



Wisconsin Trout

Summer 2022

Friends program receives trust donation

But our successful grant program still relies on your generous donations.

By Kim McCarthy, Council Grants Programs Coordinator

The Friends of Wisconsin TU program has been the recipient of a very generous and timely bequest of \$65,620.83 from a trust that had been established by a very generous former Wisconsin TU member.

The bequest comes to the Friends program at a critical time. Friends has never had to refuse a chapter request for help with local chapter habitat work. But, in recent years, the program has been heading down an unsustainable path. The fund has been awarding grants that total more than annual receipts for several years. Because receipts and requests for grants vary from year to year, there is no accurate way to say with certainty exactly when the program would have reached a financial crisis, but the situation was coming and was being discussed by Council leadership.

The question will arise as to why the fund did not run into issues of unsustainability in earlier years. The answer is a simple one. The fund was used by only a few chapters in earlier years and now is being used by many more chapters. When I was the state council chair around 2010 we would only receive one to three grant requests in any given year. In 2021 we received 12 grant requests, and in 2022 we received 9 requests.

That translates to \$24,000 awarded in 2021 and \$18,000 awarded in 2022.

One thing that has not changed is the generosity of our members. Donations to Friends have remained in the range of \$13,000 to \$16,000 annually. We have a fantastic group of loyal supporters for the program. But, as you can see from the last two paragraphs, requests for grants have exceeded funds being received. A generous donation from one of our chapters has helped us award all of the requested grants.

The trust bequest will be an enormous help to us in helping chapters with all the good habitat projects they undertake. Because we just received the bequest, no firm decisions have yet been made as to precisely how the money will be invested to aid the Friends program. Our goal will be to make the program more sustainable and to continue helping as many chapters as possible long into the future.

I also want to reiterate how important our donor base is now and will continue to be in the future. The bequest will greatly help the sustainability issue, but our loyal donors have, and will always continue to be the heart of the program. Thanks again to all of you who support the Friends of Wisconsin TU grant program.

Volunteers needed for WITU Youth Camp

Please volunteer to help teach youth about coldwater conservation, fishing and TU.

By Linn Beck

We had to hustle a bit to fill the camp, but we have done it. The camp is August 18-21 at Pine Lake Bible Camp between Waupaca and Wild Rose. The curriculum is all set and presenters have been confirmed. I have been in touch with the camp and all buildings have been reserved and confirmed as needed.

This leaves only two things left to do: Hope for good weather and round up some more volunteers.

We are looking for volunteers to help with mentoring our Sunday morning fish-a-long. Mentor volunteers can come for a day or the weekend. We will welcome anyone who would like to have a fun-filled great experience.

As a mentor you will be paired up with a youth and be their comfort zone for the day or weekend depending on how it works out for you. A great perk for this is that the State Council will pick up your meals and lodging for the camp, so you will just need to take care of your transportation.

All that is expected of you for the Sunday morning fish-a-long is your willingness to take a youth fishing. We have DNR staff that will take you and your youth along with another mentor and their youth to a fishing area, so the hard work is already done. Fish-a-long mentors will need to be at the camp by 7 a.m. Sunday morning, or you can come in Saturday night. Lodging is covered.

If you are interested in volunteering for this wonderful camp, please contact Linn Beck at chlbeck@att.net or 920-216-7408. Thank you.

Kinni dam update

\$1-million DNR grant awarded to Powell Falls Dam removal. State Council providing up to \$20,000 and urges chapters to match. Other allies show up to help.

By Duke Welter

“One year from now, that dam will be out and the sediment will have been landscaped,” River Falls City Utilities Manager Kevin Westhuis told a Kinni Planning team in late May. That prediction was based on the news that a \$1-million DNR Municipal Dam Grant had been awarded to the city to take out the Powell Falls Dam.

TU’s Wisconsin State Council at its June meeting contributed \$20,000 to the dam removal effort and encouraged chapters to match it with another \$20,000. So far at least \$9,000 toward that goal has been pledged or contributed by chapters.

Last weekend the Mid-Missouri Chapter of TU, meeting at a campground on Castle Rock Creek in Iowa County, voted to donate \$10,000 to the Kinni Dam removal effort. Those contributions will bring the total pledged or paid to the project by TU entities to more than \$175,000.

That news capped a full month of busy activity for volunteers working toward removal of the dam on this Class I trout stream, which is also the only Outstanding Resource Water in Wisconsin flowing through a city of more than 10,000 people. The city, which owns the dams, decided to remove them back in 2018, but had a long-range plan to take out the first by 2026 and the second by



PIECE OF DAM COULD BE YOURS

2046, unless the money could be found sooner. TU helped advocate for changes in state dam funding which made more funding available, and a fortuitous flood in 2020 damaged the Powell Falls Dam and helped speed the process.

State Rep. Shannon Zimmerman (R-River Falls) had been a key supporter of the proposal by Gov. Tony Evers to hike the municipal dam grant funding. He said, “River Falls receiving this grant is great news. These funds will help with transforming the Kinni and I’m glad I could play a role in facilitating this funding.”

See **KINNI**, next page



REPURPOSING THE POWELL FALLS DAM INTO PAPER WEIGHTS



CELEBRATING EARTH DAY WITH GOVERNOR EVERS

On April 21 Past Chair Mike Kuhr (left) and Chair Scott Allen (right) joined Governor Tony Evers and his wife Kathey Evers for a hike at Devil's Lake State Park in recognition of Earth Day 2022. Also joining the hike was DNR Secretary Preston Cole. The hike provided an opportunity to introduce TU leadership to the Governor and Secretary Cole.

Council seeks Zoom Hero

The State Council is in need of two people to oversee technical setup and operation of video conferencing at meetings. We host three meetings each year, with a spring/early summer meeting often held in Southwestern Wisconsin. The fall meeting is typically held at a more northern or central location; and the annual meeting is held in conjunction with the awards banquet in Oshkosh on the first weekend of February.

Video conferencing has made it possible for chapters to participate in council meetings through the pandemic in addition to increasing attendance by eliminating the extensive travel requirement for some members. Fred Spademan of the Coulee Chapter has provided exemplary service to the Council by offering his technical expertise to make video conferencing possible with Zoom at the last three State Council meetings. The State Council needs an additional one or two people to assist with video conferencing responsibilities at meetings.

Video conferencing is the future of meetings and TU needs you in our future. Please consider offering your enthusiasm to Wisconsin TU. Contact Scott Allen at jscottallen12@gmail.com or 608-495-9385.

KINNI, from page 1

Estimated costs of the initial dam removal phase, sediment management and monitoring are at \$3.3 million. With the funding in place, the dam demolition and removal and bank stabilization of the 15-acre former impoundment can start just after January 1. The city, whose utilities have maintained the two generating dams since early in the 20th century, will contribute \$1.2 million. Overall fundraising is at \$2.5 million and counting.

TU's two chapters closest to the river are the Kiap-TU-Wish chapter, which has protected the river for 50 years and provided 30 years of key monitoring data, and the Twin Cities TU chapter. They are both strongly invested in the project, with financial support and volunteers on many of the fundraising teams. Other chapters from Minnesota and Illinois have also stepped up with financial support.

This summer the city is expected to refine its budget estimates for soliciting bids for the project. Work is expected to begin early in 2023. At the same time, a work group of volunteers is planning the next steps to develop the new city park where the former impoundment lay.

A recent development is the expression of interest by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to get involved in the project. The Corps helped pay about \$225,000 toward some of the pre-decision studies ordered by the federal agency which licenses the two small electrical generating dams, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The results of those and other studies conducted by the city's contactors and the DNR showed the benefits of dam removal. The Corps reviewed those studies and reached a preliminary conclusion it was interested in participating in some fashion. A feasibility study is expected to begin shortly. If the Corps is involved in removing either or both dams, it would bring significant funding but will take some years to complete.

Some suggest encouraging the

Corps to take on the second dam removal since the fundraising for the first is well under way. The second removal, the Junction Falls Dam, would enable the city to modify 65 or more stormwater inflow sites in the former upper impoundment so that rainwater off the downtown area could be cooled and settled and infiltrate into groundwater before it reaches the river. The city's business community is interested in developing a River Walk along the newly freed river, and Corps help could aid the necessary infrastructure, as well as the stormwater system modifications.

Donors of \$250 or more can receive a concrete core paperweight from the Powell Falls Dam, cut by Randy Arnold and inscribed, "Powell Falls Dam RIP—Free the Kinni." Donors of \$100 or more will be able to receive a nifty pin for their fishing/hiking/birdwatching/paddling hat with the "Free the Kinni" logo.



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Major U.S. wildlife act on brink of success

By Mike Kuhr, WITU Advocacy Coordinator

On June 14, 2022 the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) passed the U.S. House of Representatives. Now we need the Senate to act.

This bi-partisan legislation would provide roughly \$1.39 billion a year to states and tribal governments for scientific research, habitat management and wildlife conservation efforts across the country.

RAWA would bring more than \$18 million a year to Wisconsin to conserve 400 wildlife species that are declining and in danger of becoming extinct. These wildlife species are rapidly declining due to habitat loss, climate change, invasive species and disease.

RAWA aims to provide critical habitat for threatened species to help bolster their populations and keep them off the Endangered Species List. Habitat work in and around our trout streams will help keep the cold water flowing and the trout happy.

Recovering America's Wildlife Act would bring essential funding to conservation projects in our state with no new or increased taxes. Together, we can protect Wisconsin's wildlife for generations to come.

Help bring this bill to the Senate floor.

Use the Take Action page on TU.org/conservation/action-center to urge our Senators to pass S. 2372, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Here's the basic message, which

is customizable, allowing you to add your own personalized story:

"As a supporter of Trout Unlimited, I'm writing to urge you to co-sponsor S. 2372, the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

The U.S. House of Representatives passed the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (H.R. 2773) on June 14. The Senate now has the opportunity to enact one of the most important conservation laws in decades to protect our nation's incredible diversity of fish and wildlife.

In the U.S., coldwater species are at risk, and more than 40 percent of freshwater fish are considered imperiled. The act will help provide the science-based conservation funding that is desperately needed to recover and sustain coldwater species such as the eastern brook trout, bull trout, Chinook salmon, and wild steelhead. Funding made available through the bill will empower state wildlife management agencies, alongside partners like Trout Unlimited, to build out existing conservation initiatives and combat declining populations for key fish and wildlife species.

Again, I urge you to cosponsor S. 2372 and work to ensure this important conservation funding reaches America's imperiled rivers and streams.

Thank you for your consideration."

Please help us get this historic piece of legislation over the finish line. Your voice is critical to the protection of our fish and wildlife.

Council approves \$20,000 toward Kinni Dam Removal

At its June 4 State Council meeting a motion was presented by Past Chair Mike Kuhr to use \$20,000 of State Council General funds for chapter match grants on the Kinnickinnic Dam Removal project. A chapter may apply for up to the full \$20,000.

The motion was initially presented as allowing 2023 Friends of Wisconsin TU funds to be applied to this 2022 grant cycle and allowing multiple chapters to pool the grants for the Kinni Dam project. An objection was raised by Treasurer Gary Stoychoff. His concern was that Friends grants should be applied to chapters for chapter projects only. A suggestion was made from the floor to use general funds up to \$20,000 to match a chapter donation to the Kinni Dam Project.

The amended motion passed unanimously, making it possible for chapters to be awarded grants for the Kinni Dam project at any amount up to the maximum contribution of \$20,000 from the State Council General Fund.

The deadline for applications is September 24, 2022. Friends of Wisconsin TU Coordinator Kim McCarthy will administer these grants for the Kinnickinnic Dam Removal Project. Interested chapters should contact him for application guidelines at Kjmccarthy75@gmail.com or 920-639-3697.

Save the date September Council meeting in Wausau

The State Council is holding its fall meeting on September 24 in Wausau at a location yet to be determined.

Watch for emails from the State Council or check the State Council web site for more details on this meeting, including the location.

Chair's Column

Why fish?

By Scott Allen, Council Chair

Why fish? Rather, is fishing and the water resource it depends upon really as important in our lives as we'd like it to be? Although I promised the editor no philosophical discourse or homily this time, I just couldn't fulfill that promise. No spoilers or poetic answers just yet. But stay with me, this is going somewhere.

In 1943 the psychologist Abraham Maslow proposed a Hierarchy of Needs for healthy human development and lifestyle. The premise of Maslow's hierarchy is that basic

needs such as food, shelter and health must be met before you can ascend to the next higher level of living (education, emotional needs, ethics and mores), ultimately reaching the next level of – crimony Pete, here I go—Self Actualization: achieving full potential including creativity and ambitions realized, the fullest use of one's talents and interests

I'm thinking this guy Abraham wasn't much of a fisherman, although some of his schooling years were squeezed between the banks of lakes Mendota and Monona on Madison's downtown isthmus. But

Council bestows awards



Due to the cancellation of our awards banquet last February, the State Council presented its annual awards at our June 4 meeting at the West Fork Sports Club in Avalanche. From left is Todd Ambs, Scott Wagner, Kurt Meyer, Carol Abrahamzon (representing Gathering Waters), Scott Groff and Jim Erickson (representing the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter.)



he was onto something. His research proposed the highest level of happiness (my words) as transcendence: the call to service to others, experiences in nature, the pursuit of empirical science, religion and art to name a few. You cannot reach that transcendent level until all of your humanly needs beneath are met, that's a pretty long row to hoe. But people, some among us, do it.

I'll add one caveat to Abe's pyramid to a better life: That we are all standing on one another's shoulders and never too old for role models. On June 4 the State Council convened at the West Fork Sports Club in Vernon County to take care of business and, most importantly, to honor individuals and organizations that could not receive their due recognition at our traditional February

banquet due to pandemic concerns. Todd Ambs, Scott Wagner, Kurt Meyer, Scott Groff and Jeff Reissmann have earned their place at the top of the pyramid. Couched alongside these selfless people are the Clear Waters Chapter and Gathering Waters Conservancy. These are the people and entities we can look up to, at any age, learn from and become better people ourselves.

So fishing is a necessity and makes us better people? No. It's the people that answer the call to service to safeguard clean water and a recreational resource (fish on!) that make us better people. Now go fishing and give some thought to these people who donate a portion of their lives so you can enjoy what Abe might call the euphoria of transcendence. I'll call it an 18 inch.

Permit for hog facility in Driftless Area meets criticism

State regulators deny citizen requests for environmental review. Local residents say decision threatens water resources and endangers public health.

The DNR issued a wastewater permit for the construction of a massive hog confinement facility overlooking the Kickapoo River in southwest Wisconsin's Crawford County. Some local residents, who reacted to the news with frustration and disappointment, say they are examining their options and will continue to oppose the project.

Roth Feeder Pig II, together with an existing sister facility a few miles away, would be the largest hog concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO) in the state. According to the proposal, the expansion would annually generate more than 9.4 million gallons of manure and liquid waste at a facility perched on a narrow ridge overlooking the Kickapoo River. Much of the waste would be spread on agricultural fields where contaminants like nitrates or bacteria could easily enter surface water and groundwater due to sloping topography and the highly permeable and fractured nature of the underlying bedrock.

The unprecedented scale of such a project in a watershed that is uniquely susceptible to groundwater contamination has alarmed neighbors of the proposed facility and residents of downstream communities.

Health and safety issues related to CAFOs—manure runoff, drinking water contamination, air pollution, and road hazards—have been a source of growing concern among southwest Wisconsin residents. In early 2018, the Crawford County

Board of Supervisors passed a resolution acknowledging the County's susceptibility to groundwater contamination due to the fractured, or 'karst,' bedrock that underlies much of the area.

In November 2020, Midwest Environmental Advocates submitted a formal request to the DNR on behalf of more than 200 Crawford County residents who asked the agency to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) before issuing permits for the construction of the facility.

"We were disappointed to learn that the final permit does not respond to the impressive amount of input the DNR received from members of the public and from legal and scientific experts," said Crawford Stewardship Project coordinator Forest Jahnke. "In the end, it doesn't include any additional conditions that would ensure the protection of public health and water resources. The DNR's decision shows how lacking our one-size-fits-all state regulations are and points to the need for more targeted local protections."

MEA Staff Attorney Adam Voskuil said, "The DNR failed to take advantage of a critical opportunity to demonstrate its commitment to protecting natural resources and the health of Wisconsin residents by conducting a thorough environmental review before allowing this project to move forward. We stand by our belief that a comprehensive EIS is not only warranted, but necessary

to protect the area's water resources, wildlife, and the health of local communities."

Source: Midwest Environmental Advocates

Midwest Environmental Advocates is a public interest law center that works to defend public rights, protect natural resources, and ensure transparency and accountability in government. Learn more at midwestadvocates.org.

Crawford Stewardship Project works to protect the environment of Crawford County and neighboring regions from threats of polluting and extractive industries, to promote sustainable land use, environmental justice, and local control of natural resources. Learn more at crawfordstewardship.org.

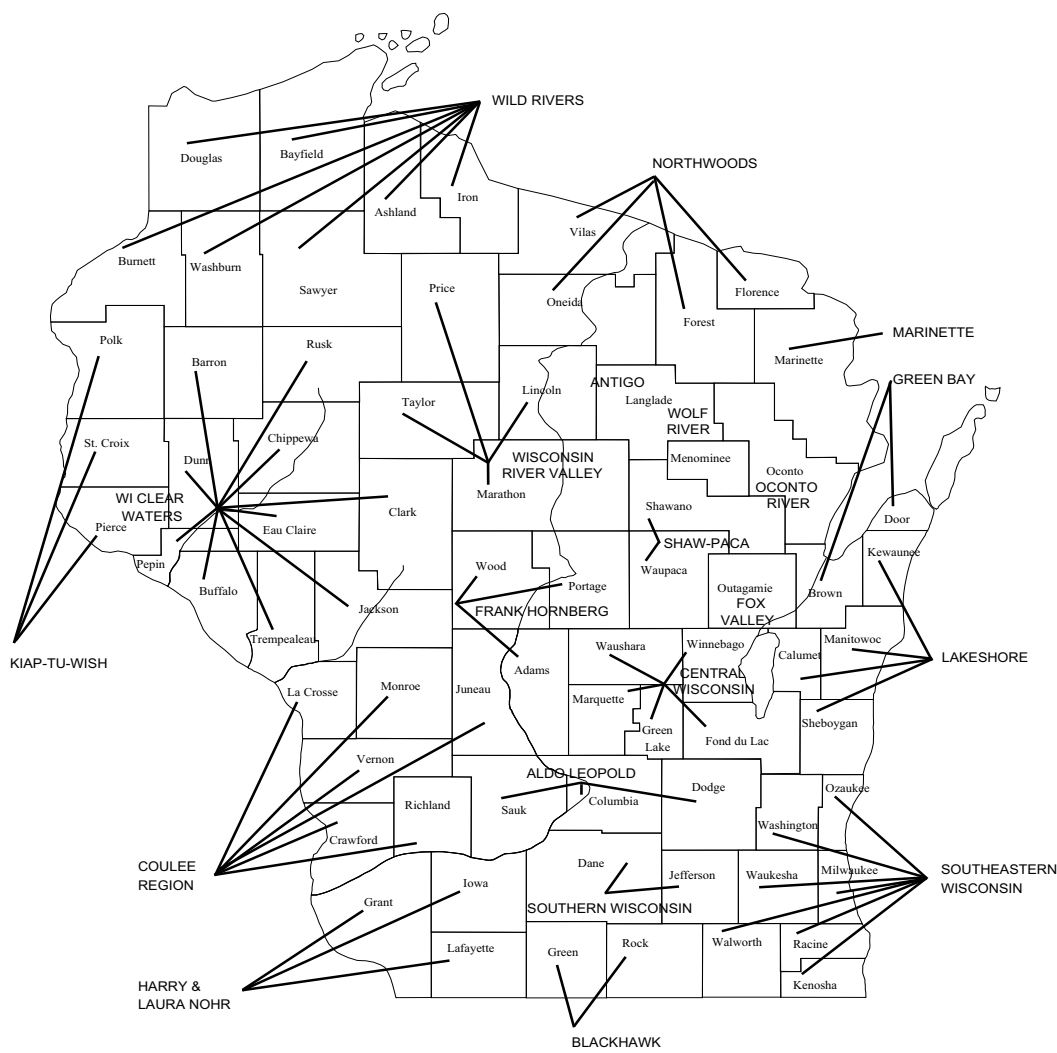
For more information contact Peg Sheaffer of Midwest Environmental Advocates at 608-247-9684 or psheaffer@midwestadvocates.org

Public hearing July 12

Written comments accepted until July 11

The Crawford County Land Conservation Committee will hold a public hearing on July 12th from 12:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. in Suite 236 of the Crawford County Administration Building, 225 N Beaumont, Prairie du Chien Wisconsin. The purpose of this hearing is to receive public testimony and comment on the issuance of a livestock siting permit for Roth Feeder Pig II, Harvest Lane, Wauzeka, WI. Input received at this public hearing will be used by the County in making its final decision on the application. Written comments will be accepted until 3 p.m. Monday July 11th, 2022 at the Crawford County Land Conservation Department, Suite 230, Crawford County Administration Building, 225 N Beaumont, Prairie du Chien, WI, 58321. A copy of the application and worksheets are on file with the county and are open to public inspection at the Land Conservation Office in the Administration Building or available to view online. Virtual attendance will be possible for the first 100 people who register. If attending virtually you must register by 12 p.m. on Monday July 11th, 2022. To register or to view application materials online visit our website at www.crawfordcountywi.org/land-conservation-home.html

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

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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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RECOLLECTIONS

The Bar at Seventeen Landing

By Rick Larkin

While our trips to Montana and the Beartooth Mountains in the late 1970's dominated our trout fishing in those days, we never passed up a weekend trout trip, especially if it involved brook trout and good old "Up North" Wisconsin.

