



Wisconsin Trout

Winter 2023

It's budget season at the Capitol

Increase to the trout stamp fee is long overdue, and your help is needed.

By Mike Kuhr, WITU Advocacy Chair

With another winter settling in, we're turning our attention to the Capitol where the governor and lawmakers will be putting together the state's budget for the next two years. It's been 17 years since Wisconsin last raised its inland trout stamp fee, and we think it's time to revisit this idea and get it into the state budget.

In 2019, the Wisconsin Conservation Congress asked whether residents supported a \$5 increase in the inland trout stamp, which is currently \$10, and more than 70 percent of respondents were in favor of the increase.

We've got economic data from studies in the Driftless Area showing that the economic impact of trout angling in the region is more than \$1 billion dollars annually.

We've got hundreds of stream improvement projects covering every area of the state that showcase the benefits of the trout stamp program.

But we've also got a long way to go. Wisconsin is home to more than 13,000 miles of classified trout water, and if we're serious about ensuring future generations access to healthy trout populations, we're going to need to make the additional investments in the coming years.

Ten dollars just doesn't have the same buying power that it did back in 2006. Think about the benefits that we as trout anglers get from our trout stamp. All the improved waters we get to fish, the survey data

and trout stream maps. If trout anglers paid an extra \$5 — about the price of a new spinner, two flies, or a couple dozen nightcrawlers — we could generate close to \$700,000 more revenue to fund trout-fisheries improvements in Wisconsin.

Sounds easy enough, right? We all pitch in a little bit more and leave our kids and grandchildren with some amazing fisheries close to home. That's a legacy we can all be proud of. In order to get there, we'll need some buy-in from our elected officials, particularly those on the State Legislature's Joint Finance Committee, who work very hard to put together the state's budget every two years.

We've made progress in recent years showing a few of these legislators the good work that's happening streamside in their own districts. But we'll need to do more of it. We'll need to continue to tell our stories of volunteering, friendships made, good fishing days and why cold, clean, fishable water matters to us all.

At Wisconsin Trout Unlimited, we'll continue to work at providing you the opportunity to connect with your elected officials. We're hoping to bring in members from different parts of the state for regional lobby days at the Capitol in Madison this spring. If you can't make it to Madison, we'll try to help you connect locally in your district.

If you know of a recent habitat improvement project that would make a good backdrop for a streamside chat with a legislator, please let



Mike Kuhr

ENJOYING THE BENEFITS OF TROUT STAMP DOLLARS

Wisconsin Clear Waters former Chapter President Jim Erickson fishes on an Eau Claire area stream which is undergoing stream improvements funded by trout stamp dollars.

me know. I'm happy to work with our local chapters to facilitate this type of meeting. It's been my experience that the best conversations take place streamside.

It's important that we continue to share the good work of our volunteers, chapters and resource professionals. Keep telling the TU story. And when you get on the water this year, remember that someone has been there before you, and someone will be there after you. And what we choose to do with our lifetime on

the water will greatly affect the experience of future users.

Let's choose to make the necessary investments in our coldwater resources. Let's continue to grow our outdoor recreation economy through healthy and robust fisheries. Let's put a down payment on the future of trout fishing by increasing the inland trout stamp fee in the 2023-2025 state budget.

You can reach me at Mikek.trout@yahoo.com.

See you at the Awards Banquet Feb. 4 in Oshkosh

The 2023 Annual Meeting and State Council Banquet and Awards presentation on Saturday, February 4 is almost here. Join us in Oshkosh at the Best Western Waterfront Hotel and Convention Center. A limited block of rooms has been set aside for both Friday and Saturday nights. Call 855-230-1900 to make your room reservations. Tell them you're in town for the Trout Unlimited Banquet.

The banquet is our Council's biggest fundraiser, allowing the Council to continue serving local chapters, fund programs like the WITU Youth Fishing Camp and Women's Fly Fishing Clinic and help administer our Friends of Wisconsin TU and Watershed Access Fund grant programs.

Tickets are \$40 each and can be purchased at <http://wistrout.brownpaper-tickets.com>. While we do plan for a few walk-ups every year, ordering tickets in advance or making arrangements to pay at the door is highly encouraged. This event is open to the public, so please consider bringing family, friends, co-workers and neighbors. All are welcome.

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

The Council would like to thank all of the chapters and individuals who donated prizes for the event. Your generosity makes for a successful banquet and an unforgettable evening for our guests.

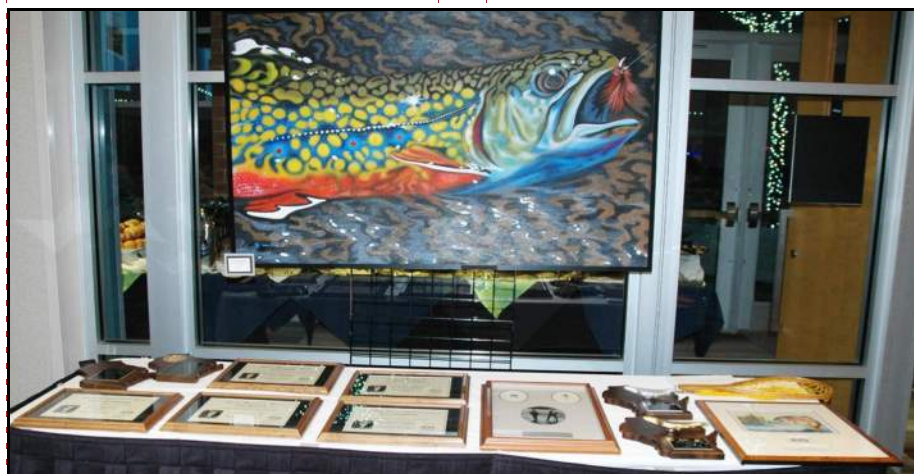
Chapter leaders should plan to attend the State Council meeting earlier in the day to discuss Council business. The meeting will start promptly at 9 a.m. and run until 3 p.m. If you plan on attending the meeting, please RSVP to Council Chair Scott Allen at jscottallen12@gmail.com so we can provide

an accurate number to the conference center for lunch.

The Council is sponsoring our Women's Fly-Fishing Clinic for beginners during the day on Saturday, Feb. 4. This free clinic for women will run from 9:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Register online at womensflyfishingclinic.eventbrite.com. For more information contact Tina Murray at t.murray.t@gmail.com.

Much planning has already taken place and the Council is indebted to the work of the Banquet Committee. An event of this scale simply wouldn't happen without the efforts of committee members Linn Beck, Todd Franklin, Myk Hranika and Mike Kuhr. We're focused on planning a fun, entertaining and successful banquet and hope you'll join us in Oshkosh on February 4 to celebrate cold, clean, fishable water in Wisconsin.

—Scott Allen, Council Chair



YOU'RE INVITED

To Celebrate Cold, Clean, Fishable Water with Us

2023 Wisconsin TU State Council Banquet Saturday, Feb. 4, 2023

Best Western Premier Waterfront Hotel
and Convention Center
1 North Main St., Oshkosh, WI 54901

Room reservations
(920) 230-1900

Doors & Cash Bar @ 4:30 pm
Dinner Seating @ 6:30 pm
Tickets just \$40

Order online at:
<http://wistrout.brownpapertickets.com>
or use the form below

For more ticket information, contact Jen Kuhr
at jkuhr101@gmail.com (414) 588-7077

Name: _____

Phone or Email: _____

of tickets @ \$40 ea.: _____

_____ My check (payable to Wisconsin TU) is enclosed

_____ I am unable to attend but will support Wisconsin TU
with this donation

Mail to: Jen Kuhr 6103 Queens Way Monona, WI 53716

Chair's Column

Return to Oshkosh

By Scott Allen, Council Chair

We're in a new year and a new beginning, of sorts, after a two-year covid-induced sequester of the State Council awards banquet. Sequestered? Certainly. Slumber? Certainly not. I am very proud of the resiliency, energy and, above all, the adaptability that our 21 chapters and State Council exhibited through this period of isolation.

