chapter: Gilbert Creek habitat work
- Wisconsin River Valley Chapter: Antigo Area Habitat Crew

Awarding all of the listed grants will be a strain on the fund's finances, so the immediate task will be to replenish the account and get ready to award more grants in the future. We cannot do that without continued support from our donors and we cannot thank them enough.

If you have not been a "Friend" of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited in the past, the State Council is hoping that you will consider contributing to this very worthwhile account in the future. All Friends of Wisconsin TU donations are used solely to fund habitat work in Wisconsin.

WITU Online Auction Starts Sunday, April 18
<https://go.tulocalevents.org/wicouncil2021>



Support cold water conservation in WI!
Here's a sample of what's on the auction block:

- Trips w/ Driftless Angler and Flying Musky
- Variety of fully loaded Fly Boxes
- Fly Rods by Echo & St. Croix
- Simms Sling Pack
- Rotary Vice & Tools
- Simms Taco Wader Bag
- Fishpond Burrito Wader Bag
- Fishpond Waist Pack
- Custom Bison Horn Knife by John Beth
- Fly Casting Lessons w/ Terry Cummings
- Bronze Trout Sculpture Casting
- More Items to be added!

Thank you to all of our donors.

Bidding closes @ 7pm on Sunday, April 25
Contact Scott Allen jscottallen12@gmail.com for more info



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visit <https://wicouncil.tu.org> for meeting link

Upcoming Events: April 7, May 5, June 2

April's Featured Guests:
Mike Carlson and Charlie Carlin from
Gathering Waters discussing Public Lands
and Knowles-Nelson Stewardship



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Chair's Column

Building resiliency into TU and our work

By Mike Kuhr, State Council Chair

Resiliency is defined as the capacity to recover quickly from difficulties. It's fast becoming a signature characteristic of both the instream restoration work we do and the chapter-building activities that we're undertaking.

By building resiliency into our trout streams and our chapters, we ensure our volunteer efforts will serve future generations well for years to come. It's our legacy that we're protecting.

In the face of a changing climate, the most obvious impacts on our Wisconsin landscape have been the increase in intense rain events and flooding. We're quickly learning which instream habitat techniques can hold up to these floods, and which ones cannot.

Instream habitat restoration techniques are constantly evolving. We're fortunate to be able to work alongside professionals at the county, state, and federal levels who recognize this.

If we're going to continue to raise money and put in volunteer sweat equity on instream habitat, it's essential that we stay on the cutting edge of these techniques. As we're developing project plans, we need to be asking ourselves how a proposed root wad, rock weir, plunge pool or LUNKER structure

will hold up over time.

We also need to recognize that the greatest threat to our beloved trout in Wisconsin is drought. Researchers have shown, through climate models, that these coming drought years could put enough stress on fish to significantly reduce brook and brown trout populations.

And yes, those are computer models and predictions that could be off by some measure of statistical noise, but the risks are too high to leave this up to chance.

It's easy to forget about drought when we're in the middle of a wet period and our groundwater aquifers are fully recharged. But there are things we can be doing right now to give our trout a fighting chance in the future.

This is the time to make sure that headwaters are protected. Strategic land acquisitions, conservation easements that form buffers in the riparian corridor, and wetland restoration and enhancement, can all play a role in keeping the cold water running.

Likewise, we need to realize the seriousness of our groundwater resource management. These are not unlimited supplies ripe for exploitation. They are valuable reserves that need to be in place when the dryer times come. Whether you're a conservationist, a municipality providing water to your community or a



business that relies on access to clean water, we all have a responsibility to manage groundwater appropriately.

These forward-looking approaches will serve our watersheds well, and we can apply these same principles to our volunteer organization.

Pandemic challenges

The pandemic has presented us with some of the biggest challenges we could ever face as a volunteer organization. I've been inspired to see TU respond to those challenges on all levels. Americans flocked to the outdoors in numbers never seen before, and those who sought out trout found that many trout-fishing resources were ready for them, due in part to volunteer work by TU and others.

To keep our members engaged, we've created virtual events. Project planning has continued. Advocacy and policy initiatives continue to advance. And we've found new avenues for fundraising opportunities.

Many of us are suffering from video-conferencing fatigue, but these have truly been invaluable tools for the TU community, and we'll certainly continue to use them even after the pandemic. Virtual leadership meetings give new volun-

teer leaders an opportunity to participate in an efficient manner. I don't think these virtual meetings will replace our face-to-face meetings entirely, but they will have a place in how we operate in the future.

I expect chapter and Council communications to continue to evolve as new platforms expand our ability to tell compelling conservation stories. Many of us instantly recognize the power a good photograph, and we're ready to make the logical next leap to short videos. The cell phone has put many of these tools within easy reach.

There has never been a better time to get more involved in your local TU chapter. Each one of us brings a unique skill set to the volunteer table, and your unique skills make our organization more resilient and effective.

We're finally starting to see some light at the end of the dark pandemic tunnel, and I'm sure many of our chapters and volunteers are ready to resume "somewhat" normal activities again. As we do, be thankful for the volunteer efforts that have built such resiliency into our organization. We've certainly been put to the test. Now it's time to respond.

Much Respect, Mike Kuhr, State Council Chair

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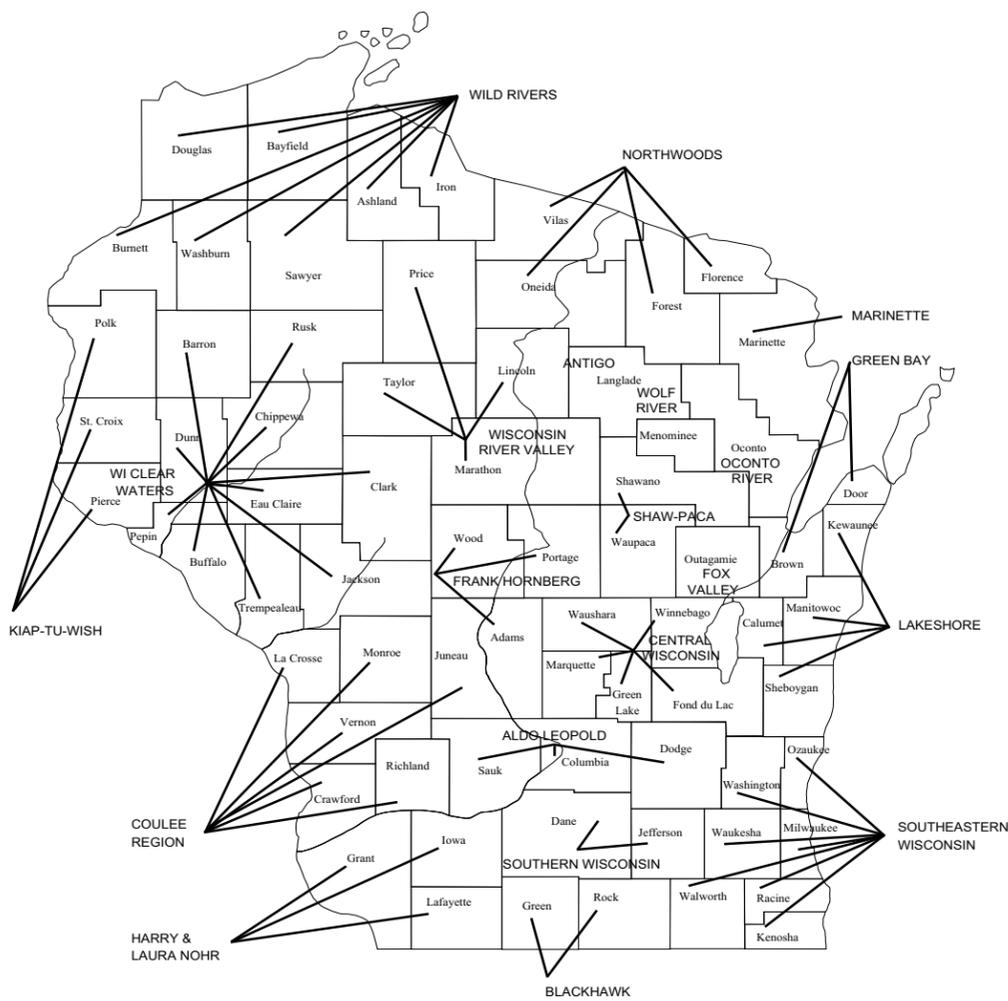
Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance

Catch & Release

For over 25 years we have partnered with conservation groups to protect and enhance quality lake and river fishing. Through our fundraising efforts, we donate to children's fishing programs, conservation groups like The River Alliance, and fund boat ramp improvements.

Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance
Join the fun - wisconsin-smallmouth.com

Wisconsin TU Chapters, Presidents, and Websites



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

- Aldo Leopold (#375):** Mike Barniskis, 805 S. Center St., Beaver Dam WI 53916; barniskis@yahoo.com; aldoleopold.tu.org
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- Southern Wisconsin (#061):** Jim Hess; jim.hess@tds.net; P.O. Box 45555, Madison, WI 53744-5555; www.swtu.org
- Wild Rivers (#415):** Kevin Seefeldt; Ashland, WI; 715-292-1614; kseef09@gmail.com; www.wisconsinTU.org/wildrivers
- Wisconsin Clear Waters (#255):** Jim Erickson; 341 Garfield Ave., Eau Claire, 53701; 715-559-1864; ttangler@outlook.com; WisconsinTU.org/ClearWaters
- Wisconsin River Valley (#395):** Kirk Stark; 811 2nd Street, Rothschild, WI 54474; 715-432-0560; kfgstark@gmail.com; wrvtu.org
- Wolf River (#050):** Chuck Valliere, 5040 Hardy Trail, Waunakee, WI 53597; 608-836-1908 or 608-332-9652; woodtickchuck1950@gmail.com; WolfriverTU.org

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Vice Chair, Northeast Region: Dale Lange, See Marinette County above.

Vice Chair, Southern Region: Jim Wierzba, 2817 Country Club Drive, Mequon, WI 53092; 414-688-3606; hoke4me@aol.com

Vice Chair, Western Region: Gary Horvath, 623 W. Pine Street, River Falls, WI 54806 (715)425-8489; garyjhorvath42@comcast.net

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Awards: Todd Franklin; Contact info at right

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Advocacy Chair: Henry Koltz

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Website: Brandon Schmalz schmalz.dev@gmail.com

Diversity Initiative: Heidi Oberstadt, 456 Wadleigh St., Stevens Point, WI 54481; 715-573-5104; heidi.oberstadt@gmail.com

Legal Counsel: Open
Communications: Open

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.

WISCONSIN TROUT

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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

Mike Kuhr, Chair

Scott Allen, Vice Chair

Bob Rice, Secretary

Gary Stoychoff, Treasurer

Diversity Initiative update

By Heidi Oberstadt

I hope this warmer weather finds you happy and healthy and able to spend lots of time in nature. I'm loving life with a two-year-old, as he reminds me to find joy in every little thing. Every leaf, every rock and every bubble in the water is a reason to squeal with delight.

I'm writing you all with an exciting update for our Diversity Initiative. We are in the process of forming a Diversity Initiative committee, and I am excited to have additional perspectives as we make our plans to move forward.

This initiative began as the Women's Initiative, and in 2016, our national TU office broadened our focus via our Diversity Initiative. I am looking forward to pairing with other WITU committees as needed while we work to make WITU more welcoming to diverse populations, including different genders, ethnicities, ages and cultures.

Our committee will be discussing questions like:

- What are our values in WITU and how can they inform our work to diversify?
- How can we make WITU more accessible to diverse populations?
- What are the biggest challenges that we face in making ourselves

more welcoming? What can we do to overcome these challenges?

- How can we help chapters in specific, tangible ways as they move toward our diversity goals?

I have two specific requests of our readers today:

If you would like to join our committee, we would love to have you! We are planning to hold from four to six conference calls/Zoom meetings per year, so there is a minimal time commitment.

If you have a unique experience with diversity in TU, please reach out and share your story! As we try to understand all the challenges that diverse populations are facing, we want to empower additional voices to share their experience with WITU. I'd love to set up a Zoom meeting, have a virtual coffee date or happy hour with you, and hear all about your experience. Maybe we'll even be able to return to in-person coffee dates soon.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or if you're interested in joining us.

My work with Trout Unlimited has changed my life. I'm excited to help WITU reach our diversity goals and to make everyone feel just as welcome in WITU as I have. Please join me.

Mining update

By Allison Werner, River Alliance

The Back Forty project has had a lot of legal activity recently. In January, Administrative Law Judge Daniel Pulter denied the wetland permit that the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) had granted to Aquila Resources. This permit was contested by Tom Boerner of the Menominee Tribe of Wisconsin and the Coalition to Save the Menominee River in June 2018. We are grateful to all of them for their persistence and dedication to protecting our waters from this threat. As expected, Aquila Resources challenged this decision.

In Michigan, challenges to administrative decisions go to their Environmental Permit Review Commission. The commission held its first session March 3 to review Judge Pulter's wetlands permit decision. At this first meeting, the three-member appointed tribunal elected a chairman and set a timetable for submission of legal briefs. Their next meeting is scheduled for June 15. You can watch the recording of the March 3 meeting at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=29EAeCYEaJQ>

Here is a portion of the Coalition to Save the Menominee River's statement about the wetland permit decision:

"The Coalition to Save the Menominee River, Inc. is very pleased with Judge Pulter's decision in our Contested Case to deny Aquila Resources' Wetlands Permit. His decision validates many of the objections the coalition raised about the permit.

"One of our main concerns was that the application should never have been considered administratively complete by EGLE because the wetland impacts were not reliably identified, which deprived the public of its right to review and comment. Judge Pulter agreed.

"Another issue we raised was that Aquila did not properly assess the alternatives to avoid wetland impacts. Again, the judge agreed.

"And regarding the question of whether EGLE could issue a permit with conditions that would have allowed Aquila to submit new and updated modeling to support the wetland impacts, the judge said such conditional permits are not allowed."

Aquila Resources submitted their new Dam Safety Permit application to Michigan's Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE). EGLE has not yet issued a public notice about a public hearing or deadline for submitting written comments.

There are many concerns with the design Aquila Resources is proposing for the tailings dam. They are still proposing an upstream design, which has failed and caused devastating harm in other locations such as Brazil. The demonstrated risks and extreme instability of upstream dams led to a Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management to establish safer guidelines for tailings dams.

The Coalition to Save the Menominee River has a form letter you can customize and send to EGLE to object to the proposed tailings dam design Aquila Resources submitted. You can find the link to the letter on their website at jointherivercoalition.org.

Aquila Resources has interests in the Bend and Reef deposits in Wisconsin. In 2013 Aquila submitted a prospecting permit to the Bureau of Land Management for the Bend deposit in the national forest in Taylor County. The federal process has moved slowly. The U.S. Forest Service is starting an environmental assessment for the prospecting permit application. Tribal nations and several conservation groups are keeping an eye on this process.

Hall of Fame Honoring TU's Stephen Born

On April 24 the Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame 2021 Inductee Gary Eldred will be honored as part of a series of four free Induction Ceremony events held live on a virtual platform throughout the day. Because the 2020 Induction Ceremony was cancelled due to the pandemic, the 2020 Induction Ceremony to honor Stephen Born, Jens Jensen and Stanley Temple will also be held as part of the 2021 event series.

Each event will be 45 minutes to one hour long. Special guests will provide background on the inductees and recognize their significant contributions. The inductees will speak about their conservation legacy and share their life's work through images and stories. More information will be added to our website as it becomes available at <https://wchr.org/2021induction/>

We in the TU community are proud of Stephen Born's induction into the Hall of Fame. He is a well-known UW-Madison professor who specialized in environmental planning and worked on almost every aspect of water management, the Great Lakes, inland lakes, ground-

water, rivers and watersheds, in addition to loving all things trout. He has been a long-time Trout Unlimited leader at the local, state and national levels.

Jens Jensen is a landscape architect of the Upper Midwest who developed public parks, preserves and private estates, focusing on indigenous plants and the location's ecological features, who also founded the "school of the soil" in Door County, known as The Clearing.

Stanley Temple is a UW-Madison professor who studied endangered birds, habitat fragmentation, invasive species and other factors leading to species declines, and now serves as a Senior Fellow with The Aldo Leopold Foundation, researching, writing and speaking about Leopold.

Eldred is a self-taught citizen conservationist whose passion for prairies and volunteer work to preserve them led to the formation of The Prairie Enthusiasts for which he has served as leader of both the organization and field activities.

—*Wisconsin Conservation Hall of Fame*

Council creates ad hoc committee for CAFOs

Chapter leaders have been asking us how they can deal with proposals to locate Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) in their chapter areas. These include dairy farms, as well as hog and chicken farms.

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited decided to put together a team of individuals to provide our chapters with a working paper on steps to develop CAFO response teams and possible actions that chapters may take to protect their home waters. It will include sections on laws governing CAFO's, permitting processes, partnering and chapter roles.

Members of the team are former Council chairs Linn Beck and Kim McCarthy, as well as Tim Fraley, Jason Freund, Bill Heth and Michael

Williamson.

We began meeting last fall to start on this working paper. The group also has met with Tim Jackson of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to better understand the permitting and licensing process. He said there are two parts of the permitting process. One is DATCP's responsibility, and the other is the DNR's. We met in March with the DNR to discuss their roles in this process, regulations and how the process of monitoring the farms works.

We will now assemble the information into a working paper, with plans to have it finalized by our June meeting, when we'll ask for input from chapters.

Know any great fly tyers?

Writer Bob Haase is looking for more amazing fly tyers to feature in his ongoing series, "Wisconsin Fly Tyers."

By Bob Haase

With the Corona Virus, I didn't feel comfortable asking to go into someone's home to interview and photograph them and their flies. For that reason, I thought it might be a good time to skip this issue and solicit the help of all Wisconsin fly tyers in developing a list of future tyers to be recognized.

Years ago, we didn't have all the shows, the internet and social media sites like Facebook, to learn about fly tying and the tyers that were using new techniques and materials. I have been tying for close to 70 years, so I maybe heard the names, but did not have the opportunity to meet a lot of Wisconsin's greatest fly tyers. Many of these people were known regionally, such as Marty Kwitek from Green Bay or Cap Buettner or Ed Haaga in the Wolf

River area. There were also others that may not have had name recognition, but played an important role in teaching others to tie, or designing new patterns.

If you know of anyone that you would like to see recognized as one of Wisconsin's Fly Tyers, please email or call me with the person's name, and any information you may have about them. It would also help if you knew of others that might also be able to provide information, along with their names and contact information.

I don't want to leave someone out just because I was not aware of them or the role they played, so your help is very important. You can reach me at flytier@milwpc.com or 920-579-3858. Wisconsin Fly Tiers will continue in the next issue of Wisconsin Trout.

Kinni dam update

By Duke Welter

Following flood damage to a dam it owns on the Kinnickinnic River last June, the River Falls City Council has taken steps to move forward with dam removal and river restoration. Meanwhile, the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter has helped the process with its own efforts, and hopes to enlist more support from all levels of TU.

After the dam was partially breached when floodwaters rose eight feet over the top of the dam, the city's electrical utility quit generating from the Powell Falls Dam. In January, the city council decided not to repair the dam, to quit generating and to remove the turbines to allow future rainfalls to move downstream without refilling the Lake Louise impoundment.

During the flooding, an estimated 14,000 cubic yards of sediment was transported downstream. The river has begun to cut a new channel through the sediment above the dam, where raw banks as high as 12 feet edge the stream. The sooner those banks can be sloped back and revegetated, the less sediment will be lost downstream.

The dam is regulated by the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission (FERC) and was moving toward eventual decommissioning and removal by 2026. Last month the city council decided to move to surrender the dam license as soon as FERC approved the surrender.

That move will mean regulatory oversight will transfer to the DNR and could speed up the processes.

The Junction Falls Dam upstream from Powell Falls continues to be licensed by FERC. But the city council decided in 2018 to remove it after the first removal, as soon as funding can be raised.

The council's steps also allow the city to seek larger dam removal grant funding than had the dam continued to be licensed by FERC. DNR's Small Dam Removal Grant program allows any dam owner to seek a \$50,000 grant. But DNR's

Municipal Dam Removal Grant program would allow state support of up to \$400,000, if the dam is not regulated by FERC.

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter President Scott Wagner has been an active participant in the effort to get rid of the Powell Falls Dam, including fundraising efforts at different levels of TU.

"The time is right for all levels of TU to step up, from our chapter and others to the state council, nearby chapters whose members fish the Kinni. We're behind it all the way, and we urge the rest of TU to financially support this project," Wagner said.

The State Council may discuss support for the project at its next meeting.

The Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter (KTU) has already contributed or pledged more than \$40,000 to the project, supporting monitoring and development of the restoration plan. KTU members Kent Johnson, Dan Wilcox and Gary Horvath have been working with engineering and restoration specialists on those efforts.

KTU member Scot Stewart plans to meet with Twin Cities TU's board soon to discuss support from that chapter and its 2,000-plus members.

The city council also modified its legislative agenda to include asking the state legislature for support for the Powell Falls Dam removal project. The Kinni Corridor Collaborative, a new nonprofit formed to help the city with education and fundraising efforts, is working on that as the 2021-23 state budget makes its way through the legislative process.

TUDARE's Duke Welter is vice-chair of KinniCC and chairs its fundraising committee, which has several KTU members, including Wagner, Horvath, Johnson and Stewart.

Meanwhile, efforts to raise funds for the \$1.9 million project continue, but have been hampered by the pandemic. Grant programs have been suspended or delayed.

Update on Enbridge Line 5 Re-route

By Melis Arik, Wild Rivers Chapter Vice President

As reported in the Winter issue of Wisconsin Trout, one of the next steps in the permitting process for the proposed reroute of Enbridge Line 5 is the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) by the Wisconsin DNR. It was anticipated that the DNR would release the draft for public comment in February, but the release date has been pushed back to late spring or early summer.

The public comment period is an opportunity to review the document and make recommendations or voice opposition or support. The agency is required to consider and respond to all comments. For example, based on comments received during the public comment period related to the scope of the Environmental Impact Statement, which received more than 2,100 comments, the DNR broadened the scope of the document to include environmental justice considerations.

Aside from permit applications already submitted to the DNR, additional permits will be required from other state and federal agen-

cies such as the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, plus consultation with tribal authorities, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others. Many of these will also have a mandatory public comment period.

The best way to stay on top of the situation is to connect with organizations that are monitoring the issue closely. These include The Sierra Club - Wisconsin Chapter, the League of Women Voters of Ashland and Bayfield Counties and Midwest Environmental Advocates (MEA). MEA published some great resources related to oil pipeline regulation that are very helpful for understanding the process. The DNR also has a website dedicated to this project, with links to all permit. The page also has a link to subscribe to email updates directly from the DNR.

Resources:

<https://www.sierraclub.org/wisconsin/line-5>

<https://www.lwvabcwi.org/issues-advocacy>

<https://midwestadvocates.org/issues-actions/issues/detail/pipelines>

<https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/EIA/Enbridge.html>

Items needed for Youth Camp

Our youth fishing camp is in need of some items, such as waders and wading boots of all sizes. They don't need to be new. We can repair them. They just need enough life to inspire a youngster.