My buddy Rosie's family owned a hunting cabin on a landlocked 40 surrounded by the Chequamegon National Forest near Clam Lake. It was there that he retreated to during bouts of unemployment, which were all too common back then.

At the cabin, he could live almost for free, eating brook trout he caught in a spring-fed culvert at the end of the driveway. The trout supplemented his stocks of canned food, hot dogs and 49-cent gas station white bread. He also found some casual work, helping a pulpwood crew cut popple and pine for the local paper mill.

So, in all fairness, he was semi-employed, not totally unemployed. It wasn't too bad for a young single guy to live in the woods and fish for the summer. He said he had just enough money for cheap beer and a little gas for his old Jeep.

A true character

Rosie was a true character, a story teller of major proportions and a serious free spirit. He was tall, about six-three, good looking, gregarious and very athletic. He had been a star wide receiver at a small

state school up north. He had attracted some interest from pro scouts which got him a free-agent invitation to try out for an NFL team. While he got cut during the first week of training camp, he would tell the girls in the bar he was a former professional football player.

Rosie's post-NFL career included various sales jobs, many of which ended around the beginning of hunting season and in early summer when the fishing got going around Clam Lake. Photogenic in a rugged kind of way, he also modeled men's clothing part time for a department store catalog, a fact he eagerly shared with those girls who may have been unimpressed with his football career.

In addition to being a self-styled lady's man, he loved to hunt and fish. To our gang of hunters and fishermen, he was just one of us, and for those of us who liked to trout fish, we were especially interested in the streams in the middle of the Chequamegon where he told us lots of big brook trout lived.

He told one story which held particular interest for the trout fishermen in our group. He said that deep in the woods behind his family cabin was a place called Seventeen Landing on a stream which tumbled between big red granite boulders, creating a series of deep pools. Here, large brook trout could be caught.

He said the only way to get to it was a foot trail behind his family's

cabin. We met up with him late one night in early summer when he had returned to Milwaukee after several weeks up north. He said he would take us there and share his secret trout spot. He had done a photo shoot for a clothing catalog that week and had enough money to head back to the cabin for a few more weeks and resume his semi-unemployment. He told us to drive up on Friday, as he said he needed a day to de-mouse the cabin to the point where we could visit.

That week, I poured over my trout maps for trout streams around Clam Lake in Ashland County. No stream called Seventeen Landing was listed for Ashland, Bayfield, Price, Iron or any nearby county near the Chequamegon. While my Wisconsin Trout Waters book listed Ashland County as having 24 trout streams, including some I had heard of, like the Bad River or Silver Creek, there were no streams with names even vaguely similar to Seventeen Landing.

We were going to fish a truly secret spot. I was very excited and visions of stout, darkly colored square tails danced in my 26-year-old head.

Five-hour drive

That Friday, three of us left Milwaukee after work and started the five-plus-hour drive to Clam Lake. Per plan, Rosie would meet us at a local bar around 10 p.m. Meeting at the local bar was thought to be best, as trying to find a cabin on a gravel

road in the middle of the Chequamegon National Forest, using a hand-drawn map in the dark was deemed to be a bad idea, even for us. My buddies Dennis, Schmitty and I plowed up Highway 13 and turned west on Highway 77 just before 10 p.m. Not bad, we thought. A little while later, a dimly lit Hamm's beer sign became visible in the distance as we approached Clam Lake. Rosie's Jeep was in the parking lot.

We had a great time eating hot bar pizza, burning the roofs of our mouths, drinking pitchers of cold cheap beer and talking trout. Rosie said he had walked back into the landing earlier that week and caught a limit of nice brookies. He also said a young black bear had shown up around the cabin and he was busy trying to make friends with it, feeding it stale bread and leftover fish-fry grease. Schmitty thought the bear must be a female and Rosie had run out of girls in the Clam Lake area that liked ex-football players.

A bar in the woods?

Then Rosie said a really strange thing: There was a bar at Seventeen Landing. We were puzzled. What? Then, why did we have to walk way back into the woods to fish if there was a bar nearby, which we assumed had a parking lot. Rosie just grinned and said we would find out tomorrow.

See **SEVENTEEN**, page 16

Mining update

Exploration in Marathon County and reclamation of Flambeau Mine make recent news.

By Johnson Bridgwater,
Water Advocates Organizer,
River Alliance of Wisconsin

Marathon County mining exploration

You may have been hearing the name Green Light Metals lately. This Canadian mining company is currently working with Marathon County to pursue exploration permits for the northeast corner of Marathon County, as well as promoting plans to drill in Oneida County and Taylor County. Unfortunately, the area they wish to drill in Marathon County is adjacent to some great trout streams such as Mole Brook, as well as the Eau Claire Dells.

Green Light Metals has started the formal process to be granted an exploration license by Marathon County, seeking to drill up to 100 bore holes. However, the county stated they require much more detail, including formal involvement of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), before any license or permit can be granted.

The Marathon County Environmental Resources Committee has promised a public mining exploration discussion with Green Light Metals in attendance. However, this has not yet been confirmed. For those in Marathon County, the next committee meeting is scheduled for 3 p.m. Tuesday, July 5 at the Marathon County Courthouse, Assembly Room 500, Forest Street in Wausau.

Flambeau Mine seeking final closure order

The DNR is seeking public review and comment on Flambeau Mining Company's Certificate of Completion of Reclamation request for the industrial out-lot portion of its mining site near Ladysmith in Rusk County.

This remaining 32 acres ("industrial out-lot") of the original 149-acre mine was left out of the previous closure order due to concerns over elevated levels of copper and zinc in a stream that is part of this final 32 acres.

This stream remains a concern, and just this year, the DNR proposed designating the upper portion of Stream C as an "impaired water" for copper and zinc in accordance with section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. This stream runs into the Flambeau River.

For further details about this mine and this final closure process, along with information on how to participate in a public meeting scheduled for July 6, please visit the DNR web page dedicated to all things Flambeau Mine: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Mines/Flambeau.html>

The DNR will host a virtual public hearing via Zoom to receive public comments between 4-6 p.m. on July 6. Members of the public may also provide in-person testimony at the DNR Ladysmith Service Center, N4103 State Highway 27, Ladysmith, WI 54848. Written comments will be accepted through July 21, 2022.

Legal development related to Back 40 mining project

As discussed in previous mining updates, Gold Resource (GORO) out of Colorado has acquired the Back 40 Mine project formerly owned by Aquila Resources. Gold Resource currently claims they can obtain all necessary permits and licenses from the State of Michigan EGLE (Environment, Great Lakes and Energy) to begin construction in 2024. However, ongoing public concerns and a new legal process involving the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the Menominee Indian Tribe, make this date far from certain.

The Menominee Indian Tribe has started a formal legal process with the U.S. Army Corps of Engi-

neers to evaluate the navigability of the Menominee River. If the river's formal "navigability" designation is changed, this would require the State of Michigan to give back formal permitting authority to the corps on matters related to wetland permitting (Section 404 permitting authority, which currently rests firmly within the hands of the State of Michigan). If you would like more information on this development, you may contact Laura Garrett via email at Laura.A.Garrett@usace.army.mil.

For any questions pertaining to these or other mining issues in Wisconsin, feel free to reach out to me at 608-257-2424, ext. 115 or jbridgwater@wisconsinrivers.org



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Lakeshore leader proudly takes on state role

Get to know Myk Hranicka of the Lakeshore

Interview by Mike Kuhr, past Council chair

Hi Myk, thank you for stepping up and volunteering to be our State Council Vice Chair. You've done some great work with the local Lakeshore TU Chapter and we're excited to have you helping at the state level. When and why did you decide to join TU?

I joined TU in 2016. For me it was about spending more time invested in something I have loved for so long. That and having more free time now that my kids were almost out of high school. I really wanted to stay busy.

Have you always lived in Wisconsin?

No, I grew up in Oakwood Hills, Illinois, but moved to Wisconsin when I was 11 years old.

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

There are many, both from hunting and fishing. I think I was just born completely fascinated by nature. From lightning bugs to the moon, I've always been connected to it. But if I were to say one moment that really sticks out is when I used to live near a small stream that had trout in it. We used to noodle for them. Yes, we'd see them swim into holes in the bank, we'd lay on our stomachs, reach into the holes and pull out trout. I only recall keeping one. It was a 15-inch rainbow that we cooked on a stick over an open fire. I was only about eight years old and no one really taught me how to live off of the land, so to speak. That moment made me realize what I was capable of doing and how magical my surroundings were.

We know volunteering for TU is very satisfying, but it doesn't exactly pay the bills. What do you do for a living?

I've been a self-employed flooring installer for 30 years.

I know you spend some time on the water with your daughters. What's that experience like?

Both of my daughters love fishing. My youngest, Talia, is a great angler. When she fishes, it's mostly with her friends. We have spent some great days on the boat together. My oldest, Jaidyn, takes fly fishing to the next level. Our fly-fishing connection is something I absolutely treasure. She will fish on her own and send me pictures of the big browns she caught, or even big bass on the fly. She once sent me a picture of her personal best brown that she caught just minutes before I landed my personal best brown. It was amazing! Mine was bigger.

Are you a trout purist or do you enjoy fishing for warm water species too?

Trout to me are like the Ducatis of fish. They're powerful and agile, yet a bit finicky. Just like a Ducati motorcycle, with a fly rod in hand, you need to know a good bit about what you're doing in order to be successful. I love that challenge. However, I still fish for anything that swims. But other than wall-eye, I usually fish for those species with a fly rod. I just thoroughly enjoy the experience more.

Pathways

Other paths invasives use to find their way into our waters.

By Ellen Voss, AIS Program Director,
River Alliance of Wisconsin

One way to think about how aquatic invasive species (AIS) move around the landscape is pathways of introduction. My contribution to *Wisconsin Trout* each quarter focuses on one specific pathway, such as us trout anglers, and the easy actions we can take to avoid accidentally moving invasive species to new places.

But Wisconsin has a lot of water, and trout anglers aren't the only folks out enjoying it.

The hottest days of summer are upon us, and as folks flock to the water to escape the heat, I wanted to tell you about three other pathways and the specific educational programs targeting those audiences.

Boaters

More than 1 million boaters spend time on Wisconsin waters each year. Each summer, hundreds of volunteer and paid Clean Boats Clean Waters watercraft inspectors spend countless hours at boat landings all over the state reminding recreational boaters about the need to drain all the water from their boats and remove all "salad" from their trailers before leaving landings.

Why? Many AIS are invisible to the naked eye, and this simple step prevents things like Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia, spiny water flea and zebra mussels from spreading to new waters. Many plant species can propagate from just a broken-off piece of the original plant, so making sure all weeds are removed prevents those fragments from potentially getting established in new water bodies.

Bait buyers

As trusted spokespeople, bait shop staff are turned to by anglers for all sorts of local fishing knowledge, including information on invasive species. Statewide, AIS partner organizations work with bait shop owners and

managers to help get the word out to prevent the spread of AIS. The shops are provided with materials like key chains, pamphlets and stickers with the "stop aquatic hitchhikers" message that serve as good visual reminders about bait laws and how nobody should ever move water or live plants and animals.

Pet owners

In some areas there are no options for people to get rid of aquarium pets like fish and snails, and sometimes, folks who can no longer care for them may release them into nearby streams or lakes. This is bad for the pet and the environment. AIS partners around the state work with J&R Aquatic Animal Rescue to "rehome" pets that can no longer be cared for to prevent them from being released into the wild.

Be on the lookout

While you're fly fishing for trout, paddling a river or boating with your family and friends, don't forget to be on the lookout for invasive species. If you see something suspicious, don't assume it's been reported before. Take a photo and send me the GPS coordinates at evoss@wisconsinrivers.org. I'll make sure it's documented. Early detection is our best chance at keeping problematic species contained, and every observation helps create a clearer picture of what we're up against.

Have fun out there enjoying Wisconsin's waters this summer, and thank you again for all you do to protect this beautiful state.

Mudsnail reminder

If you've been in New Zealand mudsnail-infested waters, use a soft brush to remove any mud or cling-ons, and spray your boots and waders with Formula 409 to decontaminate it.



PASSIONATE ABOUT FAMILY, FISHING AND CONSERVATION

Now just for fun, let's say I give you a seven-day, all-expense-paid fishing trip anywhere in the world that's not the Onion River. Where would you go?

It would either be to Alaska to fish for huge Arctic char or to one of the few places left that have native Golden Trout. Both are on my bucket list to catch.

What is something you'd like people to know about the work that Lakeshore TU is doing?

I really couldn't be more proud to be a part of this chapter. We have more people taking on new board positions. Our workday crews are consistently plentiful. What I see under our new president has got me really excited for the future. We are making trout fishing in southeast Wisconsin a destination for everyone. From the TIC program, public outreach, working with other local chapters or kid camps, working with the DNR to gain easements, being involved with the Wisconsin Conservation Congress and many other things, Lakeshore continues to make huge strides for the better. Personally, I'm working on a possible dam removal project that would create another 4.5 miles of trout stream on the Onion. Lakeshore really has a lot going on.

Wisconsin trout streams are facing many threats right now, which ones do you think WITU needs to focus on?

The removal of old unused mill pond dams and CAFOs would be a great start. Supporting or expanding funding for wetland development around our streams would also be great. On water flow issues? Regulating or even eliminating high-capacity wells and limiting development on or around headwater streams. This is everyone's water, and we should all have a say in how it's used or abused.

Thank you for spending some time with us, Myk. We look forward to working with you to help make Wisconsin TU even better in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to help make that happen.

TIC update

By Greg Olson,
Council TIC Coordinator

Many Trout In the Classroom (TIC) programs were back on track this past school year, due to easing Covid restrictions.

From what I have heard and seen, the free eggs from the St. Croix Falls Hatchery hatched well and produced healthy fry.

If you have a school that would like to start a TIC program, I have a list of all the fishery biologists in the state that one would need to contact (just the one in your area) to obtain permission to start a program. I hope to get this info on the Council's website soon.

Beginning now, schools can start the registration process. A new, simpler application form is under legal review at the state right now and we hope it is ready to go this year. Unfortunately, all TIC schools (new and old) will have to register as a fish farm again and should start the process now, to avoid the log jam at the beginning of the school year.

DO NOT REGISTER ON YOUR OWN. This caused a lot of issues last year. Please contact me at driftless23@gmail.com before starting the fish farm registration. I will put you in touch with someone from the DNR who can do this for you with a few simple questions. Thank you.

You can always reach me at 612-300-8970 or greg.olson@diasorin.com

Priority Waters update

By Chris Collier, TU Great Lakes Stream Restoration Manager

TU National started the Priority Waters Initiative following our latest strategic plan update, to identify a network of “shared priority waters” where increased collaboration within TU and with our partners could significantly shift the needle on conservation.

This should be viewed as adding another layer to coldwater conservation in Wisconsin, not reinventing how we work, meaning that chapter and state council priorities will not be impacted by the waters selected through this process. Instead, the priority waters designation is a way we can work together to amplify our coldwater conservation programs. Now we can shift to the update.

In late March, the draft priority waters plan for Wisconsin was submitted to TU National. The submitted plan had two sections (1) Priority Waters which are waters we identified as ready to jump forward today with increased collaboration and (2) Appendix Waters which includes waters that are unique to the state and/or have the potential to develop exciting partnerships and projects with a little more effort on the front end.

To further clarify what Appendix Waters means, it essentially was a way for us to highlight areas that we feel could become priority waters over the next few years if we are able to successfully develop project lists, define overarching needs and set funding plans for accomplishing goals.

This list of waters submitted are as follows:

Priority Waters: (1) The Driftless Region, (2) Central Sands, (3) Green Bay Headwaters (Brule-Menominee-Oconto-Peshtigo) and

(4) Wild Rivers (Bois Brule and Bad-White-Marengo).

The **Appendix Waters** include (1) Upper Namekagon, (2) Upper Wolf, (3) Upper Wisconsin River Tributaries, (4) Spring Ponds and (5) Lake Superior Tributaries.

These two lists give us a great starting point to foster increased collaboration today while also developing internal and external partnerships to drive coldwater conservation forward tomorrow. All of this is being done with an eye on complementing the work that has been and continues to be completed by the various levels of TU across Wisconsin (chapter, state and national).

Recently things have been a little quiet on the Priority Waters front, and that’s largely due to field season kicking off, but we have been working with TU’s advocacy team to identify federal advocacy efforts that could benefit our waters.

Once we fall into the rhythm of field season, you can expect to hear more from me as I reach out to state and chapter leaders to develop and review ideas for objectives and overall visions for each water (priority and appendix) and the state as a whole.

This has been an exciting process that I am honored to be a part of, and I’m looking forward to continuing moving things along as we finalize the plan. I know there are probably plenty of questions out there so please feel free to reach out to me at 419-296-4390 or chris.collier@tu.org.

If you would like a more in-depth presentation for chapter members, let me know and we can schedule a chapter meeting presentation.

Reel Recovery Retreats returning to Wisconsin

After a two-year, Covid-related break, Reel Recovery Retreats are returning to Wisconsin this fall. Tom Sathers from the Wisconsin Clearwaters Chapter and Bruce Maher and Scott Wagner from the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter are teaming up to host a Reel Recovery Retreat for men living with cancer at the Oxbow Hotel in Eau Claire September 7-9, 2022.

Reel Recovery is a national non-profit organization that conducts fly-fishing retreats for men living with cancer. Reel Recovery’s mission is to help men in the recovery process by sharing with them the healing powers of the sport of fly-fishing, while providing a safe, supportive environment to explore their personal experiences with cancer, with others who share their stories. Retreats are offered at no cost to the participants and are led by professional facilitators and expert fly-fishing instructors. Reel Recovery provides all meals, lodging and fly-fishing equipment, and no previous fishing experience is required. Reel Recovery’s overarching goal is to improve the lives of the men it serves.

Though only a few days in duration, a Reel Recovery Retreat can be a life-changing event for these men living with cancer. The Retreats provide male cancer patients with information, education and a network of support that will help them as they proceed through their cancer treatment and/or recovery. Retreat leaders are directly enhancing their ability to learn about and manage their disease. They provide participants an opportunity to gain new insights about living with cancer, about managing their disease

and about coping with the psychological, social and emotional aspects of having cancer. By sharing their stories with others who have gone through a variety of experiences with cancer, retreat participants learn about treatment options, navigating the healthcare system, dealing with insurance issues, facing mortality, coping with stressful family and work-related situations. By learning from others in similar situations, retreat participants gain a fresh perspective about their disease and renewed hope about fighting and surviving it.

Trout Unlimited members are encouraged to refer men they know who are living with cancer to Reel Recovery. Trout Unlimited members are also strongly encouraged to consider volunteering as a fishing buddy. Fishing buddies pair up one-on-one with retreat participants to support and mentor them during the fly-fishing sessions of the retreat. No mentoring experience is needed to be a fishing buddy. Fishing locations will be suggested by this year’s organizers for fishing buddies not familiar with the Eau Claire area. Volunteering to be a fishing buddy for a couple of days is not only a way to give back; it is a way of bringing a whole new experience of beauty and hope to a guy suffering from the pain and loneliness of cancer. It may just end up being the most meaningful two days of your summer.

For more information on referring a friend to the retreat or volunteering as a fishing buddy contact Reel Recovery at info@reelrecovery.org or 800-699-4490.

Volunteers cherish return of youth event

But we can always use more volunteers at the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo.