I'll quote the ever-quoted Aldo Leopold:

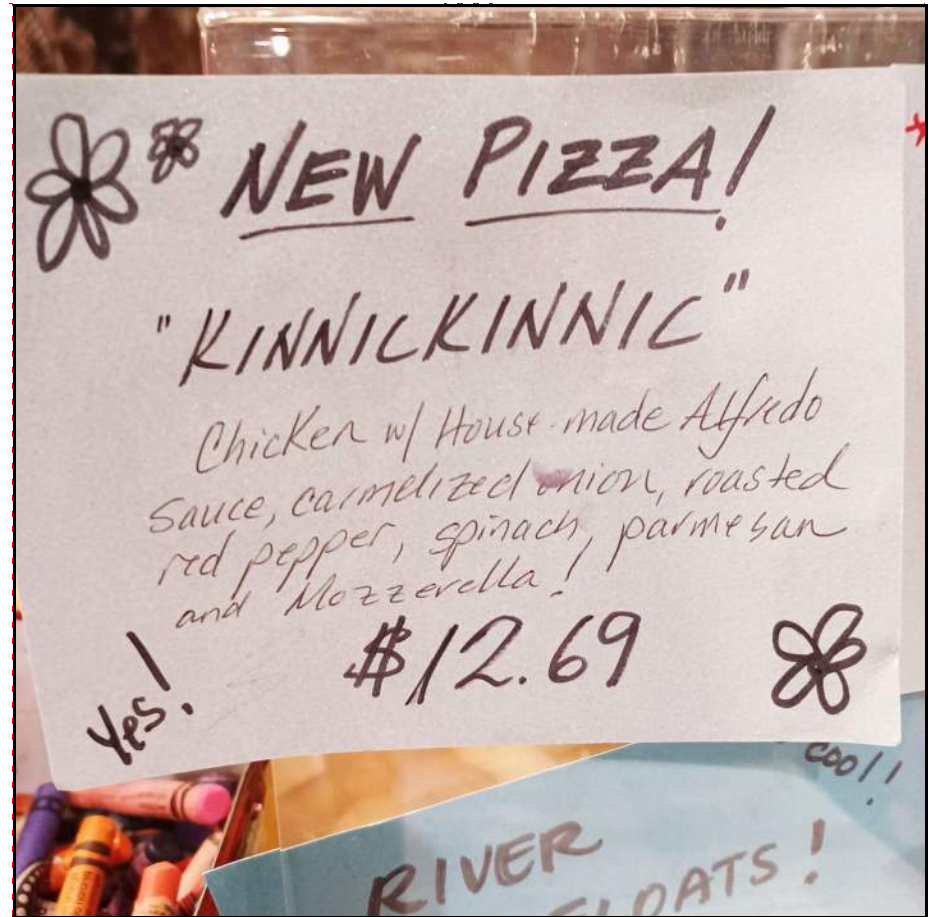
"We shall never achieve harmony with the land, any more than we shall achieve absolute justice or liberty for people. In these higher aspirations, the important thing is not to achieve but to strive."

These are words to ponder, as there's nothing wrong with setting the bar high, and Wisconsin Trout Unlimited and the national staff possess those aspirations. It's been two years since we gathered in Oshkosh to celebrate those members, citizens and professionals who set the bar high and leap over it. A lot has been developing in those two years, for example:

- The removal of two dams impairing the waters of the Kinnickinn-

ic River will be expedited due in part to the efforts of Gary Horvath, Duke Welter and the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter. The day is approaching when the Kinni will flow unobstructed with the removal of the dams.

- The Priority Waters Initiative administered by national staffer Chris Collier is in the formative stages of development. Work groups for the priority watersheds are developing long-term strategic action plans to be periodically updated.
- Gary Stoychoff will be stepping down as Council treasurer after serving the Green Bay Chapter and State Council for more than 50 years. The stalwarts like Gary provide the backbone of Trout Unlimited.
- Gov. Ever's office contacted me to ask for input on the 2023-2025 state budget. On behalf of Trout Unlimited I requested a \$5 increase in the trout stamp fee. It needs approval in the joint finance committee, so we all need to pile on and contact our legislators when the time arrives. Stay tuned, you'll hear more on this.



I'm greatly looking forward to our return to Oshkosh on February 4th and hope you will join me in honoring those volunteers and professionals who give Trout Unlimited the strength and vision to strive and

achieve.

"Since the achievement of our independence, he is the greatest patriot who stops the most gullies"—Patrick Henry

Youth Camp update

We will open enrollment for the 2023 youth camp at the annual meeting on Saturday, Feb. 4. All chapters can start registering students at the meeting. Every chapter will have a chance to send one student, and if the roster isn't filled, we will open enrollment for chapters to send additional students. We plan to keep the cost at \$250 per student.

This year's camp is Aug. 17-20. Check-in is Thursday, Aug. 17 at 1 p.m. and the camp wraps up on Sunday by 1:30 p.m. It will again be at the Pine Lake Bible Camp between Waupaca and Wild Rose. The curriculum will be the same, with casting classes for spin and fly casting, entomology, fly tying, knot tying, water safety, instruction on spin, bait and fly fishing and a half day seminar with the DNR at a chapter work-day, learning about conservation. Sunday is the big day, as

the kids get to use what they've learned and go fishing with volunteer mentors.

We can always use more volunteers, whether you can help for all of the camp or just part of it. You will have a great time. We especially need volunteers for the fish-along on Sunday.

If you're more of an organizer or an idea person, we have open positions on the WI-TU Youth Camp Committee. It is always nice to have great people with new ideas and a passion to work with our youth. The committee meets once a month from February until the camp, followed by a post-camp meeting.

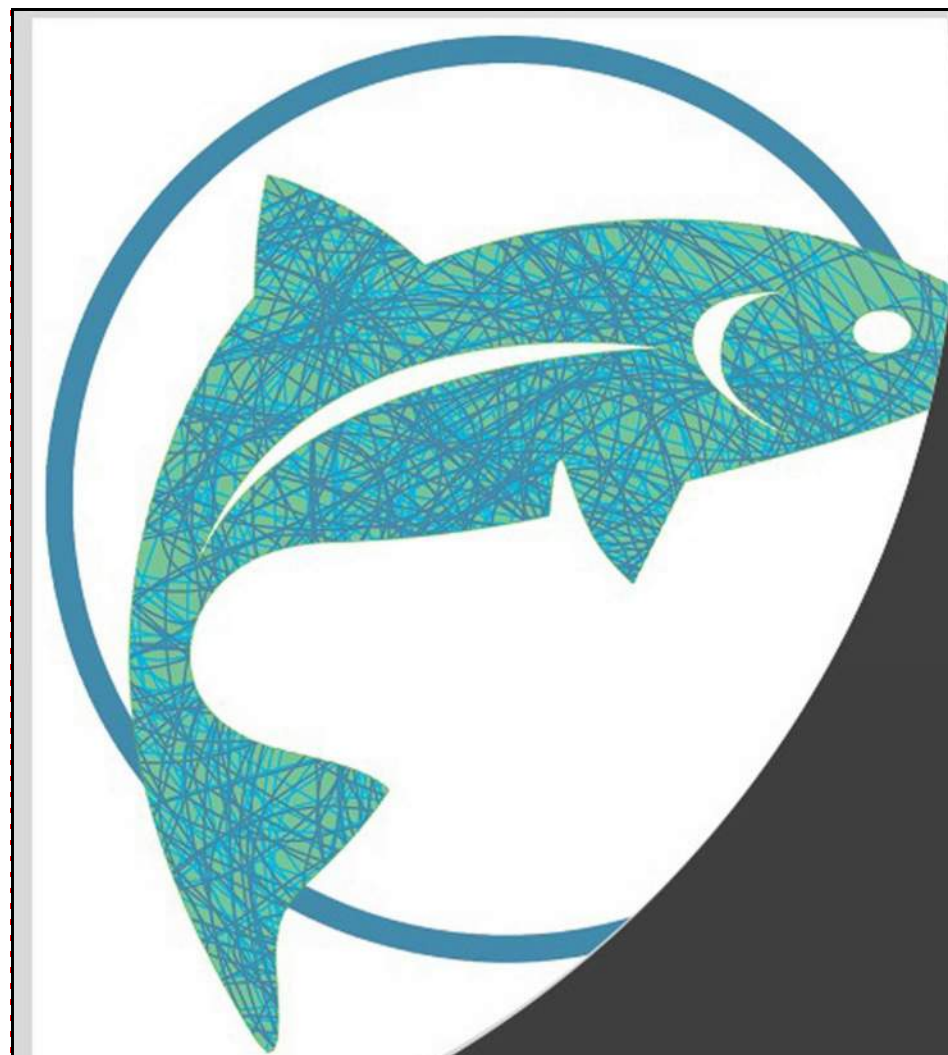
For more information contact me at 920-216-7408 or chlbeck@att.net.

—Linn Beck

TIC update

Registration for Trout In the Classroom (TIC) this year went quite smoothly. The DNR's Ryan Kleiser signed classrooms up, with only a few questions on a couple of forms. He hopes to have an even simpler checkbox form geared specifically to TIC for next year. Classrooms are reporting that the batches of brown trout eggs from the St. Croix Falls hatchery are awesome. Almost all hatched with very low mortality of the alevins.