We could also use rods, reels, flies, lures and nets for the fishing outings and other small items that can be given away as prizes.

Cash donations would also be greatly appreciated. You can mail any items or donations to Linn Beck at 160 W. 19th Ave., Oshkosh, WI 54902.

Hog CAFO proposed near St. Croix River tributary

By Bill Heart

It seems like there is always a threat to our waters. A few years ago our Wild Rivers Chapter and many other conservation-minded groups and citizens were active in stopping the construction of a huge hog CAFO, (Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation.) The proposal was planned for Bayfield County in the Fish Creek watershed and only 10 or 15 miles from Chequamegon Bay and Lake Superior. It was hard to imagine what would happen with a failure of one of their manure pits.

The newest threat to our streams came to light in 2019. This time it is another proposed hog CAFO in Burnett and Polk Counties, the southwestern part of the Wild Rivers chapter area, and the northern portion of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter territory. The watershed of the Trade River, a class 2 trout stream housing native brown trout, south of Grantsburg, is at risk. The Trade River is a tributary of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, which should be reason enough to not allow the proposed CAFO in this location.

This proposal would be the first

hog CAFO in Burnett and Polk Counties. While there are several current dairy CAFOs in the region, hogs are a totally different problem, producing considerably more manure. From the research that I have done, the proposed CAFO, Cumberland LLC, could be housing up to 26,000 hogs and producing nine million gallons of manure per year. The manure would then be spread on local fields as fertilizer, with a chance of runoff into local trout streams and the St. Croix River. Also, the odors from the manure could be problematic. Some people have stated that the odors from hog farms can actually have a measurable effect on human health.

I decided to get away for the day and drove down to Burnett County to check over the area of the proposed CAFO. After reading as much as I could find about the CAFO, I was a little surprised once I got into the area of the proposal near the little town of Trade Lake. I did not know exactly where the proposed site was, so I just kind of got lost driving the country roads. But I was able to see a lot of the area and was impressed with the forested hills and ravines. It kind of reminded me



of the Driftless Area. I crossed a few small streams, and of course I had my fishing gear along, but they were still mostly frozen over. This just does not seem to be a place for a CAFO. It was much hillier and wooded than I thought with very few large flat fields that I could find.

On the way home, I drove through the small town of Frederic on Highway 35 and saw the billboard in the photo. I have since contacted the organization KnowCAFOs.org and became a member. They informed me that the hog facility is under the auspices of Reick's Family Farm, which is the very same people that tried and

failed to build the hog facility in Bayfield County. Now they are calling themselves Cumberland, LLC.

One piece of good news that I have found on their website is that in a unanimous vote, the Trade Lake Supervisors voted on November 12, 2020 to extend the CAFO moratorium for one year beginning on the first-year anniversary in January 2021 and running till January 2022. So, there is still time to help protect this pristine area of northern Wisconsin.

Bill Heart is a long-time Wild Rivers Chapter leader and former State Council Chair.

TU CARES has momentum

By Tom Lager

The word is momentum. TU CARES (Trout Unlimited Central Area Restoration Effort for Sustainability) has gained momentum after being formed in 2016.

We started as a group of four central Wisconsin TU chapters: Central Wisconsin, Fox Valley, Frank Hornberg and Shaw-Paca, seeking a way to collaborate on tackling large projects that exceeded capabilities of one chapter working alone. The vision that Bob Hunt had for the Central Sand Hills Region was adopted as the goal for this effort, "To protect, restore and reduce the decline in habitat quality for fish and wildlife within Wisconsin's Central Sand Hills Ecological Landscape and its connected watersheds."

We selected the West Branch White River (WBWR) to be our focus stream for demonstrating restoration possibilities that could be achieved across the region. Attending TUDARE Westby workshops and meeting with their leadership helped guide our formation and process for achieving goals.

TU CARES worked closely with the Trout Habitat Management Team from Wild Rose, established a Water-Action-Volunteer based monitoring program of six sites, conducted a stream and tributary inventory and identified restoration needs along the course of these waterways. Several studies were initiated, in-

cluding a rainbow trout population assessment and a groundwater project monitoring regional stream headwaters flows.

The first significant restoration project was replacement of the Lake Drive perched culvert through which an unnamed Class I trout stream flowed as a tributary to the WBWR. A trout survey showed a healthy brook and brown trout population hindered from free movement by the undersized perched culvert that impeded water drainage through the road crossing. Funding was obtained by TU CARES (\$25,000) and by partnering with the Town of Wautoma, sharing the cost of installing a road-crossing design delivering a free-flowing stream for trout passage and water drainage.

The Younglove Easement Project was initiated with plans starting in 2020 to restore 3,450 feet of the WBWR that was under DNR easement for the last 44 years. Habitat within the easement was last worked on in the 1980's and was in need of restoration using modern methods. Based on a well designed plan created by the Wild Rose Trout Management Team, the cost was estimated near \$170,000 and could take until 2023 to complete, depending on COVID work restrictions. Funding targets were achieved in March 2021, through the generosity and commitment of regional and out-of-state TU chapters and individuals and grants from the DNR, TU National and other local and national



DAM REMOVAL ON WEST BRANCH WHITE RIVER

The old hydro-electric dam and mill foundation over the West Branch White River is scheduled for removal and road replacement.

conservation organizations.

As a result of our good working relationship with the Town of Wautoma, TU CARES was asked by the town to help participate in a project with the DNR to remove an old hydro-electric dam at the 13th Avenue road crossing over the WBWR. The dam is under the old foundation of a mill over which the 13th Avenue road was constructed many years ago.

The Town of Wautoma and the DNR are leading the effort to remove the dam, as it has been designated for removal, and TU CARES is facilitating the project as needed and will work with the Wild Rose Trout Habitat Management Team

to design and obtain grants restoring a free-flowing trout stream. The scope of the project to remove the dam and replace the road crossing is currently being defined. The town will apply for DNR grants for dam removal and road-crossing replacement (without a dam) and TU CARES will apply for the restoration grants for this project, which may continue into 2024 for completion.

TU CARES started from discussions of how to leverage regional resources around an idea Bob Hunt articulated some years ago. Steps, initially small, have now reached a stride with momentum that is now significant.

Streambank restoration standards under review

By Gillian Pomplun

With more common heavy rain events, professionals overseeing streambank restoration efforts are revising their project planning.

Crawford County has paused planning new large projects. In recent years, some projects have been blown out by heavy rains. Other counties in the area are changing the specifications of projects to make the installations more resilient to large rain events. It seems to be an issue that is increasingly affecting similar projects throughout the state.

To help address the problem, a Standards Oversight Committee has been convened by Wisconsin USDA-NRCS State Conservation Engineer Steve Becker. The purpose of the group is to bring together a group of conservation professionals in the state to evaluate the current standards to see where they may need updates, and to ensure consistent administration in all areas of the state.

Two of the members of that committee are Monroe County Conservationist Bob Micheel, and TUDARE's Jeff Hastings.

"We've been meeting since about April of 2020, with the goal of generating updated standards within one year," Micheel explained. "The likely outcome of the new standards, which will begin to affect projects starting in 2022, is that the engineering standards will become significantly more involved."

Micheel expects some of the changes will be in guidelines for projects in the headwaters of wa-

tersheds with 0.8 percent grades or more, and areas within 100 yards downstream of bridges or culverts which can function like dams in times of flooding.

"I have heard that some counties are holding off on new projects pending the new standards," Micheel said.

"In Monroe County, we are forging ahead now because the new standards are likely going to be more involved from an engineering standpoint, and the standards we are using now may well become just a distant memory."

TUDARE's Jeff Hastings says that his group also plans to forge ahead with streambank restoration projects before the new standards are announced.

"I am hoping to see greater consistency across the state come out of the standards review process, but am not anticipating drastic changes," Hastings said.

"I think that some of the concern is to rethink how projects in the upper parts of watersheds are conducted, because the larger rainfall events we've experienced mean that projects in those areas are much more vulnerable to damage."

Hastings hopes the standards will be more in sync with the approach to habitat restoration. This will make identifying funding sources and designing projects more streamlined.

Gillian Pomplun is a reporter for the Crawford County Independent and Kickapoo Scout. We thank them for sharing this article.

Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics update for 2021

The leadership team of the Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics has discussed extensively which of the clinics we can offer safely, given the structures of the clinics, where we currently are now with Covid numbers, best practices, changing landscapes, vaccinations and all the other aspects that make our heads spin.

We determined that we can safely hold our intermediate clinic, following all health guidelines, and with 90 percent of instruction occurring outdoors. By asking people to be vaccinated and following CDC best practices, we believe we can offer safe clinics.

We determined it would not be possible to hold the beginners clinics this year in a safe manner, since it offers personalized instruction in a framework that would be very difficult to adapt.

Clinic instructors are confident and committed to our water skills clinic June 16-17, and will follow all required procedures to keep everyone safe.

Considering ongoing changes with the pandemic, we may have to cancel clinics entirely if things take a change for the worse. If we have to cancel, we hope to give at least two weeks of notice.

The pandemic provided an opportunity to spend more teaching time with our Riverbuddies. These are the women who come to the clinics to support the beginners.

Each year we offer a training session, and each year there are more requests for training and teaching opportunities in the clinic. We are creating an intensive Riverbuddy Leadership Institute. Those who participate will leave with a certificate of completion and be invited to teach at the 2022 Basics Clinics.

The clinics always strive to build both confidence and competence in all who participate, creating a strong team of capable women instructors from across the state. The ripple effect of our clinics have already paid off in many communities by having women step up to take on leadership roles.

Although we are disappointed about not offering the Basics Clinic in 2021, we are maximizing the gift of time and improving our program, investing in our teaching staff and planning program improvements for the future.

Thank you to everyone who volunteers to make these clinics possible. Here is a short video on the clinics. It won first place at the 2019 Greatwaters Fly Fishing Expo film festival in Minnesota: <http://vimeo.com/325794212/50145f0cf9>.

For information on our 2022 clinics go to swtu.org/learn/womens-fishing-clinic/

For those interested in information or assisting please contact Tom Thrall at tpthrall@gmail.com —Tina Murray & Team

WiseH2O Mobile Application goes “Driftless”

Monitoring Driftless Area trout streams with the WiseH2O App

By Kent Johnson

National Trout Unlimited is placing a high priority on community science and the benefits it provides for angler education and coldwater resource management. TU's national science team partnered with MobileH2O, LLC to develop a customized mobile application called WiseH2O App, which anglers can use to monitor water quality and habitat conditions in Driftless Area trout streams.

In 2019, anglers from the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of TU participated in a successful WiseH2O App pilot project, testing the app on 10 local streams and rivers, making 83 observations and providing feedback to the developers on app improvements. The Kiap-TU-Wish monitoring plan, the 2019 pilot project report and an interactive map that enables viewing of all 2019 Kiap-TU-Wish WiseH2O App observations can be found on the MobileH2O website at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/anglerscience>.

Given the success of the 2019 Kiap-TU-Wish pilot project, and with further app improvements in 2020, WiseH2O App monitoring expanded to the entire four-state Driftless Area in August 2020. Besides Kiap-TU-Wish, 14 additional chapters now have an opportunity to monitor our regional coldwater resources. Although COVID-19 and development of the iPhone version of the WiseH2O App have delayed the Driftless Area rollout, we are pleased to report that the iPhone version of the App is available, and the 2-in-1 test strips can be used to measure nitrite/nitrate concentrations. The App also has an updated look and educational messaging that is more user-friendly.

A Get Started Guide for prospective WiseH2O App monitoring participants is available on the MobileH2O website at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/driftlessprogram>.

Those who are interested in Driftless Area monitoring in 2021 can take the following steps:

- Download the WiseH2O App: Android and iPhone versions of the WiseH2O App are available for free download at the Google Play Store and Apple Store (search WiseH2O). Instructions for downloading the WiseH2O App can be found in the WiseH2O App User Guide, located on the MobileH2O website at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/mh2oapp>.
- Complete on-line training: Detailed on-line instructions for use of the

WiseH2O App can be found in the WiseH2O App User Guide and the Video Tutorial for Using the WiseH2O App, both located on the MobileH2O website at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/mh2oapp>.

- Obtain water chemistry test kits: Depending on each participant's level of interest and desired extent of involvement with water chemistry monitoring, three types of test kits are available. These three test kits can be ordered directly from MobileH2O at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/shop>. To help offset the start-up cost of test kits for Driftless Area TU chapters and their participants in 2021, Trout Unlimited has been offering a limited number of free starter kits (up to five basic kits and three premium kits) for each TU chapter, with funding provided by TU's Coldwater Conservation Fund. If your chapter is interested in these free kits but has not yet received them, Kent Johnson can work with you to provide them. A reliable thermometer for WiseH2O App temperature measurements can also be purchased at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/shop>.
- Consider a monitoring plan: If your group is interested in monitoring particular streams and their water quality and/or habitat conditions in your area, you may want to prepare a short monitoring plan to guide participants to these special locations. For the 2019 WiseH2O App pilot project, the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of TU prepared a monitoring plan that can be used as a reference and/or customized to serve your group's needs. This plan, prepared by Kent Johnson, can be found on the MobileH2O website at <https://www.mobileh2o.com/anglerscience>. Kent is also available to provide support for monitoring plan preparation.

We are excited about this opportunity to “Go Driftless” with WiseH2O App monitoring, and we look forward to your participation in 2021. Kent Johnson will be serving as the Driftless Area (TUDARE) coordinator for this project, so feel free to contact him with any questions, thoughts or needs for follow-up information. Our Project Team includes Dan Dauwalter of Trout Unlimited and Carter and Sarah Borden of MobileH2O, LLC. Their roles are critical as we advance this project, and they are also available for support.

For more information on the Driftless Area WiseH2O App project, please contact Kent Johnson at d.kent.johnson@gmail.com.

West Fork Sports Club happenings

The West Fork Sports Club has some very exciting happenings we would like to share with everyone. Come and enjoy your club.

The clubhouse is in great shape and waiting for groups to enjoy. It has a full kitchen, bar, eight long tables and eight round tables for use. It is reservable online and is perfect for enclaves, workshops, lessons, weddings, graduations, reunions etc. It comes with the large day shelter near the building, lots of outdoor space and use of modern bathrooms. Help the club out by reserving and using it frequently for any gatherings.

All camping is first-come-first-serve, including 10 electrical sites. Every site is a group site so you can camp anywhere in the park. Well behaved dogs are welcome off leash if you pick up after them. Please do not drive across drainage ditches or in low or wet areas. We cannot accept credit cards for payments other than through PayPal. Membership is \$32 by going to westforksportsclub@gmail.com or by mail at WFSC P.O. Box 52, Virgoqua WI 54665. You can also join in person at the campground, and use a second envelope for camping fees.

Upcoming free events:

Unknown date: TU 5 Rivers College Group

April 21 & 24: Valley Stewardship Water Monitoring Workshops

June 16 – 20: Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics and River-Buddy Leadership Institute

July: Concerts in the park by local bands: Kickapoo Joy Juice on July 17, The Iowans on July 24 The Knockabouts (a fly fisher's band) on July 31. On July 10 there is also an Arts & Bluegrass Festival in Yuba at the Driftless Music Gardens. Paul

Asper of Restoration Cider and Trevor Easton of ALT Brew in Madison, both of whom are fly fishers, will be setting up refreshments by donation. Driftless provisions is donating delicious food options. Contact us if you would like to help out in additional ways. We could use some volunteers.

September 10- 12: Wisconsin Fly Fishing Message Board - Avalanche Clave. A gathering for all fly fishers and all things fly fishing. Pot luck dinner at clubhouse Saturday evening. Restoration Cider ALT Brew may be setting up refreshments by



donation. Contact is George Cleveland via Facebook Messenger.

September 17-19: Bamboo Rod Makers Workshop. Contact Scott Grady at oossg@vbe.com. Win a custom bamboo rod by Scott Grady Bamboo.

Art Show - Unknown Date, watch website. Mark Cleveland, fly fisher and artist, will be painting all summer icons of the Driftless Area. You can see some of his work here

at www.markclevelandart.com.

May 20-22, 2022: HeddonFest Classic Anglers Show, & Gear Swap/Sale. It does not have to be classic gear for tables, and tables are available to offer swap for a nominal fee. Contact Warren Frank at blackdog1101@outlook.com or 612-382-5224.

Two native lodges will be available for rent, including one with electricity. The clubhouse, cabin, native lodges are reservable online at <https://westforksportsclub.org/camping/reservations/>

We put together a number of committees for members to contribute their skills and keep the club in good shape and sustainable for years to come. We asked people to commit one year to helping the club get things done. If you are interested please fill out this survey: <https://forms.gle/jNgQhZybqCppUNYN8>.

We ask members to share their skills, or in lieu of that, contribute regular financial support to the club. For those willing to lend a hand please complete the survey and contact Curt Reidl at curtiedl@gmail.com. Curt will organize the maintenance, grounds and future stream restoration committees with the help of Committee Lead Larry Reidl Larry9699@hotmail.com. For those willing to look at sustainable giving to the WFSC please contact Tina Murray or Treasurer Colleen Kinsey at westforksportsclub@gmail.com.

Stream restoration

We have been working with Vernon County to address the upper portion of the stream that was dam-

aged from the flooding. In 2021 we plan to put in some weirs to meander the stream, increase velocity and clear out sediment, increasing depth and hopefully revealing buried structures. We also plan to cover the exposed LUNKER at the south end of the park.

Workdays

We will erect the two native lodges. They are not in the best shape, but we will patch them up for usage this year in hopes to earn enough revenue to replace the fabrics for 2022. Each other fabric costs approximately \$1,000. In May we will have more than 50 trees and some prairie plants to put in the ground. This summer we hope to complete the stream restoration work. We hope other committee members will initiate other workdays, events and opportunities for improving the club and having some fun gatherings.

It's your club. Please help keep it sustainable for future generations to enjoy. And if you see a board member, please thank them. It is a full-time job for those of us who “volunteer.” Be safe everyone. We'll see you in the park or on the water.

—WFSC Board President
Tina Murray



Scott W. Grady
Rodmaker

Split Bamboo Rods

New, repairs, restoration, appraisals
Rodmaking Tools and Advice

Call or email Scott for details at
920/687-0987 or oossg@vbe.com

Wisconsin Great Lakes Stream Restoration Program update

By Chris Collier, Great Lakes Stream Restoration Manager

As we head into spring I know many of us are anxiously awaiting warmer days on the water and to be further along in the vaccine process so we can get together again, safely. Warmer weather also means a return to field season, and we have a lot of exciting projects in the hopper.

First, you may have heard about the Marengo River Bank Stabilization project we are working on with the U.S. Forest Service. This project is finally hitting the ground. In March the contractor began harvesting trees that will be used to build structures to stabilize eroding banks and create excellent trout habitat. In-stream construction will have to wait until at least mid-May, but the project should be completed by the end of June. Stay tuned for more updates.

While fall is typically the time of year when we complete survey and design work for our road-stream crossing replacement projects, the number of partners reaching out to us for help this year means we will complete these in spring. Partners we will be assisting include the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florence County, Forest County and Douglas County, and I won't be surprised to see a few others join the list.

We are continuing outreach and education efforts about the connection between crossings, fish passage and flood resiliency. In February we hosted a virtual workshop that touched on the importance of rethinking how we manage crossings. We had more than 250 people in attendance. We were blown away by the interest in the event and we expect to see our program efforts grow because of this. Following the positive news on the vaccine front, we are cautiously optimistic that we will be able to return to in-person events later this year, with a project tour being planned for late summer and a design workshop for fall.

In closing, I wanted to highlight some exciting news for our northern Wisconsin Great Lakes programs. We are in the process of hiring a full-time project coordinator who will work with me to expand our road-stream crossing and habitat restoration efforts. With field season rapidly approaching, we are also in the process of hiring two seasonal technicians to assist with crossing inventories, fishery surveys and habitat restoration projects. There's a lot of hard-but-fun work ahead of us protecting Wisconsin's coldwater resources, and I'm looking forward to hitting the ground running this spring.

See you on the water.



Midwest Conservation Dogs, Inc.

STOCKPILING TREES

A contractor stockpiles harvested trees that will be used to create in-stream habitat for brook trout and stabilize banks damaged during flood events.

Got your TU plate yet?

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



Watershed Access Fund: Obtaining public access

Adding prime fishing areas for Wisconsin trout anglers is the stated goal of the Council's Watershed Access Fund. Following our participation in a major acquisition along the South Branch of the Oconto River, we are currently engaged in a partnership with the DNR to acquire a key parcel of creek frontage in Marinette County. The parcel is on one of the best trout streams in Northeastern Wisconsin and will join together two large parcels of state land to create a long reach of publicly accessible water. We hope to report on all the details in the near future.

Our WAF Contributors

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
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Wausau, WI
Madison, WI
New Holstein, WI
Madison, WI
Ashland, WI
Appleton, WI
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Stratford, WI
Spencer, WI
Wauwatosa, WI
Oconto Falls, WI
Appleton, WI
St. Croix Falls, WI
Oshkosh, WI
Cross Plains, WI
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Randal Rake
Bob Retko
Ken Rizzo
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Rosemary Ryan
Michael SanDretto
Jack Saunders, in memory of Earl Little | Milwaukee, WI
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Marshfield, WI
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LaCrosse, WI
Wausau, WI
Janesville, WI
New Richmond, WI
Rhineland, WI
Fond Du Lac, WI
Tomah, WI
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Green Bay, WI
Neenah, WI
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Neenah, WI
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Madison, WI
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Dr. Condon Vander Ark
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Karen and Martin Voss
Richard Wachowski
Rodd Wangen
Thomas Wasilewski
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Duke Welter, in memory of Al Noll
Duke Welter, in memory of Dan Wisniewski
Dennis Wieck
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Madison, WI
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RECOLLECTIONS

A hard one to write: Todd Durian

Henry Koltz shares some stories about a great friend and a great TU leader.

By Henry Koltz,
Past Council Chair and TU Trustee

This is a hard one to write.

On January 6, 2021, one of my best friends, Todd Durian, passed away when his heart stopped beating as a result of multiple symptom atrophy. I'm told that he went immediately and without pain, which I find to be proof of God's mercy.

Todd was a man of great faith. He believed in heaven and he also believed that inside every person was a spark which was pure and good. He held that belief closely and it was evident in nearly everything he did: How he cared for others, how he interacted with others and how he loved all.

Todd was there for his friends. And so it was that less than a year ago last March that he visited me in the hospital where I was recuperating following my own nearly-fatal heart attack.

In typical Todd fashion he showed up and hugged me, and then hugged my nurse, and finally hugged my stunned cardiologist while tearing up and thanking her for saving my life. Todd wore his heart on his sleeve, and figuring out how he felt about anything never required much of an investigation. Hugs were frequent, as were laughs, and if you hung around him enough, so were life lessons.

It seems ridiculous writing that I met Todd roughly 25 years ago. Time should not move so fast. I met him through the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited, where we both held leadership roles. He had lived more than a full life before I met him, and would tell me tales of his past as we drove all across the country chasing trout. Todd was a military kid who had lived all over the world. He'd been a competitive mountain bike racer, had worked for the Wisconsin Humane Society's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, was involved with raptors, was a friend to all dogs, went on life-changing mission trips to Appalachia to help those less fortunate, and loved and adored his wife Carol and their four children: Kelly, Chris, Cheryl and Katie.