By Bob Haase

After two years of having to cancel due to Covid, the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo was again held in May at the McKenzie Center in Poynette, Wisconsin. Around 2,300 students participated in the event, and Wisconsin Trout Unlimited volunteers help more than 600 of them tie flies.

This year was a little different because we were only able to get seven volunteers each day, as many of our previous volunteers were unable to help for a number of reasons.

Because of the limited amount of volunteer help, we almost decided not to participate this year. But we did not want to cancel because they had already rented a tent for us. Instead of cancelling, we changed the way we did things.

We always helped the kids tie a fly, but because of the time it takes to do this, the limited amount of volunteer help, and number of students attending, we decided to tie the fly for them. We got the kids involved by having them pick out the color of the bead (head of the bug), the color of the body (mop nugget), and the legs (estaz tied behind the bead), for a mop fly. The tyers were on one side of the table and the students on the other side, providing more physical separation.

This made some of the volun-

teers more comfortable and willing to participate.

I wasn’t sure how it would work out, but the tyers who helped thought it worked great and because of the time difference that it took to tie the fly, we were able to tie flies for around 640 kids, which was probably double the amount of kids we could have reached if they tied the fly.

The kids were given a handout that showed how they could use the fly with a spinning rod and reel and spinning float to catch panfish such as bluegills.

Our goal in tying flies with the kids at this event was not to make them fly tyers or fly fishers, but to have them catch a fish on something they made themselves. In this case, it was something they helped design by picking out the colors they wanted for their fly.

These kids seemed to like it as they listed this activity as one of their top events in their evaluations and thank you letters. I still like having the kids tie the fly, and think we should do this whenever possible.

Some volunteers worked both days and others could only help with one day, and without their help we would not have been able to participate in this year’s event. Another problem in getting volunteers was that we were not sure the event would run depending on the status



INTRODUCING KIDS TO FISHING THROUGH FLY TYING

A handful of TU members from around the state came to Poynette for the return of the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo. Organizer Bob Haase is asking for additional volunteers for next year’s event.

of Covid at the time. This gave us a shorter lead time to recruit volunteers. We talk about getting more involved in youth programs and this is a great opportunity for us to do that, but we will need more volunteers next year if we are to continue participating in the Expo. A special thank you to the following TU volunteers who were able to help this

year: Linda Lehman, Ira Giese, Bill Millonig, Dave Brethhauer, Gary Cartwright, James Hodges, Sandy Kienast, Randy Durner and Bob Haase.

If you think you might be able to help volunteer to tie flies with the kids next year, mark your calendar for May 17 and 18, 2023.

RECOLLECTIONS

Trout fishing Christmas

A true, big-fish tale that's almost too unbelievable.

By Kyle Seibers

Hex season is a special time of year on a trout stream. Nothing else in angling compares to the feeling you get when you're standing on a riverbank waiting on darkness with the hope that the fading light brings forth a surge of Hexagenia mayflies. The anticipation is enough to weaken your knees.

Maybe it's just the setting sun, but I swear you can see a vibrating cloud of excitement surrounding your fellow anglers. It's like a child on Christmas morning coming downstairs to see if Santa has delivered gifts. On this Christmas, however, you're hoping for a snowstorm of giant mayflies and wrapped presents topped with the bows of rising trout.

It's no secret that the Hex hatch can bring even the largest trout out of their safe havens to feed. Their rises betray their locations and give savvy anglers a chance at the biggest trout of their life. That's how I landed my personal best, thrice.

The Hex hatch happens at night. Not just dusk, but proper darkness. The duns start coming off around dusk but will continue to emerge well into darkness. Spinner falls may also start at dusk but again will continue into the inky black of night.

Especially heavy spinner falls may lay down enough spinners to keep fish feeding well past midnight. That's part of why we brave the night to fish this hatch. In our part of the trout fishing world, no other hatch can send forth an army in such numbers. We've all heard about Hex hatches on the Mississippi River so thick they show up on weather radar. Hatches thick enough to clear the road with snowplows so vehicles don't careen into the river on the greasy corpses of mayflies. We may not experience hatches in such biblical plague-like numbers, but one common thread is sewn into every Hex hatch. That is the darkness.

As frustrating as it can be, part of the allure of fishing a Hex hatch is the darkness. You can't really see anything, and you must intuit the finer details of the night. Where is my fly? Am I getting a clean drift at this fish? Did the fish eat my fly or was it a natural just inches away? Was that just a muskrat or an alligator closing in for the kill? Sure, the nearest gators are states away, but the mind tends to jump to irrational conclusions in the dead of night.

I hate the feeling of vulnerability I get when I'm standing in a trout stream in the dark, but few things match the rush that accompanies that vulnerability, and with that vulnerability comes opportunity. Your chances at the fish of a lifetime are never as high as they are during Hex season.

ACT I

The day began as any June day might. It was warm and sunny and the talk at work was about last night's Hex fishing and the plans for fishing that night. I should mention that I work for the Wisconsin DNR doing trout habitat restoration, so when I say everyone at work was talking Hex fishing I really do mean everyone at work was talking Hex fishing.

Anyway, the afternoon is where

the normal routine was interrupted. An afternoon thunderstorm blew through and with it came strong winds and an inch or two of rain.

The whole ordeal lasted less than an hour, and the cloak of storm clouds passed to reveal the same old June sunshine that had just so easily

my leader. Fishing 20 yards from the truck I didn't bother to bring my chest pack or my net. It was just my rod, my fly and the fish.

This particular bridge fish was a tricky bugger. He was rising in a tight little spot of slack water along the opposite bank. A small over-



LOTS OF LUCK HELPED HIM CATCH THIS BROWN FOR THE FIRST TIME

Measuring roughly 23 inches against my net with a big blunt nose and a hooked lower jaw, this brown trout was what dreams are made of. The electric blue of its gill plates seemed to exist nowhere else on this planet except on this individual fish. The perfect "V" of spots behind his eye defied the precision of even the most skilled artist. The fish overall was darker, but a vibrant kind of dark. Everything about it was crisp and clean. This fish was by far the largest trout I had ever caught, but also the most visually stunning.

disappeared earlier. My Hex fishing mood was less than optimistic leaving work that day, but you only get so many nights of Hex fishing each year and I was going out regardless.

My plan was a long hike through the woods to get on some bends I hadn't fished in a while. With the day's rain on my mind, I left the house earlier than usual so I had time to adjust my plans if I found the river blown out when I got there. I was hopeful that my plan would work out; cautiously optimistic I should say. These bends were farther upstream than I normally fished and the couple of times I had fished them in daylight they looked very promising for Hex fishing. I was not prepared for what was about to unfold.

As I drove over the bridge on my way to the section I had planned to fish, I glanced upstream and happened to see a rise. The rain had washed Hex flies out of the trees and into the stream or dislodged Hex carcasses from instream vegetation, and the fish were feeding. I checked the time. It was just after 7 o'clock. I had plenty of time to resume my earlier plans even if I let the bridge fish derail them for a moment. I strung up the rod and hustled into my waders. I picked a nice fresh fly out of the box and tied it to

hanging dogwood upstream and a larger dogwood downstream meant the window I was shooting for was around a foot-and-a-half long.

Cast after cast failed to induce a take. My fly was landing where it needed to, but the swift current between us pulled my fly out of the zone before the fish had a chance to

react. The rain had dirtied up the water plenty so I couldn't see the fish and the fish never spooked.

It occurred to me, after more time than I'd like to admit, that I needed to change something about my presentation. I remembered a conversation I had at work just hours earlier about bringing the

rod across your body and casting over your opposite shoulder to lay down a curve cast. That was exactly what I needed. Thanks Steve.

It might have even been my first cast, but my fly landed right where it needed to in the bankside slack. My line and leader hit the water well upstream of the fly. This all bought enough time for the fish to come up and eat my fly with all the confidence in the world.

A split second after the hookset I realized I was outmatched. Leaving the net in the truck was a mistake. The fish made a run towards the bushes and logs down and across,

but I was able to stop him just before the point of no return. Runs upstream and down did not free the fish from its tether and in under a minute we were deadlocked. The fish held its position midstream, and I let it. Neither one of us gained any ground, but neither surrendered.

Now I was playing the waiting game. Fishing right at the bridge I knew it wouldn't be long before a car drove by. My hope was that someone would see my rod arched over and stop to investigate. From there I could ask them to toss my net to me. The first minute or two was busy with traffic, but the three or four cars that passed never even looked my way. Finally, a car stopped and rolled a window down.

"Got a fish?" the man asked.

"I do. Its big," I replied.

In short order he was out of his vehicle to witness the spectacle. My request for him to fetch my net was granted. By this time a second vehicle had stopped and another man was set to play witness to my ordeal. I waded my way downstream toward the bridge and the man with my net threw it to me. A couple steps back upstream and a flex of the fly rod had the fish in the net. I grabbed the net with two hands and held it close to me chest to prevent this magnificent beast from slithering his way out as I made three steps to shallower, calmer waters.

When I first started casting to this fish I knew it wasn't small. I expected something in the mid-teens. A fish most anglers would be pleased with. I did not expect the fish to be the gem it turned out to be. Measuring roughly 23 inches against my net with a big blunt nose and a hooked lower jaw, this brown trout was what dreams are made of. The electric blue of its gill plates seemed to exist nowhere else on this planet except on this individual fish. The perfect "V" of spots behind his eye defied the precision of even the most skilled artist. The fish overall was darker, but a vibrant kind of dark. Everything about it was crisp and clean. This fish was by far the largest trout I had ever caught, but also the most visually stunning.

The fight with this fish felt like it lasted an hour, but in reality was under five minutes. Once the fish was in the net, bystander number two retrieved my phone from my truck and snapped a couple photos. During our whole encounter the fish only left the water for a couple seconds after the net job and for one quick grip-and-grin, water-dripping snapshot.

Bystander number one must have been a Hex fisherman because as soon as the fish was landed, he was back in the car and on down the road to his own fishing spot. Bystander number two witnessed the healthy release and hung around for a while afterward and chatted while I had a couple beers and calmed my nerves.

What made this fish so incredible was that fact that I caught it in daylight. Around here, fish like that just aren't caught in daylight. The day's storm provided the perfect conditions to make it all possible. The water was dirty enough for the fish to feel safe feeding, and the rain and rise in water level provided the fish with enough bugs to make feeding worthwhile.

Also, what were the chances of

"A split second after the hookset I realized I was outmatched. Leaving the net in the truck was a mistake."

me driving by at the exact moment the fish rose? Had I been as little as a couple seconds sooner, or a couple seconds later, I wouldn't have seen the rise so I wouldn't have stopped to fish. What if nobody had stopped to help me? I almost certainly would have lost the fish trying to hand land him. If you didn't know any better, you might think John Gierach's 2020 book "Dumb Luck and the Kindness of Strangers" was written about my encounter with this fish.

Reflecting on these events after the season left me with mixed emotions. I felt incredibly fortunate to have emerged triumphant from a battle with the fish of a lifetime. A little sadness was also swirling around inside me because I felt as though I could never top my achievement. How realistic was it to expect to catch another bruiser like the one I just did? The feeling quickly passed because there is nothing quite like Hex fishing, and fish are just plain fun to catch no matter what size they are.

ACT II

The following Hex season was in full swing and I had already caught an unusual number of really good fish. I had also been spending more time on other streams trying to pin down some other good Hex fishing spots.

A common theme among my exploratory expeditions was stopping at the bridge on my "home water" on the way back home. Most times, all the other anglers had already packed up and gone home so if there were still a few fish rising I would stalk them until the activity finally died for good. One such night was so surreal I still have to remind myself it wasn't a dream.

Standing on the bridge with my headlamp shining down onto the water revealed quite a few Hex spinners coming down. I couldn't hear any rising fish, but I knew the sheer number of spent bugs had to have the fish feeding. I walked down the embankment and got into the water, slowly working my way upstream straining to hear a rise.

It wasn't long before I located some rising fish. They were holding off a cluster of tag alders that hung in the water. The biggest sounding fish rose on a little current seam below, and that fish sounded considerably bigger than the others. I found the fish I was after. I would blindly cast into the darkness until I either caught the fish or it stopped rising.

The first take I had was an exciting fish somewhere in the 16-inch range. A beautiful, healthy fish. Releasing that first fish I could still hear the bigger one rising. A good handful of casts back at the big fish put it down so I started casting above the bush to another good sounding fish. In short order I landed that fish. A brown just a little bigger than the one before.

Now the big fish was rising again, and with enthusiasm. Two and three rises at a time back-to-back-to-back. He was coming up in the main current, on the seam, in the slack water. Rising right off the tip of the alder, sometimes four feet downstream. This fish was what we sometimes call a pool owner. Nowhere in the river was off limits to this fish and he was using every inch of his domain to gorge on the bounty that Hex spinners provide. Time to buckle

down and get serious.

Cast after cast, my fly drifted by uneaten while the fish continued to rise. I knew so long as I kept putting my fly in his apparently large feeding zone it was only a matter of time before my fly would fall victim to a gaping toothy maw. Finally, it happened. The hookset was firm and deliberate. The fish felt reminiscent of the big bridge troll from last season. It couldn't be the same fish, right?

After a short but strong fight the fish found its way into my net. Arriv-



BUT HE WAS EVEN MORE LUCKY TO CATCH IT AGAIN A YEAR LATER

ing at the bank to unhook the fish I immediately recognized the clownish blunt nose and the distinguished, hooked jaw. After a few quick photos the fish was released to resume its reign over any pool or bend it chose. Feeling like I accomplished the impossible I reeled up and headed home.

Reviewing photos the next morning confirmed my suspicions. Last night's fish was the same buck brown from the year before. The telltale "V" of spots behind the eye was a perfect match. The fish's flank displayed a cluster of three red spots with their blue halos touching to form a triangle. Another perfect match. Seven more spots arranged in an "S" shape near the fish's tail were identical in both photos. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. Not only did I catch the fish of a lifetime, but I caught it twice. The same exact fish felt my hook and my net, my grip and my release, twice in its lifetime. And this second

capture wasn't in the same spot as the first.

I had encountered this fish twice in the span of 356 days. Nine days shy of one full year. I had heard stories of a single fish being caught multiple times, but never by the same angler, or after so much time had passed.

I should have picked up a lottery ticket because winning felt like a sure thing after the angling feat that I had just accomplished. I was ecstatic and feeling very proud of myself at first, but I soon realized that I owed my experience to a whole lot of luck, a little bit of persistence, and an even smaller amount of skill. They say it's better to be lucky than good. Who am I to argue with that?

ACT III

Days passed since my incredible catch and the Hex were still hatching. I was still fishing every night. I had returned to some old haunts, as well as chased rumors on other sections of other rivers. I was catching some fish and having fun, relishing in every moment of the Hex hatch because it never lasts forever and soon those summer nights would be flyless.

One night I had been fishing a different stream and again stopped

at the bridge on the "home water" on the way home. My scan with the headlamp revealed Hex spinners coming down in the drift so I decided to spend a little time trying to catch a fish or two for a nightcap. I could hear a decent fish rising downstream, so I thought that was a good place to start.

I started down the embankment off the road and another angler quickly alerted me to his presence. No worries. I retreated upstream and began pestering the dinks I could hear rising along the far bank.

Before I managed to land any of the small fish I was casting to I heard the angler downstream walk out and drive away, so I reeled up and headed in that direction.

I fought my way through the tangled shrubs of the streambank and stood at the water's edge. The fish I had heard from the bridge was rising, and within range, and sounded bigger, now that I was up close. It wouldn't be easy to catch. It rose below a cluster of alders that hung in the water and moved around in that area quite a bit. The feeding window on this fish was almost entirely slack water. Casting from down and across, it would be hard to keep my fly in the zone long enough for the fish to cycle through and take it, but it was my only option. The banks were too thick with dogwoods and alders for any other approach. The river below the fish had too much overhanging alder to cast straight upstream. I had to make it work from where I stood.

I devised a plan to target the lower end of the feeding window so when the current caught my line and my fly was inevitably dragged away there was a reduced risk of spooking the fish. The fish continued to rise, and I continued my fishless casts and drifts. My mind wandered back to six days prior when I had to repeatedly make the same cast until I found success. That's what I would have to do again. So, I resolved to stand alone in the darkness until either I or the fish prevailed.

There I was on the bank of the river making cast after cast. The fly was landing where I needed it to, or at least I think it was. The fish kept rising anyway so I knew I hadn't spooked it. After an eternity of repeating the same cast with the same fishless result I knew I had to change something. I had to get aggressive. I was either going to hook this fish or blow the whole thing in the process. Either way I could

make it to bed before the sun rose.

My new approach was to take a couple of stealthy steps upstream and across current. This would put me in a better position to get a drag-free drift. I also decided to try placing the fly a little further upstream to give the fish more opportunity to find it and eat it. Reinvigorated and full of fresh optimism I began casting.

Only a few casts into my revised strategy the fish rose where I thought my fly was. I set, and much to my surprise came up tight to a big fish. The fight wasn't the stuff of legend, but this fish was no pushover. After a short tussle I clicked my headlamp on, slid the fish into my net, and nearly fell to my knees. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. It was the same fish I had landed 6 days ago, and 362 days ago. I unhooked the fish, snapped a photo of its identifying features, and released it.

I hastily made my way back to the truck and headed home. I was physically exhausted and emotionally drained. I fell asleep as soon as I hit the pillow.

The next day, reflecting on the ridiculous events that occurred, I noticed some interesting things. First, all three times I caught this fish it was in a different spot. Those spots were not especially far away from one another, but they were different spots nonetheless.

Second, this fish didn't seem to have grown any longer in the year between first and second capture. Now, I didn't have a legitimate tape measure to inspect things down to the quarter inch, but my net has been the same size its whole life and the fish was about two inches longer than the net every time I caught it.

Third, comparing my photos from year one to year two did show an increase in girth, or weight. Without a scale I couldn't say how much the fish weighed but the year two photos show a heavier fish without a doubt.

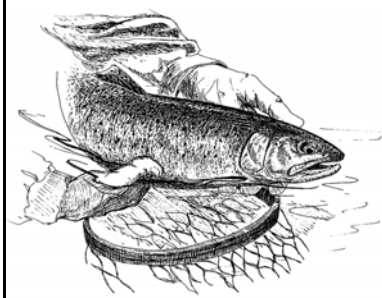
Lastly, the fish in year one was much more brilliantly colored. Perhaps it was water clarity, or diet, or age. The fish was definitely old. How many wild 23-inch trout aren't? Whatever the cause of the cosmetic degradation, if I caught the fish again I would have asked him.

Some people, hell most people, fish their whole lives without ever catching a trout approaching two feet in length. The fact that I was able to catch the fish of a lifetime three times in a year, and it was the same fish all three times, still blows my mind. If not for the famed *Hexagenia limbata* I would still love to fly fish, and I would still fish the same rivers I do now, but I would never have landed the fish of a lifetime.

Every Hex season brings with it excitement and optimism. The possibilities seem endless with the promise of mayflies in the air. Sleep deprived and with aching backs, we Hex anglers keep coming back night after night because after all, trout fishing Christmas only comes once a year.

Consider Proper Release

It's working...so let's keep up the good work!