Introduction of new programs has been severely crippled this year due to supply issues with chillers. We hope they are available again in January. Tradewinds handles chiller sales and has a waiting list set up, so chapters should consider getting on that list for next year. If you have any TIC questions, please contact Greg Olson at driftless23@gmail.com.



Women's Intro to Fly Fishing Clinic

Taught by Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing
www.swt.org/learn/womens-flyfishing-clinic/

Oshkosh, WI Feb 4, 2023

9:30-4:30 pm

1 N Main St, Oshkosh, WI 54901

Register online : <https://bit.ly/wiwff>

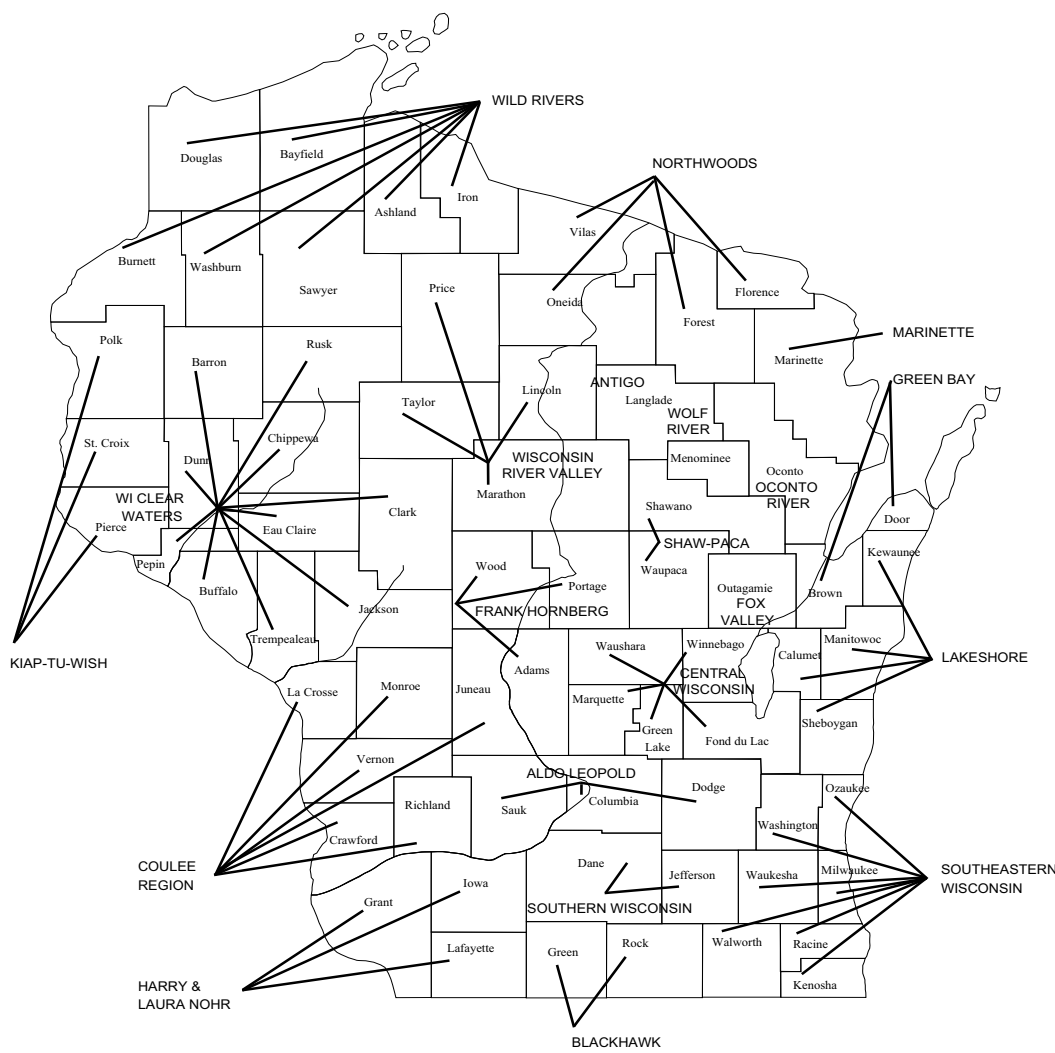
\$20, includes lunch

Gear Provided

Sponsored by

Wisconsin State Trout Unlimited

Wisconsin TU Chapters, Presidents, and Websites



- Aldo Leopold (#375):** Dan Endres; 608-963-1374; dtendres9@gmail.com; aldoleopold.tu.org
- Antigo (#313):** Scott Henricks, 213 Mary St., Antigo, WI 54409-2536 715-623-3867; henricks51@yahoo.com
- Blackhawk (#390):** Dave Brethauer; 17348 W. Gepler Road, Brodhead, WI 53520; 608-897-4166; dave.brethauer@gmail.com; www.BlackhawkTU.org
- Central Wisconsin (#117):** Wayne Parmley; 1663 Michigan St., Oshkosh, WI, 54902; 920-540-2315; wparmley@gmail.com; cwtu.org
- Coulee Region (#278):** Fred Spademan; fred@spademan.com; 429 2nd St. North, LaCrosse, 54601; 248-408-3873; CouleeRegion-TU.org
- Fox Valley (#193):** Tony Pudlo; mr.tony54381@gmail.com; (920) 427-3426; www.foxvalleytu.org
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- Green Bay (#083):** Adrian Meseberg, 315 S Michigan St. De Pere, WI 54115; 920-562-6129; christinaandadrian@hotmail.com; greenbaytu.org
- Harry & Laura Nohr (#257):** Carol Murphy; ctmurph17@gmail.com; nohrtu.com
- Kiap-TU-Wish (#168):** Greg Olson; Driftless23@gmail.com; 612-300-8970; P.O. Box 483, Hudson, WI 54016-0483; kiaptuwish.org
- Lakeshore (#423):** Al Wortz; alwortz@gmail.com; www.WisconsinTU.org/Lakeshore
- Marinette (#422):** Dale Lange, N2095 CTH BB, Marinette, WI; 715-582-1135; dhlange@centurytel.net, marinettecounty.tu.org
- Northwoods (#256):** Mike Pierce; webetrout@aim.com northwoods.tu.org
- Oconto River (#385):** Wayne Czynpinski; 920-590-2748; wczynpinski@yahoo.com; ocontorivertu.com
- Shaw-Paca (#381):** Kyle Kossel, E2392 Cardinal Court, Waupaca, WI 54981; 920-379-5741; kylekossel@yahoo.com; shawpaca.tu.org
- Southeastern Wisconsin (#078):** Andy Avgoulas; andyavgoulas@yahoo.com; 262-893-4965; sewtu.tu.org; www.facebook.com/southeastwisconsintroutunlimited; SoutheasternWITU on Instagram
- Southern Wisconsin (#061):** Jim Hess; jim.hess@tds.net; P.O. Box 45555, Madison, WI 53744-5555; www.swtu.org
- Wild Rivers (#415):** Kevin Seefeldt; Ashland, WI; 715-292-1614; kseef09@gmail.com; www.wisconsintu.org/wildrivers
- Wisconsin Clear Waters (#255):** Bill Heth; wlcaddis@gmail.com; wcvtu.org
- Wisconsin River Valley (#395):** John Meachen; troutrev@gmail.com; wrvtu.org
- Wolf River (#050):** Chuck Valliere, 5040 Hardy Trail, Waunakee, WI 53597; 608-836-1908 or 608-332-9652; woodtickchuck1950@gmail.com; WolfriverTU.org

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

State Council Leadership

Chair: Scott Allen; E4835 N. Stoney Ridge Road, Reedsburg, WI 53959; 608-495-9385; jscottallen12@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Myk Hranicka, N2766 Hopeman Heights, Waldo, WI 53093; 920-627-5779; jdrflooding@gmail.com;

Secretary: Boyd Roessler, boydroessler@sbcglobal.net

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

Vice Chair, Central Region: Tom Lager, 1700 Spring Hill Ct., Neenah, WI 54956; tomkarinlager@new.rr.com

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

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

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

Awards: Todd Franklin; Contact info at right

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

Friends of WITU and Watershed Access Fund Grant Coordinator: Kim McCarthy, 736 Meadowbrook Court, Green Bay, WI 54313; 920-639-3697; kjmccarthy75@gmail.com.

Advocacy Coordinator: Mike Kuhr

Membership: Chair Paul Kruse, 500 Saint Jude St., Green Bay, WI 54303 (920) 639-2361; kruser2@new.rr.com;

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

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

Veterans Services Partnership Coordinator: Mike Johnson; 1070 Bonnie Brae Lane, Lake Geneva, WI 53147; 262-327-0849; Mike@thosejohnsons.com

Webmaster: Brandon Schmalz schmalz.dev@gmail.com

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

Legal Counsel: Open
Communications: Open

Are you getting emails from TU?