It's a funny thing to spend so much time driving around with a friend. You start to know their family and their family's stories. You hear their family's dreams, their problems, and learn what makes them tick. You, on the other hand, remain to the family just some strange guy that goes fishing with dad.

The family, however, rarely gets to hear the fishing stories, the tales that we tell around the campfire. Some of Todd's tales were even occasionally rooted in truth, and they are all worth hearing.

So this is for Todd and his family and the rest of us who loved him. Here are a few of my favorite Todd Durian fishing stories.

The Milwaukee Leech

Some of you may know of the nearly mythical fly called the "Milwaukee Leech." You'll find that name on a bin at the Driftless Angler fly shop in Viroqua, but you won't find that name in any fly-fishing catalogue. That's because the fly got its name at the Driftless Angler on a rainy May weekend nearly 20

years ago.

Todd, Mike Kuhr and I stayed at the apartment above the fly shop. We were all Milwaukee residents at the time, and like any good tourists we went downstairs and obeyed Todd's mantra of "no fear, buy gear." We bought tippet, leaders, shirts, hats and flies. Todd and I emptied the bin of a new fly, known only as a "micro leech." Mike bought other flies.

And then it rained. A lot. All night.

The Driftless is a mysterious place, where bluffs of eroded ancient ocean floor conceal intimate valleys with ribbons of blue running through them. The more you explore it and the more you fish it, the more you understand those ribbons. Each has its own character and some are unique. Some rivers are big and slow, becoming a chocolate malt at the first drop of water, while some stay clear as if impervious to

Mike for our pre-planned lunch and departure home.

From that point on Todd, I and countless other friends to whom we proselytized, purchased every micro leech shipment that came into the Driftless Angler. Heck, Todd would place pre-orders for a gross (yes, 144 micro leeches) at a time. We bought so many of the micro leeches that Matt and Geri, owners of the Driftless Angler, simply began calling them the Milwaukee Leech in honor of the knuckleheads who bought all of them the second they arrived.

Todd fished the Milwaukee Leech more than anyone should logically fish one fly, and he fished it very well. Now when I look back at pictures of past trips, I see more pictures of Todd than anyone else because he caught more fish than anyone else. And most of those fish were on "The Leech."



runoff.

This being the final day of our trip, we took our last shot at one such forever-clear river on our way home. It was a small stream, so we split up. I went downstream, Todd went up and Mike stayed in the middle.

Surprisingly, the water was barely stained, although it was high and swift. Nothing worked. Trout were hunkered down, likely the result of the cold rainwater infusion and coursing volume. Traditional dry or dropper patterns yielded nothing.

After several hours, it was time for a "Crazy Ivan." In the movie Hunt for Red October, a Crazy Ivan is a maneuver where a Russian submarine abruptly changes course to detect the presence of an enemy sub. In my fly-fishing world, it simply means radically changing course when nothing else works.

So I grabbed the micro leech and began casting my 3-weight straight upstream into the heavy current. I stripped line as fast as I could, trying to keep one step ahead of the current. What happened next was unbelievable.

After several strips an upstream yank shot the line straight out of my hand. Fish on. Nice fish on. After wrestling that fish into my net and resetting, I began again. And the same thing happened. In fact, it happened again and again and again to the point that I was forced to leave still-striking fish to meet Todd and

full of fish. It runs through a breathtaking high desert red rock canyon that closes in immediately on both sides of the river. The top of the "A Section" immediately below the dam is known as "the aquarium," and is reputed to have up to 20,000 fish per mile.

Because of the Green's translucent water it is not uncommon to see a fish rising from 10 or more feet below to take a fly. It's unnerving, and as a result anglers routinely set too early. Scotty taught us to see the take, and say "God save the Queen" before setting. What followed was two Wisconsin idiots doing horrible British accents the rest of the day as they caught one brown trout after the next. Cheerio to that.

Eventually we asked Scotty for his biggest fly, just for giggles. We figured we would either catch really big fish, or catch no fish for a while and rest our tired casting arms. Scotty laughed, and produced a fly that he used guiding runoff water on the Snake River in Wyoming. It was a monstrosity of a Chernobyl ant looking pattern on a 4 or 6 long hook, intended to throw a big shadow to trout in turbulent water, and covered a good part of my palm. It actually whistled when it was cast.

But it worked. And it worked for big fish. So much so that Scotty proclaimed "I'll have to remember this." Now, after having caught several of the biggest fish of the day we were even more worn out. Todd was truly in his element, totally relaxed and happy. The image of him laughing with a doubled-over rod, red canyon walls behind him, remains etched in memory. It was the type of day that becomes a measuring stick for every trip thereafter.

But then, nature decided that we'd had it too good and that it would do everything it could to keep us from making it back to camp. The drive out from the Green back to Dutch John is long, desolate and often along ridges where the drop immediately next to the road is 50 to 100 feet. There is wildlife everywhere.

By now Scotty was fully on board with the "Todd and Hank Show." We were all laughing to the point of not being able to breath. The drive back was just laughter and talk about the day's success. Then a mule deer somehow materialized from the mountain and ran directly into the path of Scotty's truck.

To his great credit Scotty kept the rig in the middle of the road, jumping on his brakes with everything he had. It wasn't enough, and we all heard and felt the impact of the deer into the front of the truck, and as it was swept underneath hitting the front tires, then the back tires, and then finally Scotty's drift boat behind us. The drop immediately to our right was at least a hundred feet, and Scotty's quick decision to steer to the middle of the road instead of away from the deer had certainly saved our lives.

We sat in the truck as the deer and the truck bled out their last fluids over the course of the next hour. At that point, a gas mining crew, at the end of their work day, took Scotty and his boat back to town, leaving Todd and me to wait for another vehicle.

Green River

In 2009 Todd and I traveled to Dutch John, Utah, to fish the Green River below the Flaming Gorge Reservoir. We had a couple of days before Trout Unlimited's annual meeting at the Snowbird ski resort outside Salt Lake City. We trekked into the north slope of the Uinta Mountains on some of the worst roads I've ever seen. It had everything: scaring a bear (and Todd) off by yelling at it, mountain cutthroat trout, random cows in the middle of never-ending switchbacks, and a horrible case of warm Land Shark beer. There simply isn't enough space here to tell every tale from this trip.

We gathered early in the morning below the Flaming Gorge dam. Todd and I were paired with a great guide named Scotty. Scotty was humorous, patient and put up with Todd and me telling horrible puns and laughing the entire trip.

Scotty decided that fishing in the early morning would be slow, and it would be best if we just took an hour off while he rowed us out ahead of the rest of the armada leaving the dam's launch. We agreed, and he set to the oars putting us out ahead on untouched water. After an hour, Scotty tied on double dry-fly rigs, using "triple double" ant patterns. We immediately began hooking up.

The Green River below Flaming Gorge is gin clear and absolutely

See **TODD DURIAN**, page 23

Remembering Dave Patrick

Blackhawk Chapter loses its longtime stalwart.

By Dave Brethauer,
Blackhawk Chapter

Last October we lost Dave Patrick. I think every TU chapter has that one member whose contributions stand out from all the others. Whether it's community involvement, chapter leadership, conservation devotion, fishing acumen or just plain hard work, these individuals stand out. Dave Patrick was that person for the Blackhawk Chapter.

His knowledge of the streams came from years of searching and fishing. He could tell you where the very best and worst were, but unless you knew him, he was pretty tight lipped. If you heard someone ask about a stream and he said it wasn't that good and you have to watch out for snakes and quicksand, you knew it was a winner. With kids, it was a different story. When working on conservation projects with youth groups, Dave made sure they always got a good fishing experience.

He knew the value of starting future fishermen and conservationists. His contacts with people throughout the state brought people and donations to chapter banquets, which allowed the chapter to finance its efforts. He was devoted to anything that improved the streams.

I can't do justice to all Dave has done, so I asked others to share their memories. I think of Dave every time I look in my fly box and see one of his Red Backed Scuds. I don't think there is anyone in our chapter who doesn't have at least one in their fly box and I hope they think of Dave when they're fishing it. And if you're going to catch as many fish as Dave always did, you better have more than one.

From Terry & Carol Kent:

Dave's love of the outdoors was a starting point that erupted into a devotion to the Driftless Area and to coldwater conservation there. But it wasn't just about conservation; Dave loved trout fishing. He recognized early on the potential of the Driftless Area and put the Blackhawk Chapter on a decades-long path to devoting money and labor toward restoring Driftless Area streams. Dave could probably have told you where just about every LUNKER structure Blackhawk members installed was located.

Dave was a mentor and a good friend to me. We met in August, 1974 in front of the Edgerton Middle School, where he was painting the entry. I had just been hired to teach 6th grade history and Dave was the chairperson of the department. That was the start of a 46-year friendship during which Dave taught me how to tie flies, fly fish and hunt grouse.

He was beside me when I caught my first trout on a fly and shot my first grouse. We fished and hunted together at least every two to three weeks for many years. He was the best trout fisherman and grouse hunter I knew then and now.

This is my favorite Dave fish story. My first trip to Montana and the Big Horn River was with Dave, Sir Richard and "Flying Freddy." We got to the Yellowtail Dam and Dave said, "Terry, you come with me". We walked $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile downstream on the Crow Reservation and, peaking through the brush, there is a "pod" of about 25 trout surface feeding. It was my first view of a

"pod"!

The water is at the top of our waders and Dave starts with a trico. On his second cast, he hooks a 19" rainbow. My turn! After what felt like 100 or so casts, I'm tired. Dave's turn! On his second cast, he hooks a 20" rainbow. My turn! After 50 or so casts, no fish! Dave's turn! Dave makes one cast and hooks a 22" rainbow right up against the bank. I did not catch a trout out of that "pod"!

Dave made 15 to 20 casts and hooked seven rainbows. This happened again and again on the Big Horn and Missouri Rivers on that trip. Lord, he knew how to catch trout!



From Paul Krahn:

When I think of Dave Patrick I always remember him as a "leader." I first met Dave in the early 1990's when I worked for the Vernon County Land and Water Conservation Department. He came into the office asking what his chapter could do to help with stream projects. The first project I did with him and his chapter was to build LUNKER structures on Billings Creek.

In those days we struggled with chainsaws, hammers and nails to construct the LUNKERS. Not long after, the Blackhawk Chapter made LUNKER building their "thing" and invested in equipment and a trailer to build them. After that, almost every year we worked with Dave and the chapter members on stream projects. Many miles of stream were improved, thanks to his leadership.

Dave also had a great passion for getting young people interested in fly fishing and stressing to these young people the importance of stream and watershed health. He understood that young people were so important to continuing stream conservation efforts. Dave and Karen made a special trip to Vernon County when we held a conservation field day for kids. He drove all that way just to demonstrate fly fishing to any child interested in how to fly fish. He was always enthusiastic about helping the Shabazz school kids every year at the West Fork Sports Club. With his leadership, both money and fly fishing lessons were donated on a yearly basis and the kids really appreciated his commitment to them.

Dave was one of those people that you met and you felt richer for having known him. He was just an awesome man and we will miss him greatly.

From Jeff Hastings:

When I reflect on what Dave Patrick has accomplished for trout restoration in the Driftless Area, I go back to when I was the County Conservationist for Vernon County, around 1988. Dave contacted me just after I started with Vernon County about the Blackhawk Chapter getting involved with Vernon County streams. I have a lot of photos of Dave and me holding a check from the Blackhawk Chapter. I would often put an article in the paper about their involvement.

Dave not only backed up his financial contribution from his chapter, but often came to Vernon County to volunteer his time to

working with trout streams in Vernon County. Now, 12 years later, I continue that work with TU, building partnerships and seeking funding for projects. I feel deep gratitude to Dave for his inspiration, enthusiasm and years of dedication.

From John Lusk:

Name a trout stream from Wisconsin to Montana and David could tell you what kind of fish and their average size, what they usually hit, what we got them on last time and when we fished it last. In his prime he could walk across rows in a muddy plowed field and tie a blood knot and never miss a step. He always seemed to remember the farmer's name and if they had a dog that bit and usually got us permission to fish their property.

Much of the stream work in southwest Wisconsin was because of Dave's work with the farmers, counties and TUDARE. Give David a Pale Rubber Dun, a Quail Head Nymph, caddis or his signature Red Back Scud and he would catch fish out of a mud puddle. Besides his family, his other three loves were trout fishing, grouse hunting and fly tying. We started hunting pheasants behind a beagle to a series of some of the finest (and craziest) bird dogs in the Wisconsin woods. I could write a book about the adventures we had roaming the streams and woods of Wisconsin, bass ponds and strip mines where he grew up in Southern Illinois and the wild rivers of Montana. When you have fished and hunted with a man for 60 years, where do you start and how do you end...

From Dan Ivanchik:

Even though Dave was an educator throughout his career, impacting and positively shaping so many lives, he continued doing the same throughout the state with fly fishing. He helped so many beginning fly fishermen like me to learn and understand the many nuances of trout behavior and fly fishing in general. The only difference was that his fly-fishing classroom was the Driftless Area.

Dave was the whole package: A very proficient fly caster, knowledgeable entomologist, uncanny trout whisperer and expert fly tyer. He enjoyed watching someone have success as much he enjoyed catching fish himself. Truly Dave was one of the most humble and dedicated to his family, friends and community. He made a significant difference in mine and with so many others in the Blackhawk TU chapter, the Driftless Area conservation efforts and with TU as a whole. The next time you are walking along a trout stream in the Driftless Area in an eased section of what was previously private water, or see a LUNKER structure in a corner pool or rip rap along the banks, think of Dave, as there's a good chance he helped with that effort.

Dave's impact will be impossible to replace as a mentor, sage counselor or champion for trout fishing. However, those of us who were blessed to spend time fishing or tying flies with him, listening to his presentations at chapter meetings or working alongside him on stream projects or at the annual banquet, are now are tasked with this mission, for we are Dave's living legacy.

Tight lines in heaven, my friend.

work on restoration projects with youth groups from Madison. These youth groups, I think high-school age, were challenged by the educational system and it was often hard to break into their friendship circle. Dave, however was able to bring them out to a project site and get them involved with building LUNKERS. The work he started with these groups still continues almost 30 years later. Dave would get contractor Roger Widner to bring out some of his equipment and have these young men and women actually place the structures in the stream, after they constructed them. Purple hair, multiple piercings, tattoos, etc. didn't matter to Dave as he worked with them to get them involved with multiple conservation practices, and they liked working with Dave.

I also know that a lot of the money that came to Vernon County and other southwest Wisconsin projects came from successful Blackhawk Chapter auctions and fundraisers. I often thought of Dave going to a business and asking for donations for the auction, because if you know Dave, it was hard to say "no" to him. Blackhawk fundraisers were so successful that we would often have Dave give us a presentation and some insight into how he did it. This occurred at our Stream Restoration Project Planning workshops that we held in Westby every Spring.

As we developed more and more partnerships and projects, Dave put together one of the first equipped trailers with all the equipment we needed to build LUNKERS and have a successful workday. We built hundreds of structures with the assistance of Dave and with the Blackhawk Chapter's well-equipped trailer.

As I write this tribute to Dave I can't help but think it was his enthusiasm for putting together partnerships and funding for trout stream projects that jump-started my career

2021 State Council Award Winners

Due to the pandemic, we were unable to hold our annual Awards Banquet in Oshkosh this year. In spite of that, special people continue to do amazing things to support our coldwater resources.

We recognize the following individuals and one business for their contributions.

Thanks go out to our State Council Awards Committee members: Mike Kuhr, Linn Beck, Kim McCarthy, Scott Allen, Jim Wierzba, John Meachen and Todd Franklin.



TUDARE'S JEFF HASTINGS EARNED OUR TOP HONOR

Resource Award of Merit: Jeff Hastings

Wisconsin Trout Unlimited's highest award, the Resource Award of Merit, recognizes a person, corporation or organization for outstanding contributions to conservation. This year, the recipient is Jeff Hastings of Westby.

Not only has Jeff Hastings done a masterful job of leading TUDARE as its project manager since 2006, but he had a long first career as Vernon County's Conservationist for 25 years before that. In his former position, Jeff helped set a county-level model for the collaborative, wide-ranging projects that TUDARE has worked to develop across the 42 counties of the Driftless Area.

Jeff came to Vernon County from UW-Stevens Point, where he earned his master's degree in natural resources. As county conservationist he developed a program using federal Farm Bill dollars and the support of Trout Unlimited chapters and other conservation groups, bringing several hundred thousand dollars a year to trout stream habitat projects across the county. County easements guaranteed angler access to all those projects.

That model became the blueprint for TUDARE when TU leaders got together in 2004. When the national office of TU made TUDARE a Home Rivers Initiative in 2006, Jeff was hired as its project manager. He turned out to be the perfect person to move it forward and expand its reach. He brought credibility among county conservation personnel and had headed Wisconsin's professional association. He already knew the partners in TU and agencies from his previous projects. And his strategic vision helped TUDARE become an important force for environmental restoration across the Driftless Area of southwest and western Wisconsin, southeast Minnesota, northeast Iowa and extreme northwest Illinois.

At each step in the growth of TUDARE, Jeff brought strategic vision and unlimited patience in solving the problems that were posed as the program grew. He is a skilled and credible grant writer, and he carries out his proposals in projects. Jeff's grant proposals have brought in well over \$22 million from the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), and his work with MNTU in securing grants from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Program has put another \$25 million into projects there.

Jeff would probably tell you he's most proud of the emphasis TUDARE places on non-game habitat in its projects: places for turtles, frogs, snakes, insects, birds and native plants. The nongame habitat handbook he assembled has become a national resource. His shepherding of the Driftless Symposium each year has also allowed the experiences and ideas here to be shared across the region and beyond.

Jeff Hastings' work with TUDARE and his career in conservation make him an ideal recipient of TU's Resource Award of Merit.

Silver Trout Chapter of the Year Award: Coulee Region Chapter

With its 370 members, The Coulee Region Chapter serves six southwestern Wisconsin counties: La Crosse, Vernon, Monroe, Juneau, Crawford and Richland. Led by a hard-working group of officers and board members, and working with numerous other chapters and local conservation groups, the chapter has been hitting on all cylinders in 2019 and 2020. Working in the heart of the Driftless Area, CRTU's efforts benefited from strong regional interest in the area's fisheries and supported strong habitat work led by the DNR, TUDARE and Vernon and Monroe county land conservation depart-



COULEE REGION CHAPTER IS ALWAYS TEACHING KIDS

ments.

Among its accomplishments, the CRTU chapter and its members accomplished the following:

- They helped assemble and support seven habitat projects and an angler parking lot in 2020.
- They helped assemble more than \$90,000 to cover landowner costs on more than \$425,000 worth of stream habitat projects.
- They worked with seven other TU chapters, the State Council's Friends of Wisconsin TU grant program and TU National's Embrace-A-Stream grant program to fund their efforts.
- They contributed more than \$28,000 toward various projects.
- They wrote or co-wrote grants to Cabelas/Bass Pro Shops, Madison Fishing Expo and other funders.
- They developed the capacity of a new easement partner—the Prairie Rod & Gun Club — which holds two new public fishing easements in Crawford County, enabling two new projects.
- They carried out six Trout In the Classroom projects and taught Girl Scouts and other kids about angling and conservation.
- They partnered with the Tainter Creek Farmer-Led Watershed Council to carry out two very successful Stream Days along Tainter Creek, and planned for a third.
- They worked with Illinois TU's Lee Wulff and Gary Borger chapters to site, permit and install more than two dozen angler stiles to protect farmers' fences.
- They provided \$2,000 to support a brook trout restoration study on Mapledale Creek in Vernon County.
- They developed a social media presence, including more than 5,500 visitors and 930 Facebook followers.
- They organized public showings of public service films including Patagonia's "ArtiFISHal" and on the Pebble Mine.
- They regularly contributed to state council efforts and meetings.
- They supported a high school student who attended the state and national TU youth camps.
- They conducted chapter Zoom meetings on a diverse range of topics including climate change, flooding, Driftless geology and watersheds. These meetings drew many new attendees.

Distinguished Service-Leadership: Joe Bach

While Joe was president of the Fox Valley Chapter, he responded to a chapter member's request to help establish a Trout In The Class Room (TIC) project at Chilton schools. In typical Joe fashion, he took a deep dive into the pool of TIC information from National TU and surrounding chapter experiences to define the pathway to the successful Chilton TIC Program.

Leadership expanded from the planning stage to implementing a funding program by which local teachers obtained a Chilton Area Community Foundation grant for equipment and supplies. Knowing of Stony Brook, Joe contacted local farmers owning adjacent land to secure a release site, with DNR approval, for reared trout. Stony Brook, a former trout-stocked stream that was devoid of trout, received the brown trout released by students.

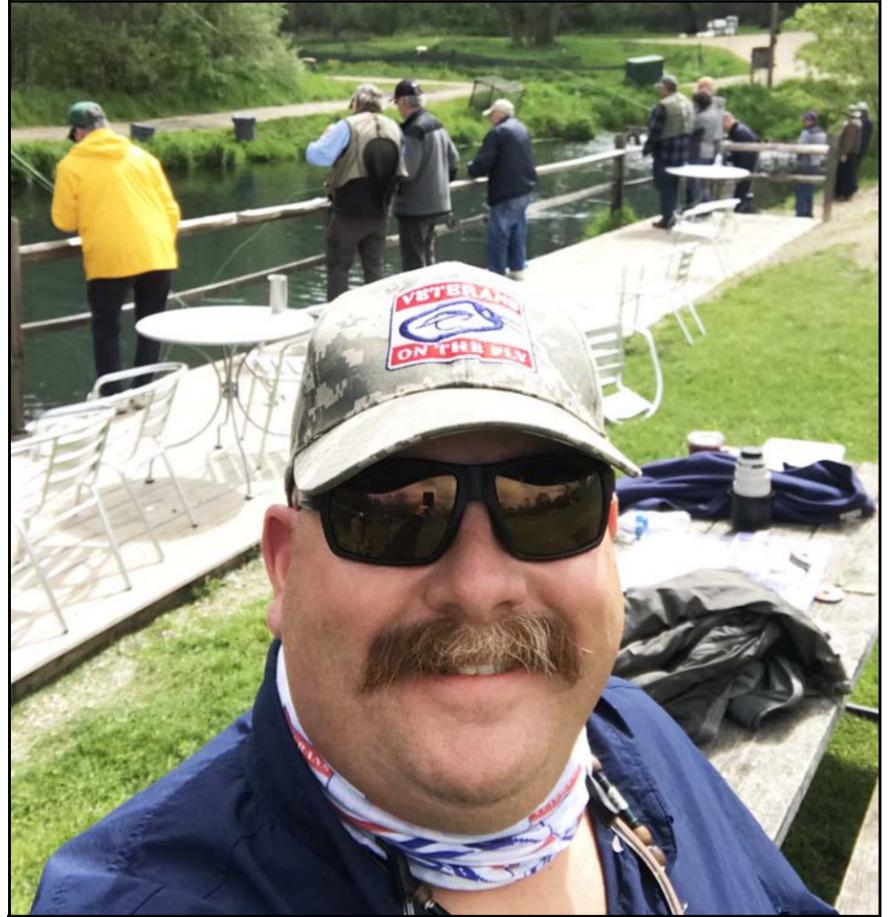
Joe enlisted help from FVTU members to explore the possibility that Stony Brook had characteristics favorable for long-term sustainability of trout, especially if restorations could be planned, funded and implemented. Joe brought together key individuals, agencies and organizations to define the means to connect the Chilton TIC Program with a new project to restore the last trout stream in Calumet County.