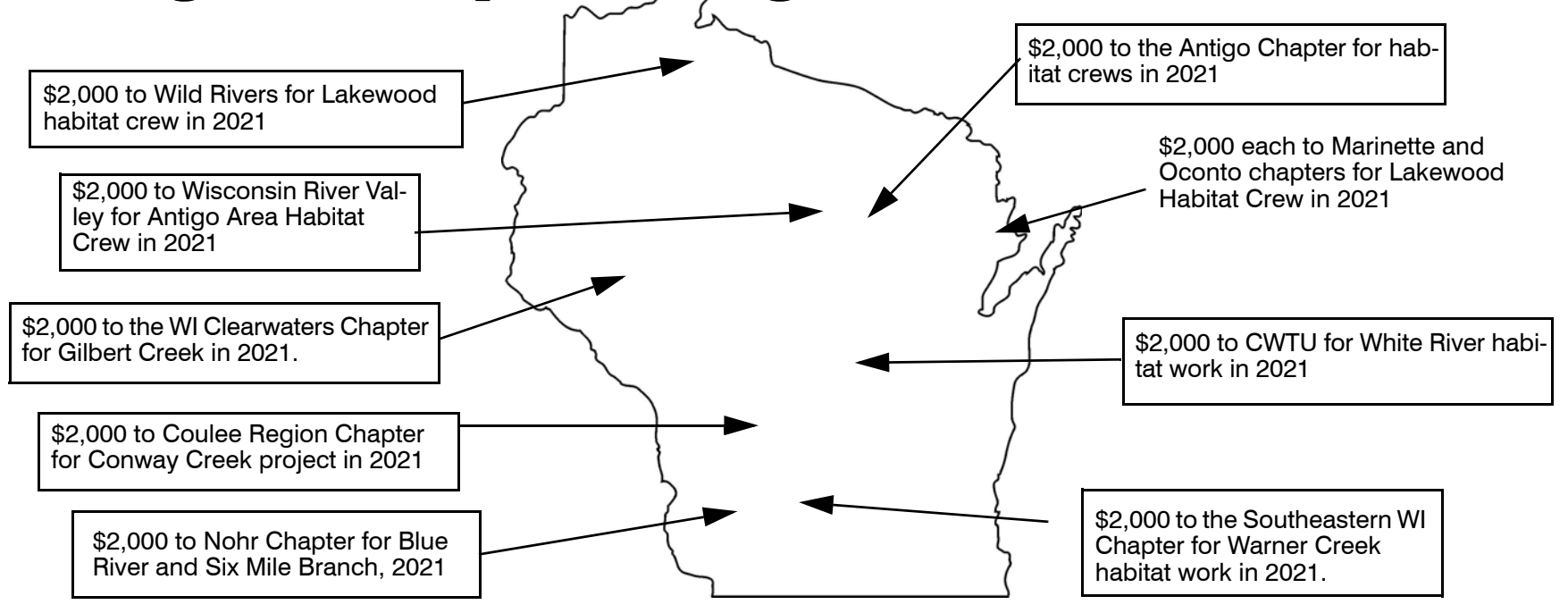


- 1. Don't play fish to exhaustion.** Instead, use a landing net to bring fish under control before they're played out.
- 2. Handle fish in the net.** Grasp them across the back and head for firm but gentle control. Use the net fabric as your "glove."
- 3. Turn fish belly up while removing hooks.** This disorients fish momentarily for easier, quicker handling.
- 4. Don't remove swallowed hooks.** Just cut the line... doing so saves two-thirds of deeply hooked trout.
- 5. Don't keep fish out of the water more than 10-15 seconds.** Fragile gills are damaged after that...especially in cold weather.

Please support Friends of Wis. TU in 2022

2022 looks to be another very good year for the Friends of Wisconsin TU grant program and the habitat work it sponsors. The State Council has awarded grants totaling \$18,000 to nine chapters for the 2022 work season. Thank you to those who support the Friends of Wisconsin Trout grant program with your contributions.

Providing habitat improvement grants since 1991.



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Enclosed is my check for \$100 or more, payable to Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.*

MAIL TO: Kim McCarthy
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Restoration improves Prairie River for trout

The DNR, with the help of TU and local landowners, completed 6,000 feet of channel restoration on the Prairie River.

By Taylor Curran, DNR Fisheries Management Technician Advanced

The Prairie River is a class 1 trout stream that is home to naturally reproducing native brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) and naturalized brown trout (*Salmo trutta*). It originates in northwestern Langlade County. The Prairie River flows southwesterly into Lincoln County through the town of Gleason, Wisconsin, the self-proclaimed "Trout Capital of the World." It continues a southwesterly flow until it joins with the Wisconsin River in the city of Merrill.

During the summers of 2020 and 2021, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), with the help of TU and local landowners completed 6,000 feet of channel restoration on the Prairie River. The project site is located just north of Gleason on the east side of State Highway 17 at the end of the Dagus Road. From Dagus Road the project heads downstream for just over one mile until the river meets an old farm bridge where the project ends.

The project lies on two state-owned fishing easements. There are new parking areas at the upstream end of the project at Dagus Road as well as at end of the project off State Highway 17 across from Gross Lane.

Before the project was completed, this section of river was wide, shallow and lacked overhead cover preferred by trout. Prior to starting

the 2021 work, a pre-habitat trout assessment electrofishing survey was completed to assess the trout population. This survey showed great numbers of trout, but overall small size quality.

For this project, channel shaping, tree plantings and the installation of complex wood and rock structure was conducted. Previously completed projects on the Prairie River using similar restoration methods have resulted in greater numbers of larger trout.

Channel shaping is a tried-and-true method of stream restoration. It increases lateral movement of the stream. This was done by creating point bars or islands on inside bends and in wide shallow areas. Point bars and islands were constructed using spoils dug from the newly shaped channel. The point bars and islands narrowed the stream, increasing the depth, and helped the stream scour down to desirable gravel and rubble substrates.

Channel shaping also increases the thalweg velocity of the stream, helping maintain cold water temperatures and provide areas for silt and sediment to settle out in slower and shallower slack areas. Nineteen-point bars and four islands were created as part of this project. Over the course of two Trout Unlimited workdays, 3,100 trees were planted on the new point bars and islands, as well as some of the existing outside bends.

Along with the channel shaping,

large wood and rock habitat were added to provide overhead cover for trout. More than 100 whole trees were added to the river, along with 750 rocks. The rock was additionally used to help anchor the large wood as well as aiding in collecting future recruiting wood to the river.

The overall goals of this project were to narrow and increase the depth of the stream channel, increase the amount of complex wood

and rock habitat in the stream and suppress tag alder growth, while encouraging recruitment of mature timber (habitat) into the stream within the riparian area. This project increased the resting and foraging habitat and improved spawning sites for trout.

You can reach Taylor Curran at 608-509-5496 or taylor.curran@wisconsin.gov



Taylor Curran

PRAIRIE RIVER PROJECT SUPPORTS LARGER TROUT

For this project channel shaping, tree plantings and the installation of complex wood and rock structure was conducted.

Watershed Access Fund: Dell Creek parcel secured

The Council is pleased to announce that Watershed Access Fund (WAF) grant money has once again played a major role in acquiring a prime fishing area.

WAF, together with a group of partners, worked successfully to purchase a 40-acre parcel on Dell Creek in Sauk County. This purchase will connect lands already in public hands and create a long continuous stretch of publicly held trout water.

Thank you to our donors who make this type of purchase possible.

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

Make your check payable to Wisconsin Trout Unlimited

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STREAM Girls take to the stream

Words and photos by Michele Bevis

In the long winter of 2021, Kiap-TU-Wish board members Linda Radimecky and Michele Bevis began plans for their chapter's first STREAM Girls event, TU's STEM program for girls that builds confidence and breaks down barriers in science and the outdoors. They set the date for May 21, 2022. TU staff Tara Granke and Franklin Tate and the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter provided online resources. Girl Scouts River Valleys staff member Meghan Belanger coordinated logistics and recruitment. The Ellsworth Rod and Gun Club generously donated the use of their facility on the Rush River. Everyone was eager to help.

We limited the group to 16, knowing there'd be cancellations. On that Saturday, 10 girls in grades 5-8 showed up, representing more than four scout chapters from different regions of eastern Wisconsin and central Minnesota. A dozen volunteer anglers representing the Twin Cities Chapter and Kiap-TU-Wish were ready to share their fascination and knowledge of coldwater fishing.

The STREAM Girls activities involved some aspect of science, technology, recreation, engineering, arts and math. Each girl experienced all of these applications as they earned their badges and certificates.

Often STREAM Girls takes place over the course of two days, or as an after-school program. For a variety of reasons, we decided to fit the following required five activities in one long day: STREAM Walk, Go with the Flow, Fly Casting, Macro Invertebrates, Fly Tying, Scavenger Hunt and Art project. It was a long day, and we shortened some activities due to timing. But we plunged through and still had time to fish at the end.

The chapter chose young female anglers to serve as team leaders. We found four youth, three of them high schoolers. We wanted the girl scouts to see themselves reflected in these team leaders. Holly Wandersee, Emeline and Ellody Nemeth and Lindsay Maxfield volunteered to be these role models. They stayed with their "girl team" through each activity. They helped the girls choose the best-fitting waders, showed them how to cross a stream in current, assisted them in filling data and ideas into their STREAM Girls field

notebook and mentored them fishing at day's end.

After morning introductions, Missie Hanson and DNR fisheries biologist Kasey Yallaly lead the girls on the STREAM Walk, where the girls got to know "their" stream. What was the water temperature and clarity. Could they identify pools, riffles or runs? The STREAM Walk goal was to get the girls thinking and wondering about all the important parts that make up a healthy stream.

Macroinvertebrates, fly tying and casting were the most popular activities. Cindy Winslow used her homemade, professionally drawn posters to detail the life cycles and characteristics of aquatic insects including the caddis, mayfly, stonefly and midge. Cindy, Ken Hanson, Ed Constantini and other volunteers showed the girls how to release bugs from the rocks and rubble with kick-nets and by turning over rocks. The girls carefully placed them in trays for observation. With heads bent over the trays, they examined their catch which included nymphs and larvae they'd seen in Cindy's posters, as well as a crayfish, leach, scud and worms.

Grace Glander from Laughing Trout Fly Tying group patiently instructed the girls to tie their first wooly bugger. Each girl sat in front of a vice with all necessary tools and supplies. Grace counseled them to "watch first, tie second." She demonstrated how to place the hook in the vice, wrap the thread and feathers, and so forth. Some girls thought the definition of fly tying was to catch a real fly and tie it on a hook. A fly happened to be buzzing around the room during the lesson. Grace assured them if they caught the fly they could try it.

While half the girls were tying flies, the other half gathered with Monta Haynor and Linda on the lawn for fly-casting instruction. Each girl assembled her rod and cast towards the target. As experienced casting instructors, Monta and Linda taught the forward cast using the image of casting between 10 and 2 on a clock. Yet many girls were unfamiliar with analog clocks; they didn't relate to '10 and 2.' They came up with their own image. They cast as if they were "flicking paint off a paint brush."

After a full morning, everyone was ready for the healthy lunch provided by Judie Babcock and the Kin-



STREAM GIRLS GET AN EDUCATION IN MACROINVERTEBRATES

niCC. Judie and her husband Dave followed lunch with a drone demonstration that captured the group, the stream and the clubhouse from above. You can view this on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/uOtAgVCUP5o>.

Even though many girls claimed to not like math, when they used it as instructed by Kasey and Rainbow Barry during the "Go with the Flow" activity, they could at least experience a practical application of measurement, division and multiplication. They waded into the stream to measure the stream width. Once marked, they floated a pingpong ball three times and recorded its arrival at the finish line. They used their data to calculate the stream flow in cubic feet/second at that specific spot on the Rush River. It could have been that they really did like math. Maybe they just liked the feel of the current; for whatever the reason, we had to coax them to leave the water and begin the next exercise.

The scavenger hunt seemed designed to pull everything together. The team leaders lead the girls to distinct spots near the stream to identify and locate nine healthy parts of a stream: water, riffles, rocks, trees, wood, short plants, sky, animals and bugs. This activity al-

lowed everyone to circle back to the information shared at the beginning of the day on the STREAM Walk with Missie and Kasey.

For the final hour before badge awards and fishing, the girls went inside the lodge. Michele led the girls in making a beaded bracelet for their art project. This was theirs to take home and remind them of all the healthy parts of a stream. Using old fly line for their chords, they strung different beads that each represented the nine healthy stream parts they had recently identified. Besides creating a keepsake, they might have learned that knot tying takes patience, like learning to fly fish. Hopefully, the girls would show their bracelets to family and friends and tell about the fun day they had on "their" stream that day.

Finally it was time to fish. Team leaders and other volunteers headed out with individual girls to various runs, riffles or pools. The young anglers felt the weight of water tension on their lines for the first time. The day ended with at least one girl yelling, "I caught a fish! I caught a fish!" Her cast was curly and loose; it slapped the water; she tangled her line in her excitement. But sure enough. She had caught her first fish on the fly, a beautiful 10-inch brown trout.



STREAM GIRLS LEARN TO TIE A WOOLY BUGGER

Grace Glander from Laughing Trout Fly Tying group patiently instructed the girls to tie their first wooly bugger.



Does your fishing car have a TU license plate yet?

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Tainter Creek Stream Day: A squishy success story



NEW FISHING COMBOS ALWAYS BRING SMILES

Besides learning all about their local streams and the fish and insects that live in them at the recent Tainter Creek Stream Day, these happy kids will be fishing in style with new gear.

By Duke Welter, Coulee Region Chapter member.
Photos by Gillian Pomplun.

Kids filled up with hot dogs and cookies, cast little plastic fish as if in a feeding frenzy, watched bugs from the river and enjoyed seeing piles of trout and other fish at the Tainter Creek Stream Day Saturday, June 4.

TU volunteers joined FFA students, UW grad students and entomologists, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and DNR staff in helping attendees learn more about the well-known trout stream flowing through their neighborhood. Off-and-on sprinkles didn't hinder the festivities.

This was the third Stream Day on Tainter Creek, led by the Tainter Creek Farmer-led Watershed Council and Coulee Region Chapter (CRTU) volunteers. The last was in 2019, then Covid caused cancellations in 2020 and 2021.

Stream Days in western Wisconsin have been local successes for the last 10 years. Buffalo County led the way with a celebration on Eagle Valley Creek in 2013, co-led by the Cochrane-Fountain City Rod & Gun Club and the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter. Since then, these annual gigs have been a continuing hit on stream projects across the country. Other chapters might want to consider helping put one together. It's hard to conceive of another type of event that better connects conservation-minded anglers, families and landowners.

The enthusiasm of participants was striking. Adults were happy to

get back together and learn more about the stream and how restoration work has helped this stretch. Kids had lots of different activities to turn to, kept busy and muddy and went home with a spin or fly rod.

CRTU members helped in almost every category. Dale Jonson, only slightly hindered by being on crutches, patiently helped kids learn to cast spin and fly rods. Brad Barger and Brad Bryan helped with fly tying and casting, helping a squad of high schoolers get their first exposure to those skills. Kris Welter helped women with their casting, and shared information about additional learning opportunities.

Paul Krahn, TUDARE's project specialist and the designer of the Tainter Creek and Conway Creek habitat projects, led a tour of the sites so people could see and discuss the impacts.

In the 3,200-foot reach of Tainter restored in 2019, soil loss was reduced by an estimated 600 tons per year, and phosphorus was reduced by 605 pounds. Fish numbers and bugs have increased, and the site is more popular with anglers.

A quiet, steady contributor

One of the quiet, steady contributors to the success of the Farmer-Led Council, as well as the three Stream Days, is another CRTU member, Bruce Ristow. He and his wife Sue live downstream on Tainter Creek. Their driveway is the iron girder bridge across the creek. They are both retired teachers who rotationally graze Angus cattle on their rich pastures along the creek.



LOOK WHAT WAS LURKING BENEATH THE BANK

Kirk Olson displays a nice trout electro-shocked from the stream at the recent Tainter Creek Stream Day.

Bruce may be retired, but he hasn't stopped teaching and connecting people. The project on Tainter and Conway creeks got under way after his conversations with landowner Ernest (Wayne) Rayner of Star Valley, about six years ago. Rayner wanted to leave the degraded stream better off than it was, and agreed to a DNR easement and a TUDARE-led project. Sadly, he passed just as the project was getting under way, but family members have continued to support it and were recognized at this event.

Over the years, Bruce has talked with plenty of landowners and neighbors about actions that will benefit the stream and make it more resilient to the dramatic floods the area is experiencing. They all listen to Bruce, even though some aren't willing to change or allow projects to happen just now. But he is a patient and gentle teacher, a pious man, not a preacher, but the most valuable kind of neighbor.

During several talks about the stream, attendees asked plenty of good questions. One was key. A lady asked, "What can you do with a landowner who's just resistant?" Bruce quietly said, "Just talk with them with patience, and good information, and love." The implication

was that you can only do what's possible. Some people will not change for a variety of reasons, but you can make progress with those who are willing, and those who become willing.

Much of the success of any project relies on making connections, and this event epitomized that. Many people had little idea about the fish and insects that live in the stream. DNR Fisheries Biologist Kirk Olson explained about brown and brook trout and what they need to thrive. They saw those bugs seined up from the stream—caddis larvae and mayfly nymphs, mostly—and then the fly tyers compared those bugs with actual flies imitating the naturals. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Heidi Keuler, who heads the Fishers & Farmers Partnership across the area, brought a stream simulator and showed everyone how stream currents and gradient impact stream channel shapes and flooding.

New project plans are in the works for Tainter Creek, so it's likely there will be more places to celebrate in future years. All in all, the guests left with something to remember, and we hope they'll be back for the next one.



BRUCE RISTOW CONTINUES TEACHING AND CONNECTING PEOPLE



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College clubs meet up at the West Fork

TU Costa 5Rivers Midwest Meet-Up brought college students together to learn about cold water, conservation and fishing.



Mike Kuhr

LOOKING FOR MACROS IN THE SEAS BRANCH

Students learned how to use the kicknet sampling technique to gather macroinvertebrates.

Student anglers recently converged on Wisconsin's Driftless Area for a weekend of fly fishing, camaraderie and volunteerism at the Trout Unlimited Costa 5 Rivers Midwest Meet-Up. The following article was written by Linnea Turner for The Bark, University of Minnesota Duluth's student news organization.

By Linnea Turner

Fly fishing is like kayaking. Most people know of it, maybe even have done it, but do not actually know how the equipment works or how technical it can be. Both activities can be extremely simple, but there is a variety of skills and knowledge that go along with each. Fly fishing is a passion, a hobby, an art and a sport.

TU's Costa 5 Rivers Program recently hosted a regional meetup for Midwest college fly fishing clubs to fish and learn. The University of Minnesota – Duluth's developing club brought four members down to Viroqua to further explore the sport.

Club President Brice Lauwers is a passionate fly fisher and accounting major. Anna Early is a finance major, rustic outdoorswoman and intermediate fly fisher. Grace Carleton is currently exploring majors, a full-time adventurer and fly-fishing virgin (but not anymore). I am an environmental science major and previously worked for TU as an aquatic field resource technician in the Great Lakes region.

Three college clubs embarked on a weekend road trip in late April to experience the outdoors. Many of the students came from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and a few from the University of Wisconsin-Stout. The event was held at the West Fork Sports Club. As students arrived on Friday, they had the opportunity to fish right on the West Fork Kickapoo River flowing next to camp. The evening included a late-night bonfire, late arrivals, tent camping and car camping.

Saturday morning at 5 a.m. the excited morning folk awoke. We all awoke to fog suspended above the river and heard the morning sounds of cows and birds. Brice started fishing right away and caught a brown trout after about 10 minutes. Brice is fully committed and passionate about the art of fly fishing. He ties all his own flies and embraces the full process.

"Maybe there are people out there growing their own worms to fish with ... but [the process of creating flies is] more challenging," Brice said.

I sat by the river, enjoyed nature and studied the flow.

By 6 a.m. my impatience and excitement were uncontrollable, and I woke up Grace. After she pulled on waders, I gave her a quick casting lesson. I have only a base knowledge of the sport, but I attempted to teach by example.

Even though Grace had never held a fly rod before in her life, her



Brice Lauwers

MIKE MILLER IS ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO SHARE HIS KNOWLEDGE

The DNR's Mike Miller provided plenty of information on macroinvertebrates and other stream life.

excitement to learn and improve showed through. The concept of fishing while standing knee-deep in water and having the ability to walk through a river chest-deep, feeling the cold water surround you while remaining completely dry, was new to her.

After breakfast and small conversations, I was aware of how much diversity of knowledge and passions was in the room with me. I was surrounded by individuals from diverse educational backgrounds but similar mind sets. Many students were biology-related majors, but there was a range, from machine operator to interior designer.

We had the opportunity to learn from and listen to many knowledgeable scientists and anglers, including Mike Miller, an ecologist with the Wisconsin DNR. He brought us to the headwaters of Seas Branch, where we saw clear water flowing from a hillside.

We performed kick-test surveys to see what organisms were living under the rocks. By kicking up sediment and catching it in a net, we were able to capture hundreds of tiny organisms, such as mayfly larvae and nymphs. The tiny insects we identified are often what flies are tied to represent them. At the core of fly fishing, presentation is key. Anglers create flies that represent natural food sources.

After stream sampling with Mike, we all split up and went fishing. The stream options are endless in the Driftless Area of southern Wisconsin, so I lost track of everyone but Brice and Grace.

Brice took time to continue to teach Grace casting techniques. As

beginner's luck would have it, Grace caught a sucker and two brook trout. I saw a few fish bite, but I could not hook them. I simply enjoyed casting, wading in the river and being around other like-minded individuals.

Unfortunately, I had to leave early, so I missed Sunday's activities, including a service project where students had the opportunity to build LUNKER structures, which create habitat and cover for trout.