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

WISCONSIN TROUT

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

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State Council Officers

Executive Committee includes officers and vice chairs

Scott Allen, Chair

Myk Hranicka, Vice Chair

Boyd Roessler, Secretary

Gary Stoychoff, Treasurer

Kinni Dams update

By Duke Welter

With support from TU chapters and members across the region, the River Falls City Council has voted to join the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in a feasibility study on whether both Kinnickinnic River dams should be removed and the 1.5-mile corridor ecologically restored.

If the Corps decides the two dam removals and restoration are the choice with the most benefit to the river, it will bring \$10 million to cover a hefty part of the total bill. The city and river supporters will be responsible for the rest, which could total \$5 million.

The feasibility study could cost up to \$800,000, of which up to \$350,000 will be the city's responsibility. With TU support, the non-profit working to raise funds, the Kinni Corridor Collaborative (KinniCC) has pledged to pay half, or up to \$175,000. A \$50,000 down payment on the KinniCC share pledged will have been made by the time this issue of *Wisconsin Trout* goes to press. KinniCC is working to raise the remainder in the next few months, with a goal of \$85,000.

During the city's discussion, council members acknowledged the potential for a significant part of the project bill to be covered by the Corps. They were also aware that

the Corps is experienced at ecological restoration and dam removals and has the reputation of doing what it said it would do.

Process takes time

To meet the requirements of federal law, the Corps process takes some time. The study will take an estimated 12 to 18 months. But that time period is much shorter than the three years the usual Corps study takes, and completion of the project is significantly shorter than the schedule the city originally contemplated. The feasibility study can be done sooner because many of the studies needed have recently been completed in the process of relicensing Junction Falls and delicensing Powell Falls, at the order of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Right now, the Powell Falls license was surrendered last February and the Junction Falls license is set to renew in 2023.

The City Council voted in 2018 to eventually remove the two dams, Powell Falls by 2026 and Junction Falls by 2046 or whenever funding is available.

A \$1 million DNR Municipal Dam Grant can be used for removing the lower (Powell Falls) dam, and another \$1 million will be applied for, once the city surrenders the federal operating license and

quits generating its miniscule amount of electricity through the Junction Falls Dam. Between the two dams, hydro generation supplies 1.5 percent of the city's electrical needs. The rest is purchased on the power market. The city is already developing solar panel fields to become fossil-fuel free as soon as possible.

Could be completed in seven years

Corps representatives have informally advised the city that the project could be completed in seven years, a significant shortening and one that encourages river lovers.

If the Corps takes on the project, advocates urge that the process to surrender the second FERC license begin as soon as possible, to ensure eligibility for a second DNR grant.

The city has asked the Corps to consider revamping downtown stormwater inputs as part of the project, and the Corps will consider working on about a dozen of the 25 or so inflows draining the downtown area. After studies by TU revealed the thermal impact of summertime

stormwater runoff could hike temperatures by 10-15 degrees in a matter of minutes, the city agreed in 2006 to modify its system. Those modifications have never been done, but the Corps could make a major dent in that need. If the inputs are changed, storm water will go into settling basins and the ground to be filtered and cooled before it reaches the river.

Detailed cost estimates have not yet been developed for the overall project, whether or not it includes stormwater modifications. If it goes forward after the study, the Corps will contribute \$10 million and the city match would be \$3.5 million. The DNR grant(s) could be included in the city's match. If with stormwater modifications the project costs \$15 million, the city and its utilities could be expected to contribute since it has benefited for a century from the damming of the rivers. Still, there will be a need for further fundraising as the project moves forward. Those who want to step up and be associated with freeing the Kinni will still have a chance to support it.

Women's Fishing Clinics June 14-18

Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics 2023 will be:

- June 14-16: On the Water Skills Clinic - Intermediate
- June 16-18: By Women For Women Basics Clinic

The Wisconsin Women's Clinics held each June are open for registration. For more information go to <https://www.swt.org/learn/womens-flyfishing-clinic/>

For those guides/mentors who want to work with the Intermediate Women on the Water June 14 - 16th please contact Tom Thrall at tthrall@gmail.com. We will need at least 20 guides/mentors from 4:30 p.m. on the 14th and from 10 a.m. for the full day on June 15. Fishing Friday morning is by arrangement with the women you take out. Emails with locations and info will be sent to those signing up to help in February and May.

For those who have flies, gear or donations for raffle, please email us at wisconsinwomenflyfishing@gmail.com. Your support is what makes the clinics so successful.



SPRING POND GURU RECEIVES STATE COUNCIL AWARD

Jeffrey Reissmann (left) was recently presented with the State Council's 2022 Robert Hunt Resource Professional Award by Antigo Chapter President Scott Henricks. He has spent most of his DNR career improving and enhancing the spring ponds of northern Wisconsin, while operating and maintaining the one-of-a-kind hydraulic dredge.

Does your fishing car have a TU license plate yet?

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



Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics

Presented by Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited
<https://www.swt.org/learn/womens-flyfishing-clinic/>
<https://www.facebook.com/SWTUWomensClinic>

<p>BY WOMEN FOR WOMEN BASICS CLINIC June 16-18th, 2023</p> <p>Learn how to choose proper equipment, tie knots, cast, read water, select the proper fly and time on the water. You will learn new tactics, regardless of your level of ability. Equipment available for use.</p>	<p>ON THE WATER SKILLS CLINIC - INTERMEDIATE June 14 -16, 2023</p> <p>Personalized instruction streamside. Tune up workshops by women instructors to refresh skills in casting, matching the hatch & reading the water. Fish WI finest trout streams with experienced anglers.</p>
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<p>Location Avalanche, WI (near Viroqua, in Wisconsin's Driftless Area) https://cvent.me/rK4wL0</p>	<p>Cost \$325 until April 1st \$355 after https://cvent.me/kAA74K</p>
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www.swt.org/learn/womens-flyfishing-clinic

Grant program update

The latest news regarding our Friends of Wisconsin TU and Watershed Access Fund grant programs.

By Kim McCarthy, Grant Programs Coordinator

Another new year is kicking off for the Friends of Wisconsin TU. Chapters that applied for and received Friends grants in 2022 have finalized their end-of-the-year reports, so we have wrapped up the 2022 grant cycle and are about to get started with the 2023 cycle.

2022 was a very active and successful year for the Friends program. Nine Wisconsin chapters applied for and received grants totaling \$18,000. That money was leveraged with chapter funding and other grants to complete many miles of habitat work throughout the state.

To get the 2023 cycle started, we sent all chapter presidents copies of the Friends language as well as the 2023 application form. If your chapter has been planning a habitat project for the 2023 work season, and part of that planning is to apply for a

Friends grant, there is one very important date to keep in mind: January 15, 2023. That is the date by which all Friends Grant Applications need to be received by either the Council Chair or the Friends Grants Coordinator. There is no longer a second date for chapters to submit applications.

After a grant request has been submitted by a chapter, the application is submitted for approval to a committee consisting of the State Council vice chair and regional vice chairs. They will make their decisions and announce the approved grants at the State Council Annual Meeting and banquet in early February.

We do not have any new acquisitions to announce from the Watershed Access Fund. But, the program continues to be active and is looking at a property in western Wisconsin. We hope to have more information on that in the future.

WANTED: Fly tyers

Many of the fly tyers who have volunteered their time to help with youth fly-tying programs have gotten older and can no longer help. Many younger tyers have jobs that prevent them from helping during the week, when some of these programs take place. Others may not be aware of the need, or the programs that exist. And some folks aren't comfortable tying with kids, or participating in programs like this because of Covid-19 or other health issues.

But we could really use some younger members to help us carry on this wonderful TU mission.

I've met some of my best friends through TU, many at events such as youth fly-tying programs. These programs include the Milwaukee Sentinel Show and Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo.

The kids we teach may one day become TU members. We can get them interested by helping them tie a fly and talking to them about fish-

ing, conservation and the great outdoors. We need to use every avenue we have to try to recruit new members by planting these seeds at this young age.

We are in serious need of volunteers to help at these youth fly-tying events. If you could help for one day, two days or whatever your schedule allows, please contact Bob Haase at 920-579-3858 or flytiper@milwpc.com.

Some of the shows in 2023 include:

- Journal Sentinel Sport Show, March 10-13, State Fair Park, West Allis
- Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo, May 10, Havenwoods State Park, Milwaukee
- Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expo, May 17 & 18, MacKenzie Center, Poynette

More information about these events will appear in the next issue of *Wisconsin Trout*.



Bob Haase

CONNECTING KIDS TO THE OUTDOORS IS SO IMPORTANT

Besides making a difference with our youth, volunteering at youth events is another great way to make new friends in the TU community. Events this year that could use your help include the Milwaukee Sentinel Show and two Midwest Outdoor Heritage Education Expos. Here, Dave Brethauer of the Blackhawk Chapter is teaching the art of fly tying, and so much more.