The combined projects, led by Joe, consisted of Chilton TIC volunteers, Adan Nickel of DNR Fisheries, Jim Kettler of Lakeshore Natural Resources Partnership, DNR biologist Shawn Sullivan's Trout Habitat Management Team and the Fox Valley Chapter. The Chilton TIC program continues in its sixth year, habitat restoration is underway, both brook and brown trout populations are prospering and the last trout stream in Calumet County flows naturally for future generations because Joe cared to make a difference and led the way.

Joe epitomizes the purpose of this award, to recognize someone who has led the way in the restoration of a trout stream, while bringing so many partners and people together in the process.



JOE BACH HELPED RESTORE STONY BROOK



MIKE JOHNSON EARNED OUR VETERANS SERVICES AWARD



GREG OLSON IN HIS ELEMENT, TEACHING KIDS

Distinguished Service-Youth Education: Greg Olson

Greg Olson joined the Kiap-TU-Wish chapter in 2008 and joined the Kiap-TU-Wish board of directors in 2013. Since then, Greg has combined his interests in fishing for trout, science and youth by serving as the coordinator for Kiap-TU-Wish's Trout-In-the-Classroom program. Greg started by building programs, teachers and Kiap-TU-Wish volunteers slowly in area elementary, middle and high schools. Over time, Greg built up both a solid group of Kiap-TU-Wish volunteers and a group of area teachers with enthusiasm for raising trout in their classrooms.

With funds raised and contributed to the program by Kiap-TU-Wish, Greg built the local program up to include tanks in eight different schools for the 2019-2020 school year. (2020-2021 would have seen an additional TIC tank had the new classroom not been put on hold due to Covid.)

To get each of the TIC programs up and running, Greg starts by purchasing and setting up the TIC equipment for each classroom. Then he personally works with teachers to familiarize them with the program. He and other Kiap volunteers deliver trout eggs to the classrooms during their annual "spawning run" in January. After the tanks are up and running in each classroom, Greg and other Kiap volunteers, like Dean Hanson, work with teachers and volunteers to coordinate Bugs-in-the Classroom sessions with live stream invertebrates in their classrooms.

Finally, Greg helps organize Trout Release Days for the TIC programs during which students and teachers are bussed to area trout streams where Kiap-TU-Wish volunteers help them release their fry into the wild. Greg also helped organize shutting down these programs and releasing fry early when Covid emptied our area schools this past March. In addition to serving as the coordinator and point person for the eight Kiap-TU-Wish Trout-in-the-Classroom programs, Greg also serves as the Wisconsin State Council's Trout in the Classroom Coordinator.

Distinguished Service-Veteran's Services: Mike Johnson

Towards the end of 2017 Mike Johnson was looking for a way to give back to his community. He has long had a passion for fly fishing and wanted to share that with others. When he heard about the Veterans On The Fly (VOTF) classes starting up that winter at the VA hospital in Madison, Mike was in. The program is run by volunteers from the Southern Wisconsin TU Chapter. After volunteering at the first few weekly classes, Mike quickly acclimated to the group.

Mike has a laid back, easy going attitude, and loves sharing fishing knowledge with others. Despite living more than an hour away from the hospital, he has become a regular at the Wednesday evening group which works to get military veterans and their families connected to the outdoors through fly fishing.

In May of 2018, former Program Lead Steve Davis announced a life changing event (i.e. moving the family to Colorado) was happening sooner than he had originally intended. Steve was leaving the program in good shape, but there was a bit of a leadership gap. Mike Johnson immediately stepped up and volunteered to help run the program. He was new to leadership but he quickly earned the trust of the volunteers around him as he got acclimated to the new position.

Mike's involvement with the Veterans On The Fly program has always been focused on his drive to serve our veterans. He's been the face of the group at many events like sports shows, Fly Fishing Film Tours, and around the VA hospital. He's the first one to show up at many of the fishing outings, with rods rigged and ready to go for any eager veteran angler.

Mike has taken the initiative on fundraising activities and made some connections within the community to acquire ball caps and buffs as a way to promote VOTF. In 2019, he along with other volunteers across the state, organized an overnight fly-fishing outing in northern Wisconsin with Hayward Fly Fishing Company. The event had a profound impact on the veteran participants, the volunteers and the guides. Shortly after, Mike began fundraising efforts to help make future trips bigger and better.

While COVID-19 has dampened some of the efforts to engage with our veteran community over the last year, volunteers like Mike Johnson stand ready to fire up these Service Partnership programs as soon as it is safe to do so. The Council thanks Mike Johnson for his service to our veterans.

Robert Hunt Resource Professional Award: Matt Otto

Natural Resources Conservation Service Resource Conservationist Matt Otto is worthy of the Robert Hunt Conservation Professional Award because of all the actions he has undertaken to bring millions of dollars for coldwater restoration to Wisconsin. In his current position as Special Initiatives Coordinator for Wisconsin, Matt has helped our chapters, DNR fish habitat crews and county field offices secure more Farm Bill dollars for fish habitat than anywhere else in the nation.

In 2012 Matt was working on the Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative (DALCI), which was the conceived by Matt and coworker Tom Krapf. They approached TUDARE and the wildlife subcommittee of the Wisconsin NRCS State Technical Committee, about submitting a Driftless Landscape proposal that would provide millions of Farm Bill dollars for four major land uses in the Driftless Area, with coldwater streams being one of



MATT OTTO ENJOYING OUTSIDE TIME WITH HIS SON

the four priorities. Over the four-year period, 19 Wisconsin counties implemented 197 practices totaling \$1,881,334 and restoring more than 18 miles of trout streams.

In 2016 the Mississippi River Healthy River Initiative (MRBI) was a multi-million-dollar initiative that targeted 12 subwatersheds with a multitude of nutrient management practices. However, none of the practices were those TUDARE typically uses for stream-restoration projects were proposed. Matt helped us to expand our target area to add two additional subwatersheds, and for the first time in program history, NRCS allowed TUDARE to use the nutrient management funding to add riparian management practices like streambank stabilization to the eligible practice list. Over the life of the project, county field offices completed more than 24 projects totaling more than \$1.4 million.

In 2018 the Driftless Regional Conservation Partnership Program awarded \$2.9 million for Minnesota and Wisconsin coldwater streams. This was TUDARE's first attempt to obtain funding from this program, and Matt was the project lead for Wisconsin and Minnesota NRCS. Matt organized joint partner meetings with Minnesota and Wisconsin, and regional meetings with the Wisconsin counties. He even worked with Minnesota to help them develop a selection tool to prioritize coldwater streams that would show the biggest response to the work, and priority points for streams with easements. At this point in time, more than 30 miles have been restored in Minnesota and Wisconsin, and by next fall all of the program dollars will have been obligated.

In 2019 TUDARE's Jeff Hastings proposed a \$9 million award for the Driftless Area from the Driftless Regional Conservation Partnership Program. He never thought they would receive the full amount. Encouraged by Matt and the success they've had at spending Farm Bill dollars for stream restoration in Wisconsin, Hastings proposed allocating almost \$4 million for Wisconsin alone. In just two years Wisconsin field offices have developed 57 project contracts and are half way through the \$4 million award. Matt again took the lead for the four states to provide oversight of this large award (one of the largest in the nation), organized state partner meetings and helped TUDARE secure an additional quarter of a million dollars for technical assistance.

Matt is an avid trout fisherman and hunter, and manages his property in Richland County for both his passions. To Trout Unlimited, Matt is a friend and partner who has done so much to accelerate coldwater conservation in the Driftless Area.



MARK PATEL (RIGHT) OF LUNA COFFEE ROASTERS

Reel Partner Award: Luna Coffee Roasters, Mark Patel

For more than 20 years the folks at Luna Coffee Roasters have been serving coffee to the delight of Green Bay area residents and visitors. Shortly after opening, owner Mark Patel welcomed a new business to the block – Tight Lines Fly Fishing Company. For several years, they partnered on a breakfast blend of coffee called “Rising Trout.”

Fast forward to 2020 and Mark Patel reached back out to Tim Landwehr at Tight Lines about bringing back the famed breakfast blend and using it to help fund conservation work in Wisconsin. Tim was gracious enough to put Mark in touch with Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, and within a few short months, Rising Trout coffee beans were hitting the grinders and coffee pots.

Luna Coffee Roasters is generously donating approximately 42% of sales back to Wisconsin Trout Unlimited. They worked with the Council to set up a website page to advertise the coffee and highlight the work of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited. They also helped us set up an automatic monthly donation system that tracks sales, calculates donations and makes the bank transfer of funds.

The Rising Trout blend is available for purchase online as either whole bean or ground coffee, and shipping is available anywhere in the United States. Now it's easier than ever to find “Rising Trout,” even when there doesn't appear to be a hatch on your favorite stream.

With a tip of the cap to our friend Tim Landwehr for making the connection, Wisconsin Trout Unlimited is proud to work with Luna Coffee Roasters on this venture and honor them with our Reel Partner Award.



WITU Online Auction Starts Sunday, April 18
<https://go.tulocalevents.org/wicouncil2021>

Support cold water conservation in WI!
 Here's a sample of what's on the auction block:

- Trips w/ Driftless Angler and Flying Musky
- Variety of fully loaded Fly Boxes
- Fly Rods by Echo & St. Croix
- Simms Sling Pack
- Rotary Vice & Tools
- Simms Taco Wader Bag
- Fishpond Burrito Wader Bag
- Fishpond Waist Pack
- Custom Bison Horn Knife by John Beth
- Fly Casting Lessons w/ Terry Cummings
- Bronze Trout Sculpture Casting
- More Items to be added!

Thank you to all of our donors.

Bidding closes @ 7pm on Sunday, April 25
 Contact Scott Allen jscottallen12@gmail.com for more info

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 THEODORE GORDON: HIS LOST FLIES AND LAST SENTIMENTS
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In John Gubbins's beautiful new book, what begins as a story of adventure in the wilderness of Alaska, rife with both camaraderie and loneliness, soon becomes much more, as memory and destiny intrude, carrying with them the sort of heartache and soul-sickness that in Gubbins's careful hands, burst with an electric and affirming humanity.
Matthew Gavin Frank
 Professor, MFA Program in Creative Writing, N. Michigan University, Marquette, MI

Winner: 2020 IPPY Bronze Award
2020 Finalist Indie Award

John Gubbins has given us a great insight into Gordon's life, as an angler, a fly tier, a writer, a person of many secrets, and most importantly to me, a conservationist. I found it hard to put this book down once I started to read it.
Bert Darrow, Author, Guide & President of Theodore Gordon Flyfishers

For Books and Inquiries: Amazon - Kindle & Paperback
 John Gubbins, 665 Tony's Lane, Ishpeming MI 49849
 PH: 906-869-6679 · profoundriver@gmail.com (paperback with endorsement gratis)

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

Streams, rivers in poor shape

A national survey shows that many U.S. and Wisconsin streams and rivers have excess nutrients, as well as fish populations in poor condition.

By Mike Miller

The National Rivers and Streams Assessment (NRSA) is a collaborative effort among state and federal agencies, and tribes, led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The primary goal of NRSA is to assess the physical, chemical and biological conditions of the nation's rivers and streams on a five-year cycle. With the recent change in federal administrations, EPA is now releasing the 2013–2014 findings reported here. In 2013 and 2014, more than 1,800 boatable river and wadeable stream sites representing nearly 1.2 million miles of flowing water in the continental United States were surveyed. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is a collaborator on the NRSA surveys.

Fish are key indicators of ecosystem health. A total of 16,988 individuals of 104 different fish species and three species of hybrids were caught and released during the 2013–2014 NRSA survey in Wisconsin.

Multi-metric indexes of stream health incorporate various attributes (metrics) of plant, animal or physical habitat assessments into single measures to estimate environmental conditions. The fish survey results reported are from a multi-metric fish index developed by EPA for the national survey. The condition estimates of streams and rivers are combined in the national

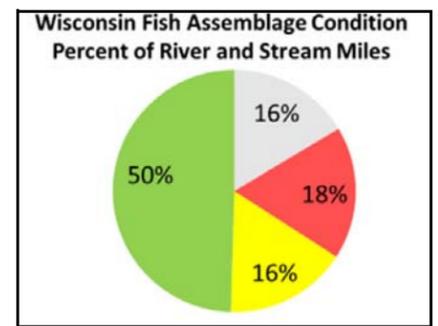
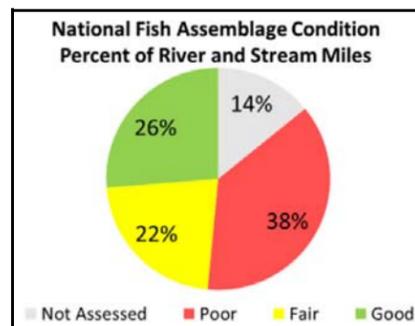
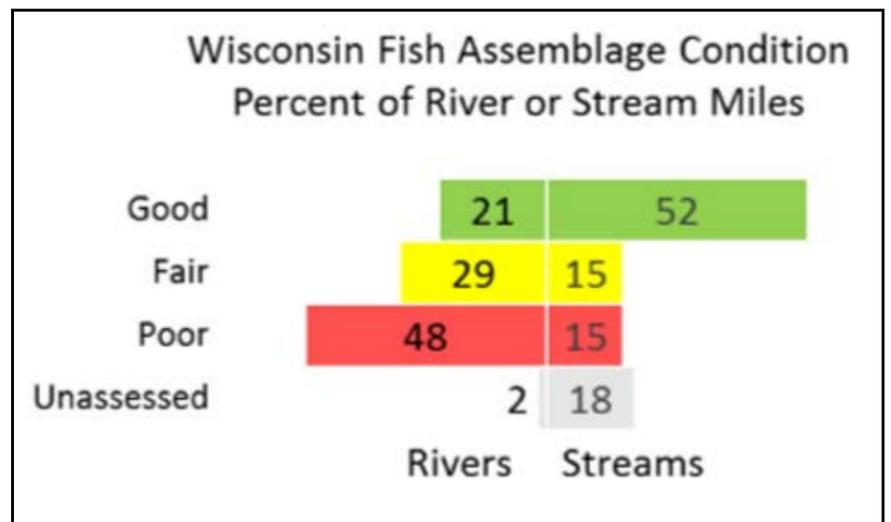
and Wisconsin assessment pie charts. Waters “not assessed” indicate some survey sites had no or insufficient numbers of fish captured to calculate index scores.

Smallmouth bass were found at all river survey sites in Wisconsin and white suckers were the most common stream species, being found at 55 percent of the stream sites. A single American eel was captured at a Mississippi River survey site after making a 3,500+ mile journey from its birthplace in the North Atlantic Ocean.

Key findings

Key Findings of the National Rivers and Streams Assessment 2013–2014:

- Less than a third of U.S. and half of Wisconsin river and stream miles have healthy fish assemblages.
- Nutrient pollution is widespread; 60 percent of both U.S. and Wisconsin stream and river miles have high concentrations of phosphorus, 43 percent of U.S. and 67 percent of Wisconsin's flowing waters have high nitrogen concentrations.
- High nutrient and sediment levels, and degraded riparian and in-stream habitat impact the biological conditions of U.S. and Wisconsin streams and rivers.
- Enterococci, an indicator of fecal bacteria, is widely present in U.S. and Wisconsin waters.



- Microcystin, toxins produced by cyanobacteria, are present in a small proportion of U.S. and Wisconsin stream and river miles, and usually at low concentrations.

Mike Miller is stream ecologist working in the DNR's Bureau of Water Quality's Monitoring Section. His primary responsibilities include advancing efforts to improve stream and river monitoring and assessment in Wisconsin. He teaches a stream ecology and watershed management class at UW-Madison and is a co-author of a Field Guide to Wisconsin Streams.

Letters

I really enjoyed John Lyons' article “Wisconsin salmonids: Past, Present and future” in the Winter 2021 issue. It's really interesting to read about the history of trout in Wisconsin. I'm especially interested in the history of coaster brook trout. When I was in my 30's, I heard about coasters, and not knowing they were gone, hoped I might catch one. In my 40's, I had hopes that they might return. In my 50's I started losing hope. I'm now a year into my 60's and really wondering if Wisconsin will ever have coasters in my lifetime.

Lyon's article notes that there is much doubt as to whether coasters are genetically any different from resident brook trout that occupy the same streams as them. Legally, this theory was borne out when the Federal Government refused to list the last known coaster population in Michigan's Upper Peninsula as endangered, reasoning that there was not enough evidence of genetic difference. I recall reading an article a few years ago about a study that showed that sea-run brook trout in Canada leave the stream when they start to get crowded. If there is no genetic difference, perhaps if brook trout get crowded, they would move downstream to the next big hole, and the next until the next big hole is Lake Superior.

It seems to me that a lack of genetic difference is cause for optimism. Perhaps those stream residents are waiting to become coasters, if they don't get eaten first. Sadly, the size and bag limits for the most restrictive stretch of the Bois Brule read like this: “Daily bag limit: 3 trout and salmon in total,

only 2 of which may be Brown trout, only 1 of which may be a Rainbow trout. Length limit: Brook trout 10" Brown trout 15", salmon 12" and Rainbow trout 26"

The non-native steelhead get the most protection. The non-native browns get the next most. The stream's only native trout get the very least protection, as anglers can take three 10-inch brook trout every day. That's on the stretch of the river with relatively restrictive regulations. On the rest of the river, an angler can take home five brook trout over 8 inches, every day of the season. A few years back, I met someone on the Brule who told me that the regulations were designed so that essentially every rainbow and brown trout would be able to spawn once. Not so with the native brook trout. I don't mean to knock steelhead or browns, as both are fish I enjoy catching. The thing is, part of TU's mission has been to foster the comeback of natives.

It seems to me that an experiment could be done to help determine whether brookies head for the lake when they become crowded. The experiment could involve making the Brule River catch-and-release only for brook trout. Perhaps the natives, now treated as poor cousins, would increase in numbers and begin to leave the river. If so, there would be coasters, and something would have been learned about how coasters are created. If not, there would likely be better brook trout fishing in Wisconsin's most famous trout stream. Given the fact that there is a weir on the Brule with a camera, and every fish that runs the river is counted, it's

hard to imagine that there could be a better stream in which to conduct such an experiment.

Some have argued that the Brule isn't the perfect test river, because it doesn't have a rocky shoreline. Coasters near Bayfield were known as “rock trout,” the argument goes, therefore they need streams on a rocky coast. That seems like a big assumption based on very anecdotal evidence. What is more, special regulations have been tried on some of the smaller streams near Bayfield and the results have been underwhelming.

Perhaps the brook trout don't need to be in a river that has a rocky shoreline immediately at its mouth. After all, as Lyons mentions, the Brule is known to have had coasters. When I fished it in the 80's, I ran into old timers who remembered them being caught in the 40's. Others have argued that the Brule isn't a perfect river because some of the springs in the upper reaches have been dammed under private hatchery permits. Still, the brook trout spawn in the river and occupy miles of it.

Perhaps this is something that Trout Unlimited could champion. It's hard to imagine that any significant portion of our membership would oppose something like this. Similar rules have been tried in Ontario, Michigan and Minnesota. Why not Wisconsin?

There have been articles and talk, and special regulations of this sort on a very few small Lake Superior tributaries in Wisconsin, all without many good results. Why not try this? The worst result would likely be better fishing for resident

brook trout, with plenty of other rivers available to harvest brook trout. TU has led the way to so many successes in Wisconsin, perhaps most notably with brown and brook trout recovery in the Driftless Area. We haven't seen quite so many success stories in the streams of the north, and we've essentially seen no good results regarding coasters. Why not give it a try on the “River of Presidents?” Thirty years is a long time to watch, hope and see no improvement.

Tom Wiensch



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RECOLLECTIONS

The box canyon incident



CLARK FORK TRIBUTARIES

A typical Clark Fork tributary coming out of the Absaroka Mountains. This one, or one just like it, went through the box canyon where the big browns were.

Words and photos by Rick Larkin

Too many close calls with bears forced our group to leave the best trout fishing we had ever experienced. We broke camp on Fox Lake and hiked down the mountain and retreated to the little cabin at Al's Big Bear Lodge to re-plan the rest of our trip. We all agreed that a little less adventure and a more touristy approach to the Beartooths might be the best, at least as far as this trip was concerned.

Later that day, we hit Cooke City and wandered around like real tourists, going into the souvenir shops and the fly shops. We bought cheap cowboy hats and agreed that we all looked pretty silly. On the way back to our cabin, we tried our hand at horseback riding at a place along the highway which advertised trail rides. After all, we had cowboy hats.

The next morning Joe and Katy announced they were taking off to see Yellowstone National Park for a couple of days and leave the rest of us in the little log cabin with its two saggy little beds. We moved out of the horse barn. Dave, Howard and I now sat on the porch of our cabin and hoisted a beer as the little yellow Toyota went down the highway toward Yellowstone and disappeared. Our thoughts now drifted back towards Cooke City and some entertainment. We counted our remaining cash, took showers and headed back into town.

Around the Clark Fork

That's how the next couple of days went, spending the days fishing the Clark Fork and its tributaries that were accessible off of the high-

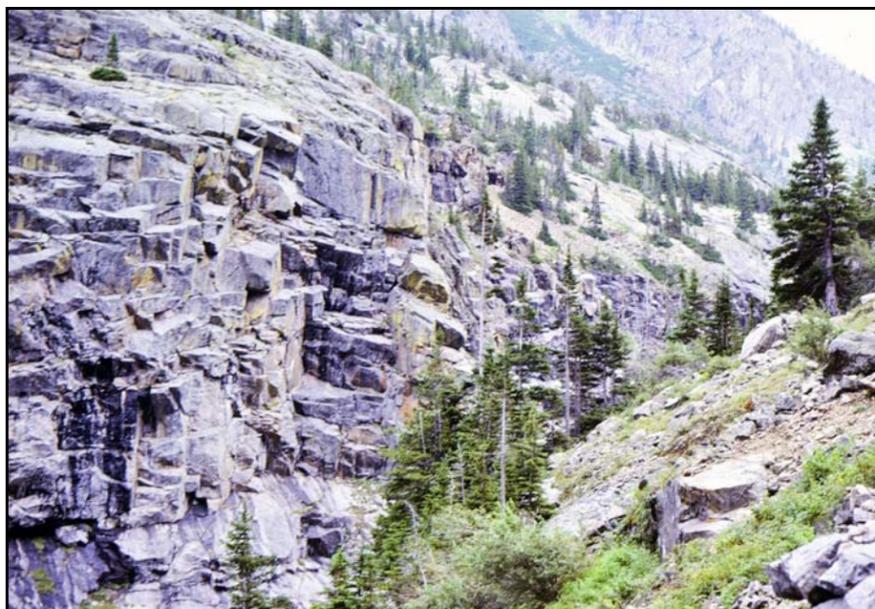
way, east of Cooke City. We fished within a hundred yards or so from the truck, figuring that bears would not be hanging out so close to the road.