This effort was led by Paul Krahn, stream restoration specialist with TU's Driftless Area Restoration Effort. There were also fly-fishing gear giveaways (provided by donations from Costa, Simms, Yeti, Shenanigans Fly Fishing, Trout Routes and Trout Unlimited), fly tying and of course, more fishing. The resources and opportunities at this event were amazing.

Fly fishing is a mystery to some but loved by many. There is an unbelievable amount of resources through organizations such as TU to get involved in river conservation and fly fishing.

This event was made possible with support from the Wisconsin TU Council and the AFFTA Fisheries Fund. Special thanks to the following individuals: Tina Murray and Valerie Hein-Hamstra from the West Fork Sports Club, Mike Kuhr from Wisconsin TU, Paul Krahn of TUDARE and Mike Miller of the Wisconsin DNR for contributing their time and resources. Funding and materials for the service project were provided by the Southern Wisconsin, Southeast Wisconsin and Blackhawk chapters of TU.



Brice Lauwers

GETTING UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL WITH THE TROUT

Author Linnea Turner (center) and Grace Carleton get an up-close look at a stream life at the recent TU Costa 5Rivers Midwest Meet-up.



Brice Lauwers

LEARNING ABOUT LUNKERS

Students got a hands-on education on the types of habitat structures that are used to improve trout streams.

Planting trout in Stony Brook

Stony Brook serves as an outdoor classroom for kids of all ages.



STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT STREAM MONITORING

Students learned how to monitor the quality of the water in our rivers and streams, including the monitoring of dissolved oxygen, along with flow rate, the types of macro-invertebrates living in the stream, the water and air temperatures, the water clarity, the pH of the water, the amount of phosphorus and chloride, weather conditions and specific conductivity of the water.



ELECTRO-SHOCKING DEMOS ARE ALWAYS A HIGHLIGHT

DNR biologist Angelo Cozzola and his crew demonstrated electro-fishing, a means of stunning fish so they can be measured and scanned for PIT tags that tell the DNR when and where the fish were planted and other data. To the student's surprise, in the short section of stream there were many sizable trout. Of the 13 netted and measured, 11 ranged from 11 inches to nearly 17



By Joe Bach

On May 6, students who raised trout in their classrooms resumed planting trout in Stony Brook. This year three schools participated in the trout plant. Planting their young-of-the-year trout were Chilton High school, Chilton Middle School and Merrill Elementary School from Oshkosh. Brad Bowman, counselor from Merrill, was able to secure funds so his elementary school students could experience and learn how to raise trout in the classroom.

As in years past, the day not only included the planting of trout, but also learning much about streams and rivers. There were six learning stations along the banks of Stony Brook, led by specialists.

The first learning station was led by Natalie Dorler-Hyde from the Lakeshore Natural Resource Partnership and Joe Bach from Fox Valley Trout Unlimited. There was a live demonstration of the macroinvertebrates that live in Stony Brook. The students enjoyed seeing and touching the creatures in Stony Brook that are the food source for the trout they plant.

Chris Acy, the Aquatic Invasive Species Coordinator from the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance, gave the

students a presentation on the invasive species in the lakeshore counties of central Wisconsin.

Judy Hartl from Water Action Volunteers (WAV) gave a presentation of the stream monitoring protocol that WAV volunteers all around the state use to monitor the quality of the water in our rivers and streams. This protocol includes the monitoring of dissolved oxygen, along with flow rate, the types of macroinvertebrates living in the stream, the water and air temperatures, the water clarity, the pH of the water, the amount of phosphorus and chloride, weather conditions, and specific conductivity of the water. The monthly reports also contain the status and condition of the streamside habitat. The data is recorded and stored in a DNR database for future analysis and comparisons.

Danielle Santry, the Water Quality Specialist of Calumet County, gave the students a presentation on the habitat parameters of our stream.

Norm Christnacht, a skilled trout fisherman from Fox Valley Trout Unlimited, gave a demonstration of fly casting for trout, which included giving students a chance to personally experience the art of fly casting.

One of the highlights of the day was the electro-shocking demon-



STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT STONY BROOK'S MACROINVERTEBRATES

stration by Angelo Cozzola, fish biologist with the DNR, and his crew. They demonstrated electro fishing, a means of stunning fish so they can be measured and scanned for PIT tags that tell the DNR when and where the fish were planted and other data. To the student's surprise in the short section of stream there were many sizable trout. Of the 13 netted and measured, 11 ranged from 11 inches to nearly 17 inches.

The second and most important highlight of the day was the planting of brook trout in Stony Brook by each student. By the looks on their faces, they were proud to have played a part in restoring the natural reproduction of trout in Stony Brook.

Stats for the day? There were approximately 180 students present,

220 trout planted by the students and more than 30 adults, including reporters, county officials, neighbors and members of Friends of Stony Brook.

The Friends of Stony Brook (FOSB) thanks all the students who raised trout and their teachers, including Tracy Bartels, Brittany Mayer, Greg Sromek and Brad Bowman for their exceptional effort to create this learning experience. Without the teacher's collective effort, the current and future physical improvements being made to Stony Brook would not have been possible.

Joe Bach is a long-time member and leader of the Fox Valley Chapter. You can reach him at JoeBach1g@gmail.com or 920-570-2632.

SEVENTEEN, from page 5

It was nearing midnight and the bartender determined that it was closing time. "Last call!" he hollered and we scrambled for one last pitcher of beer. A little while later, we slowly followed Rosie down the forest road and turned on the gravel road to the cabin. Fortunately, the bear was not there to greet us.

The combination of a long drive, pizza and a few pitchers of beer at the corner bar caused us to fall into a deep, deep sleep. We awoke to the smell of Rosie frying bacon, brewing coffee and making toast made with his favorite gas station bread, which he smeared with bacon grease. It was a suprisingly delicious breakfast. It was now the crack of 9 and it was time to hike through the woods to Seventeen Landing.

Unusually hot for June

Despite it being June in the north woods, it was unusually hot for 10 a.m. when we started walking. We guessed that the rest of the day would be even hotter. Schmitty and I had put on our waders as Rosie said the walk was not really all that long. Besides, I thought, there was this bar, which probably had air conditioning. Rosie and Dennis just had rubber knee boots and scampered through the woods while Schmitty and I lumbered along in our heavy waders. Our tackle was a mix of fly rods and spinning rods. Rosie carried a big backpack. "Necessities," he said.

In those days, waders were mostly heavy rubber and canvas affairs, and soon Schmitty and I both felt like we were a couple of high school wrestlers trying to make weight. We were way wetter on the inside than we were on the outside and we became increasingly miserable. Plus, we hadn't packed any water, as we were counting on this mythical bar.

As I walked along, drenched in sweat, I kept looking for the bar. I was confused, hot and now very thirsty. We were in the middle of a deep, very quiet woods and I couldn't hear any road traffic or any other indications that a streamside country bar might be nearby. Everything was silent, save for a few birds. We continued trudging along, sweaty, grumpy and thinking Rosie was playing some sort of joke. Suddenly, Rosie stopped. "There's the bar!" he shouted. Dennis, Schmitty, and I stopped and looked at each other. We couldn't see any bar.

Rosie stood on a small rise, pointing to a small depression just off the trail. "Here's the bar, boys" he laughed and pointed to what looked like some wooden boards strewn around on the bottom of a little depression in the forest floor. On closer examination, bright green watercress grew in profusion and clear cold water flowed out of this small area. The bar was in a spring hole.

Ice-cold spring water was flowing all over this little area. Rosie knelt down over a board with a door handle. Lifting the handle, Rosie revealed a spring-water-filled beer barrel with the top cut off, into which a series of drilled holes which allowed the cold spring water to flow through and cool cans of beer. The top of the barrel was sawn off and a small hinge was drilled into the top. It was a perfect bar, we thought, except there was no beer. Rosie lifted the handle and stared inside.

Beer-stealing bears

"Bad news, boys," Rosie said glumly. "The bears got the beer."

We looked inside. The barrel was empty. Rosie then pointed to some beer cans strewn around in the watercress. "Happens once in a while," he said with some dismay.

I had noticed the empty cans when we first walked down toward the bar, thinking they were the litter left by messy fishermen. I picked one up now. It sure looked like it had been opened by a bear. The can had holes from the bear's teeth and had been crunched up. Closer examination revealed more than 20 empty cans, probably more than a case, strewn over the forest floor. It must have been either a heck of a bear beer party, or there was a bear somewhere with a massive hang-over.

"Problem solved, lads!" laughed Rosie. The "necessities" in the large backpack were two 12-packs of beer. He dumped them into the empty barrel. "Should be cold by the time we're done," he grinned. With that, we followed the little spring outflow from the bar to Seventeen Landing. It was now around 11 a.m. and the woods were now sticky and hot, but we didn't care. We could hear the rushing water Rosie promised. We each grabbed a half-warm beer. "Emergency hydration," Rosie said, and we headed to the sound of the rushing water.

It was just like he described it, Seventeen Landing was a boulder-strewn tumble of good-sized pools in an otherwise small tributary stream. It was wild and beautiful. Each pool was fed by a little waterfall which streaked each pool with magnificent bubble lines. The water had a light tannin stain and looked a little like tea, probably from flowing through the surrounding miles of conifer and tamarack. It was also just wide enough to fly fish, so I set to work, stringing my rod and trying to figure out just what these wild brookies would eat. Schmitty strung his fly rod while Rosie and Dennis took their spinning rods and a can of worms to a big pool upstream.

The answer to the selection of the right fly turned out to be almost anything in our boxes. I caught nice-sized brookies on muddler minnows, Mickey Finn streamers, black woolly buggers, white woolly buggers and a prince nymph. Feeling cocky, I went dry and put on an Adams, followed by a Royal Wulff, and then some goofy-looking thing I tied myself. The brookies ate those, too, and I lost count of just how many I caught. Schmitty had the same luck in his pool and was grinning from ear to ear. The brookies were indeed stout, dark and healthy. We kept a few to eat and let the rest go.

While wading around the perimeter of my pool, I noticed that the usual well-worn fisherman's path, typically found on either side of a popular trout stream, didn't appear to exist. The only path I could see was the one we followed down from the small trickle which flowed out of the spring hole. The little path stopped at the side of the hole Schmitty was fishing in where it took the form of a small "T." The small path then went about 30 feet in either direction along the streambank, then it disappeared. No other streamside paths were evident and I thought maybe this really was Rosie's private trout hole and the little bar in the spring was Rosie's private joint.

Rosie and Dennis whooped it up on their pool and both waded in to cool off. Schmitty and I could hear them splashing around like a couple of elephants. Taking their lead, we stripped off our hot waders and went in the water, too. By around 2 o'clock we had the makings of a fine

supper of brook trout in our creels. Rosie kept a good-sized brown trout for his smoker. We were all wet, thirsty and tired. We were fished out. It was time to see if the beer in the spring hole was cold enough to drink.

As we got closer to the spring, Rosie went ahead to see if the bears were having a party with our replacement beer. "You can never be too careful with these guys," he said, and motioned us forward. With no bears in evidence, we all reached into the barrel for a cold beer.

Cheap northwoods beer

Back in those days, most Wisconsin brewers offered a cheap summer beer for the "up north" market, with names which have long been forgotten and also included a generic beer in a plain all-white can labelled "BEER." You could get a 12-pack of this stuff for under \$2 and sometimes a sixer for 89 cents. While price point was all important for us, taste was not. It was this kind of beer that filled our little barrel in the deep hot woods.

This cheap cold beer turned out to be, quite possibly, the best beer we ever had. We scooped out a little space in the watercress to keep the creels cool and settled into the business of refreshment. Rosie took a can and walked over to a little rise just off the spring. He said he was the bear sentry. We thought he was laying it on a little thick. We laughed and sat down in the cool spring hole to enjoy the cold cans of beer and talk about the trout we caught, recounting heroic fights with some of the bigger trout, especially the ones which broke us off or jumped clear out of the water before spitting out our fly. We speculated as to just how big they might have been. During the course of this discussion, the trout grew dramatically in size.

We also talked about the bears having the beer party which resulted in the empty barrel, and what they might have talked about. "Garbage cans" was the general consensus, although honey and roadkill were strong contenders. Two hours passed without us knowing it. After sitting in the cold spring water and drinking this wonderful spring-chilled beer, we forgot all about the long hot hike in. But we realized we were also very hungry and the toast and bacon breakfast had long worn off. We needed fried trout, so we finished our beers, picked up our empty cans along with the bear-chewed ones and hiked back to the cabin.

The hike back wasn't too bad, despite the heat. Cooled by the spring, and relaxed by the beer, we reached the cabin fairly quickly. We dried off, changed clothes and got to work. Fish fries don't just happen. Dennis peeled potatoes and chopped an onion. Rosie melted the leftover bacon grease and I got the table ready. When Schmitty got back to the cabin there were four cast-iron frying pans on the little wood stove. Two were full of potatoes, which were already starting to cook. We dipped the trout into a mix of flour and cornmeal and put them in the hot bacon grease in the other two pans. Dinner would be ready soon. Popping fresh beers, the four of us then sat down to what is one of the best trout dinners in my memory. It consisted simply of fried brook trout, raw-fried potatoes, salt and pepper. Who needed anything else?

After dinner we talked trout late into the night. Rosie held court and alleged that the large brown trout he caught that day was the big one he had been trying to catch all summer. His tales of trying to outwit this big

crafty fish all ended in break-offs, a screaming drag and head-shaking leaps.

The way he made it sound, we were surprised he hadn't been killed back there, what with him having to fight off hordes of drunken bears, a pack of wolves and an intoxicated wolverine, all while running at wide-receiver speed through the woods to get back to the cabin. Oh, in the dark, too.

If that epic trout saga wasn't enough, Rosie told us about the young bear he had made friends with and told us of sitting around a small campfire in the backyard of the cabin, feeding the bear potato chips and scratching it around the ears while it snuggled next to him in the firelight. "Definitely a female," said Schmitty.

We made jokes about the young girl bear being unable to resist the charms of the ex-football player/male model who plied her with potato chips. We also didn't believe him and demanded he show us his fingers, figuring the bear would have bitten off at least one by now. We laughed, howled and carried on. And so it went, until the first light of dawn crept into the little cabin.

On Sunday, just before noon, the cabin slowly came back to life. It was time to go home and the prospect of a long drive appealed to none of us. We ate the remaining trout with reheated potatoes and bacon-grease toast. Coffee replaced beer. The mood was a little somber. We knew good times like this are hard to come by and usually impossible to repeat. Rosie tried to brighten things up by saying he was looking forward to some peace and quiet after this riotous weekend. "Yeah," said Schmitty. "You just want some alone time with your bear."

I have never been back to Seventeen Landing and I have never found it on any map. We talked about this later on the way home. Maybe it was a local name, or maybe it was a name Rosie or his family gave it. We never thought to ask Rosie and just assumed it was just the name of the stream. We would never know. Times being what they were, and Rosie having both itchy feet and dreams of grandeur, moved to Montana where he intended to become an elk-hunting and trout-fishing guide. He never came back, but visited occasionally around Christmas for years thereafter. We would get together and always revisit the great weekend at Seventeen Landing, the bar in the spring hole, the brook trout fishing and the memorable trout dinner. After a time, Rosie's guiding dreams were replaced by bartending and odd jobs. He stayed in Montana, surrounded by the trout, the elk, the mountains and maybe a few bears.

He is gone now, sadly succumbing to cancer at 60. We had a small wake in a tavern on Milwaukee's east side where we told Rosie stories, drank a little beer and revisited Seventeen Landing. We wondered if we could ever find it again and if the bar and the brookies were still there? All of those present agreed that after 30-plus years, finding this magical spot would be a nearly impossible task and Seventeen Landing would have to exist only in our memories.

If I had had my way I would have scattered some of Rosie's ashes in the stained water of Seventeen Landing, some at the little bar in the spring hole, and the rest around the fire pit at the cabin, where an old black bear mourns his passing and misses her ear scratches and the potato chips from her tall, handsome ex-football player.

Volunteers help fin-clip Red Cliff coasters

Words and photos by Stan Zarnowiecki

It sounds like a great time: Fin-clipping thousands of immature trout at a fish hatchery. Visions of what it might be like and the actual task turned out to be north and south. Nevertheless, two members of the Oak Brook Chapter traveled north to the Red Cliff Indian reservation fish hatchery in Bayfield when the call was sent out by the Wild Rivers Chapter that the hatchery needed help with the annual spring fin clipping of coaster brook trout.

Wild Rivers Chapter President Melis Arik provided information on times, dates and location of the hatchery. We settled on coming up for two days in late April. Our dates and times were confirmed by hatchery specialist Lance Bresette. An eight-hour car trip to Ashland and arrival at a local motel the night before provided the finality of our impending work days.

The Red Cliff Indian Reservation hatchery sits on land above underground aquifers, the source of water for the hatchery. Water passes through the hatchery at a rate of 500 gallons per minute and is discharged

into wetland ponds where nutrients are filtered out as the water finds its way to Lake Superior. They also use a filtering and recycling program to minimize overall water usage.

Over the years, starting in 1994, they have been able to stock more than 1.3 million coaster brook trout into and around the streams and Lake Superior shoreline. The eggs come from brood stock on site and from the Iron River fish hatchery. The strain that is raised is called Tobin Harbor.

The actual task of fin clipping is tedious, monotonous, arduous, boring, repetitive, dull, repetitious, uninteresting work. But it has to be done and it has to be done to thousands of fish. The spring and fall fin clippings see 50,000 fish go through the system. You have to grab a little slippery fish and with a small pair of scissors, clip the fin that the hatchery has decided to clip for this year's run.

They alternate clipping between the left and right ventral fins and the adipose fin, for the purposes of identifying year classes. This year, we were clipping the left ventral fin. But you turn the fish upside down to clip so actually you are clipping the right side, upside down of course



FIN CLIPPING COASTER BROOK TROUT

becomes left side, depending on how you are holding the fish, head toward you or tail toward you. In other words, you have to concentrate, and all of us fly tyers should be good at this since we concentrate when we are tying and we are using small scissors to cut our materials and trim our flies as we tie.

Focus required

You also have to keep count of the fish that you are fin clipping. So that means no talking to your fellow coworkers because you will lose count if you converse. You clip 10, 20 or 30 fins and then you grab a counter and click off your numbers. The fish have been put to sleep with a harmless chemical so they are somewhat docile, you grab a fish from your small tub, clip the fin, remember the count and then toss it back into the holding tank. Initially, the fish fall to the bottom of the tank but if you have done everything correctly, in about 20 minutes, the sleepy chemical wears off and they are once again swimming around, sans a fin.

We worked for eight hours each day, taking lunch and then returning to the grind.

The first day we clipped nearly 3,600 but somehow slowed down the second day and managed about

3,000. This is barely a dent in the overall number of fish needed to be clipped, but the staff was happy to have us.

Welcoming staff

Speaking of the staff, we couldn't have felt more welcomed to be invited to participate. Lance Bresette, who is in charge of the program, gave us perfect directions, answered all of the dumb questions that novices have, posed for pictures, and invited us back anytime to help out again. The facility was a great place to work and provided all of the necessary equipment to get the job done. It is really a great way to spend some time volunteering on something other than stream work project days. They also insert PIT tags into 500 fish annually and they demonstrated how that is done also. This is another way fish might get identified once released into local waters.

I urge you to contact Lance at the hatchery and support their program by traveling up to the hatchery and fin clip trout when he puts out the call. The Wild Rivers Chapter is in contact with the hatchery and should send out a notice when it's time to fin clip. Fin clipping usually happens in April and October.



TANK FULL OF FIN-CLIPPED COASTER BROOK TROUT

Stakeholders unite for Marengo River planting

By Jamie Vaughn, Great Lakes Engagement Coordinator

This past May, Wild Rivers TU, TU National, local partners and volunteers came together to plant trees at a project site along the Marengo River. Volunteers planted 750 white pine trees along the Marengo River in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest with the support of the U.S. Forest Service, Superior Rivers Watershed Association and Friends of the Lincoln Community Forest.

In 2021, TU and the U.S. Forest Service completed a project where large wood structures were installed along the Marengo to stabilize the banks that were rapidly eroding due to unprecedented flood damage in 2016. This tree planting will help to further stabilize banks and restore vegetation that was impacted by the

floods.

This tree planting was part of the larger Plant For Our Future campaign by TU that resulted in chapters and staff members hosting 45 planting events across 10 states this spring. More than 750 volunteers planted nearly 15,000 trees along 3.5 linear stream miles and covering 38 acres, about the size of 30 football fields. As those trees grow, not only will they keep sediment out of streams, filter runoff and provide shade and stability, they will also help pull carbon dioxide from the atmosphere to help combat climate change, a major threat to our cold-water resources.