TU National Leadership Council happenings

One of the most important duties of being a National Leadership Council representative is to be a part of the NLC workgroups. The 36 NLC representatives are required to participate in at least two of the workgroups. These groups are designed to address the various issues facing Trout Unlimited and its chapters and councils. They are separated into two categories: Conservation and Organizational, together representing 12 different areas.

The Conservation Workgroup is comprised of seven workgroups: Climate Change, Delaware River, Driftless Area Restoration Effort (TUDARE), Great Lakes, Land Conservancy, Native Trout and Responsible Mining and Energy. The Organizational Workgroup has five workgroups: Communications, Diversity and Inclusion, Grass Roots, New Initiatives and Youth Education. Each workgroup is responsible for identifying, addressing and improving the unique opportunities that arise in each of their areas. Each of these workgroups are important and unique in their own way, and all are very important to Trout Unlimited.

Each workgroup includes a TU National staff member to oversee

and help with TU policy clarifications. As you can imagine, with only 36 representatives, it is hard to properly fill each of these workgroups to accomplish the goals that each workgroup has put forth for the groups. Most of the groups are comprised of TU Trustees, past NLC members that joined the group before their terms ended and decided to stay on because of the nature of the workgroup, along with TU members who want to make a difference.

The best part of these workgroups is that they are always looking for member involvement and new ideas, and they accept any Trout Unlimited member. You need not be in leadership position to join in on the fun and make a difference.

If this interests you, contact me at chlbeck@att.net or check out the work groups on the TU National Website. Go to NLC@tu.org. There are descriptions of each workgroup, including the contact information for the workgroup chair person. The workgroups generally meet monthly via Zoom.

Linn Beck, Wisconsin's National Leadership Council Representative.

West Fork Sports Club planning stream project

Donations sought for project on club property.

Reservations available

Reservations for next year are open online at westforksportsclub.org. If you are planning an event that does not require reserving buildings, but includes more than 12 people camping, please email westforksportsclub@gmail.com before April 1.

Support sought for project

The West Fork Sports Club and TU DARE would like to invite members and chapters to help support restoration efforts on the West Fork of the Kickapoo River on the club property. TU DARE helped form and get approval for a three-year stream restoration plan to help protect habitat, reduce sediment, deepen the stream, decrease water temperatures and return a meander.

The project will install wing dams, three new-style LUNKER structures and rock boulders in stream. The project area has a DNR easement and access.

The contractor and most supplies are already lined up. The WFSC will match dollar for dollar up to \$8,000 for this project in donations. The total cost of the project keeps fluctuating because of the price of rock, but is estimated to be between \$15,000 and \$20,000 to do properly, including sloping severely degraded banks on the DNR property.

Thinking about access for elderly anglers

The WFSC is acutely aware that many older anglers struggle with access and mobility, and we have tried to incorporate this element into our projects. Stream restoration projects offer the opportunity make the

banks more friendly and the club will try to mow fairly close to the water. We hope to make the park more senior friendly through these projects.

The West Fork Sports Club was one of the early partners of TUDARE and continues with educational opportunities and conservation efforts. Each April the club releases brook trout into the watershed, and this year we hosted the TU 5 Rivers rendezvous and facilitated 10 chapter events spanning from Minnesota to Indiana.

The club is perfect for large events

The WFSC is one of the few places large groups can gather and hold their events, such as such as the Bamboo Rod Makers, Heddon Fest, the TU summer state council meeting and so much more, such as women's clinics and youth environmental education events. Others groups utilizing the club include 4H, the scouts and other youth groups.

Stop in this year

If you haven't visited the club in a while please consider stopping in in 2023. Donations for this project can be sent to TU DARE, Sara Strassman, Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Program Manager, 516 23rd St. N, La Crosse, WI 54601

Thank you in advance for helping the river be its best and protecting habitat.

Tina Murray, past president and current chair of the Stream Restoration Committee.

Stream access can mean different things

By Bob Haase

Access can mean a lot of different things, and it is something that many of us take for granted here in Wisconsin.

As the Angler Representative for the Wisconsin Sporting Heritage Council, I have given a lot more attention to access and the role it plays in “R3,” the recruitment, retention and reactivation of anglers. Traveling to other states to fish, such as Colorado, Montana and Wyoming, I needed to be more aware of the legal aspects of access, and how it differs from state to state.

In this article, I will try to go beyond the legal aspects of access, and address some of the other things we might want to consider. Some of these include ease of access, maintenance, knowing where access areas are, signage and a variety of other issues.

Legal aspects of access

In Wisconsin, we used to use the high-water mark as a reference of where it was legal for us to fish. We could access a stream as long as we were within the normal high-water mark of a stream. That is still the case in states like Montana. That was changed to a new rule of keeping our feet wet. As long as we keep our feet wet in the stream, we are in legal compliance regarding trespass laws. It also gives us the right to go on land to go around an obstruction in a stream, but we have to re-enter the stream as soon as it is safe and possible to do so.

One of our students from this year’s Youth Trout Fishing Camp was fishing the Crystal River near Waupaca after the camp and found a fence and “No Trespassing” sign across the river. It is illegal to block a stream like this, but if nobody complains, I guess they might get away with it. Allowing things like this to happen could affect stream access and prevent anglers from fishing that section of a stream. Don’t take stream access for granted.

It is also important for us to know the boundaries of where public land ends and private land begins. Without proper signage, this is sometimes confusing. It can become more confusing when there is an easement giving us permission to fish and not knowing the boundaries of the easement and if there are other provisions of the easement.

These boundaries and easements are often shown on DNR apps, maps and other apps like OnX. OnX also provides the names of property owners to help you know who to contact if you want to try and gain access to some private lands.

We can help maintain and expand access to streams by picking up any garbage, cans and other items like this as we fish the streams, even if it was left by someone else. Use the Boy Scout program of “Leave No Trace” to help prevent the loss of access to the streams we enjoy fishing. Not all easements or stream access rights

are permanent and could fail to be renewed over something as simple as people leaving trash along the streams.

Ease of use and safety

Having the legal authority to fish a stream doesn’t mean much if it is so overgrown that we cannot navigate to and along the stream corridor. Our DNR habitat crews and TU chapters help maintain many stream corridors, but invasives and other weed growth can make fishing

where TU chapters help maintain stream corridor access by mowing an access path to and along the streams. The DNR crew would cut the first path, removing large trees and obstacles, allowing for ease of mowing. This path would be away from a stream, maybe 10 to 15 feet, with paths cut in occasionally to access the stream.

With proper training, TU members could maintain the access by cutting it when needed, possibly two or three times per year. It doesn’t have to be maintained like a lawn,

do not know how to identify it, or what to do if they come in contact with it. It is often mixed in with other vegetation along stream corridors. Better access as mentioned above and chemical treatment of these invasives might make it safer fishing along our streams.

The DNR habitat crews and TU volunteers have done a lot to increase the quantity and quality of fish in our coldwater streams. It is a shame that more people don’t make use of them throughout the fishing season. Anglers often fish the

streams that are easiest to fish, concentrating fishing pressure on fewer streams, when it could be spread out to many other streams if there was easier access along the stream corridors.

It is not what I think, but what the majority of trout anglers and TU members think. Would you like to see easier access along the stream corridors by some



ILLEGAL OBSTRUCTIONS CAN GO UNCHECKED IF NO ONE SPEAKS UP

One of our students from this year’s Youth Trout Fishing Camp was fishing the Crystal River near Waupaca after the camp and found a fence and “No Trespassing” sign across the river.

so difficult that people stop fishing the stream.

I know this, because I am the one that usually goes out and searches out places for the students to fish during our State Council Youth Trout Fishing Camp. By the end of July and into August, some streams are so overgrown that I can’t find any signs of people using the streams. The DNR has expanded the fishing season to begin in January when it is freezing cold, but I find it a lot more enjoyable to fish in September and October. The only problem is the increased amount of weed growth and other vegetation along the stream corridors.

As we get older, it becomes more difficult and sometimes dangerous to fish when we have to tread through the tall grass, fallen trees and heavy brush, so we just stop fishing.

A couple years ago I was fishing the North Branch of the Bad Axe with a good friend. He was having some knee problems and was concerned about walking through the tall grass that was about head high in some areas, and not being able to see any possible obstructions. We gave up trying to fish that stream and looked for another stream that provided easier access. We ended up going to a pastured stream where the grazing cows made it more accessible.