Luckily, there was plenty of public access and the fishing was easy. The only drawback was that while the trout were plentiful and cooperative, they were small. Actually, they were tiny, with only a few topping six inches. We had been spoiled by the football-sized rainbows we caught in Fox Lake. On the plus side, we never saw a bear or even a bear track, so our fishing was relaxed and fun. After a couple lazy days of catching tons of little trout, we realized we were getting bored.

The next morning, after breakfast, we were sitting at the counter of the café, nursing coffees. It had been another good night. At least what we could remember was pretty good.

Howard recalled we went to the dance bar in Silver Gate, down the road from Cooke City as there was no bear in the dumpster at the bear bar. Plus, the bartender was now probably sick of us and suggested we would have more fun just down the road in Silver Gate.

Howard asked me if I remembered the big horseshoe-shaped bar at the dance place in Silver Gate. "Ah, no" I confessed. He then asked if I remembered the quaint local custom where you stood with your back to the bar and hooked your boot-heels in the foot rail while bending over backwards so the bartender could pour a shot directly into your open mouth. I did not remember this and Howard reminded me that I proved to be especially adept at this local drinking skill.



WALKING INTO THE BOX CANYON

A narrow trail in a steep canyon was the only access to the secret fishing spot.

Howard proved to be a valuable babysitter, as he didn't drink. He would watch over our shenanigans, typically sitting in the corner of whatever bar we were in, sipping a diet soda. He would then drive us home.

When Al came in, we were still drinking coffee, reading newspapers and the free brochures, and generally hanging out. Howard was busy with a paper placemat for little kids and was coloring it in with the complimentary crayons. I did the crossword in the local paper. Dave was checking the want ads.

Al saw we needed something to do. I think he also wanted us out of the café, as we were just taking up space and scaring off customers. Our conversation returned again to the very large trout we saw back at Fox Lake compared to the dinks we were catching in the Clark Fork.

About the box canyon

Then, right before we left, Al cautioned us. "I forgot to say this. That box canyon can be very dangerous. If there is any rain upstream, even a little drizzle, get out right away. It can fill up in only a few minutes. It's very steep and quickly traps a lot of water in a hurry. The current gets real nasty. Also always watch the water; sometimes rain upstream will cause high water. If you see the water turning muddy, start running. And I mean RUN! The clouds don't mean anything. This is no BS. It can happen even if there isn't a cloud in the sky where you are" he said this for further emphasis and continued,

"More than one guy has drowned in there!" We said we would be careful, but the thought of trophy brown trout was foremost in our minds.



THE HOLE AT THE BOTTOM

The author, wearing a brand new cowboy hat, fishes the box canyon's big hole before all hell breaks loose.

Want to catch some big browns?

Al came over with the coffee pot and joined in. "Yeah, those Fox Laker's are probably big Rainbows and Cutts. A lot of the lakes up higher in the Beartooths there have populations of big fish like that. Unless you have a boat or a float tube, you can't get at them." He continued "Y'all want to catch some big browns over by the Clark Fork?" He really must want to get rid of us. He was letting us in on a secret spot. Of course we wanted to catch big browns. We were all ears.

Al drew out a map showing the Clark Fork, downstream from the Coulter Pass Trailhead in an area off of the main trails. His hand-drawn map did not correlate too well with our Beartooth Country Map, but he said that map wasn't super accurate, and some areas of the Beartooths had just too many small tributary streams to show up on that particular map.

He said the spot he had in mind was a couple mile hike down a small unmarked trail and past a bunch of old abandoned mining equipment. He described the spot as a small box canyon with a big deep hole and very steep walls. It was one of a number of tributaries of the Clark Fork and few people knew about it, only a few locals. Al said that big brown trout lived in this deep canyon.

Al told us that if we swung streamers, especially white Muddler Minnows, we would connect with these big trout. He said while anything white would work, the Muddler would work the best. We grew more and more excited as he told us how to catch these big fish.

We drove the short distance to the Coulter Pass Trailhead and checked out the various trails which radiated off the parking lot. We looked at Al's map and figured out which trail to follow. Dave and I grabbed our rods and fly boxes, packed up a couple of day packs, and headed in. Howard followed with his spinning rod and box of daredevils. He strapped on the pig sticker, just in case.

We descended down a steep little-used trail into a heavily wooded hollow. The larger older tree trunks and the boulders were covered with thick moss and the place had a damp, eerie feeling. We knew not many people came this way. The puddles and muddy areas of the trail did not show any fresh foot traffic. As we hiked down, we could start to hear the water rushing through the canyon. This must be a pretty secret place, I thought.

After about an hour hiking mostly downhill, we found the abandoned mining equipment at the bottom of the trail. It consisted of a rusted conveyor and the remnants of an old steam shovel. Moss covered the wooden beams and undistinguishable hunks of rusty metal littered the place. The remains of an old log shack, also covered with thick moss, sat off to one side. From there, we followed another little trail which was partially hidden by all the junk further down into the canyon. It was steep and narrow, just like Al said. The hole full of big browns lay at the bottom.

Once in the canyon, we looked around and saw high rock walls on the opposite side which looked too steep to climb. Upstream, the river entered the canyon by a narrow chute which rushed out from be-

tween two massive rock walls.

Our little trail looked to be the only way in and the only way out. At the base of the chute was a long deep blue pool which had a steep rock wall and some overhanging rocks on the opposite side from where we had hiked in. This had to be the home of the big browns, I thought. The pool was so deep, the bottom was not visible and some overhanging rocks provided even more cover for the trout. The deep pool spread out into a long riffle run which eventually plunged into another even narrower chute before it disappeared into a much narrower canyon which served as an outlet.

I looked around carefully. This, I thought, was what plugged the canyon and held all the water. The water was clear and I looked up. There wasn't a cloud in the sky. We were OK for now.

A gravel bar, roughly 40 yards long, lay along the edge of the pool and gave us plenty of room to cast and enough space for three fishermen. It also looked like the riffle at the base of the pool would also hold some decent trout. In total, the canyon looked to be about a hundred yards from the pool and our little gravel bar to the outlet. To get out we would need to climb a couple of switchbacks which would get us out of the canyon and back to the old mining junk. To me, it looked like we could do this pretty quickly if we needed to. Piece of cake, I thought, and we strung our rods and started to cast into the pool.

The browns were there

The browns were there, and they were hungry! It was a perfect setup. The gravel bar was wide enough to allow you to stand back, away from the pool's edge so the fish couldn't see you, and cast your fly into the middle of the big pool. I think the browns were stuck there and eagerly ate anything that tumbled out of the fast water chute. I hooked up on my second cast. A 16-incher. Not bad, I thought. Howard and Dave were both fighting nice fish. Howard landed an honest 18-incher and Dave's was close.

"Twenty plus!" shouted Howard as another large brown trout broke the water's surface and then broke his line. His killer Daredevil was lost. The same could be said for my white muddlers which were gobbled up, shredded and often broke off. Dave and I lost several each. I ran out of white muddlers and tried the traditional sculpin-colored brown deer hair muddler. They liked that one, too and I broke off a couple more good fish and landed a couple more until I lost that fly.

This place was too good to be true. We were all catching big trout. These trout were much bigger than the rainbows we caught a few days ago in Fox Lake. Our laughing and shouting echoed off the narrow canyon walls.

This went on for what seemed a long time. The pool was full of large, aggressive hungry fish. We moved up and down the pool, our casting rewarded with trout, trout and more trout. They were mostly good-sized browns, but a couple of rainbows and a cutthroat also showed up. The whole canyon was full of fish.

Leaving the deep pool, I waded into the riffle and caught trout on small nymphs. I even tried some dry flies. I don't know how many we landed. I remember losing a couple of fish that broke off some pretty heavy tippet. This included a very large rainbow that cleared the pool with a high leap, throwing off one of our last muddlers.

We gotta run! NOW!

I was standing on the gravel bar, unhooking a nice brown when I noticed the color of the water coming out of the chute at the head of the pool was suddenly a little discolored. There also seemed to be more flow than I remembered. It must have been raining upstream somewhere. I looked down. My boots were now in about an inch of water and our gravel bar was now covered in shallow water which looked like it was getting deeper, fast. I remembered Al's speech. The water started to come out of the chute even faster now and it began to roar.

"We gotta run! NOW!" I shouted. We knew we had to get out and reeled up. We grabbed our stuff and started to wade across the submerged gravel bar to the trail. We lost precious seconds trying to grab all of our gear and quickly, a couple of fly boxes, a net and a recently purchased cowboy hat were swept

tally frightened trout fishermen were splashing and chugging up the trail, trying to run as the water advanced. It was now knee deep and it seemed like we could not gain on the rising water. The best we could do was to keep running through it and hope it didn't get any deeper. I was in a state of panic and all I could think of was not falling. I could feel the current strengthening. We were in big trouble. I didn't want to die here. More adrenaline kicked in and I found some strength and endurance I did not know I had. Dave and Howard also surged ahead. We kept going. Stopping to catch our breath was not an option. After a few more minutes, the water got shallower and we made it to the first switchback. We were going to make it.

Very soon, we were out of the water and standing next to the rusty mining equipment, panting like a small pack of tired wet dogs. The

somewhere up the river. Drink?" he asked.

He rummaged around under the lunch counter and pulled out a half-full bottle of whiskey and three water glasses. "On the house boys, three finger limit" and we filled our glasses.

"Wow" I said, after allowing the whiskey to soak in for a couple of minutes. "That son of a bitch filled up in seconds...couldn't believe it"

Al nodded. "Told ya," he nodded "been there myself."

"We damn near got killed" said Dave, who was visibly shaken. He handed Al his glass. "You only poured two fingers." He lied, but Al refilled the glass anyway. Al now realized the nature of our close call and seemed genuinely relieved. This experience was so scary, even Howard the non-drinker had a little bit of whiskey. I finished his glass for him.

Our collective fright turned to laughter in the warm glow of the whiskey. Young men recover quickly from stuff like this and the group's talk returned to the big hungry trout which lived in the box canyon. We would live to fish another day.

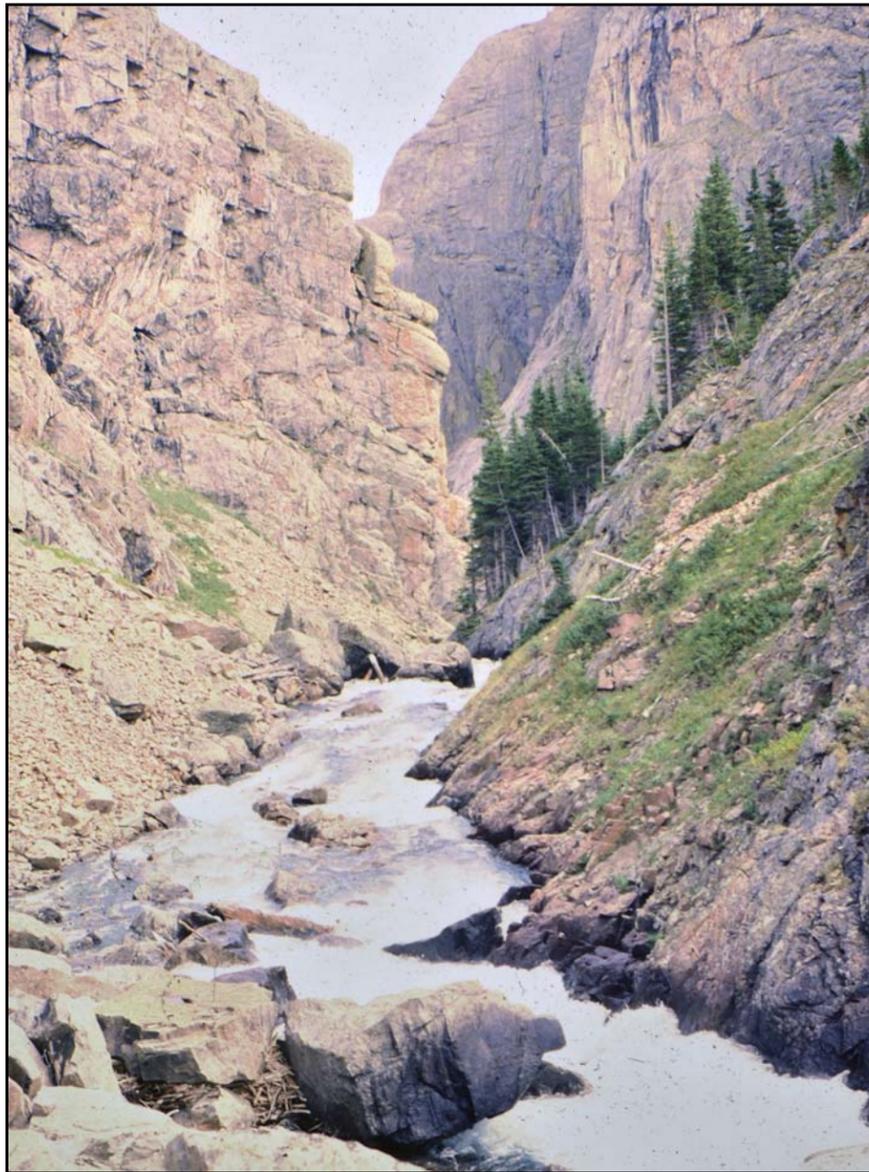
That's how we ended that trip. Later that afternoon, Joe and Katy got back from Yellowstone and told us of their camping adventures which involved having to leave their tent in the middle of the night and sleep in the car due to a marauding grizzly.

It seems a ranger in a truck with a loudspeaker rolled through the campground, warning campers about the bear and telling them to get in a hard-sided vehicle immediately. We told them about the close call in the box canyon. Joe seemed more interested in the size of the fish we caught than our close brush with death. We wanted to know if they ever saw the bear. We told and retold our stories. Later, Joe and Katy went back into the cabin. The three of us took our sleeping bags and headed for the horse barn.

The next morning, our little caravan, packing two coolers full of frozen trout, and five seasoned backpackers, crossed the Beartooth Pass and headed out across the prairie toward home. The discussion in the little blue pickup mostly centered on the methodology, equipment and strategies necessary to catch the giant cutthroats we saw swimming out in the middle of Fox Lake.

The discussion in the yellow Toyota wagon, we later learned, was who Joe and Katy were going to invite to their wedding, and going back to Yellowstone for a honeymoon. While no one in the pickup truck wanted to go back to the box canyon, we all agreed we would be back next year with a plan for the big trout of Fox Lake.

Rick Larkin is a long-time member of SEWTU. He has fished and hunted Wisconsin his entire life and reportedly caught a perch off his uncle's dock at age two on a cane pole. While he will fish for anything that swims and once had a trotline license for Mississippi River catfish, he is especially fond of all things trout and the Driftless Area in particular. He embraces the Robert Traver concept of "Whiskey in a tin cup tastes better out there." He also enjoys building LUNKER structures, cutting down buckthorn and listening to bad jokes around the campfire at the West Fork Sports Club.



BOX CANYON OUTLET

Steep canyons with roaring tributaries like this are common in this part of the Beartooths. This one was downstream from the box canyon.

downstream.

"NOW!" I shouted again and we took off. The water was now ankle deep and quickly becoming calf deep while we were crossing the gravel bar. We started to struggle and by the time we reached the trail, the water was pushing knee deep. A rapidly strengthening current was making its presence known and it was getting harder to run. The water was chasing us up the trail.

The water just kept coming and getting deeper with each step. The deeper it got, the slower we ran. It got louder, too, and the roar in the canyon began to intensify as more water shot out of the chute like an angry fire hose. It seemed like the canyon wanted to suck us in. I looked back and the pool and gravel bar had vanished under angry roiling coffee and cream-colored water.

Soon, the little column of mor-

water now roared in the box canyon below. By sheer luck and aided by the fact we were young, strong and modestly athletic, the canyon did not get us. Soaking wet, we slowly hiked uphill, out of the wooded valley and back to the trailhead where we had parked the truck.

There was not a cloud in the sky and I didn't remember any clouds or rain while running out of the canyon. It must have been raining somewhere upstream but we would never know just where. We were very wet, exhausted, scared out of our shorts, but very much alive.

We drove into the lodge parking lot and walked into the café. We were greeted by Al who saw three, wet, ghost-like apparitions dripping water on his café floor, and jabbering a mile a minute. His expression soon told us he knew where we had been.

"Found the canyon, I see" he said. "Musta been a thunderstorm



Chapter News

Blackhawk Chapter

Not much is new with Blackhawk TU, as we suffer through the safety measures of the pandemic, hence no in-person meetings or gatherings. We're hoping that by spring and the work/fishing season, we will be able to meet. The chapter is sponsoring three youth for the Council's Youth Fishing Camp. It's a great opportunity to get kids in-

involved in conservation and fishing. We are partnering with the Southern Wisconsin Chapter to provide some monetary support for water-quality stream testing on some important trout streams in our area. We are glad to provide support, even if we can't meet in person.

—*Dave Brethauer*

Central Wisconsin Chapter

The Central Wisconsin Chapter has continued to limit in-person gatherings. Our activities have been as frozen as our lakes and streams. As we trudged through the sub-zero winter, we look forward to the opening of spring and perhaps a new and better year. Board meetings have been held by Zoom and plans are being set for 2021.

One project that we did accomplish was the publication of a CW-TU 2021 calendar. That project was championed by Wayne Parmley and featured the fine photography of Bob Hasse.

The calendar was distributed to all of our members free of charge. We included a fundraising request to help fund our costs and stream work days. We also asked our members to update their email addresses so we can better communicate with everyone. Those who responded with a donation or an updated address were entered in a drawing for multiple prizes.

This year we celebrate our 50th anniversary. Unfortunately we had to cancel the Dan Harmon III fly fishing school, which has been held for more than 40 years. We look forward to holding the school once again in 2022.

We hope to restart our stream work days soon. Perhaps by mid summer we can partner with the DNR crews on stream restoration projects and enjoy a lot of fresh air and fellowship. We may even be able to restart in-person board meetings and outdoor picnics with trout programs.

One event that is definitely in the planning is our annual banquet slat-

ed for the end of October. Since we are celebrating our 50th Anniversary, we will be holding the event in Mt. Morris, close to our central fishing waters. It is our largest fundraiser and most important social event of the year. It will be an evening of good food, fine fellowship and great prizes. Once again, the event is being organized by Laura Tucker, so it should be a fabulous evening.

In March we held our elections. Wayne Parmley was elected president, Tom Meyer as vice president, Laura Tucker as secretary and Joe Peikert as treasurer.

Wayne will bring great energy to the chapter, given his skills at developing membership and youth programs. As a part of this emphasis, our board voted to sponsor two young people to attend the WITU Youth Fishing Camp this summer.

Regarding membership, we retained almost all our members and now boast a total of 410 members. Much of the growth has come from referrals by TU National and their first responder initiative.

Many of our members are anxious to see us return to a full schedule of events. Until then we are developing visual meetings and programs to fill the gaps.

Following our most recent meeting we invited Tom Lager to present an online talk to our members on the Grannom caddis in Wisconsin. This was our first online program for the chapter and it may be continued until we return to live meetings. The next event is being planned for April.

—*Stan Cichowski*

Coulee Region Chapter

We had a very successful virtual banquet in February. While we certainly missed seeing all of our friends and supporters, we had approximately 60 attendees and a fantastic presentation lineup. Cy Post and Rick Kyte shared information on the founding and history of the chapter, now more than 40 years in existence.

Jason Freund and Duke Welter did an overview of all of the stream projects we supported in 2020 and what is to come this year.

DNR fisheries biologist Kirk Olson discussed the state of Wisconsin coldwater streams.

Kristal Welter and Marlene Huston shared information about the growth and importance of female anglers in TU.

Our youth outreach coordinator Dale Jonson discussed the past, present and future of our youth initiatives.

State Council Chair Mike Kuhr discussed what was happening at the state level and presented us the Council's Silver Trout award for most outstanding chapter.

Meghan Barker also made a remote appearance to share an update on the Bristol Bay Alaska work, which TU has been involved with for many years.

We gave away several prizes, including flies tied by members and friends, CRTU caps, fly reels, a Rush River whiskey gift set, fly-tying station and pheasant cape, and an 8-foot, 4-weight rod built by Rick Kyte. It was a great deal of fun and we surpassed our fundraising goals.

Our March chapter guest presenter was Jim Bartelt, who explained the moving fly in the Driftless.

Our April presenter is Dr. Nancy Rabalais of Louisiana State University, who will share information on the "dead zone" in the Gulf of Mexico.

Find Coulee Region TU on Facebook for more information on these presentations and all the other happenings with our chapter. You can also keep up with CRTU at couleeregiontu.org and find us on Instagram at couleeregiontu.

—*Curt Rees*

Fox Valley Chapter

Hello Wisconsin Trout readers. It has been three years since we redesigned our chapter newsletter, Trout Talk. Before the change, it was edited by Jim Jenken, assisted by Rich Erickson, who also wrote our chapter reports for Wisconsin Trout. They had been a talented and effective team for many years.

With the redesign we decided on a few simple design elements to guide the layout and content of Trout Talk: Full color with more pictures, drawings and graphics, shorter articles and more of them, photos of people: authors, contributors and chapter members, interesting articles about a wide variety of subjects, 12 full pages with zero "white" space.

The Spring 2018 issue featured Rich Erickson writing the lead article, who also became editor and continued to write our chapter reports for Wisconsin Trout. In the summer of 2019, Rich retired and I took over as editor, as well as writing our chapter reports.

We thank both Jim Jenken and Rich Erickson for their years of dedication and many contributions.

Who are the real stars, the champions of Trout Talk? It's those who have contributed articles, including Tom Lager with 25 articles followed by Jeff Moureau with 19 articles.

Those who wrote 11-15 articles include Al Johnson, Nate Ratliff, John Barkmeier, Roger Genske, Jesse Walter and myself.

Six to 10 articles were submitted by Graeme Hodson, Linda Walter, Joe Bach, Rich Erickson and Dan Geddes. We three to five articles from Tony Pudlow, Dick Stielow, Terry Ziegler, Brad Bowman, Mark Peerenboom and Norm Christnacht.

Also contributing great articles were Gerome Hero, Chris Firkus, Tony Gavy, Steve Heiser and Bruce Pennings. Thank you all and please continue.

We also need to thank our design/layout, print and mail team: Bill and Linda Walters of Optima Graphics. Linda applies her design and layout magic while Bill's Hei-

delberg Press dominates the printing of each issue. There would be no Trout Talk newsletter without Optima Graphics. Thank You, Walters!

The newsletter has featured some great articles by great writers over the years. For inspiration, there were Joe Bach's articles about Stony Brook or Trout In the Classroom.

Outgoing President Nate Ratliff entertained us with his fresh perspectives on life, our chapter, TU, plus trout fishing and the environment. How can we forget the Fly Tie Socials he inspired?