Ultimately, 15 awesome river stewards donated their time on a Saturday in northern Wisconsin to help take care of their home watershed, and we're so grateful for their



TIRED TREE PLANTING CREW

Volunteers along the Marengo River after helping to plant trees to help stabilize and revegetate banks following restoration efforts in the river.

efforts and collaboration. We look forward to working with more chapters, partners and members through engagement opportunities that

bring us together for the benefit of healthy trout, clean water and resilient communities.



Chapter News

Aldo Leopold Chapter

Thankfully we appear to be coming out the other side of the Covid pandemic, and with the changes we have seen everywhere else, we are also seeing some here at the Aldo Leopold Chapter. We had our first board meeting in quite some time and had three board members decide to not to seek re-election. A huge thank you to Mike Stapleton and Tom and Sally Gawle for all of their contributions as board members. Enjoy your "retirement" and we hope to see you on the stream and at future chapter events.

We also welcomed two new members to our board, Randy Durner and Brock Flowers, and we look forward to having them help shape the future direction of our chapter. With that said, we still have two open seats on the board, so if you are an Aldo member and would like to serve, please reach out. Future plans are starting to take shape, as we plan to have a chapter outing the weekend of September 10-11 in

the Driftless Area.

We also plan to resume our "Bar Flies" fly tying events this coming winter. Stay tuned or drop a message for further details.

The recent land acquisition that we partnered to purchase on Dell Creek spawned a renewed interest there. We are having discussions with Nate Nye from the DNR, and plan to do a multi-year project on Dell Creek starting next year. The project will be light in nature, with no LUNKER structures or heavy equipment used, but hopefully large in impact as we hope to work on a large portion of the stream.

Rumor has it brook trout are becoming more prevalent, and may even become the dominant species in the future in Dell Creek, which has many of us excited about the future there. If you have any questions, comments or need to message me, please drop me a note at dtendres9@gmail.com

—Dan Endres

Antigo Chapter

We've provided funding for stream habitat work, including \$6,000 to fund a DNR brushing crew and fuel for the DNR dredge, along with a \$2,000 grant from the State Council's Friends of Wisconsin TU grant program.

We recently built boxes at 20 landings and stream-access sites for waste fishing line, along with signs to encourage their use. We are setting up a schedule to clean and empty them. Thanks to Mike Heinrich for making the boxes and signs.

We recently helped three area high schools finish their TIC projects.

We will be setting up work days to brush and maintain fishing access and fishing docks in the Antigo area.

On June 11 we held our annual

Kid's Fishing Day at the Antigo city park. It was a rainy day, but did not dampen the smiles on the kids' faces. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this day possible, and a huge thanks to all for the generous donations.

We filled the fish tank with beautiful brook trout for the kids to catch, and also had a place for the kids to catch prizes. DNR personnel ran a great casting contest. We served hamburgers, hot dogs, root beer and all the fixings, even fresh fruit. We held a drawing for a girls and boys bike, and fishing poles. As always, it was one of the best days of the year for our chapter.

Keep safe and have a great summer.

—Scott Henrichs



ANTIGO CHAPTER HAS SUCCESSFUL KID'S FISHING DAY

On June 11 the chapter held its annual Kid's Fishing Day at the Antigo city park. It was a rainy day, but did not dampen the smiles on the kids' faces. They filled the fish tank with beautiful brook trout for the kids to catch, and also had a place for the kids to catch prizes. DNR personnel ran a great casting contest. They served hamburgers, hot dogs, root beer and all the fixings, even fresh fruit. And they held a drawing for a girls and boys bike, and fishing poles.

Blackhawk Chapter

In April we held our first in-person meeting in two years at Sidelines in Janesville, catching up with fellow members, and followed by our monthly meeting. Since the majority of our members are in the "high-Covid-risk" (aka "old guys") group, most everyone was just pretty recently getting back to fishing and getting out in the public.

Since we haven't met in so long, we used the meeting to prioritize and set the course for the chapter. Three basic areas, which have always been at the core of the chapter, emerged: Hands-on conservation work, membership recruitment and retention and fundraising.

Organizing conservation work is a huge undertaking. At present we don't have anyone dedicated to coordinating work, so we are reaching out to the local County Conservation departments, the DNR and other chapters to partner on work projects. Hopefully, we will have someone to take the reins for coordinating projects in the near future.

Several members offered suggestions for recruiting new members and getting the word out about TU. This needs to be a main priority as

the core group of members keeps shrinking and we aren't getting any younger.

Another way of reaching out as well as raising money for projects is our annual banquet. After a hiatus of three years, we are planning a banquet for April of 2023. The banquet is not only important for the above-mentioned reasons, but it is the event that really brings a huge group of dedicated members together to prepare for and put on the banquet.

We would like to continue with programs to reach out to the community, such as fishing clinics, casting clinic or fly-tying classes, as resources permit. We are sponsoring two individuals to the WITU Youth Camp. We did have chapter representation for the fly tying at the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo in Poynette.

For Blackhawk TU it is a time of rebuilding, refocusing and getting our waders wet again, and hopefully, at last, finally getting out from behind the mask.

—Dave Brethauer



CWTU DH3 FLY FISHING SCHOOL

Dan Harmon III Fly Fishing School students and staff had a beautiful day on the Tomorrow River. (top photo)

Jeff Treu encourages student Jane Bersch to put what she learned earlier in the day into action. (bottom photo)

Central Wisconsin Chapter

CWTU held its 50+1 anniversary conservation banquet at the Mt. Morris Camp & Retreat. It was our first banquet in a few years and everyone was more than ready to get back to it. The attendance showed it, as 152 attended. We had more prizes than past years. Congratulations to all who won items.

Thank you to all who attended and made this a standout banquet in CWTU history. A big thanks to Laura Tucker as banquet chair as well as the great committee of volunteers who pulled it all together. Thank you as well to all the generous donors that provided outstanding prizes and support.

In the background throughout

the evening a slideshow ran of photos of a mix of chapter activities and also showcased many past and present members. Once dinner was wrapping up there was a series of small presentations, including opening statements by Wayne Parmley, a few words about the Tom Poulette memorial stone and Chad Tucker saying a few words about work days.

Bob Jozowski gave a quick overview of River Keepers for 2022, which consists of 30 teams, 35 sites and 90 volunteers. Bob then presented the award "River Keeper of the Year" to Peggy Compton. Russ and Sue Bouck conducted the youth raffle followed by Tom Meyer running through the placemat trivia an-

Chapter News



Nancy Loehrke



Nancy Loehrke

CWTU BESTOWS CHAPTER AWARDS

Mike San Dretto and Laura Tucker both received the “Brookie” award from CWTU for all their contributions over the years. (top photo) Top honors went to Ira Giese (right). He received the “Ozzie” award, presented by chapter Vice President Tom Meyer (left).

swers. Awards Chair Dan Harmon III presented the Golden Net Award to past president Stan Cichowski, who served as chapter president from 2019-2021 and has been a long-time board member.

Tom Meyer presented Ira Giese the “Ozzie” Award for service and lifetime achievement. Ira has been a longtime active volunteer with CWTU. He spent almost a decade heading up the master’s fly-tying class, was assistant coordinator for work days, a longtime River Keeper, instructor/guide for the Dan Harmon III Fly Fishing School, committee member for TroutFest and a frequent speaker/presenter.

Dan Harmon III also presented Laura Tucker with the 2020 “Brookie” Award, the highest award for individual achievement in the chapter. Laura has been the banquet chair for more than a decade, a past president (2017-2019), works tirelessly managing food for events such as work days, the Dan Harmon III Fly Fishing School and TroutFest, is host of numerous picnics, and the list goes on. Currently she is CWTU secretary.

Dan wrapped it up by presenting Mike San Dretto with the 2021 “Brookie” Award for all his great contributions over the years, including past president (2015-2017), work days, outreach events, chapter membership and he is currently very involved with TU-CARES.

Shawn Sullivan, DNR Fisheries Operations Team Manager based in

Wild Rose, gave a passionate presentation on all the work done so far on our area streams. He commended his hard-working team and talked about what’s in the works for future projects. He was grateful and appreciative for all the support CWTU has given over the years and that it keeps getting better year after year.

The evening continued with 13 live auctions, pulling of winning tickets and endless smiling faces as prizes were handed out. The camaraderie was infectious and continued until the last person walked out the door.

Regarding work days, the summer plan is to work on the Younglove section of the West Branch of the White River, except for August, which will be at Bird Creek in Wautoma with the WITU Youth Fishing Camp students and volunteers assisting. A big thanks goes to the Elliott Donnelley TU chapter from Chicago, which historically sends a work crew of members to help with our May work day, and also presented CWTU with a \$4,000 check to put toward more stream work in the area. For information on upcoming work days, contact coordinator Chad Tucker at 920-540-4665 or chadmtucker1@gmail.com.

Finally, after two years off, in early June we held our 43rd Dan Harmon III Fly Fishing School on the beautiful Tomorrow River near Amherst. This year we had 13 eager students and plenty of volunteers to help. As in the past, the day was filled with a mix of classroom pre-

sentations and hands-on activities and demos on the water. The weather was fantastic on Saturday with a small bit of rain Sunday morning, which didn’t hurt the fishing during the guided fishing segment. Both days included a wonderful breakfast and lunch spearheaded by Laura Tucker. No one went hungry.

Thanks to Jeff Treu and John

Gremmer, who organized and managed the whole operation. Additional thanks to all the CWTU members who taught, presented, mentored and guided to give these students a great intro and/or refresher to the great sport of fly fishing. Everyone is already looking forward to next year.

—Wayne Parmley

Coulee Region Chapter

We held an in-person banquet March 25 at Cedar Creek in Onalaska. The event, which drew about 100 people, continues to be a successful fundraiser for us and never fails to be a darned good time. Chapter Treasurer Curt Rees took the reins as emcee, Bob Hubbard did much of the pre-event organizing and gathering of prizes, and many, many other members pitched in to make the evening a delight. Thanks to everyone who helped organize it, as well as to those who participated and joined us for dinner.

Tainter Creek Stream Day, a partnership with the Farmer-Led Watershed Council and Valley Stewardship Network, was June 4. Those who braved the sometimes steady rain enjoyed a fish-shocking demonstration, which yielded a shocking number of fish, in about 50 yards of stream. There were also fly-tying and fly-casting demonstrations, a wonderful lunch, various presentations and demonstrations, and a tour of the stream restoration project on Conway Creek. Mark your calendar for the first Saturday in June, 2023 for the event’s return.

CRTU Youth Education Coordinator Brad Berger provided some fly-fishing exposure to students in Mitch Olson’s Adventure Education class at La Crosse Central High School this spring. Students were able to learn about fly fishing and fly casting, along with gaining some valuable information on the Driftless Area over the course of the unit. We hope to continue that outreach partnership in the fall. Our thanks to Brad for making that happen.

Our April membership meeting was held online and featured our own Jason Freund, who discussed spring hatches in the Driftless Area and how to fish them. The virtual meeting was very well attended. Jason is extremely knowledgeable and an excellent resource. We are fortunate to have him on our board. Membership meetings are cast live on the Internet now, if you are unable to join us in person. Our May member event was conducted in Coon Valley Veterans Park. It was

an enjoyable outing with the usual picnic fare and felt like a pleasant gathering of old friends. Thanks to all who joined us.

Grants by the La Crosse Area Public Education Foundation and CRTU were able to make possible an Introduction to Fly Fishing summer school class also conducted at Central High School. Students will be taught lessons on fishing, fly casting, entomology, macroinvertebrates, stream hydrology and fly tying. Daily fishing trips to area ponds and streams are a focus of this class. Fourteen students ages 12-14 registered for this inaugural event. The class is open to students in grades 6-12 and it is hoped that the class continues to grow after this first, pilot year. Instructors for the class are CRTU Board Secretary and Central High School teacher Brad Bryan and CHS science teacher Scott Linssen.

The 11th annual Coon Creek Trout Fest in Coon Valley was June 25. The kids fishing event included prizes and the release of more than 300 trout. Other events included fly-tying and fly-casting instruction, food and beverages, vendor booths, a village rummage sale and much, much more. Come join us next year for some fun.

Our second STREAM Girls day held in cooperation with the local Girl Scouts of America chapter is being planned for August. Check our Facebook page for updates.

Creeks in our area are in good shape and fishing well. A few good, soaking rains here in early June have been a boon, as some of the systems were starting to run low. We enjoyed some predictable caddis hatches this spring, which continue as of this writing. If the gods continue to bless us, we will be spared the return of any catastrophic rain events and mayfly season will transition gracefully to hopper season. Rods will bend and reels will scream. Those fishing transitional waters have been reporting some large browns and for those who enjoy fishing the smaller waters, 50-fish days are within reach.

—Brad Bryan

Fox Valley Chapter

We are pleased to welcome two new chapter leaders. Jerome Herro is our new vice president, while Tony Pudlo was elected as our new chapter president. Congratulations to both. While our board retention rate remains nearly 100 percent, we are searching for a new board member, due to a recent board member’s relocation.

We are pleased to learn from our Membership Committee, headed by Chris Firkus, that FVTU welcomed 18 new members in the past six months. Welcome, new members.

Our annual Special Needs Fish-

ing Day, a casualty of the pandemic, was held in May. On a gorgeous day at Camp Shioc, FVTU hosted nearly 30 disabled anglers and their caregivers. This heartwarming event was organized by Jerome Herro.

In partnership with the Central Wisconsin Chapter, we conducted this year’s first habitat work day in late May. About 30 volunteers from numerous TU chapters improved sections of the West branch of the White River in Waushara County. Shaun Sullivan and his Wild Rose DNR crew led and supervised the volunteers. Around noon, the din-



Chapter News



Jerome Herro

FVTU'S SPECIAL NEEDS FISHING DAY RETURNS

Elevated fishing platforms gave anglers a perfect perch. The chapter's annual Special Needs Fishing Day, a casualty of the pandemic, was held in May.

ner bell rang, signaling hot fresh local pizza lunch was ready and to announce the end of the day's habitat work.

Joe Bach reports the receipt of another grant for Stony Brook stream enhancement work in Calumet Co. The \$36,500 grant will pay for the installation of a 44-foot-long and 12.5-foot-wide bottomless arched culvert that replaces an old six-foot round culvert. Jim Kettler

wrote the grant and the work will be done by the town of Stockbridge. This represents the third culvert replacement, which will allow the stream to flow unobstructed for three miles including being rerouted 1,000 feet through farmland. Please read the article about this by Joe Bach in this issue of Wisconsin Trout.

—Don Clouthier

Frank Hornberg Chapter

We received a \$2,000 donation from Larry Krueger of Stevens Point to support the Kinnikinic Dam removal in River Falls. Our chapter will then apply for a matching Wisconsin Trout Unlimited grant of \$2,000. Larry said "it was some of the best money he ever donated." Thank you, Larry!

In May we teamed up with the UW-Stevens Point Flyfishing Club to clean up garbage along the Tomorrow/Waupaca River. Fourteen people removed garbage from 21 parking lots and bridge crossings.

We collected eight large bags. I also spoke with kayakers coming down the river and they reported they saw no garbage along the river. This was great news! Let's keep the Tomorrow River beautiful!

Remember, you do not have to be a TU member to participate in our activities. If you have a friend or neighbor who cares about the environment, please invite them to our next event.

—Doug Erdmann

Green Bay Chapter

In April we held our annual meeting, when we celebrate our accomplishments over the past year and fill open board seats. This year there was plenty to celebrate and Chad Neta and Jim Vanden Branden were voted into two open seats. Wisconsin DNR Fisheries Research Scientist Matt Mitro joined us as a virtual guest speaker to talk about an issue close to our region, the relationship between trout and beavers.

Our first work project of the summer was in May, when we partnered with the Oconto River, Northwoods and Wisconsin River Valley chapters and the DNR to plant about 1,500 trees on the banks of the Prairie River. This was a continuation of a workday we held in May 2021, when we helped plant about 1,000 trees.

Last fall our board voted to fund



Adrian Meseberg

GREEN BAY CHAPTER HELPS RELEASE TIC TROUT

Lombardi Middle schoolers, GBTU members and the RNR released 31 TIC fish into Haller Creek.



Adrian Meseberg



Adrian Meseberg

GREEN BAY CHAPTER HOLDS KIDS FISHING DAY

Tom VanErman (top photo) and Dave Ostanek (bottom photo) teaching fly tying at the Take a Kid Fishing Day event.

the \$1,500 needed for Lombardi Middle School to purchase a Trout-In-the-Classroom (TIC) setup. We also chipped in \$200 toward Bay View Middle School's TIC program. In the case of Lombardi, they set up their tank in early October and received their 200 eggs in November. After learning about trout, taking the responsibility to ensure all the environmental conditions were met, and that the fish were fed regularly, the middle schoolers were left with 31 fingerling trout ready for stocking.

In May Lombardi Agri-Science teacher and chapter board member Carla Zimmerman, Green Bay DNR Fisheries Biologist Jason Breeggemann, GBTU's Kim McCarthy and Adrian Meseberg, and students who were instrumental in raising these trout stocked them in Haller Creek. As a pleasant surprise, Channel 5 news came out and did a feature story on the event.

In June, for the first time in three years, we held our Annual Summer

Picnic. Fourteen members, family and friends came out to our potluck-style event. The chapter provided the main course and drinks and John Duechert grilled burgers and hot dogs. The food was very good, and the company was great.

In June we joined the Outagamie County Conservation Club for their popular Take-a-Kid-Fishing-Day. This year 290 kids registered, which was a new record. We taught kids fly casting, fly tying and the importance of our clean, coldwater resources. We were kept busy by a constant flow of youth participants. Chapter volunteers included Dave Ostanek, Tom and Pam VanErman and Adrian Meseberg.

GBTU continues to run our Veteran's Service Program every other Tuesday. They are held at Tight Lines Fly Shop in De Pere.

Speaking of veterans, we lost a very special member and leader of our Veteran's Program. On June 2, Gary Gillis peacefully passed away. Gary joined TU in 1998, and was



Paul Kruse

GREEN BAY CHAPTER JOINS PRAIRIE RIVER WORK DAY

A recent Prairie River work day crew included members of Green Bay, Oconto River, Northwoods and Wisconsin River Valley chapters and the DNR.

Chapter News



recognized with our Distinguished Service Award in 2021 and the President's Club Award in 2019. Gary was not one of the leaders of our Veteran's Program. He was a Veteran himself. He donated multiple hand-crafted fly rods, which were used to raise revenue for our mission. Moreover, Gary was a regular at chapter work projects, meetings,

banquets and events. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his friends and family.

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

—Adrian Meseberg

Harry & Laura Nohr Chapter

We had our officer elections in April. We elected Carol Murphy as president, Kyle Richards as vice president, Gordon Grieshaber as secretary and John Morton as treasurer. Don Pluemer is past president. Brian Larson and Ted Swenson were elected to the board and Todd Templen will finish Carol's term on the board.

We held our 2022 banquet on our regular schedule this year, the first Friday in May. Attendance was down a bit to 65, but we did well with our fundraising and presented several awards.

Two families and landowners who have granted fishing easements and allowed us to work on their Blue River property were thanked and honored with the Landowner Appreciation Award. The Zadrazil and Stanek families' children were present to accept the awards. Project Chairman Don Pluemer provided a summary of their efforts.

The Gold Net Award went to our new chapter President Carol Murphy. She has brought a lot of energy and new ideas to the group and organized the Water Monitor Volunteers, has led several gatherings designed to teach women how to fish, and has been involved in state-wide events that help women get outdoors, become better anglers and get involved in conservation efforts.

We recognized Kurt Meyer for earning the State Council Award for youth education. He has a Trout In

the Classroom (TIC) program in his Fennimore School science classes, which lets students see trout hatch from eggs, grow in cold-water aquariums, and are then released into a local trout stream.

Don Pluemer was honored by the Gathering Waters Land Trust Group with the Conservationist of the Year 2021 for his ongoing work and leadership in stream restoration.

We had several work days putting in stiles and working with SW-TU on brush clearing. If you are interested in work days, please contact Ted Swenson at swensonted@gmail.com. Also stay connected on our Facebook page.

Our TIC 7th grade students from Fennimore Middle School traveled to Castle Rock Creek to release their trout. They studied the macroinvertebrate stream life and enjoyed a fish-shocking demonstration by DNR staff. Following that they observed stream restoration being completed on the Blue River and finished up the day playing in one of the many springs that charge our coldwater resources.

Work on the second half of the Blue River project on the Zadrazil property continues. Next, we will be working on the only eased section of Big Spring that we have not worked on. It is just above the confluence with Six Mile Branch.