My role on the Sporting Heritage Council is to represent anglers in regard to recruitment of new anglers, the retention of current anglers and reactivation of people that used to fish and might want to get back into it again. Having not only legal access, but ease of access can make a difference in recruiting new anglers, maintaining current anglers and getting some anglers to give it another try.

One solution might be to create an “Adopt a Stream Program”

just trimmed when needed to allow access where you can see where to walk and see obstacles. I would ask some of the older TU members if having an access like this might affect where they fish and allow them to fish longer into the season.

Invasive species

Another concern is making contact with invasive plants such as Wild Parsnip and Giant Hogweed that can give severe burns, blisters and even blindness. Some anglers

kind of a maintenance program, or do you think it is good the way it is? Does an “Adopt a Stream” program as mentioned above make sense? Would you like to see better signage on the streams to know where public access begins and ends? Do you have other related concerns or ideas? You can email me at flytiter@milwpc.com

“The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away.”

William Shakespeare

Remember TU as Part of Your Legacy

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

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

Thank you for considering Trout Unlimited in your estate planning.

Mining exploration continues

Winter is a time of activity for mineral exploration.

By Johnson Bridgwater, River Alliance of Wisconsin

Happy winter. It's a time of great beauty. It's also a time of activity for mineral exploration. Drilling is commonly done in the winter in Wisconsin, when the ground is frozen, in an attempt to minimize surface disturbances.

Currently, Green Light Metals, a Canadian mining company, is pursuing two wintertime exploration licenses in northern Wisconsin — the Bend Deposit on the Yellow River in Taylor County and the Reef Deposit on the Eau Claire River in Marathon County. The DNR maintains an up-to-date internet page for both of these deposits, including permit paperwork, at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Mines/Projects.html>

The Bend Deposit is in the Chequamegon National Forest, but the mineral rights are owned by a private company, Soo RR. Therefore, both the DNR and the U.S. Forest Service are participating in permitting the Bend Deposit explo-

ration. In Marathon County, the Reef Deposit exploration permitting is being overseen by the DNR and Marathon County, and exploration will take place on private lands.

Although there has been discussion in Wisconsin recently about "critical minerals" and the need to increase domestic mining for the sake of "green energy," the Bend and Reef deposits are both massive-sulfide gold mines. Gold is not a critical mineral. Further information on both sulfide mining and critical minerals may be found on River Alliance of Wisconsin's Mining Page at <https://wisconsinrivers.org/mining/>

Flambeau Mine closure

On December 20, 2022, the department issued a Certification of Completion of Reclamation for the remaining 32 acres of the permitted mine site, referred to as the industrial outlot, along with a Revised Mining Permit. Additional information regarding the industrial outlot, the petition for certification, the no-

tice of public hearing, the Revised Mining Permit and other related materials are available at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/Mines/Flambeau.html>

Back 40 Mine proposal

Gold Resource Corporation (GORO), of Denver, Colorado, purchased the Back 40 Mine on the Menominee River in Michigan from Aquila Resources. Recently, GORO updated their timeline of action for this proposed mine project by pushing everything back at least a year. GORO is now saying their initial feasibility study will not be ready until late 2023.

Also, related to the Back 40 Mine, the Michigan Historic Preservation Review Board voted to support the nomination of Anaem Omot, a Menominee Tribe cultural landscape on the Menominee River between Wisconsin and Michigan, to the National Register of Historic Places. Wisconsin previously voted to support this effort. There are more steps required at the federal

level to complete this process.

While this action will not directly bear on the mining permitting process, it certainly upholds what the Menominee have known for centuries: The Menominee River is a rich and sacred place, deserving respect and protection.



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Wisconsin Greenfire issues report on state of our natural resources

The report is a thorough and thoughtful analysis of priority issues and actions for Wisconsin's natural resources.

Contributors to this report include Paul Heinen, Ellen Wagner, Fred Clark, Don Behm, Sarah Peterson, Kate Reilly and Robin Schmidt

Opportunities Now is an issue paper series published by Wisconsin's Green Fire that summarizes the science and background of key conservation and environmental issues and makes policy recommendations that support pro-conservation outcomes. Each of the papers in our Opportunities Now series is the product of an analysis of current literature, interviews with agency staff and experts, and the consensus of our subject matter teams.

Here is a summary of the report. To see the complete report go to <https://wgreenfire.org/our-publications/>

Wisconsin no longer an environmental leader

Between the 1960's and 2010, Wisconsin was recognized as a national leader in conservation and environmental protection. This reputation was built on a legacy built by icons in the conservation movement and an innovative and progressive approach to new policies and legislation. During this time Wisconsin addressed difficult environmental challenges, made sustained investments in conservation and environmental programs and established a set of laws, policies and norms that protected natural resources programs from undue political influence while encouraging robust public engagement.

Today Wisconsin's reputation is dramatically different. Over the past 10 years we have fallen behind neighboring states, both in addressing longstanding conservation issues as well as emerging environmental

threats. Since 2011, the collective effects of state legislative actions, court rulings and political practices have undermined democratic processes and profoundly changed the way state government operates.

Power shift

One important change during this period has been a sustained shift in power from the executive branch to the legislative branch. Outcomes of this shift include failure to conserve natural resources in a range of areas including management of fish, wildlife and forests, protection of public lands and protection of clean air and water.

One especially acute outcome of this policy failure is the public health crisis precipitated by Wisconsin's failure to adequately prevent contamination of drinking water and degradation of surface waters as a result of industrial, agricultural and poorly managed residential activities. While some of these problems have been years in the making, a decade-long failure to take effective actions to address them is affecting health and quality of life and creating a growing financial burden to Wisconsin residents throughout the state.

Nitrate contamination

Nitrate contamination of water supplies in Wisconsin is a public health problem that needs to be addressed. As of 2022, more than 42,000 private wells and 300 public water systems have levels of nitrates above the current health standards established by Wisconsin Department of Health Services (WDHS). Elevated nitrate levels are a health risk that can lead to colon, stomach or bladder cancer, diabetes and thyroid conditions. Nitrates are a par-

ticular health risk for women of childbearing age as they are a known cause of birth defects including spina bifida, cleft palates and missing limbs in newborns. Nitrate exposure in infants is directly tied to Methemoglobinemia (aka blue baby syndrome). The direct medical cost estimates for all nitrate-attributable adverse health outcomes in Wisconsin is estimated to range between \$23 million and \$80 million annually.

PFAS contamination

As of June 2022, 90 unique sites in Wisconsin have been identified with elevated per and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS) levels. Communities affected by elevated levels of PFAS to date include Adams, Eau Claire, Green Bay, La Crosse, Madison, Marinette, Marshfield, Milwaukee, Mosinee, Peshtigo, Rhinelander, Rib Mountain, Wausau and Weston.

Exposure to PFAS is tied to adverse health outcomes including decreased fertility, developmental effects in children including low birth weight, accelerated puberty, bone variations, or behavioral changes, increased risk of some cancers, including prostate, kidney, and testicular cancers, immune system impacts, and increased risk of obesity.

PFAS are a growing public health crisis affecting both urban and rural communities throughout Wisconsin. In the most heavily affected communities, local governments are supplying bottled water for cooking and drinking at taxpayer expense.

Declining surface water quality

Wisconsin surface waters continue to decline in quality, with more waters added to the state's Impaired

Waters List each year. An increasing number of water bodies have been made unsafe or unusable during more parts of the year as a result of algal blooms or the presence of toxic chemicals.

A series of changes to state laws has limited local governments from using locally established standards for protecting shorelands from excessive development and limited the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from enforcing those standards. Shoreline development on the margins of lakes causes degraded water quality and reduced habitat quality for fish and aquatic species, which in turn reduces recreational opportunities for lake users and affects property values for all lakeshore owners.

This paper explores the changes in the balance of power in state government since 2011 that have prevented effective responses to these and other emerging environmental threats, thus putting the health and welfare of Wisconsin citizens at risk.

We focus on how these changes have impacted key environmental programs. However, they also impact natural resource conservation (fish, wildlife, public lands) and other state policy arenas. Our conclusions offer recommendations for changes to policies and practices that will allow Wisconsin to effectively address the ongoing need for conservation and environmental protection that is essential to human health and quality of life for Wisconsin communities.

This was only a summary of the report. Policy makers, conservation organizations, and concerned citizens are all welcome to use and distribute Opportunities Now papers without restrictions. Direct enquiries on this paper to Fred Clark at fcclark@wgreenfire.org.

Wild Trout Symposium returns

Midwest well represented at trout-centric national gathering.

By Matthew Mitro, Wisconsin DNR

Five years ago, I wrote an article for *Wisconsin Trout* about the Wild Trout Symposium, an every-three-year gathering of scientists, conservationists, anglers and other trout enthusiasts to share our work on studying, managing and protecting trout. After a two-year delay, we finally gathered this past September, once again in West Yellowstone. We resisted holding a virtual symposium, in either 2020 or 2022, recognizing the importance of connecting with one another in person and in a place with an abundance of wild trout rivers to inspire and engage attendees.