Thank you Al Johnson for making our chapter's finances understandable, and as our talented controller, your analysis helped us clarify and focus on our chapter's objectives.

Who can count how many meals were planned and prepared using Bob Klingerman's delicious and easy-to-understand recipes? Bob takes the tears out of dinnertime.

We hope John Barkmeier takes a two issue break before starting the awesome task of planning, promoting and then communicating the highlights planned for our Cabin Fever Day event January 15, 2022.

Tom Lager helps us solve two of life's most persistent problems. As our "Bug Man," he takes the mystery out of which flies to use. Along with Jesse Walters, they explain how to tie them.

Meanwhile, his advocacy articles help solve the challenges of ensuring quality trout and trout habitat for future generations.

As a veteran, I applaud Jeff Moureau's tireless work to organize and lead our chapter's efforts to help veterans and engage them in our sport. Jeff's "How To" articles have become this chapter's own in-print YouTube channel.

You are invited to read and view the last four issues of our new-style chapter newsletter, Trout Talk, on our website at foxvalleytu.org.

—*Don Clouthier*

Frank Hornberg Chapter

Even though we have not been holding any activities in person, we have been busy.

We've met monthly on Zoom to address our plans for 2021. Members should have received an email from me regarding those meetings. If not, please contact me at 715-712-3134.

Congratulations to Hannah Sroka of Weyauwega for being the recipient of the Frank Hornberg Chapter's scholarship of \$250.

Hannah was selected by the University of Stevens Point- College of Natural Resources Scholarship committee.

She is a senior at UW-SP majoring in fish and water resources. We wish her the best as she pursues a career in water resources.

In January DNR Senior Fisheries Biologist Jennifer Bergman discussed Big Roche-A-Cri Creek. She discussed the history, past habitat projects, a future project and the possibility of the Adopt-a-Fishery program.

To enroll in the program, we would have to commit to 100 hours of labor per year for three years.

This could start in the spring of 2022. Contact me if you are interested, even if you can only commit to one workday. derdmann55@charter.net

We donated a Simms sling pack to the upcoming State Council online auction to be held April 18-25. Please support the State Council and bid on auction items.

Our Amazon Smile account generated \$56.22. If you are an Amazon shopper, please consider logging in to Amazon Smile and select the Trout Unlimited Frank Hornberg Chapter. Amazon then donates .5 percent of purchases to our chapter.

There are exciting things to come regarding our chapter. We are planning for in-person events later this summer. Follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/HornbergTU>.

—*Doug Erdmann*

Chapter News



Green Bay Chapter

The Green Bay Chapter continues to hold virtual board meetings via Google Meets.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is currently working on a potential purchase of land on Beaver Creek, a class I trout stream. The property would connect two parcels of DNR property on the creek. The more partners and supporters the department can secure, the better the odds of being approved for the land acquisition. GB-TU member Kim McCarthy has been keeping our chapter up-to-date on this fluid situation. Our board voted to provide \$1,000 toward the acquisition.

In the last edition of Wisconsin Trout we mentioned how our Alternative Fundraising Committee was preparing to launch a new fundraising campaign. Our Membership Chair and Alternative Fundraising Committee member Jose Diaz created a donation page through Constant Contact. He then sent mailers explaining how our Annual February Conservation Banquet had to be cancelled and we were hoping our supporters would consider donating whatever they could. It has been

well received, as we have raised approximately \$8,000 so far.

Our donation page also serves as a chapter store. We currently have a hand-crafted bamboo fly rod built and donated by one of our Veterans Service leaders, Gary Gillis. We plan to add more items as we secure them (we recently received a full-day guided walleye trip). Donors are sent a "thank you" letter for their personal records as well as recognition on our chapter website for one year. On behalf of the Green Bay Chapter, our community, the environment and the fish, we want to say "Thank You" to all who have donated so far.

If anyone would like to make a donation, please visit our website for more details. Online donations through Constant Contact require a PayPal account, however checks can be mailed to the address on our website's donation page.

For more information visit our website at greenbaytu.org or check our social media on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

Stay safe everyone.
—Adrian Meseberg

Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

The Blue River project on the Zadrzil property started last fall and is slated to be done by year end. Located immediately downstream of the junction with Six Mile Branch, just off County Q, it includes the final 700 feet of Six Mile Branch and approximately 7,500 feet (1.4 miles) of the Blue River. There will be lots of log structures and back-hooks.

Due to the pandemic, our spring banquet will be delayed until fall.

We are very thankful for all the donations made in 2020, in lieu of the banquet.

We will hold our first board meeting since last spring in March, with appropriate protocols, to prepare for April board elections.

We are starting a water monitoring program and a trash pick-up program. Watch for more information on these programs.

—Brian Larson

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

Chapter members are still encouraged to contact TU National to update their profile with a current email address to get our chapter newsletter, Rip-Rap. Otherwise, it is on our chapter's website at <http://www.kiaptuwish.org/>

In lieu of Kiap's annual December Conservation Banquet, we held a 4 x 100 Chance Offering Raffle and a virtual auction on TU's auction platform. Both events culminated in a virtual banquet on February 25. Scott Wagner and Dave Johnson hosted the virtual Zoom banquet. The one-hour banquet included a presentation reviewing the past year's accomplishments, and an

awards segment honoring chapter members for their service.

In recognition of his multitude of efforts on behalf of the chapter, we awarded Past President Tom Henderson the Chapter's Golden Trout Award, with Loren Haas receiving our Silver Trout Award and past Rip-Rap Editor Maria Manion receiving the newly inaugurated Judy Lutter Communications Award.

The drawing featured a Norling bamboo rod, Yeti cooler, Thomas and Thomas 3-weight rod, and a Joshua Cunningham framed oil painting. The Offering raised \$5,000. The virtual auction was highly successful and made more



KIAP BRUSHING CREW

From left: Dave Gregg, Jim Tatzel, John Skelton, Loren Haas, Trish Hannah and Dave Kozlovsky.

than \$5,000. The auction featured guided trips and events by chapter members, a Patagonia fly fishing trip, fly boxes tied by Paul Johnson and fishing gear.

The chapter is grateful to the team that pulled this together on short notice. Scott Wagner identified the TU auction platform. Ken Hanson handled the myriad of details to make the platform work. Ed Constantini designed and coordinated communication and promotion of the events. Dave Johnson, Tom Schnadt and Greg Dietl solicited trips and coordinated sales efforts. The chapter learned a lot from the experience and plans to apply this knowledge to future fundraising events.

All four of our Trout In the Classroom (TIC) classrooms had eggs delivered and the kids were delighted to see the eggs hatch. The fry are still living off their egg sac while spending their days in the egg basket. Soon they will be released to the big, wide, world of the 55-gallon tank and feeding with tiny pellets will commence. The kids are doing a great job monitoring water chemistry and temperature. The kids were delighted to watch the heart beating in the sac fry as it swam about the petri dish. As first year TIC teacher Ben Toppel stated, "It doesn't get much more exciting than that!"

Kiap-TU-Wish is planning on offering a Stream Girls event in our area this summer, depending on the COVID situation. Do you know a young female that would like to learn to fly fish, and the conservation and biology behind it? The Stream Girls curriculum introduces girls to stream ecology, sampling techniques, fly rod casting and fly tying through a series of activities. You may be familiar with the phrase "STEM" education, which refers to learning in science, technology, engineering and math. You may also have heard of "STEAM" education, which includes the arts in addition to STEM, and could include fly tying, creative writing and sketching. At TU, we believe in "STREAM" education, which includes all of the above topics, plus recreation (fishing). For more information on assisting with this event or to learn about ways to become involved, email us at info@kiaptuwish.org.

We had another busy winter of brushing. After finishing up tree clearing at the new easements on Plum Creek on the outskirts of Elmwood, the chapter switched its focus in December and began maintenance tree and brush clearing on a section of the upper Kinni immediately downstream of the I-94 bridge. It is on the Jeff Lueck family farmstead. Fencing along this stretch to keep cattle out of the river had let massive buckthorn, honey suckle

and some box elders to take over the corridor.

We held 11 workdays comprising some 660 hours of volunteer time. We did take one pause during this project to move to the South Fork of the Kinni to remove an infestation of sand bar willows. A workday has been held each week from mid-December till the writing of this article, other than two bitterly cold weekends in February.

At our recent online banquet and fundraiser, we gave out certificates of appreciation and gift cards to six of our outstanding workday volunteers: Dave Gregg, John Skelton, Jim Tatzel, Trish Hannah, Pete Kilibarda and Loren Haas. Others who attended two or more workdays are Dave Kozlovsky (eight days), Matt Janquart (six days), Scott Wagner (six days). Those attending four workdays are Matt Wysocki, Ted Higman, Michele Bevis, and Pat Sexton. Those attending three workdays are Rainbow Barry, Jim Sackrisson, Sarah Sanford, Brian Schils, Steve Wardell and Keith Stein. Those attending 1-2 workdays are Joe LeFave, Cline Kickok, Scott Thorpe, Corie Berrigan, Steve Kaukola, Alan Hopeman, Mike Colling, Mimi & Charles Condon, John Kaplan, John Rock, Bob Kinder, Brad Wistrom, Perry Bowyer, Chris Boon, Mary Lilly, Greg Dietl and Kyle Amundsen. Our thanks go out to all of the volunteers who participated.

Habitat Coordinator Randy Arnold was contacted in late January by Jeff Hastings. He had been approached by Daniel Pherson, Regional Sales Manager for Stihl Corporation. Daniel is a trout fisherman who spends time in the Driftless Area, and he has taken note of all of the restoration work done by chapter volunteers. On behalf of Stihl, he wanted to give a \$1,500 gift certificate to a deserving chapter to be used to purchase Stihl equipment for chapter use. We would like to thank both Jeff and Daniel for choosing Kiap-TU-Wish to be the beneficiary of this gift. As a gesture to Daniel and Stihl, we held a workday in March, where regional Stihl factory reps enjoyed a workday and slayed some box elders and buckthorn on the Kinni.

Kiap-TU-Wish's dam committee has spent a lot of time raising funds, which now exceed \$40,000, as well as attending meetings and planning for the future. Our dam committee includes Scott Wagner, Gary Horvath, Kent Johnson, Scot Stewart and Dan Wilcox.

River Falls has made the decision to not repair the Powell Dam and to not include it in the FERC license renewal. Once approved by FERC, the dam removal and restoration of the river through the former im-

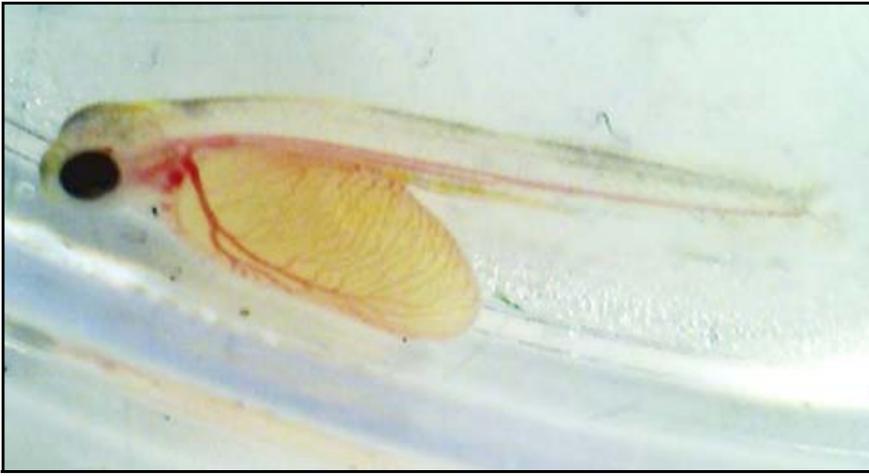


KIAP BRUSHING CREW

From left: Pat Sexton, Rainbow Barry, Sarah Sanford, Steve Wardell, Michele Bevis, Corie Berrigan and Brian Schils.



Chapter News



Ben Toppel, Greenwood Elementary School

BEATING HEARTS ARE VISIBLE IN SAC FRY

Kids can see the heart beating in the sac fry as it swims about the petri dish at the Rocky Branch Elementary School in River Falls, thanks to the Kiap Chapter's TIC program.

poundment will fall under the jurisdiction of the DNR. We have met with the DNR and hope to meet with the City of River Falls to continue planning to contain sediment in the lower Kinni, finish a river-monitoring plan and complete a river-restoration plan. We will also need to draft an agreement with the city to work together to accomplish these tasks. At the same time, we will continue to gather funding to accomplish this work. Kiap-TU-Wish is busy meeting with partners to broaden support and resources for this effort.

With the arrival of spring, the Kiap-TU-Wish monitoring team will have a busy schedule during the April-October 2021 period. Chapter members will deploy 29 temperature loggers in five local rivers to evaluate the impacts of stormwater runoff, hydropower facilities and climate change, and to assess the ability of our stream restoration projects to improve temperature regimes.

Numerous water samples will be collected and analyzed on several streams to better understand watershed impacts on water quality, as well as the ability of restored river reaches to improve water quality. To complement stream temperature and water chemistry data, two weather stations will be operated, providing data on air temperature, relative humidity, dewpoint and rainfall amounts. Kiap-TU-Wish also continues to provide financial and volunteer monitoring support for USGS operation and maintenance of the Kinnickinnic River flow gaging station (https://waterdata.usgs.gov/wi/nwis/uv?site_no=05342000) and the Willow River flow gaging station at [http://waterdata.usgu.gov/usa/nwis/uv\\$05341752](http://waterdata.usgu.gov/usa/nwis/uv$05341752)

In the fall of 2020, Kiap-TU-Wish provided \$600 to the USGS for purchase and installation of a continuous temperature monitoring probe

at the Willow River gage. Along with the flow data, the temperature data can be viewed online in real time. The flow and temperature data should be useful to the DNR for managing operation of the new Little Falls Dam in Willow River State Park, thereby protecting the downstream trout fishery.

Kiap-TU-Wish supported a recent effort by the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust (KRLT) to purchase a 40-acre property near River Falls. Located in the lower Kinnickinnic River canyon, this property became KRLT's fourth preserve: The Community Forest. KRLT ownership will protect this property into perpetuity and provide public access to 1,500 feet of Kinnickinnic River and Rocky Branch Creek trout waters, with a potential for DNR restoration work to improve trout habitat, stabilize stream banks, and reduce erosion.

In addition, this property will provide public access to the River Falls School Forest, which has been landlocked for decades, and will connect the school forest with public parks owned by the City of River Falls and River Falls Township. The combination of River Falls School Forest, KRLT Community Forest, and public parks will create substantial educational and recreational benefits, including a lengthy continuum of river access for anglers. KRLT raised the \$500,000 needed to cover the purchase price and associated transaction costs. Kiap-TU-Wish contributed \$7,500 to support KRLT's acquisition of this remarkable property. Other funding partners include the DNR's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program, U.S. Forest Service/USDA (Community Forest Program), corporate and non-profit organizations and individuals. KRLT closed on the property in January and the Community Forest is open to the public.

—Gary Horvath

Lakeshore Chapter

We are looking forward to a new season. We should have our permits for our stream projects and it's finally lining up. Unfortunately, everything else is still up in the air as to what we can do regarding TIC, our banquet, casting classes, etc. Our streams and rivers are looking good and people are coming from a long way away to fish here. We've seen a boost in numbers of people fishing the early season, letting us know that people like what our area

has to offer. I've been meeting a lot of people on the river that are first timers. This is also exciting to meet newcomers who are finding their way to our streams. So in short, the future is looking bright for our chapter.

Personally, I'm talking with other chapter members and the public as much as possible to get them involved with the WCC "Wisconsin Conservation Congress" and participate in the spring hearings. I've



Tom Schmact

TOM HENDERSON RECEIVED KIAP'S GOLDEN TROUT AWARD

Tom Henderson with his richly deserved Kiap TU Wish Golden Trout Award.

been encouraging everyone to put in resolutions that may help our trout streams and telling them to vote for the trout stamp increase. As a delegate for the WCC and being on the trout committee for Sheboygan County, I know that community outreach is crucial.

When people value and understand the importance of what the Lakeshore Chapter does for our environment and community, they may become more inclined to join. It's really surprising to me how many of our members who come to our

workdays don't even fish for trout. Some start trout fishing because they joined and we showed them how to. So please, whether you're a member of the chapter or not, if you know someone who would benefit from being a TU member and participating in what we do, don't hesitate, just tell them. TU has completely changed my life for the better, it can do the same for someone else, too.

—Myk Hranicka



MARINETTE COUNTY CHAPTER FLY FISHING CLASS

Marinette County Chapter TU member John LeBeau demonstrates fly casting equipment to the class. From left in back row are Alen and Janet Bird. Seated, from left are Vin Paoli and Landon Haulotte.

Marinette County Chapter

We kept our fly fishing class small, with social distancing and protective mask. The class ran for four nights. First we covered trout habitat and identification of trout and where to find them. On night two we discussed fly casting equipment and how to set up a fly rod and reel. The third covers fly tying, while the fourth night featured fly casting at the Marinette Rec. Department Community Center. This program

has been going on for more than 25 years.

We are planning a couple of brushing projects this summer for trout stream access, as well as kids fishing days. Our annual fundraising banquet is planned for Monday, June 7 at Embers 1871 in Peshtigo. For information contact Dale Lange at 715-582-1135.

—Dale Lange

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

As with many chapters, SEWTU has had to adapt to the realities of the ongoing pandemic restrictions. We have been unable to have any workdays since late 2019 and our chapter meetings have been limited

to a few Zoom meetings the past year. Most of our habitat work is dependent on our partnership with the DNR and they have not allowed us to have workdays out of an abundance of caution since the pandemic

Chapter News



began.

We lost our dear friend and past president, Todd Durian, who passed away on January 6. Todd was a thoughtful, compassionate leader and long-time advocate of conservation. In his final months as president he was able to get the Tichigan Creek project sponsored by the chapter. Because of Todd's efforts, we should have a fishable brook trout stream in the southeast corner of the state for all to enjoy. Todd will certainly be missed by all.

There is light on the horizon. With vaccines rolling out and infections down, we look forward to getting back to having in-person meetings again for a limited number of members, and also continuing to have Zoom meetings for those at high risk and unable to attend in person.

We held a limited in-person chapter meeting and habitat presentation on February 24 at the Bavarian Bierhaus in Glendale, which was also broadcast live on Zoom. At this meeting we announced the winners of our 2020 spring raffle where we gave away a \$1,000 Cabela's gift card to the first-place winner, and a fly rod and reel combo and spinning rod and reel combo for second and third place, respectively. Rick Larkin and Ken Rizzo provided the content for the night, in the form of a habitat debrief.

On March 31 we held another in-person/Zoom chapter meeting. Chapter Vice President Andy Avgoulas provided our members with the most current status on the spring steelhead run on our local tributaries.

On April 24 we are back to partnering with our friends at Milwaukee Riverkeeper for their annual spring cleanup. To participate register online with Milwaukee Riverkeeper and pick a site and time. Our chapter will again be primarily focused on the Menomonee River, known for its spring steelhead run, at the American Family Field site, but if other sites are more convenient for our members, they can choose an alternative location to help out. There will be a limit of 10 persons going out in staggered waves, every 30 minutes, and masks and social distancing will be required. Despite the additional protocols, we are looking forward to getting our feet wet and our local waters cleaned up.

We will also be holding our bi-an-

Southern Wisconsin Chapter

SWTU continues to navigate the pandemic and engage our members in a "fish-ically distant" way.

So far this year, we've shared two excellent YouTube presentations by Nate Nye, DNR fish biologist for Sauk and Richland Counties. Nate is involved with the superb restoration of Bear Creek, which was the major project of the Aldo Leopold Chapter of Trout Unlimited for several years. Nate and our friends and neighbors accomplished great things with that restoration, as his presentation on it makes clear. Nate also provides a lot to think about (and consider exploring) in his presentation on Columbia County trout streams. These are both well worth your time, and we're working to have more presentations to share. Visit our website, swtu.org, for links and more.

We also went virtual with our an-

nual chapter elections for our officers in April. If you are interested in nominating anyone for treasurer, secretary, vice president or president, please email Andy Avgoulas at andyavgoulas@yahoo.com.

The date of the April membership meeting and elections is still being finalized, but likely will be April 28.

In May we hope to get back in the water and get some workdays scheduled. Our habitat chairs Rick Larkin and Ken Rizzo have been busy scoping out projects with one of our DNR fisheries biologist partners, Ben Heussner. Some of the projects being discussed are brushing and backfilling on the Scuppernong River, buckthorn and invasive removal around the recently dredged McKewan spring pond, and brush and tree removal on Rosenow Creek.

Our annual partner workday/camping trip with the chapters of the Driftless Area, which is normally held in June, is currently postponed. Depending on how the pandemic restrictions look over the next six months, we hope to reschedule this event in August.

In other habitat business, SEWTU has applied for grants to continue TU's work on the habitat improvement of Nichol's Creek. If approved, SEWTU would work jointly with the Lakeshore Chapter on the project. Nichol's creek is located in southern Sheboygan County.

On the education front, our Trout In the Classroom program has been put on hold for the time being due to inconsistent in-person attendance. We hope to get this program back up and running as soon as schools are back in session full time and the threat of Covid restrictions on in-person classes is a thing of the past.

As always, we are looking for members who would like to get more involved in the nuts and bolts of running the chapter. If you are interested in participating on any of the following committees — Membership, Education, Habitat or Advocacy — please contact Andy Avgoulas at andyavgoulas@yahoo.com or 262-893-4965 (call or text).

Wishing you all good health and happiness and, of course, tight lines.
—Andy Avgoulas

pressed appreciation for the online class, and some said they otherwise would have been unable to access the class or afford the fly-tying materials.

Lastly, and based on current information as of publication time, we do plan to have safe and effective Stream Team workdays this spring. The work can range from brushing

to installing stream structures to planting trees, so there is something for everyone to work on. Details are being finalized and will be shared on our website soon.

Thank you, and please visit swtu.org for the latest on our chapter's activities.

—Drew Kasel

Wild Rivers Chapter

So far in 2021, Wild Rivers has hosted a guest speaker regarding the importance of identifying, protecting and measuring the benefits of the hundreds of unnamed seasonal streams that feed our coldwater trout streams. We applied for and received a generous \$2,000 matching grant from the Friends of Wisconsin TU Grant Program to support stream work and fishing access. We also joined a partnership with the Lake Superior Collabora-

tive, a consortium of organizations committed to protecting the health of the Lake Superior Basin.

For 2021 we will have monthly board meetings, open to all members, on the second Wednesdays, and quarterly membership meetings with guest speakers in January, April, July and October. We will announce field days as we move forward in the year.

—Kevin Seefeldt

Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter

Our winter brushing season is in full swing. About 20 different volunteers have contributed 160 volunteer hours so far this brushing season. To date, they have cleared more than a quarter-mile of alders, box elders and debris along Duncan Creek north of Chippewa Falls. We want to especially thank Keith Krajewski and Steven Voller, who have been at every workday. Next up will be several streams in Dunn County that have been improved in the past, but need maintenance. In March we held a brushing workday on Knight's Creek in Dunn County.