—Brian Larson



Kurt Meyer

NOHR CHAPTER'S TIC STUDENTS RELEASE TROUT

The Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter's TIC 7th grade students from Fennimore Middle School traveled to Castle Rock Creek to release their trout. They studied the macroinvertebrate stream life and enjoyed a fish-shocking demonstration by DNR staff. Following that they observed stream restoration being completed on the Blue River and finished up the day playing in one of the many springs that charge our coldwater resources.

our summer break. The meeting was held at Rush River Brewing with Steve's Pizza provided by the chapter. Chapter awards were presented with a lot of catching up with friends and tall fish tales.

We finished off the winter brushing season with a couple of final workdays in April. The snow cover was totally gone but with a couple of portable pumps and some garden hose, we were able to wet things down enough to negate the fire danger while continuing to burn the slash from the trees and brush we were cutting.

A total of 66 volunteers assisted over the course of the season with 34 individuals attending more than one workday. At our May chapter meeting at Rush River Brewing, we awarded seven individuals with gift certificates for having participated in 10 or more brushing days. John Skelton topped the list by attending 24 work days, followed closely by Jim Tatzel, with 23. The others who filled out the list were Dave Gregg, Dave Kozlovsky, Tom Anderson, Steve Cox and Trish Hannah.

With the lack of snow cover and the late arrival of spring, the ground remained frozen until the first week of April when Randy Arnold was able to get out in the field and drive in fence posts to install another 44 bluebird nest boxes. Sites getting the boxes were the new restoration

on Cady Creek just downstream of the County Highway P bridge, Gilbert Creek downstream of the Highway 29 bridge, the South Fork of the Kinni at the Highway 29 easement, and at the county park on the Trimble River just downstream of Highway 10.

On a recent workday eight volunteers joined Randy to assist with planting trees and shrubs at the new Cady Creek restoration. Volunteers included Don Fritz, Jim Tatzel, Dan Donahue, Charlie Schlatter, Michele Bevis and Steve Wardell.

Chapter volunteers Ken and Missie Hanson, Matt Janquart and family, along with Dean Hansen, braved a cold Earth Day April 26 in River Falls to staff our chapter's booth at the event. Turnout was good, considering the unfavorable weather.

The Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter staffed one of three stations related to stream conservation as part of Rocky Branch Elementary's annual "Eco-Week" celebration. Eco-Week is a full week of nature appreciation, outdoor service learning, and environmental education for all their students. The fourth-grade students, in collaboration with the DNR, participated in an electroshocking of a local tributary. Students observed four species of fish as they were collected, measured, weighed and safely returned to the

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

We had a booth at the Fly-Fishing Expo in St. Paul, which was held after a two-year hiatus due to Covid. It was great seeing familiar and new faces and interest in our activities.

At our April meeting DNR Habitat Specialist Nate Anderson gave a

recap on the DNR projects of 2021, along with a project update for 2022 and news on easements. Senior Fisheries Biologist Kasey Yallaly gave a presentation entitled "2021 Large Stream Survey and Rush River Creel Survey Results." In May we had our last chapter meeting before



KIAP-TU-WISH'S TIC TROUT RELEASE VOLUNTEERS

Trout release volunteers Ken Hanson, Missie Hanson, Pat Sexton, Dean Hansen and Mark Pereenboom.



KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER TREE PLANTING CREW

Those helping with tree planting included Don Fritz, Brian Hoverson, Dan Donahoe, Dave Brockway, Charlie Schlatter, Steve Wardell and Michele Bevis.



Chapter News



KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER STREAMGIRLS AND VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

water. Students from the Renaissance Charter Academy's "Wisconsin Waterways" high school course were also able to participate in the activity.

Pairs of students captured invertebrates using D nets. Other students identified insects from charts with help from Dean Hansen and Kiap-TU-Wish members Dan Wilcox, Mark Peerenboom and Tom Schnadt.

In May we helped three TIC programs release their trout in Willow River State Park. Along with the trout release, other activities includ-

ed stream bug capture/identification and fly-casting lessons. Volunteers included Dean Hansen, John Ulman, Tom Schnadt, Ken Hanson, Missie Hanson, Patrick Sexton, Mark Peerenboom, Molly Barritt and Greg Olson.

Kiap-TU-Wish conducted our first STREAM Girls program in May. The Ellsworth Rod and Gun Club was the host and reports were fantastic. A separate story can be found in this issue of *Wisconsin Trout*.

—Gary Horvath

Lakeshore Chapter

It's been a very busy three months for us as we enthusiastically experience things getting back to normal following these past two pandemic years. We've had excellent attendance at our meetings, very well attended monthly conservation events and lots of fun.

Our March meeting featured long time LSTU member Rog Kletke giving a very informative talk entitled "Fly Fishing Common Mayfly Hatches." Rog, who has his own YouTube channel, discussed a couple very specific Iowa Driftless Area hatches, concentrating on recognizing the hatch, choosing the best fly patterns and choosing the best techniques for the water type. Thank you, Rog.

In April we featured Titus Seilheimer, Fisheries Outreach coordinator for the Wisconsin Sea Grant program. Titus talked to us about the current state of fisheries in Lake Michigan and tributaries, the latest on invasive species and the potential impacts of global warming on our Great Lakes. The presentation generated a lot of discussion and was very well received. In May, we elected new officers and a new board. Many thanks go to our outgoing leaders and especially Myk Hranicka for his leadership the past five years. Myk has moved up to the position of vice chair with the State Council, where his leadership and passion will continue to have a big

impact.

We have also been very active in our community and in our habitat work on the Onion River. In May we contributed to the TU plant-a-tree campaign by hosting an event at Camp Y Koda in Sheboygan Falls. We had more than 20 volunteers plant about 180 trees along the Sheboygan River on Camp Y Koda property. The best thing about this was that only three of the volunteers were TU members. The rest were local families, six high-school-aged volunteers from the Fond du Lac area and conservation-minded volunteers from local businesses. We thank Camp Y Koda for allowing us to utilize their facilities for our meetings and look forward to more opportunities to partner with them on youth- and family-oriented conservation efforts.

Our monthly workdays, held the second Saturday every month, have drawn 12 to 18 volunteers each. We've been focused on keeping up with removal of dead ash trees that are either in the river or about to drop as a result of the emerald ash borer. This is a huge job as ash is a predominant species in the Onion River basin and the destruction is immense. So far, our work has kept the stream in the special regulations zone mostly open and fishable, but it is a huge task that will likely be our burden for several years to come. The next few work

days will see us focus more on repairing existing bank cover structures, but some tree removal may also be needed. We can always use more hands, so if you are interested in helping out, please contact me at

alwartz@gmail.com.

Wishing you all a fun and safe summer.

—Al Wartz

Marinette County Chapter

We held our 37th annual fundraising banquet in April. The banquet was a success and was back to the old days filled with people and fun. With funds raised at the banquet, we can pay off all our commitments for this year's summer habitat projects and be ready for next year's commitments. We will

be working with other chapters in the northeast to do work projects during the summer. We will also be holding another fly-fishing event on July 20 at Stephenson Library in Marinette.

—Dale Lange

Northwoods Chapter

On May 4 we held our first in-person meeting since March 2020. We're in catch-up mode, and the meeting served several purposes. As you'll all remember, the Northwoods Chapter had a late-arriving spring this year, and our larger lakes were still ice covered on the date of our meeting. Our attendance received a boost with Bill Sherer from We Tie It Fly Shop in Boulder Junction giving a forecast of what to expect for the fishing opener. After the presentation, we conducted a long-overdue annual meeting and held elections. We elected three officers and two board members. Our new president is Mike Pierce, and our new vice president is Christine Pierce. Re-

turning to our chapter leadership are Terry Cummings as treasurer and Bill Sherer and Duke Andrews as board members. At this time the secretary position and the remaining board positions are vacant. This summer we will be returning to pursuing means to revitalize the chapter that we had begun when COVID-19 brought us to a halt. Supply chain delays prevented us from expanding our TIC program to potentially two or three more schools. Our lone TIC participant, James Williams Middle School in Rhinelander, completed their second successful year of raising brook trout.

—Terry Cummings

Oconto River Chapter

In May we were invited to help teach students from Gillett High School how to cast a fly rod. The opportunity arose as part of a "Life Sports" class taught by Jill Halla. The class included a unit on fishing. Students were taught basics on different styles of fishing including spinning, baitcasting and flyfishing. About 30 students participated in the casting demonstrations with individual instruction on the football field. A very windy day provided a challenging task to show how to cast effectively.

Chapter members including Wayne Cypinski, Lyman Wocking, David Kalous and Dale Halla used the chapter's fly rods to teach the basics of fly casting. Surprisingly, there were only two or three of the students that had ever tried to use a fly rod to fish. Several students had never fished. That was about to change.

A few days later the students went on a field trip to Lyman's Pond to practice what they were taught. The class was split into four groups and each group spread out around the small lake.

One side was reserved for those new to fly fishing. The groups switched sides every 20 minutes, allowing students ample opportunities to catch something. Each fish caught was logged as to species, length and captor.

The students caught and released more than 150 fish. Thank you to the adult volunteers including Lyman and Cathy Wocking, Gary and Helen Lisowe, Joe Femling, Wayne Cypinski, Tom Klatt and Dale Halla.

As a special treat, Dan Sumnicht prepared a fish fry for students and adults. Dan fried up nearly 175 fillets, and served them up with tartar

sauce and rye bread. This was a great opportunity to recruit some new fishing enthusiasts. Thank you to all who took part in it.

Activities around the world are planned during the week of Earth Day. The Great Global Cleanup is a worldwide campaign to remove billions of pieces of trash from neighborhoods, beaches, rivers, lakes, trails and parks to reduce waste and plastic pollution, improve habitats and prevent harm to wildlife and humans. Chapter members took part in these activities by picking up trash at boat landings on the Oconto River and some area lakes.

A crew including Bill Wagner and Dale, Jill and Tyson Halla and grandsons collected several bags of trash from County BB and Pulcifer boat landing areas.

Another crew of Kay and Tom Klatt, Rae Blom and Ted Schaff tackled landings at Underhill, Hintz and Berry Lake.

A neighbor of Christie Lake, Ron Klatt removed two bags of trash and a deer carcass from the dead-end road boat landing.

The chapter's northern crew of Dave Kalous, Lloyd Heise and Wayne Cypinski cleared brush, windfalls and other forest debris on the Wagner Trail to the Memorial Bench at Spruce Road access area to South Branch of Oconto River.

Earth day is intended for all of us to recognize how we influence our limited resources. There are often activities, campaigns and events scheduled to promote awareness of earth issues. We chose to help keep clean water and the beauty of our environment. Thank you, members, for a job well done.

—Tom Klatt



LAKESHORE CHAPTER TREE PLANTING CREW AT CAMP Y KODA

Chapter News



Andy Avgoulas

SEWTU POSTS NEW SIGNAGE AT PARADISE SPRINGS

SEWTU considers Paradise Springs Pond a special place for its education program and funds a portion of trout stocking in the associated pond. At a recent work day there, the chapter added new chapter signage explaining their support and including contact information.

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

I am going to start this article off with a plea: We need your help!

As you read this, we will have two or three workdays in the books for 2022 and we will have future opportunities for volunteers in August, September, October and, weather permitting, December. If you have never been to a workday or haven't been to one in a while, I encourage you to check one out this year.

When I first joined TU almost 10 years ago, getting involved in the workdays helped me learn the streams, meet new friends and become a better angler and conservationist. Workdays are the bread and butter of this organization, and we need your support more than ever. We have more projects than we have time and volunteers for, so we need to make every one count. Even if you can't do physical work anymore, there is always something to do such as helping set up, helping with the brat fry, taking pictures, making sure everyone has water and supplies, etc. I promise you will not be bored, and we will find the job that works best for you.

If this isn't enough to pique your interest, we will be having a special raffle at the end of the year just for volunteers at our workdays. Each participant will get an entry in the drawing for however many workdays attended throughout the year so the more you attend, the more chances you have to win. At our December chapter meeting we will raffle off at least three prizes, including a high-quality rod and reel combo.

If you have any questions or interest in an upcoming workday or event, please send an email to our

chapter mailbox at southeasternwisconsinsewtu@gmail.com or call me directly at 262-893-4965. If I haven't convinced you yet to attend a workday, please see our latest workday report from Ken Rizzo, co-chair of our habitat committee below.

Work Day Report: SEWTU participated in the Milwaukee River Watershed Clean-up Day in April, in cooperation with Milwaukee River Keeper. This is a great event to help give back to our community, partner with another conservation organization and promote our mission with the general public. Ten of our volunteers participated in the event, mostly cleaning up the Menominee River shoreline.

Our official workday schedule kicked off on May 14th at Paradise Springs in the Southern Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest near Eagle, where 20 volunteers combined forces with DNR personnel to clear brush along the stream and a giant pile of brush and wood from below the dam on the western edge of the pond.

SEWTU considers Paradise Springs Pond a special place for its education program and funds a portion of trout stocking in the associated pond. Additionally, we added new chapter signage explaining our support and including our contact information.

Afterwards the volunteers enjoyed a brat fry and some great fishing in the catch-and-release pond at the springs.

We combined forces with the Oakbrook Chapter this summer for a work day at Bluff Creek in Walworth County in June. We'll join



SEWTU CREWS DISMANTLING DAM JAM AT PARADISE SPRINGS

them again on Karcher Creek in Racine County on July 16. Our August workday and associated weekend camp outing is planned for the weekend of August 13 in the Driftless Area, although we haven't yet determined the exact location.

If you have any questions or are interested in helping with any of these workdays, please send an email to southeasternwisconsinsewtu@gmail.com.

Our chapter meetings will resume on September 27 with featured speaker Seth Waters from Dark Waters Fly Shop in Iron River, Michigan. For more information on our speaker, please check out Seth's website at darkwatersflyshop.com.

Our meetings will continue to be at the Bavarian Bierhaus in Glendale starting at 5:30 p.m. for dinner and socializing with your fellow TU members, and programs kicking off at 7 p.m.

Please watch for our email blasts on the specifics of each upcoming event, as well as our Facebook, Ins-

tagram and website.

The IF4 Film Festival and our Fall Fundraising event will be Thursday, October 27 at the Bavarian Bierhaus. Doors will open at 5 p.m., with the films starting around 7 p.m. Come early for food and drink and to participate in the raffles and auction. General admission will be \$15 for adults and \$5 for students and children. Guests can select from various ticket packages for our raffle. Other raffles and a silent auction, as well as door prizes, will also be available at the event. This is the only showing of the IF4 in the state this year. Check out FlyFilmFest.com to purchase tickets.

Not getting our emails? Have a suggestion or question? Need some fishing tips? Want to help out? Please reach out to Andy at andyavgoulas@yahoo.com or 262-893-4965. For general inquiries, please send an email to our mailbox at southeasternwisconsinsewtu@gmail.com.

—Andy Avgoulas

Southern Wisconsin Chapter

It's been so nice to see everyone again. After the long Covid winter, SWTU members have happily gathered for meetings, fundraisers and workdays.

Our meetings are back on track on the second Tuesday of each

month. We've had some great presentations on local resources, and more timely topics are planned for the summer months. Our former meeting location is on its way to being a new condo complex or something like that. We've found a great



SEWTU WORK DAY CREW



Jim Beecher

LEARNING ABOUT STREAM LIFE AT SWTU'S FREE CASTING CLINIC

Fun learning about creepy-crawlies at SWTU's free casting clinic along Black Earth Creek.



Chapter News



SOUTHERN WISCONSIN CHAPTER'S NEW CHAINSAW

Ted Swenson, conversation chair of the Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter, gives SWTU's new chainsaw a spin. The saw was purchased with a grant from Dane County.

new spot with excellent service, food and drink: Schweogler's Bowling Lanes on the west side of Madison. It's very convenient to the beltline and we welcome anyone to join us.

With our traditional fundraisers on ice due to the pandemic, we tried something new in April with a Spring Fair Fundraiser held at a local park. Thanks to the hard work of Ben Lubchansky and his amazing crew of helpers, the event did all you could ask and more. The setting, prizes, food and drink were all top notch. Even the weather cooperated. As a fundraiser, it outdid anything we've done in the past thanks to terrific generosity from our members, guests and a great many local businesses. We appreciate all who helped make it happen.

Work. Work. Work. It's been a

fantastic and productive spring work day season. In some places, we cleared trees, stacked brush and installed sweepers in the stream. In others, we planted trees by the score. In all cases, we were safe, had fun, made friends and helped our precious coldwater streams be that much better. Many thanks to Conservation Chair Jim Hess for coordinating these, as well as to our members, a Scout troop and other nearby chapters we were so pleased to partner with. The work was not light, but many hands made it enjoyable. We'll restart these in the fall and welcome you to join us.

Thank you. As always, please stop on by swtu.org to learn more about us and what we're up to.

—Drew Kasel

Wild Rivers Chapter

We've had a busy season so far with several opportunities for member engagement. We had volunteers at the Hayward Family Fishing Expo in April, teaching fly tying to dozens of enthusiastic kids. Also in April some of our members volunteered with fin clipping coaster brook trout at the Red Cliff Fish Hatchery.

In May we gathered for our annual highway cleanup on Highway H in Delta along a two-mile stretch in front of the Delta Diner, where we concluded with a very pleasant lunch. Also in May our volunteers joined DNR staff with tree planting along the buckthorn eradication area of the upper White River.

On May 21 we called on more volunteers to join with Great Lakes TU and U.S. Forest Service staff, as well as partners from Northland College and the Superior Rivers

Watershed Association, to plant trees along a project area of the upper Marengo River. On May 26 our members joined students from the Drummond School at the Bayfield Fish Hatchery for fly tying and casting.

In June we had members helping children fish a stocked pond at the very popular Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center Kids Fishing Day. On June 7 we partnered with Douglas County Forestry staff to create and clear an angler's access trail on the Ounce River.

Coming up is our annual member picnic at 6 p.m. July 13 at Larsen Landing on the Namekogan River in Sawyer County, just south of Seeley. If you're nearby, stop by and have a brat and share a story.

—Kevin Seefeldt

Wisconsin River Valley Chapter

The wonderful weather has finally arrived and as time does, is already flying by. I was hoping to find my first morel mushroom this year but after several attempts of searching, I have come up empty. Perhaps I'll be luckier with other fungi in the summer and fall. I hope everyone has a safe and wonderful warm weather season and squeeze in as much outdoor time as you are able.

In March Taylor Curran gave us an update on the Prairie River project. This was the second half of the

project, and it is now completed. This presentation was recorded and can be viewed on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RF_mTH06eQ or search "Prairie River Project Completion-Taylor Curran." Many thanks to Taylor and his crew for all their work on this project. The stream was narrowed and deepened and looks beautiful. If you visit this section of the Prairie River, please be considerate of the landowners. Do not take shortcuts across planted fields and pack out

and pick up any trash you might find.

In May Heidi Oberstadt gave a presentation on diversity and gave several great tips on how to make meetings or events more welcoming to new people. Please check out her

YouTube recording, "A Curly, Girly Point of View: TU Diversity Updates, Fish Tales and Photo Tips from Heidi." Thank you to all who attended.

In May I helped out at the Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education



WISCONSIN RIVER VALLEY'S PROUD TIC STUDENTS

Expo in Poynette. The weather was cooler than most years, but once the first bus full of kids arrives, the time flies by. I met so many great, curious kids and a few teachers, parents and even a bus driver. Thank you to Bob Haase for all your work in putting materials together for this event and all your time in phone calls to get a great group of tyers together. I met kids from schools as far away as Northern Illinois and even kids from my neck of the woods from Merrill. We really could use more tyers so please note this event on your calendar for next year and come and join us.

On May 20 was the Taylor County Sportsman Youth Expo, which is like a smaller, northern version of the Poynette event. It was a cold rainy day, but the kids had a great time. I don't think I have ever gotten this muddy since I was their age. Henry Kanemoto and Bob Pils demonstrated their skills at the fly-tying table, while Kirk and I were helping kids with fly casting. There were fairly strong winds that we had to fight, but two kids still managed to hit the Frizbee target. I thought it was a little ironic that both kids were wearing Packer shirts.

We also held a work day in May, planting more than 2,100 trees along the Prairie River with 13 volunteers, including some from the Green Bay Chapter. Thank you so much for your help. We planted white pine, tamarack, hemlock, maple and river birch. I had never used a tree-planting bar before. They are heavy. By the end of the day I was fairly sure my arms were longer than when we started. Thanks to John Meachan for making the lunch for the hungry crew.