Although life as we knew it in many respects stopped in early 2020, work on trout continued and was evident in the varied presentations shared at the symposium.

Midwest well represented

The upper Midwest was once again well-represented at Wild Trout XIII:

- Doug Dieterman, Minnesota DNR, presented his work on the role of stream habitat rehabilitation in a Driftless Area riverscape.
- Mike Siepker, Iowa DNR, shared his perspectives on brook trout management in the Iowa Driftless Area.
- Troy Zorn, Michigan DNR, presented a poster on trout population trends in Michigan streams.
- Kent Johnson of the Klap-TU-Wish Chapter, presented a poster on the WiseH2O mobile application developed for anglers to monitor water quality and habitat conditions in trout streams and he shared observations on the Kinnickinnic River dam removal project.
- Emma Lundberg of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service-Green Bay gave an updated presentation on our brook trout movement study in Upper Middle Inlet. We wrote about this research in the winter 2022 issue of *Wisconsin Trout*.
- I presented on the Wisconsin trout-beaver study, which I wrote about in the last issue of *Wisconsin Trout*.

Gap between science and public opinion

The theme of this symposium was “Reducing the gap between science and public opinion.” Three plenary speakers who were invited to the symposium to speak to this theme included Editor-in-Chief Kirk Deeter, Director of Science for Riverence Holdings and past president

of the American Fisheries Society Jesse Trushenski and, the Deputy Chief of Fisheries for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department Dirk Miller.

I assume most readers here are well familiar with TU’s Kirk Deeter. Kirk talked about 20 ways the fly-fishing world is dramatically different than a generation ago and why science should play a more vital role in today’s world. Much of his presentation focused on the rising interest and participation in trout fishing and the concomitant opportunities and challenges for trout management and conservation.

Jesse Trushenski oversees the aquaculture research needs for farmed trout and steelhead operations at Riverence Farms in Idaho and for salmon breeding at Riverence Brood in Washington. While it may seem odd that someone who works with captive-bred salmonids was addressing a symposium on wild trout, fish culture plays an important role in taking pressure off harvest of wild fisheries.

Aquaculture provides us food, but perhaps more importantly for wild trout, hatchery propagation can support conservation of threatened coldwater fishes by aiding efforts to reestablish populations. Examples may include threatened cutthroat trout subspecies in the inter-mountain west, grayling in Michigan, or brook trout populations in Wisconsin, whose native genetics have been displaced by past stockings derived from domestic brood stock.

In Jesse’s presentation on “Facts, Ideas, and the Post-Truth State of Play,” she talked about her work on sharing science in what she calls a post-fact world, where objective facts or evidence-based science may have less influence on shaping public opinion than personal beliefs.

Lastly, Dirk Miller provided the agency perspective on science and public opinion. Among the many concerns he addressed, the issue of public trust resonated with me the most, perhaps because I also work as a fisheries professional in a state agency. We share not only a responsibility to support sound, evidence-based management of public resources, but we also share a professional responsibility to be honest in what we do and in what we communicate with the public. The trust we hope the public has in us is based on the choices we make in our work decisions, and if that trust is lost, it

may not be easily earned back.

I think it is important that the symposium theme was about “reducing” the gap between science and public opinion, and not about eliminating it. I think science, at its best, informs public policy, and science must not dictate public policy.

“Must” is a strong word, and I use it here intentionally. I think policy based on public opinion, whether it addresses trout stocking decisions, harvest regulations, or stream riparian management, should be informed by the best available science, but it should also incorporate the public’s values.

I always hope that public opinion on resource management is based on sound science, but I also affirm that values are an important variable in shaping public policy. In other words, science and values are both important in shaping public opinion and driving sound resource management.

Other fascinating presentations

There were too many presentations and posters to describe in detail here, but I will highlight a couple that I found notable and interesting.

Kevin Meyer, a research scientist with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, presented research findings on the effects of elevated water temperatures on trout angler catch rates and catch-and-release mortality. This has become a concern for trout fisheries in western rivers, where less-than-ideal warm water temperatures have been occurring during summer months. Calls have been made to restrict fishing at elevated water temperatures in some rivers.

The study involved fishing with artificial dry flies to tag and release trout caught at water temperatures from 56-78°F and estimating relative survival by looking for tagged trout in subsequent electrofishing surveys. (Note to self: design a research study that requires sampling by fly rod.) They observed that while relative survival declined as water temperature increased while angling, catch rates similarly declined as water tempera-

ture increased.

Accounting for both declines, the study authors concluded that fish mortality per angler might be higher at cooler water temperatures such that there may be little if any benefit to restricting angling at elevated water temperatures.

Perhaps the most unusual study presented was by Craig Purchase, a research scientist from Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada. His presentation title asked the question, “Does post-ejaculatory cryptic female choice reduce hybridization in salmonids?” He refers to

this as the “undiscovered contraception.”

The idea is this: female trout often mate with multiple males, which can lead to the potential for unintended matings and sperm competition. Cryptic female choice may occur by way of the ovarian fluid, which is released with eggs, influencing sperm behavior. Some males may be favored over others in situations where sperm compete to fertilize eggs.

This mechanism behind cryptic female choice is supposedly strong in native populations of Atlantic salmon and brown trout in Europe. Paternity has been observed to be biased towards one’s own species, thus reducing hybridization. Craig and his team investigated sperm swimming performance as a predictor of paternity in Newfoundland populations where invasive brown trout could potentially hybridize with native Atlantic salmon and native brook trout.

Ovarian fluid, in comparison to water alone, did improve sperm motility and swimming velocity. But there did not appear to be any preference expressed for sperm from one’s own species. In fact, sperm from invasive male brown trout tended to perform better, suggesting cryptic female choice is insufficient to preclude hybridization in this scenario. This continues to be an active area of research, so look for more findings to come.

For anyone interested in more details about the research presented at Wild Trout XIII, each presenter put together a roughly eight-page proceedings paper. These will be available as downloadable PDF files at the Wild Trout Symposium website at wildtroutsymposium.com, sometime in early 2023.

The trust we hope the public has in us is based on the choices we make in our work decisions, and if that trust is lost, it may not be easily earned back.

I think science, at its best, informs public policy, and science must not dictate public policy.

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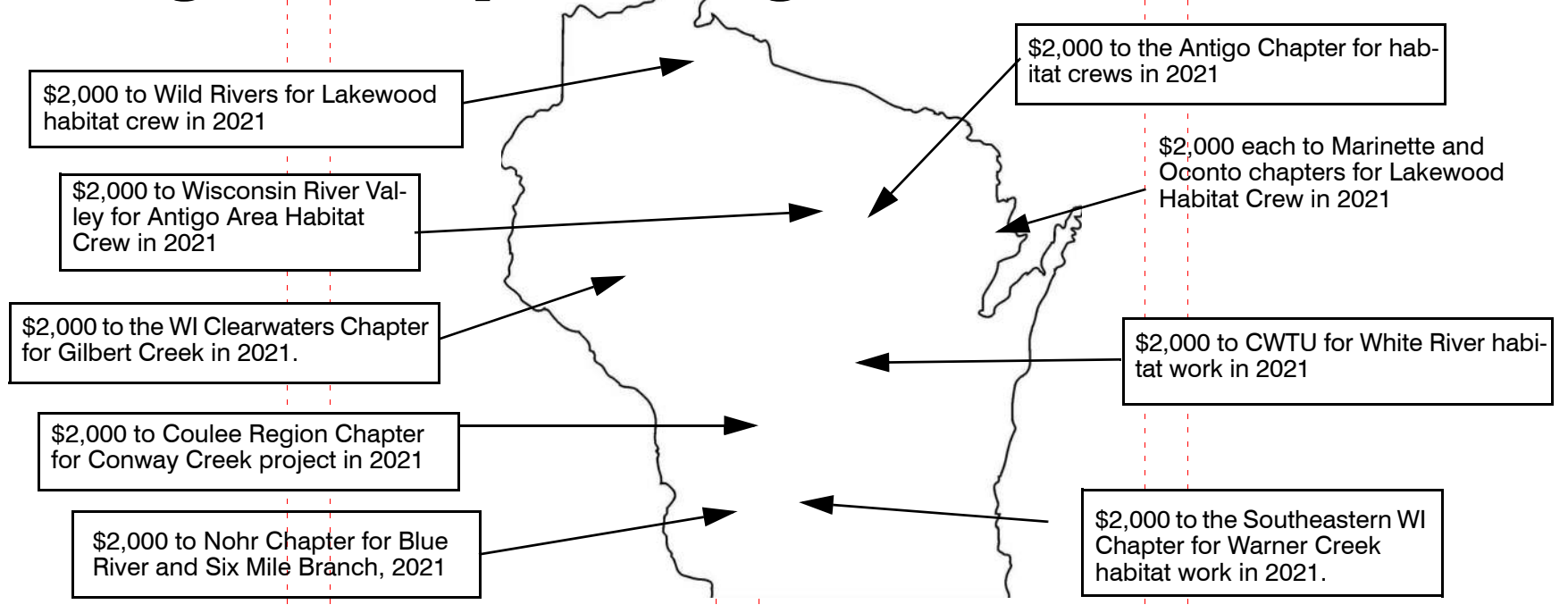
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If you are a Thrivent member and have the ability to make Thrivent Choice donations, we would be honored if you’d consider including the Wisconsin Council of TU within your charitable planning, and making a donation to our cause.