New board member Josh Smeltzer of Draft Design House has volunteered his time and talent to produce a short video of the day,

complete with drone footage, time-lapse photography and some interviews. The video's goal is to highlight our brushing techniques, the ecological and recreational reasons we do it and the camaraderie and personal reasons that bring people out.

We are participating in TU/Girl Scouts Stream Girls program. At our March meeting we introduced the program, with TU youth coordinator Tara Granke and our own Jillian Heth presenting. Jillian and the regional and local Girl Scout leaders have set the first annual Stream Girls event at Beaver Creek Reserve. For additional information about Stream Girls, go to www.tu.org/streamgirls.



WISCONSIN CLEARWATERS CHAPTER BRUSH WHACKERS

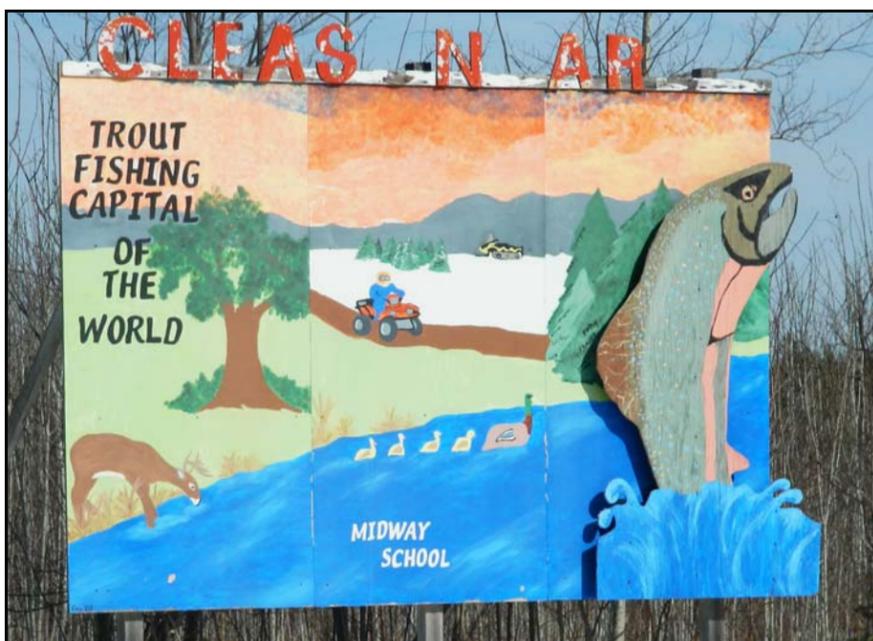
About 20 different volunteers have contributed 160 volunteer hours so far this brushing season. To date, they have cleared more than a quarter-mile of alders, box elders and debris along Duncan Creek north of Chippewa Falls.



PROGRESS LOOKS GOOD FOR CLEARWATERS BRUSHING CREW



Chapter News



TROUT BILLBOARD IN GLEASON IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT

Two billboards were designed by three teachers from Midway School in the early 2000's. Christy Rasmussen, Kristen Novitch and Jamie Henrichs came up with the design and got funding from the Gleason Community Club. Several adults and fifth-grade students worked for about a month to put up two billboards. The south-facing sign still stands, but needs some TLC.

The pandemic has delayed restoration projects and fundraising events, but members have been joining online watershed and stream restoration workshops and seminars. It may not be the same as getting your feet wet or muddy on site.

Still, the time was well spent.

Spring has finally arrived, and may the hatches continue to confuse us on what presentation is best and let us not complain, because your boots are in the water.

—Jim Erickson

Wisconsin River Valley Chapter

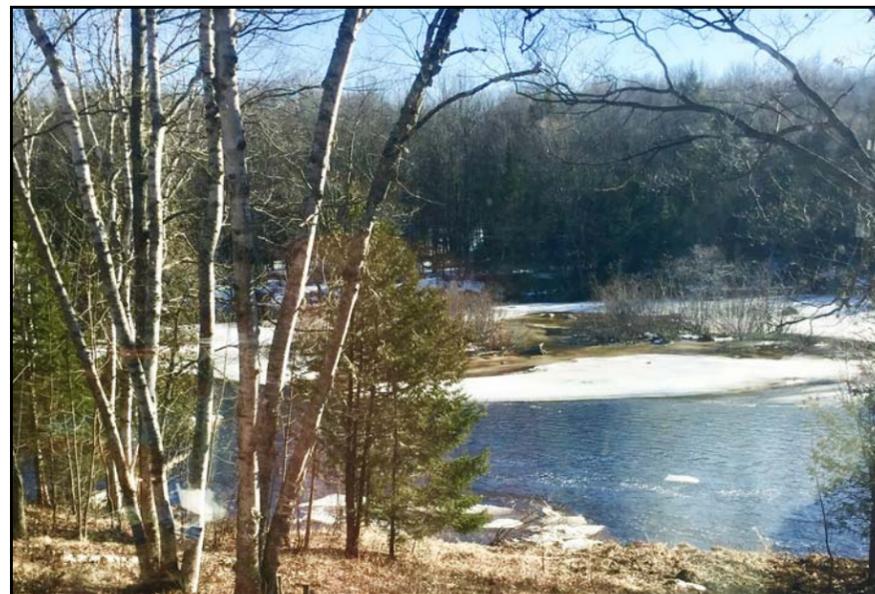
In February we held a Zoom presentation from Taylor and Dave of the DNR on the projects they had worked on when they were finally able to get back out in the field, and the adjustments that had to be made due to the pandemic. Dave spoke about several creeks and spring ponds in Langlade County that were surveyed to check on fish populations and for possibilities for improvement work. Stillhouse Springs, Lost Springs, Long Creek, Lost Creek, Clubhouse Springs and Sunshine Springs were some of the areas discussed. Taylor Curran showed photos of the improvement project that is wrapping up on the Prairie River in Lincoln County. Many thanks to all who tuned into the Zoom meeting and to Dave and Taylor for the nice presentation.

In our March Zoom presentation, Bob Hasse showed us tips and tricks that he has collected for tying flies. He has a wealth of knowledge

and is always willing to share his knowledge of fly tying. He also has a passion for wildlife photography and has an impressive collection of photos.

Several members will be getting WAV training to do stream monitoring in our area. I have been watching Peggy Compton's videos on YouTube and have found the information to be very interesting. Clams and mussels have been one of my favorites. I had no idea there was such a variety and that they had such funny names, such as monkey-face, warty back, sheepnose and fawn toe. Most are threatened or endangered. They have a fascinating life cycle and if conditions are right can live 60-70 years. I might be becoming a clam nerd.

Anyway, we would love to get some more monitoring teams together, so if you think you might be interested, please contact Kirk Stark at kfjgstark@gmail.com.



WOLF RIVER ICE MAKES ITS FINAL PUSH OUT

There are eight locations in Marathon County, eight locations in Lincoln County and one in Taylor County.

If you have driven north on Hwy 17, you may have seen a billboard that says "Gleason Area, Trout Capital of The World."

Kirk did some digging to find out how it got there. He found that there were two billboard that were designed by three teachers from Midway School in the early 2000's. Christy Rasmussen, Kristen Novitch and Jamie Henrichs came up with the design and got funding from the Gleason Community Club. Several adults and fifth-grade students worked for about a month to put up two billboards. The south-facing

sign still stands because it is on private land but the north-facing sign was removed by the Department of Transportation because there was not a permit to put it up on state land.

The south-facing sign has been through some pretty heavy storms in the last few years and is in need of some repairs. Hopefully we can find a way to do that. We are grateful to the teachers and the community for providing these and hope all involved remember the signs with a sense of community and pride. A special thanks to the teachers who provided the thoughtfulness to make this happen. We salute all involved.

—Linda Lehman and Kirk Stark

Wolf River Chapter

"Wolf River Flies and History" was recorded and is now posted on YouTube. Several Wolf River Chapter members, including Andy Killoren, presented information about Wolf River history, fishing and Wolf River-specific flies. This is definitely worth watching to learn more about the Wolf River.

We held a Zoom board meeting in March to plan for future events. Nine Mile Creek restoration work will continue as weather permits. Much progress has been made the last few years to release cold spring water so that it flows into the Wolf River and ensure that the trout have a coldwater sanctuary as summer temperatures heat up. If you would like to get involved with our Nine Mile Creek project, Contact Andy Killoren at [tel.net.](mailto:akilloren@centure-</p>
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Later this year several board members will explore the Hunting River, a coldwater tributary of the Wolf River, to see if any work needs to be done there. They will most likely be bringing fly rods along with a GPS to properly check it out.

As I write this report, large ice slabs are floating down the Wolf River, a signal that spring and fishing season will soon be here. Please remember that both Langlade and Oconto Counties are extremely prone to spring wild fires due to the blow down in July 2019 and less than normal moisture over the winter. Please be careful as you head out to fish and do not forget to look up as there are still many widow-maker limbs precariously hanging and ready to fall.

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 with-

in 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.

WITU Youth Camp update

Plans underway for August camp.

The 2021 WITU Youth camp is hoping for a return to normal, or at least a new normal. With the canceling of last year's camp and the shaky start to 2021, it is refreshing that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. We are still planning for the camp to run from August 19-22.

I have been in close contact with TU National and with Pine Lake Bible Camp. All indications are that we are good to go, so we are proceeding with plans to hold our camp this summer. There will be quite a few changes to operations and the curriculum. We are working closely with TU National and the camp on new regulations and operating procedures, to follow the American

Campers Association (ACA) guidelines. These guidelines ensure that campers, volunteers and camp are safe. August is a ways out, so that's in our favor, and hopefully we'll all be vaccinated by then.

We have filled our roster of 20 youth. Thank you to those chapters that helped fill the final roster spots. If you have prospective campers, keep their information in case any openings come up.

We're hoping all volunteers from the last camp in 2019 will come back to help. We welcome any new volunteers. Contact Linn Beck at 920-216-7408 or chlbeck@att.net, or Wayne Parmley at 920-540-2315 or wparmley@gmail.com.

Fly-tying tips

Killing insects in your materials and all about adhesives, coatings and head cement.

By Bob Haase

Over the last few years I have seen a lot of misinformation on fly tying posted on Facebook, YouTube and other sources. Some of these could be stretched to being just another way of doing things, but I think they at least need some clarification. I will try to cover a couple of these.

Killing insects in tying materials

Some say that if you want to preserve hair or feathers from wild game, just put it in the freezer to kill the insects or just rub salt into the skin to preserve the skin. Some people state that you should freeze the materials, thaw them out and re-freeze the materials to kill all the insects. This does kill a lot, if not most of the insects, but you want to kill all the insects, not just some of them. Those that survive can do a number on all of your fly tying materials. I burn wood, and when I bring some wood in after 20 below temps, I sometimes find mosquitos or other bugs coming out of the wood alive. Look at stoneflies crawling around on the ice in the spring.

The best way to kill all the insects and any larvae or eggs that they may have laid, is to microwave them. You need to find the best temperature and time based on your microwave, but a good starting point is medium heat for 20 seconds. Let stand for one minute and go for another 15 seconds. You will not need to do this with commercially purchased materials such as your good capes and saddles, and doing so will probably make the skin curl. You only need to do this with wild hair and feathers that have not been

treated commercially. The skin on some birds and animals will curl if put them in at too high of heat or for too long of time. If you skinned out a bird and treated the skin, try placing them in the microwave for 10 to 15 seconds on low heat, let stand for one minute, and repeat. If you have loose feathers, not on the skin, you can microwave these for the 20-second time stated above.

If you have skinned out an animal or bird skin, you need to remove as much of the fat as possible. Not doing so will allow the oil to be absorbed into the hair or feathers. Some suggest rubbing salt into the skin. This will dry the skin, but will not effectively treat it. It is preferable to rub a generous amount of Borax into the skin, or a mixture of Borax and alum is even better.

After microwaving the materials, I usually place them in plastic storage boxes, along with a strip of aromatic cedar closet liner. You can pick up a large pack cedar at a building supply store like Menards for around \$30. I then cut them into about 8 to 10 inch lengths, and put one in each box to deter insects from getting in. If you don't need that many strips of cedar, consider going together with a friend and splitting it.

Head cement versus UV Resin or nail products

Instead of head cement, some folks will say to just use UV Resin or Sally Hanson's Hard as Nails fingernail polish, or just use UV resin for everything.

There is a difference between cements, adhesives and coatings. Any thick material like most UV resins and thick nail polish like Sally Hanson's are coatings. They do not

readily soak into the materials, but rather put a nice glossy finish on. You can get thin resin and you can thin Sally Hanson's so that they soak in and bond the materials like a fly head cement. Remember that UV resin needs UV light to cure it. If it soaks into your fly tying materials, UV light will not penetrate to cure it.

If your fly head cement is starting to get too thick, it should be thinned so that it can penetrate better. Make sure to use the correct thinner. You need to use a lacquer-based thinner for lacquer-based head cement. On a recent Facebook post I cannot believe how many people suggested using alcohol or nail polish remover to thin Wapsi lacquer-based fly head cement. It will not work and it will wreck your cement. Use water for water-based head cement. I was also surprised on another Facebook post where people were saying not to use a water-based head cement because it washes off in the water. Not true. Does your water-based paint wash off your house?

The purpose of a cement is to bond the materials together. I often put a drop of head cement on to help bond squirrel tail or other materials to keep them from slipping. I use head cement to penetrate and bond the thread on the head of a fly. On larger heads of flies, I often use UV resin to coat the head to make it even more secure and make it look better. I also use UV resin in place of two-part epoxy for shell cases, scud backs and other related uses.

Adhesives are used to bond two or more materials together. If you use super glue for head cement or on certain materials, it often turns white or leaves a dull finish.

Adhesives and cements work similarly, but they are not all the

same. As an example, you should not use a head cement to bond two layers of foam together. The best adhesive for this is Scotch 77 spray adhesive. A product called Tear Mender is excellent for bonding leather like zonker strips, or ultra suede material together. It is primarily used for bonding fabrics and you can find it in most craft shops like Joanne Fabric.

A UV resin can take the place of two-part epoxy for many fly tying applications, but it is not the same. A UV resin is more of a coating than a bonding agent. It needs UV light to cure, where a two-part epoxy cures by the chemical reaction of the resin and the hardener.

Other products like E6000 work great for coating heads of large musky and pike flies and setting eyes. It remains somewhat flexible, does not crack easily and has a lot of other uses in fly tying.

There are times that cements, coatings and adhesives can be used interchangeable, but they do not work as well as the product that was designed specifically for that purpose.

A little tip? I use a Loon product called UV Knot Sense to help lock legs on nymphs into position, or keeping upright wings on some flies in position. If you use a bodkin and apply the smallest little drop of resin to legs on nymphs and hit it with the UV light while holding in position it will stay where you want them. This product is so flexible that it will hold on your fly line, even the way I cast, so it will hold on your flies without cracking off.

If you find this information helpful, I can provide more information like this in future editions of Wisconsin Trout. Just let Editor Todd Franklin know.

TODD DURIAN, from page 10

The coyotes howled as we watched the stars start to come out over the ridge and drank the rest of Scotty's beer. We had an amazing view, spotted some elk on a ridge, and stayed just warm enough.

Eventually another guide came back from Dutch John and drove us back to town. Only a mile down the road, a 5x5 bull elk ran into the road in front of us, apparently to challenge the guide's Dodge Ram truck to a fight. We watched it lower its head and make false charges at us. Clearly we had offended someone. This became even more clear as we finally neared the main highway, and were stopped by a big horn sheep that darted out into the road and claimed the right of way for several minutes.

Eventually we made it back to camp and proceeded to tell the story of our day all over again, doing even worse British impressions and laughing harder than we had before.

Yellowstone cutthroat

In 2011, Todd and I traveled to Big Sky, Montana, to meet up with a group of anglers for what we called "Cutthroat-A-Thon I." Hosted by Mike and Sue Arneson, we ran the trip as a fundraiser for the Southeast Wisconsin TU Chapter. Todd and I took off to head to the Lamar Valley of Yellowstone National Park in search of our trip's namesake.

Driving a rental minivan dubbed the "hoopy," through the Park, we

did our version of the Yellowstone Fire Drill. We would pull over, get out and with pretend binoculars, appear to look at non-existent wildlife in the distance. After another car or two stopped to see what we were looking at we'd hop back in and drive off. I probably shouldn't admit we did that, or how much we laughed at the thought of people looking for the grizzly bear that wasn't there while we drove away, but it sure was fun.

It is hard to describe how fishy Todd was. He simply had a knack for catching fish. It didn't matter what the conditions were, what you were fishing for or how you were fishing. He was usually the man to see, and usually caught the most fish. This day would test Todd, however.

We eventually reached Soda Butte Creek. It's exceptionally well known, receives a great deal of pressure, and I'm not giving anything away to anyone by naming it. We found space on the lower end, where we saw pods of cutthroat trout visibly holding on cut-bank corners.

Todd predictably put on a Milwaukee Leech and took position below the pod.

I crawled up a nearby high bank, and spotted for him. In the backdrop was Mt. Norris and the Thunderer, and the smell of sage hung in the air. There were pronghorn and buffalo in the meadow behind him.

Even though Todd placed excellent cast after excellent cast up-

stream of the pod and stripped The Leech directly through the pod, these Wyoming cutthroats simply moved out of the way. They'd let The Leech pass by, and then re-assume their positions. For once, The Leech simply wasn't the fly.

Later, on a corner upstream about an hour later, I made the switch to a size 18 sparkle dun and that proved to be the ticket. Crazy Ivan. It was absolutely magnificent watching Todd try to set (and miss) cutthroat which would turn downstream and chase his tiny fly, hitting as it came directly towards him.

Small hooks are hard to set, and even harder when a fish is chasing downstream. Todd would laugh, cast once more, and eventually hook up and start giggling all over again.

Once the code was broken we proceeded to catch so many trout on small flies, some nearly 20 inches in length, that we actually had several frustrated anglers walk hundreds of yards to ask us what we had figured out.

Todd, always wanting everyone to experience the same joy he was having, ended up handing out most of our sparkle duns. It was near the end of our time on Soda Butte anyhow, and Todd was right: Seeing other anglers catch fish was almost as good as catching them ourselves. His theory was that it was acceptable to pass on a little knowledge (and give away my flies) because we were all "brothers in trout." No truer words have ever been spoken.

A good friend

I could tell enough Todd stories to fill a regular column in this paper. He was a beam of light and one of the pillars of my fly fishing group.

Most importantly, he was my friend. He treated me patiently, even when I was raging about some TU this or that, or was upset that something wasn't going as planned. He was always my wing-man, always my vice-whatever, and always supportive of whatever crazy scheme I'd cooked up.

He pushed for our chapter's first Driftless projects. He got us unlimited texting phones and made sure we won grants. He pushed us to keep fighting for our license plate bill. We traveled all over the Midwest and spoke to others about chapter building. When I needed him, he was there.

So it was no surprise that Todd came to see me the first day I was in the hospital last March, because of course he did. The last day I was in the hospital I was told no more visitors, which I assume was due to Covid and from there the world shut down just as I started over.

Although we spoke on the phone and texted one another, I never got to see Todd again, and we never got to fish together again. Perhaps that's for the best, as what remains are my memories of Todd in his prime, in his element, radiating joy and laughing. He was a great man, and he'll be missed a great deal.

BROWNS, from page 27

The logic has been that Seeforellen might produce larger fish. However, a recent genetic analysis in Chequamegon Bay indicated that Seeforellen survival was relatively low and that most brown trout that anglers caught in the bay had been produced naturally in the nearby Sioux River and other tributaries. The latest Seeforellen stockings have focused on the western end of the lake near Duluth-Superior, where lake-run fish are scarce.

The future: Threats on the horizon

At the moment, brown trout distribution and abundance in Wisconsin's inland waters are probably as high as they've ever been. Years of improved land use, intensive in-stream habitat improvement, better fisheries management and the incorporation of "wild" strains into stocking programs have expanded the range of brown trout and increased natural reproduction and abundance in many streams. Unfortunately, however, we may be at the high-water mark for the species. Two major threats are looming: Poor land-use and climate change, and these may soon cause sharp declines in brown trout numbers.

Too much manure

Although there have been substantial improvements in agricultural practices over the last 85 years, in some ways we are now moving in the wrong direction. The widespread consolidation of cattle, hog and poultry rearing, culminating in massive Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs), has led to huge volumes of manure that need to be stored and ultimately disposed of. Storage facilities, often excavated lagoons or large containment vessels, have a disturbing tendency to leak or fail. Because manure is largely liquid, it runs downhill when it escapes and too often ends up in the nearest stream. Once in the stream, chemical and biological processes break down the manure, producing toxic chemicals such as ammonia and using up the dissolved oxygen in the water. The result is dead trout and other fishes and aquatic invertebrates.

Many livestock producers spread their manure on their crop fields as a fertilizer. While this is good use in concept, in practice sometimes too much manure is spread or the spreading occurs just before snowmelt or a heavy rain, again resulting in runoff to streams and fish kills. Excessive spreading on sandy soils or areas of shallow limestone bedrock, which encompass much of Wisconsin, can also lead to contamination of the groundwater and drinking water wells with nitrates.

Efforts to develop "digesters" to convert the manure into natural gas show promise to reduce impacts. But at present digesters have formidable up-front costs to install and a steep learning curve to operate efficiently and economically, hindering their adoption by many livestock producers. We can only hope that the costs come down and more effective operating procedures are developed going forward.

Alternative livestock rearing practices such as intensively managed or rotational grazing, also known as regenerative agriculture, are far better for the health of the land and streams and are gaining adherents, particularly in the Driftless Area. But they represent a fundamental change in operations that

many producers are reluctant to embrace without more information and incentive. Thus, there are alternatives to the unacceptable status quo for manure management, but whether these will be widely adopted remains to be seen. And until manure management is improved, trout streams in agricultural areas will be under constant threat.

Suburbanization

Urban sprawl is another serious challenge for Wisconsin trout streams. Occurring on the margins of the larger cities in the state, sprawl often happens at the expense of agricultural lands. Given all the problems with manure management, maybe this is a good thing? Unfortunately, the answer is no. On a per-acre basis, urbanization, or perhaps more appropriately, "suburbanization," has an even greater negative effect on trout streams than farming.

The biggest problem with urban sprawl is altered stream hydrology. The houses, commercial buildings, sidewalks, driveways, roads and parking lots that are constructed as an area is developed are all types of "impervious surfaces" that don't allow rainfall or snowmelt to soak into the ground to replenish the groundwater. Instead, water is repelled and runs off, usually into a ditch or storm sewer where it is transported quickly to the nearest stream. This runoff also carries the fertilizers and pesticides from our lawns and the oils and chemicals that get spilled on our driveways, streets and parking lots.

Although rapid drainage is good for moving water away from buildings and roads, it is bad for streams. As development and runoff grow, the frequencies and severity of floods increase to the detriment of trout, their habitats and the aquatic insects they feed on. More ominously, the reduction in the amount of water soaking into the ground leads to a lowering of the water table and a decrease in stream flows. During droughts, streams may dry up or get too warm for trout.

It doesn't take a "concrete jungle" for urbanization effects to occur. Suburban development of less than one third of a watershed can cause problems for trout streams. There are building and drainage practices that lessen urbanization's effects, but they usually make development more expensive and may not be practical in some settings and so often aren't employed. Continued expansion of our urban footprint is likely to lead to the decline and even demise of the trout streams adjacent to our cities.