On June 4 I headed to Wisconsin

Rapids to the Kiwanis Outdoor Youth day to tie some more flies with the kids there. It was a very nice day and I met some very nice people. As I was tying, we had a bit of a trivia contest, including questions about such things as math, state capitols and spelling. A correct answer was rewarded with a bonus fly and a bobber so the kids could try their flies out with a spinning rod. It was a fun day.

Grab your sunglasses and leather jacket and join us July 16 for the "Summer Watershed Ride 2022."

Our chapter and Bull Falls Harley Davidson of Wausau are teaming up to sponsor this event. The ride will start at the Bull Falls Harley Davidson of Wausau dealership (BFHD), travels north along the Plover River to Fishers Bar in Gleason and then south along the Prairie River then back to the BFHD dealership. There will be opportunities to play fundraising games at Fishers Bar, such as horseshoes and bean bags.

This is approximately a three-hour ride and is open to all motorcyclists. Kickstands go up at noon. As a part of the fundraising, the participant must purchase a "July Ride Card" from BFHD, of which the proceeds will benefit the Wisconsin River Valley Chapter. The ride route will be printed on the ride card. There will be burgers and hot dogs available at the BFHD dealership prior to the ride. Participants do not have to ride on July 16. They can ride any time during the month of July. However, event games and food will only be available on July 16.

—Linda Lehman

Wolf River Chapter

The Wolf River Chapter has had a very busy spring that was inspired by our Annual Spring Meeting in April. Andy Killoren reported on his continued rebuilding of our chapter's website at wolfriver-tu.org. The website now has a place for current events and past newsletters.

We held elections and have a new board member, John Carbonari. A big thank you to Travis Stuck for his years of commitment and

work for the chapter. Zach Buchanan presented a three-year plan for the chapter to help us better organize and prioritize projects. Along with this, John Carbonari, Andy Killoren, Brian Biermier, and Zach Buchanan were elected as work day coordinators. We chose June 11, July 16, August 6 and August 20 as work days and John Carbonari volunteered to run a few mid-week work days for volunteers who prefer them.

Chapter News



WOLF RIVER CHAPTER HOLDS ANNUAL MEET & GREET

Wolf River members and guests enjoy their Meet & Greet lunch at the Livingston's on the banks of the Wolf River.

John Rose from Hollister writes that winter ice persisted into late March and early April, as it was another season with above-average river levels. Low-water temperatures and ice along the shore made it difficult or impossible to wade to some of his favorite spots. Conditions reduced the fishing season by a month, compared to last year. Late April and early May brought more favorable conditions but he still logged only about half the number of fish he caught by this time last year.

According to John Carbonari, on Friday April 22, 2022 beaver dam remains that were obstructing Nine Mile Creek culverts on Hwy 55 were removed. This beaver debris was placed above the culverts and along the right of way. The Langlade County Highway Department agreed to pick up the debris so it couldn't be reused by the beavers.

In early May, Andy Killoren led Jon Graverson, Travis and Miles Stuck and Rhonda Zander to upper Nine Mile Creek to clear the road. They had to cut many trees that totally obstructed the road. Now we have access to upper Nine Mile Creek, a coldwater tributary of the Wolf River, for future work days.

After a two-year Covid sabbatical, the Wolf River Chapter held its annual Meet and Greet on May 21 at the Livingston residence on the banks of the Wolf River.

Mentors from the Wolf River Chapter accompanied 10 new and some seasoned fishermen guiding them to access points and sharing their knowledge of the river. Lunch was served to 40 members and recruits.

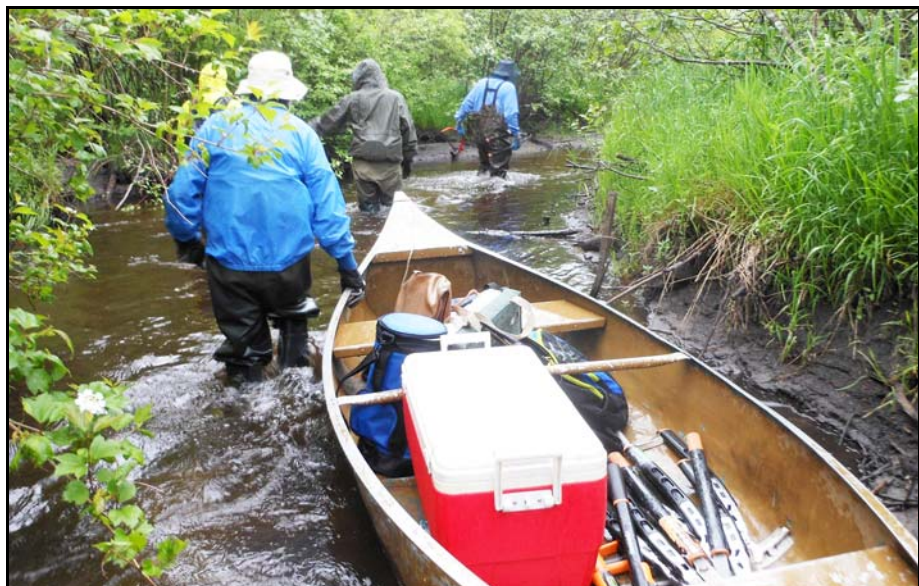
John Carbonari and Eric Scharenbrock spent four hours brushing Nine Mile Creek on June 2, working from the old railroad crossing to Highway 55. They had a great time and got quite a bit done on a Thursday, when Eric is able to volunteer.

On June 11 John Carbonari led a group of volunteers that met at the Nine Mile Creek parking lot off Highway 55. In attendance were Jon Graverson, Noah Sennholz, Brian Heikenen, John Rose, Tim Waters, Nathan Schmidt, Doug Moldenhauer and Travis Stuck. Bill and Susie Livingston met the group there to take care of chapter paperwork. Andy Killoren did a great job coordinating the event.

The plan was to continue brushing upstream of East Hollister Road from where the chapter had stopped a few years back. There were plenty of shears and loppers available. Crews were formed to take on the task. Instructions were given to primarily remove tag alder and drag the brush into the surrounding area with care not to step on or lay any of the brush on any small trees that might be present, and to also make sure that the tag alder was not stuck into the ground allowing it to possibly take root. There were also instructions how to release some of the small trees that might be under the canopy of tag alder.

The crews proceeded upstream to the actual work site, a section of about 100-150 yards of dense tag alder, before the stream again opened up into an old dead beaver meadow. Each group got to work on their section and at a steady pace, tag alder that was laying in the creek and more that would soon be in the next year or so was removed. Making excellent progress, they were able to get past the intended target site and proceed into the old beaver meadow, where dead tag alder was also removed from the creek. After a few hours the job was complete, the stream was open and the tag alder restricting the flow of Nine Mile Creek was removed. Thanks to a great group that gave up their rainy Saturday morning to give back to those beautiful fish we love to catch.

—Laurie Zen Netzow



WOLF RIVER CHAPTER MEMBERS WORKING ON NINE MILE CREEK

Jon Graverson

Oak Brook Chapter

While the Oak Brook Chapter (OBTU) has maintained a high level of activity throughout the pandemic, we were forced to make extensive use of Zoom meetings and curtail some of our in-person events. In 2022, we have ramped up our conservation, youth education, and fundraising to pre-Covid levels and are also finding time for chapter fishing outings, various outdoor work days, and other in-person gatherings.

Led by Dave Carlson, our Conservation Committee has been very busy lining up opportunities to contribute dollars and work days toward the improvement of trout streams in Wisconsin and throughout the Midwest. We continue to partner with numerous other chapters, conservation organizations and watershed councils. In addition to chapter work day opportunities, we have budgeted more than \$21,000 to provide financial assistance to the following projects in the current 2022-23 fiscal year:

- Kinnickinnick River: Remove Powell Falls Dam near River Falls, Wis.
- Monroe County, Wis.: Assess stream crossings, install easement signage, improve access.
- Timber Coulee Creek, Wis.: Repair flood damage, stabilize banks.
- Traverse Valley Creek, Wis.: Improve brook trout stream habitat Illinois Driftless Area: Install temperature loggers and monitor stream temperatures.
- Iowa Driftless Area: Contribute to land acquisition for the public, support Bloody Run CAFO litigation.
- TUDARE: Help finance required program management expenses not covered by government grants.
- Au Sable River, Mich.: Replace Pine/Spite Road stairway (still in process from last year).
- Coldwater River, Mich.: Install EnviroDIY Sensor Station dissolved oxygen unit.
- Dowagiac River, Mich.: Improve habitat, contribute to endowment fund.

We have a great lineup of conservation activities planned for 2022. We have joined forces with the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter. Last year, the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter graciously invited us to join them for two workdays on streams located nearby in southeast Wisconsin.

We are excited to continue our relationship with SEWTU and look forward to working together again this year. On June 11 we helped out at Bluff Creek in northwest Walworth County.

On July 16 we'll help them at Karcher Creek in southwest Racine County and on October 22 we'll join them at Tichigan Creek in western Racine County. The workdays generally run from 9 a.m. to noon on a Saturday, followed by a traditional brat fry lunch.

Work consists mainly of cutting down buckthorn with a chainsaw and dragging the branches away from the stream corridor. Also, loppers are used to cut numerous other invasive species.

OBTU has an extensive youth

education program that has been led by Marvin Strauch for many years. Our TIC program is charging full steam ahead. OBTU volunteers delivered fertilized trout eggs to 14 schools November, 2021. In April, Dean Hansen, a professional entomologist from the Minneapolis area, was engaged for a week to deliver outstanding live macroinvertebrate samples as well as his expertise in presenting "Entomology Day" to a number of area schools. Dean is assisted by OBTU volunteers for each classroom session. Teachers have said, "This is the best science class of the year!"

"Trout Release" field trips were held in May. Students ride the bus to their respective release site, explore the environment, conduct some bug sampling and execute water quality tests, and then release the fingerlings which have been grown from eggs in their classrooms.

We are in the process of finalizing a grant to set up an aquarium in a new school for next year. We hope to keep growing the TIC program with the addition of one or two new schools each year.

After resorting to Covid-19 accommodations last year, such as teaching fly fishing knots online via Zoom, the Youth Fly Fishing Training team is so happy to be getting back to full in-person training this year. These classes are free to participants and all equipment is provided.

Class dates are May 7, June 4, July 9, Aug 6 and Sept 17. Classes include a half day of classroom instruction followed by a fly-casting lesson and fly fishing at a local lake. Participants can earn a Boy Scout Fly Fishing Merit badge in one day. OBTU has been running this program for many years and has instructed more than 1,000 youth, including a few students from Wisconsin.

Our new Stream Girls Program is now up and running, and our team has been busy collaborating with area Girl Scout leaders to organize the program, arrange for an appropriate stream location, recruit several OBTU volunteers to lead the program, assemble the needed workbooks and equipment and recruit the girl scouts who will participate. The first "live" pilot Stream Girls program was June 11. A second session is being scheduled later in the summer or fall.

The Illinois Council of TU Youth Camp is restarting after a two-year Covid-19 hiatus. It's an outstanding opportunity for girls and boys ages 13-18 to learn to fly fish for wild trout on Michigan's Au Sable River, while also receiving an excellent introduction to coldwater conservation through a series of field trips with local university professors, naturalists, biologists and historians.

This year's camp will take place July 24-29. Camp flyers, presentations and applications are available at obtu.org.

—Stan Zarnoweicki

Great Lakes Stream Restoration Program update

Words and photos by Chris Collier,
TU Great Lakes Stream Restoration
Manager

Summer is here and our Great Lakes Team is embracing the chaos of another field season. This is where all the work we've been planning hits the ground and we celebrate coldwater conservation victories across northern Wisconsin. Also, if I'm being honest, the chaos is where the fun happens.

Field season kicked off in earnest for us this year in the Bois Brule River watershed. We're helping the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey crossings on tributaries to the Brule to eliminate fish passage barriers in this famous watershed. This was an early spring endeavor for us and seeing high-water levels in Vilas and Iron counties made me nervous that we misjudged our timing. As luck would have it, we got to our sites and water levels were perfect for surveys. Now we're working away on processing data and creating options for better crossings that we hope to implement during the next few years.

Danielle, our project coordinator, kicked off a fun new project deploying temperature loggers across the Upper Wolf River watershed as part of a broader TU effort to study climate resiliency in select watersheds across the country. We picked the Wolf due to the questions regarding its ability to continue supporting wild trout populations in the face of climate change. Our hope is that this study will show us how cold tributaries to the Wolf River are faring with hotter summer temperatures. This will help us understand if headwater streams can continue to provide enough coldwater refuges to support wild trout in one of our state's famous trout rivers.

Keeping on with more of Danielle's exciting projects, she's kicking off year two of our trout movement study. This project involves surgically implanting brook trout with small transmitters that an RFID array (basically an antenna running through the stream) will read each time a tagged fish passes it. This information will let us know how many trout try to pass an identified fish

passage barrier and which ones are successful. Once the barrier is removed, we will be able to tell how movement changes.

Next, I need to shout out to some amazing volunteers who helped plant trees along the Marengo River. Volunteers from the Wild Rivers, Wisconsin Clear Waters and Fox Valley chapters, Northland College, and the Superior Rivers Watershed Association joined us to plant trees along the banks we helped the U.S. Forest Service stabilize last year to further restore these sites. Another huge thank you is owed to the U.S. Forest Service for supplying the trees, tools and staff time for the planting.

With field season also comes construction season on our barrier-removal projects. We have two projects scheduled to start in mid-June to remove barriers on Barney Springs and a tributary to Hay Creek. Both projects are in Oconto County and are the first of at least five crossing-replacement projects scheduled for this summer. The fall issue of *Wisconsin Trout* should have some interesting photos and updates about these projects.

Our 2022 seasonal technician team includes Emma Balliet, who is rejoining the Wisconsin team after spending last summer working with the road-stream crossing assessment team in the Upper Peninsula. Upon rejoining TU, she said, "I love to nerd out on all things stream related, especially benthic macroinvertebrates, and my hope is that I can use this second summer with TU to continue working towards a full-time position with the organization."

Kyle Hulbert is the second member of our crew and is a geography major at UW-Madison with a focus on the intersection between people and the environment. He is excited to gain experience with coldwater systems and how they overlap with Northwoods communities.

Also on the team is Carter McShane, a fisheries and aquatic sciences major at UW-Stevens Point. Carter is looking forward to gaining more professional experience in the fisheries field and learning what it's like to work for a non-profit conservation organization. We're excited



HANDS-ON WORK WITH BROOK TROUT

TU seasonal employees Carter, Emma, and Kyle take measurements of brook trout monitored at a road-stream-crossing project site.

to have all three on board for the field season. Keep an eye on our TU Great Lakes Facebook and Instagram pages to see what they are up to.

As you can see, the chaos is here, and we wouldn't have it any other way. Summers in northern Wisconsin are fleeting and I'll take every opportunity I can to get out and en-

joy it. If you would like to learn more about these projects or are interested in helping with some of this work (we have opportunities for volunteers) please reach out to me at chris.collier@tu.org.

See you on the water.

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 - wisconsinsmallmouth.com

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR WISCONSIN TROUT UNLIMITED
Start everyday with "Rising Trout"

We're proud to partner with Luna Coffee Roasters in De Pere to bring you this special breakfast blend of coffee. Whole Bean or Ground. Shipping available nationwide!

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42% of sales will directly support Wisconsin Trout Unlimited's work to ensure future generations access to cold, clean, fishable water.

West Fork Sports Club update

By Tina Murray

In April we released 2,200 brook trout into the West Fork of the Kickapoo River system with about 15 families and 40 kids. The kids absolutely had a blast releasing the trout and the West Fork Board members presented little educational sessions on different aspects of trout life, habitat, fishing practices, regulations, entomology and threats to a healthy stream system.

The kids were given buckets with approximately 100 trout to take to the river to release. The fish were released in six spots along the watershed.

These trout are raised in partnership with Living Waters Bible Camp and the DNR.

The West Fork Sports Club feeds these trout from July to April each year at a cost of approximately \$1,800. Donations to keep this program running are greatly appreciated and can be mailed to the WFSC, Trout Program, PO Box 52, Viroqua WI 54665. If you would like to be a part of next year's release, please email westforksportsclub@gmail.com

New cabin available soon

The board has been working on a tiny house that sleeps 4-5 people and will take the place of the old "blue cabin." It is being called the Brookie and it will have a brook trout front door pattern on it.

The woodwork inside is amazing, thanks to the talented board members and volunteers who worked on it. It has a downstairs day bed that separates into two single beds, while upstairs there is a queen-sized bed. A cot or a camp mat can also be put

down on the floor. It is just now getting placed and will be available soon and can be rented here: <https://westforksportsclub.org/camping/reservations/>

Provided are sheets, a tall dorm fridge, microwave, coffee pot, two-burner hot plate, utensils & pans. Guests should bring their own water, although there is a water pump right outside the cabin, as well as towels etc. It will not have bathrooms, but is near the club bathrooms with showers.

Nightly price has not yet been determined. This will help the club remain sustainable since the blue cabin was the largest source of revenue for the club.

Other updates include a rework of a previous 2019 DNR permit that allowed us to landscape to work with the river should it rise. This will protect the club property and be better for the river as it will have a clear shot for the river to return to the river channel faster during high-water events.

We are hosting four free concerts in July. Refreshments will be available by donation and donations to the musicians will be much appreciated.

On July 9 Dylan Harris perform. On July 16 The Knockabouts perform. On July 23 Kickapoo Joy Juice performs and on July 30 Jay Hoffman and Jim Schaffer will perform.

Come on down and enjoy the music and community. Come and enjoy the park, canoe the Kickapoo, visit the Kickapoo Valley Reserve, birdwatch, ride bikes or enjoy the local farmers market.

Tina Murray is on the board of the West Fork Sports Club.



KIDS HELP WEST FORK SPORTS CLUB RELEASES BROOK TROUT

In April the club released 2,200 brook trout into the West Fork of the Kickapoo River system with about 15 families and 40 kids.

LETTERS

Can you help this member find waders that fit him?

I am trying to find a pair of size 10 lightweight waders. I am 74, 240 pounds (too big). I tried everywhere. Frog Toggs had a pair of "stout" lightweight. The difference between "stout" and regular is 4 inches. Not even close for a bigger person. I have been trout fishing since I was 8 years old and I don't want to give it up. If you know of somebody that has waders they want to sell that I can use, let me know. If they fit I will buy them, new or used. I found a place in Montana that had them, but they wanted \$700.

Thanks Again, Happy Fishing, Robert Wolff

Can you help Robert find waders that will fit him? You can reach him at 920-685-2898.



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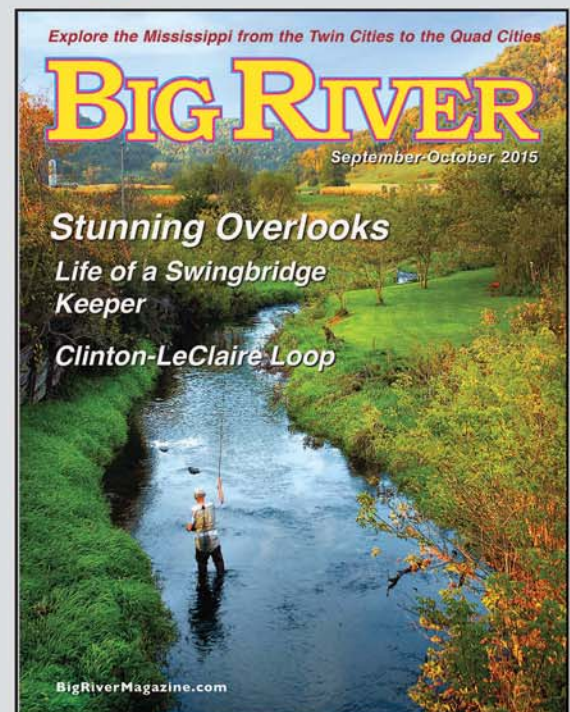
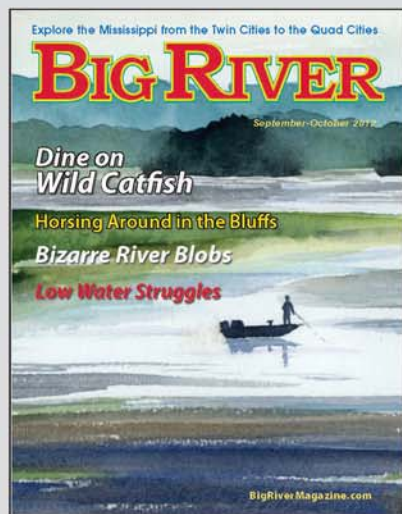
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