High-capacity wells

Both farming and urban development require large amounts of water, in agricultural areas for irrigation of crops grown in sandy soils and for watering livestock, and in suburban areas for household and commercial uses. Much of this water demand is met by high-capacity wells drilled into the shallow aquifer. As farming becomes more intensive and urban areas have expanded, the number and size of these wells has increased. Heavy pumping by these wells can deplete the local water table, particularly during droughts. A depleted water table leads to reduced stream flow and warmer water temperatures, neither good for trout. In some cases, heavy pumping has caused small trout streams to dry up temporarily, and fish kills have occurred.

A warming planet

Agricultural and urban impacts are bad enough, but the biggest threat to inland trout streams statewide is climate change. Although the numbers aren't as dire as for brook trout, the latest projections are that Wisconsin brown trout stream habitat will decline by 33 percent by mid-century without intervention. And if the root cause of global warming, rising concentrations of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere, isn't addressed, habitat losses will continue and likely accelerate as we approach 2100.

As I covered in more detail in the brook trout article in the last issue of Wisconsin Trout, the most important order of business is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to manage the oceans and the land to better absorb existing gases. This must be a global process. But at a local level, groups like Trout Unlimited can advocate for watershed land-use and stream-management policies that protect and enhance resilience to the warmer and more variable climate of the future.

Suitable water temperatures in Wisconsin trout streams are maintained primarily by groundwater inputs and to a lesser extent by sun exposure and shading. Foremost to protecting groundwater are land-use practices throughout the watershed that enhance the absorption of precipitation into the ground to recharge the water table. This can be accomplished by minimizing impervious surfaces and directing runoff to wetlands and other areas of natural vegetation and to rain gardens and other constructed infiltration zones. Many local, state and federal programs provide information about and support for proven practices that protect groundwater. These same practices can also help offset impacts from urban sprawl.

Reducing sun exposure and increasing shading is tricky. Constant shade keeps water temperature cool but also blocks light to the understory vegetation, often leading to bare banks, greater erosion, reduced habitat quality and tougher fishing. Many current habitat improvement practices are effective for trout but reduce shading. This will be problematic as air temperatures climb. New and innovative techniques need to be developed to balance in-stream habitat needs with protection from rising temperatures.

What about the Great Lakes?

Future climate change effects on Great Lakes brown trout remain unclear. The Great Lakes are huge, and even under mid-century climate conditions they should retain plenty of water cold enough for trout and

salmon. Of course, if greenhouse gases continue to increase unchecked, then eventually the Great Lakes will become too warm. But within our lifetimes, they should have suitable thermal habitat. The big question is, will the Great Lakes food web continue to support trophy fish?

Trout and salmon stocking of Lake Michigan is massive, with many millions of fish stocked per year. There are serious concerns that this annual input of predators might overwhelm the prey base, as appears to have already happened in Lake Huron. Trout and salmon in Lake Michigan feed primarily on alewife, but alewife numbers are now only a small fraction of their 1960-70's peak. Some of the alewife decline has been driven by predation but changing ecosystem dynamics have also played a role. The invasion and rise to astronomical numbers of first zebra mussels and now quagga mussels have shifted lake productivity from the water column to the lake bottom and decreased the abundance of the zooplankton on which the mid-water alewife feed. How a warming climate will affect the future interactions between mussels, zooplankton, alewife and trout and salmon is hard to predict.

Lake Superior may be less threatened by climate change than Lake Michigan, at least in the short term. Projections indicate that major tributaries like the Bois Brule and the Sioux will continue to have water cold enough for trout, although the total amount of suitable stream habitat will drop. The lake itself is currently too cold to be ideal for brown trout growth in offshore areas, and it's plausible that a warming climate might actually increase brown trout habitat in the lake over the next 30-40 years. But again, the big unknowns are how warmer water will affect the food web of the lake and if the changes will help or harm brown trout.

Conclusion

The brown trout has gone from a newly introduced species with a contentious reputation to the most widespread and abundant salmonid in Wisconsin's inland waters and an important trophy species in the Great Lakes. At the moment, brown trout are generally doing well and support very popular and valuable fisheries statewide. But dark clouds are on the horizon, and without active and targeted conservation measures, brown trout numbers are likely to decline in the future, perhaps precipitously.

John Lyons is a member of the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited and Curator of Fishes at the University of Wisconsin Zoological Museum.



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Please support Friends of Wisconsin TU in 2021

2021 is shaping up to be a big habitat improvement year. Ten chapters have been awarded grants for habitat work in 2021. They are; Antigo, Central Wisconsin, Coulee Region, Harry and Laura Nohr, Marinette, Oconto River, Southeastern Wisconsin,

Wild Rivers, Wisconsin Clear Waters, and Wisconsin River Valley. Each chapter will be receiving \$2,000 for their 2021 habitat work. Please consider a donation to this very worthwhile program. Your support would be greatly appreciated.

Providing habitat improvement grants since 1991.

\$2,000 to Wild Rivers for Lakewood habitat crew in 2021

\$2,000 to Wisconsin River Valley for Antigo Area Habitat Crew in 2021

\$2,000 to the WI Clearwaters Chapter for Gilbert Creek in 2021.

\$2,000 to Coulee Region Chapter for Conway Creek project in 2021

\$2,000 to Nohr Chapter for Blue River and Six Mile Branch, 2021

\$2,000 to the Antigo Chapter for habitat crews in 2021

\$2,000 each to Marinette and Oconto chapters for Lakewood Habitat Crew in 2021

\$2,000 to CWTU for White River habitat work in 2021

\$2,000 to the Southeastern WI Chapter for Warner Creek habitat work in 2021.

Friends of Wisconsin TU

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Wisconsin salmonids: Past, present and future

Brown trout: An import from other countries, but an important fish to anglers.

Words and photos by John Lyons

Brown trout present an ultimate challenge for trout anglers. An import from Europe, it is to many the most desirable of the Wisconsin salmonids, but to some an interloper (“spotted carp”) which has replaced their beloved native brook trout. Regardless of how you feel about the brown trout, it has had a huge effect on the trout streams and fisheries of Wisconsin. It is the most numerous and widespread trout in southern and central Wisconsin and common in many areas of northern Wisconsin. It is able to thrive in streams where other salmonids often cannot, and it persists and can grow to large size, even in the face of high fishing pressure.

Brown trout are demonstrably the wariest and most difficult to catch of all of Wisconsin’s stream trout, and their devotees spend countless hours and many dollars in pursuit. Occasionally, the fishing can seem almost impossible, but then on special rare days the fishing gods smile, and, if you have reasonable skills, nearly every good cast is rewarded with a strike. Most outings are of course somewhere between these extremes. But the appeal of brown trout is that each time you go out, you can never be sure which kind of a day you’ll have.

The past: A new fish for Wisconsin

The brown trout is native to much of Europe, western Asia and a small part of North Africa. It is a highly variable species in terms of appearance, behavior, life history and potential size. Some forms are adapted to spend their entire lives in small streams, whereas some occupy lakes as adults and enter streams only for spawning, and some run to the sea like salmon. Most forms primarily eat insects and other invertebrates, and some lake dwellers focus on tiny zooplankton, whereas others mainly eat fish. Each form looks a little different, and Europeans have given many of them their own colorful common names such as Ferox or Gillaroo.

The brown trout first arrived in the United States in 1883. Fred Mather, a well-known early fish culturist, had journeyed to Germany and become enamored of the brown trout he encountered in Bavaria. He

arranged for a shipment of brown trout, in the form of fertilized eggs, comprised of 20,000 bachforelle, German for “brook trout,” a stream-dwelling insect-eating form of the Black Forest, and 60,000 seeforelle, “lake trout,” a larger fish-eating form found in the lakes of the Alps. These eggs were sent to federally run hatcheries in New York State and northern Michigan, where they were hatched and raised for a year. The first official stocking in the U.S. took place in the Pere Marquette River in Michigan, a Lake Michigan tributary, in 1884.

Soon brown trout stockings were being made throughout the country. Wisconsin received its first 1,000 brown trout eggs at the Bayfield Hatchery on the shores of Lake Superior, and the first stockings took place in 1887 in northern Wisconsin streams. In 1884, eggs from brown trout from Loch Leven, Scotland, arrived in the U.S., and they were raised in Wisconsin hatcheries and stocked in Wisconsin waters by the 1890’s. By the early 1900’s, all the major river systems and both Great Lakes in Wisconsin had been stocked with some form of brown trout.

Wisconsin brown trout strains

The German and Scottish brown trout looked different, with the German fish tending to have many red spots intermingled among black spots of a range of sizes, and the Scottish fish usually lacking red spots and having mainly relatively large black spots. Anglers in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s often distinguished between the two forms and identified the fish they caught as either “German browns” or “Loch Leven browns” based on spotting patterns. Even today, some anglers speculate about which type they’ve caught. However, both the German and the Loch Leven fish were routinely crossbred in hatcheries and were mixed in the wild soon after they arrived in the United States, and interbreeding appears to have eventually eliminated any “pure” types in Wisconsin waters.

What is interesting is that in Wisconsin Lake Superior tributaries such as the Bois Brule River in Douglas County and the Sioux River in Bayfield County, “resident” brown trout that remain in the river



NAMEKAGON RIVER, A CLASSIC NORTHWOODS BROWN TROUT STREAM

their entire lives differ genetically from “lake-run” brown trout that spend much of their adults lives in Lake Superior. Could this reflect the initial stocking of both the bachforelle (resident?) and seeforelle (lake-run?) forms? The problem with this idea is that there appears to be little genetic difference between bachforelle and seeforelle in their native Germany. But large genetic differences may arise relatively quickly when new populations are established from a small number of adults, which undoubtedly was the case with the first brown trout eggs that reached Wisconsin.

It would be fascinating to use modern genetic methods to look at different Wisconsin populations and try to derive their ancestry from the various European forms. A recent study examined Lake Michigan and Lake Superior browns in Michigan and Wisconsin and found evidence of German and Scottish heritage but also some indication of genotypes from Denmark and the French Pyrenees. This finding suggests that the origins of Midwestern browns are more complicated than we thought.

Browns versus brookies

It is fair to say the brown trout saved Wisconsin trout fishing in the early 1900’s. Browns were able to survive and even thrive in streams where brook trout had been eliminated, and many parts of southern and central Wisconsin would have had few trout if not for browns. This was not because brown trout could tolerate more extreme warm temperature or lower dissolved oxygen concentrations than native brook trout as some fishery biologists and anglers have assumed. Both laboratory and field studies demonstrate that temperature and oxygen tolerances are similar for both species, although brown trout do prefer and grow better at slightly warmer temperatures than brook trout.

What the brown seems to have been able to do was handle habitat degradation better, particularly sedimentation. Widespread poor agricultural and timber harvest practices in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s had led to massive erosion that choked streams with sand and silt. Brown trout were not immune to these impacts, but they were better able to deal with them than brookies. As stream pools filled and rocky substrates were covered by sediments, brook trout disappeared but brown trout often could hang on.

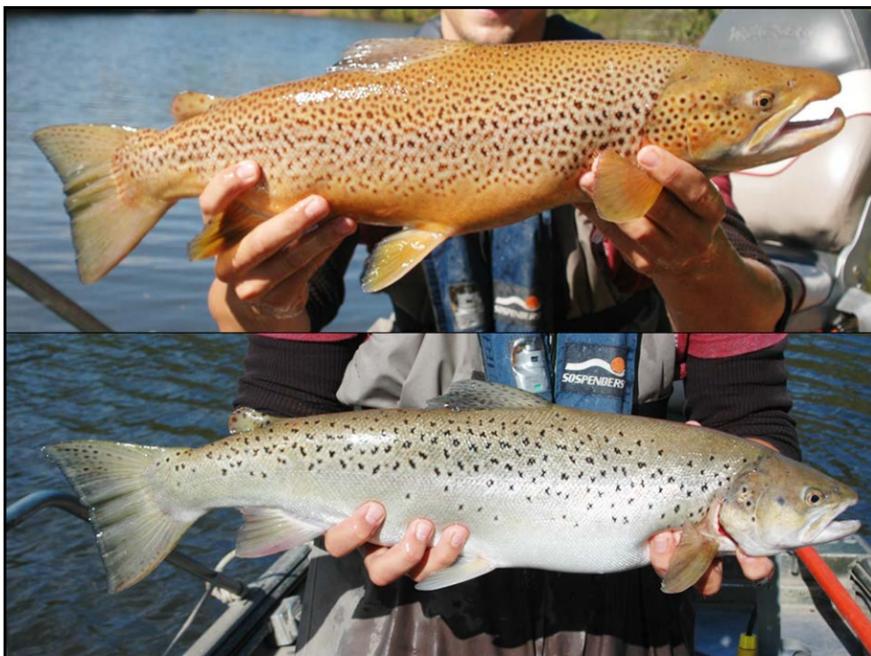
Brown trout also have more flexible spawning requirements. Brook trout need areas of strong groundwater input, which disappeared as the water table dropped from poor land use and former spawning areas were covered with silt. Brown trout like strong groundwater areas too, but they aren’t as dependent on them, and they could often spawn in the gravel riffles that remained even after the groundwater areas were largely eliminated.

Brown trout were also harder to catch than brook trout and persisted in the face of fishing pressure that would have decimated brook trout populations. The difficulty in catching browns made them unpopular at first. The techniques used for brook trout often didn’t work nearly as well on the more wary browns. Some anglers complained that they couldn’t catch the new arrivals and lobbied for more stocking of brook trout and less of brown trout. But other anglers embraced the challenge and developed new approaches to catch the browns. As these new approaches become well-known and widely available, the clamor against brown trout subsided and eventually largely disappeared.

Another reason for their acceptance was that brown trout grew much larger than brookies in most streams. Whereas a typical adult brook trout in an inland stream might be only about 8-10 inches, an adult brown trout could easily be twice that. Many anglers were drawn to the possibility of a trophy brown trout referred to in pounds rather than a brook trout referred to in inches. Eventually, some anglers came to prefer brown trout to brook trout.

However, the dislike of brown trout among other anglers never completely faded out, in large part because in many instances brown trout displaced brook trout. The reasons for this aren’t completely clear. Some experimental studies show that brown trout are more aggressive and able to chase brook trout away from the best feeding and resting areas. But other studies show that among fish of the same size there is little difference in competitive abilities between the species or even that brook trout may sometimes be able to outcompete brown trout.

I speculate that the dominance of brown trout in many Wisconsin streams may lie in their faster growth rates and larger ultimate size compared to the brook trout. At water temperatures from the 60’s to the low 70’s, which is typical of



VARIATIONS IN LAKE-RUN BOIS BRULE BROWN TROUT

Two lake-run browns from the lower Bois Brule River during their spawning run, showing some of the variation in coloration and spotting patterns.

many Wisconsin trout streams in summer, brown trout grow faster and reach a larger size than brook trout. This size difference may give browns an advantage in competitive interactions. Generally speaking, larger trout dominate smaller trout in experimental studies and field observations. Browns that grow larger than a foot or so also become a predatory threat to brook trout, further contributing to their advantage.

Whatever the reasons, introduced brown trout have often replaced native brook trout, even in streams that otherwise remained suitable for the brook trout. Only in the coldest waters, where brown trout have less of a growth advantage, in tiny headwaters, where the larger size of brown trout may actually be a disadvantage, and in areas of northern Wisconsin with particularly long and cold winters, which brown trout may not tolerate quite as well, have brook trout consistently been able to hold their own.

Brown trout distribution

By the mid 1900's, brown trout were widespread on the Wisconsin landscape. They were found in hundreds of inland streams throughout the state, and resident and lake-run populations were established in the Lake Superior basin. Stocking was extensive, but many self-sustaining populations were also present. However, despite many early stock-

ing attempts, brown trout remained essentially absent from Lake Michigan until only about 50 years ago. Unlike in the state of Michigan, where self-sustaining lake-run populations had developed by the early 1900's, few if any browns were found on the Wisconsin side of Lake Michigan before the mid 1960's. This was because Wisconsin tributaries were too warm for successful spawning and rearing of young. But by the mid 1960's, Lake Michigan was a very different place than when brown trout had first arrived in the late 1800's. The lake's native top predators, lake trout and burbot, had been devastated by overfishing and non-native species, especially the parasitic sea lamprey. With few predators, populations of the non-native alewife, a small herring species that became established in the 1950's, exploded and reached tremendous numbers.



VARIATIONS IN DRIFTLESS BROWN TROUT

Two inland brown trout from the Driftless Area, showing some of the variation in shape and mouth size that exists. Top: Trout Creek, Iowa County; Bottom: Sugar River, Dane County.

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To take advantage of this resource, the state of Michigan, quickly followed by Wisconsin and other

a typical maximum size of 2-3 pounds and their life cycle is like that of browns in inland streams. In contrast, lake-run fish are born and spend one or sometimes two (rarely three) years in the same tributary as the residents. But they then migrate downstream to the lake where they live for one or usually two years before returning to spawn in that same tributary at age 3 or 4. At this point they usually weigh 4-8 pounds.

The spawning run of lake fish in the Bois Brule River begins surprisingly early compared to resident and inland populations. Lake-run spawners first appear in July, peak in August and early September, and wind down in October, just as spawning is beginning in inland streams. Lake-run fish are capable of returning to Lake Superior for another year or two, reaching a weight over 10 pounds, and then spawning again, but relatively few survive the rigors of their first spawn, and repeat spawning is relatively uncommon.

The present: Current status

Today, brown trout are common statewide. Rough estimates are that there are about 4,000 miles of inland streams with completely or largely self-sustaining populations and another 3,500 miles with populations maintained mainly or completely by stocking. These streams encompass the largest and most storied trout fisheries in the state. Lake Michigan has only stocked populations. Lake Superior has several self-sustaining lake-run populations in the larger tributaries, although some stocking also occurs.

Brown trout in Lake Superior tributaries have two life histories. There are resident fish that never leave their tributary system even though they could. These fish reach



ELK CREEK IS A CLASSIC DRIFTLESS AREA BROWN TROUT STREAM

Stocking

Stocking practices for brown trout have changed over the last 30 years. Prior to the 1990's, brown trout stocking in inland waters was almost exclusively of the domesticated "St. Croix" and "Wild Rose" strains, named after the Wisconsin hatcheries where they were first developed in the 1950's and 1960's. These strains could be efficiently raised in large numbers to catchable size and could handle well the rigors of handling and transport to the stocking site, but their long-term survival in the wild was often poor.

In the early 1990's, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources began experimenting with rearing eggs taken directly from wild self-sustaining populations and stocking the resulting offspring. Although they were more difficult to rear and did not reach as large a size in the hatchery, these "wild" stocked fish did much better than the domestic fish in streams. Indeed, they sometimes established a self-sustaining population in places where previously the domestic fish had supported only a short-term "put and take" fishery.

Eventually, culturing of "wild" brown trout became widespread in DNR hatcheries, and stocking began to incorporate a mix of wild and domestic fish. For a given amount of money, space and effort, the domestic fish could be raised in larger numbers and to a larger size, but the wild fish survived much better once stocked. Currently, streams in which the goal is rehabilitation of a population tend to receive wild-fish stockings whereas those that have inadequate conditions for natural reproduction or that have high fishing harvest early in the season tend to get domestic fish.

Brown trout stocking in the Great Lakes has also changed. In 1991, the DNR began stocking the "Seeforellen." Although originally derived from fish from the same area of Germany as the initial seeforelle stockings of the 1800's, the modern Seeforellen is a semi-domesticated strain developed in the

United States. Compared to existing domesticated strains, Seeforellen have the desirable quality of tending to stay in the lake for one or two years longer before migrating into tributaries or nearshore areas to spawn and consequently can reach a larger size. Seeforellen also migrate for spawning later in the fall, extending the nearshore fishing season into the early winter.

Seeforellen are cultured like "wild" inland stocked fish, and each fall DNR crews collect eggs from Seeforellen adults running out of Lake Michigan and then raise the offspring to fingerling size at a hatchery until stocking the following year. In recent years, nearly all the brown trout stocked in Lake Michigan have been Seeforellen.

Initial Seeforellen stockings went well and contributed to a popular fishery. But by 2000, stocked trout survival and angling success began to drop precipitously. The declines were lake-wide but were particularly acute in Green Bay. It remains uncertain what the cause was, but possible explanations include a major decrease in alewife abundance, fundamental shifts in the lake food web caused by the proliferation of non-native zebra and quagga mussels, and in Green Bay, a large increase in potential predators such as muskellunge, walleyes and smallmouth bass.

Efforts were made to improve survival of newly stocked Seeforellen in Green Bay by acclimating them to the lake in net pens before release or by stocking them offshore to avoid nearshore predators. However, results so far have been equivocal, and brown trout populations in Lake Michigan remain down from their 1970's-1990's heyday. But the remaining fish are large, and the state record brown trout, a 40.6-inch, 41.5-pound monster was a Seeforellen from Lake Michigan caught in 2010.

Stocking of Seeforellen browns has also occurred in Lake Superior despite the presence of self-sustaining lake-run populations.

See **BROWNS**, page 24



LAKE-RUN SEEFORELLEN BROWN TROUT

A lake-run Seeforellen brown trout from the mouth of the Oconto River near Green Bay.

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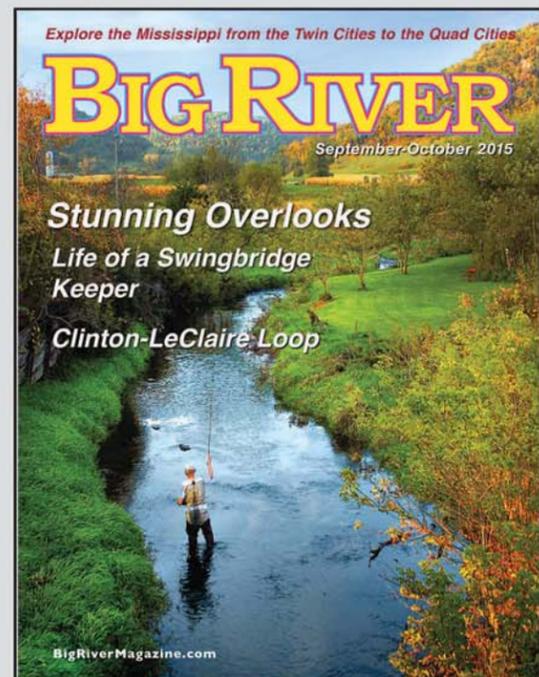
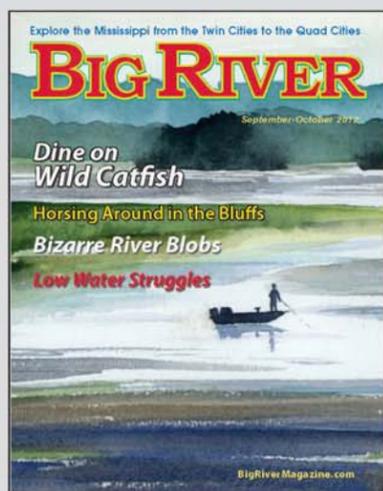
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