Please support Friends of Wis. TU in 2022

It is time for chapters to be planning their habitat projects for 2023. Please remember that if your planning includes applying for a Friends of Wisconsin TU grant, you must submit your application no later than January 15, 2023. Let's make 2023 another great year for the Friends of Wisconsin TU program.

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*Yes, I want to join the "Friends" of Wisconsin TU.
Enclosed is my check for \$100 or more, payable to Wisconsin Trout Unlimited.*

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BOOK REVIEW

“Salmon Wars: The Dark Underbelly of our Favorite Fish.”

By Duke Welter

If you're starting to read this little review while eating anything, stop right now. Just put away the food or the book, and come back later. If you keep on eating, I won't be responsible if you lose your lunch.

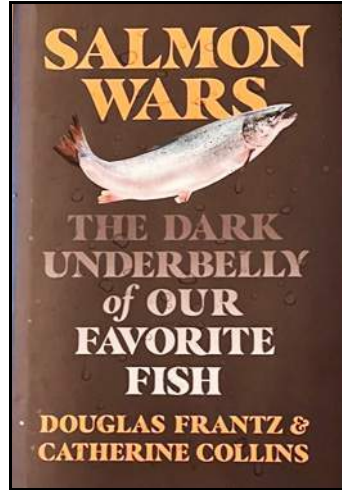
Once you've pushed away from your plate, let me offer the authors' suggestion that one of the solutions to this disastrous aquaculture practice might be found right here in Wisconsin. More on that later.

“Salmon Wars” covers in detail the farmed salmon industry around the world, dominated by a few (mostly Norwegian) corporations that would be broken up if we had meaningful international antitrust rules, and its disastrous consequences for our near-shore ecosystems and anadromous fisheries. Written by a wife-and-husband pair of experienced investigative journalists (Frantz shared in a Pulitzer Prize while at the New York Times), their world tour will give the reader excruciating detail about the ugly side of farmed frozen Atlantic salmon coming to us from the coasts of Norway, Scotland, Canada, parts of the U.S. and Chile.

That tour will bring you in contact with rotting, disease-infested fish by the thousands, bottom areas clogged with waste and dead fish

which eventually smother shellfish grounds and ruin other long-time fisheries. While they promise economic rewards when they seek to colonize another coastline, the boom usually turns to a bust as other fisheries die out and the fishers' jobs with them. Boom and bust economies, we have seen, each have their benefits to a few for a time before the bust comes.

Patagonia's video “ArtiFISHal” gave us a look three years ago into the net pens on the coasts of Washington and British Columbia. There, as in lochs of Norway and Scotland, the Bay of Fundy, and elsewhere, hundreds of thousands of Atlantic salmon are crowded into circular net pens, fed food manufactured from fat-rich smaller fish from around the world, subject to disease, and frequently escaping into waters through which struggling Pacific salmon migrate on their spawning routes. The farm-raised intruders are rife with gill lice and other infections, and they communicate the gill lice to the wild fish, reducing their hardiness and ability to survive in the wild. There's also some interbreeding suspected.



The response to critics like these from the salmon aquaculture industry has been eerily similar to that used by the tobacco industry against critics of smoking: hire “experts” to dispute the science, try to discredit the critics, and, in this case, the need for mass protein to feed the world's burgeoning population.

These farmed fish need to eat, and what they've been eating has been smaller fish netted from West African waters and anchovies from the coast of Peru, then ground into fish pellets. The downside shows up in those local fisheries, crashing populations long used by locals for their economies and consumption. The waste from the net pens also gives off methane as it decomposes, leading to experiments with other types of feed, some of vegetative origin. Maybe seaweed is an answer.

One answer, the authors suggest, might be inland salmon farming. Right here in Wisconsin, when you drive on I-94 past the Alma Center-Pigeon Falls exit between Black River Falls and Eau Claire, you'll see a massive single-story building up on the hilltop. That's the home of Superior Fresh Salmon, a dual-level facility raising Atlantic salmon and steelhead and using the water to raise salad greens on the upper level. Quite a few restaurants, aware of consumers' growing concerns about farmed salmon, are turning to superior Fresh products for their menus. While I don't order Atlantic salmon

off any menu because it is all farmed, I have bought Superior Fresh at a Festival Market. Priced somewhere between wild-caught Alaskan salmon and the planks of coastal net-pen-raised fish, it is certainly better than the latter, though in my opinion perhaps not as flavorful as the former. The environmental impact has been mitigated in part by water being treated on site and re-used, or used to irrigate farm fields around the area. No fish products go into the food, and no antibiotics are used. And both fish and greens grow to market size significantly faster than net-pen-grown fish and greens grown on land.

Farmed salmon grown around the world make up an industry worth many billions, dominated by a handful of companies mostly based in Norway. Superior Fresh LLC isn't a small operation, and fortunately has the financial resources behind it of the Wanek family of Arcadia, owners of Ashley Furniture Industries. This won't be done funded by local bake sales. But it can be done.

While the coastal net pen farming of salmon is a shameful ongoing environmental and food disaster, we may yet see ways to force companies to move away from it to inland salmon farming. The State of Washington, after disastrous net pen failures and escapes, will phase out net pens within the next couple of years. Perhaps the Wisconsin example will show more people how it can be done in a better way.

Salmon Wars: The Dark Underbelly of Our Favorite Fish, Douglas Frantz & Catherine Collins, Holt & Company, New York, 2022, 355 pages, \$29.99.

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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736 Meadowbrook Court	Name
Green Bay WI 54313	_____
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Cleaning stations now in Georgia

Teen Scout is helping to spread the use of wader wash stations in his state.

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

In my quarterly update last spring, I asked you to let me know about streams that could use some Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) signage. Thanks to the great responses, I wanted to celebrate a couple sign installation success stories that happened in the last year, and let you know about opportunities to get involved in 2023.

First off, kudos to members of two Illinois TU chapters for their efforts to install AIS stream signs on southwest Wisconsin stiles. River Alliance member Dick Dragiewicz responded to my newsletter request from last spring and sent out a call to his friends in the Gary Borger and Lee Wulff Chapters. These two groups have been building stiles in the Driftless Area since 2016, and they thought AIS signs would be a good addition to the ef-

fort. In 2022, Jerry Sapp and Bill Davis led the charge to attach nine signs to stiles on popular fishing streams. They plan to visit previous TU stile project sites and install additional signs in 2023.

We give a shout out to a great Boy Scout

Second, I wanted to give a shout-out to a Boy Scout and TU member in Georgia who reached out last July for help with his Eagle Scout project.

Noah Ottinger wanted to protect his favorite fishing streams near Atlanta from AIS and needed help designing boot-brush-cleaning stations. His local TU chapter (Cohutta Chapter) agreed to sponsor the project, and after a little Googling, he learned about the stations River Alliance and partners have been installing in Wisconsin since the New Zealand mudsnail invasion in 2011.

Thanks to his initiative, anglers in his state now have access to streamside reminders about how to stop AIS, and some tools on hand to help with decontamination. He made some adjustments to the Wisconsin design and hopes that this effort brings awareness to the AIS problem not just in Georgia, but nationally. His design plans are available for anyone who wants them, so let me know if you'd like them.

If you have sign placement ideas, want to help build boot brush stations or would like to volunteer your time in some other way, please contact me. Invasive species are a problem that will never go away completely, and the cast of problematic characters is constantly changing. It takes all of us working together to keep our trout streams as good as they can be, and I look forward to opportunities to work together on projects in the coming year.



SCOUT CREATES WADER WASH STATIONS IN GEORGIA
Noah Ottinger spearheaded an effort in Georgia to build wader wash stations to protect his favorite trout streams.



Nathan Ottinger

ANOTHER GREAT GARY BORGER CHAPTER STILE IN THE DRIFTLESS AREA
Members of the Gary Borger Chapter after installing a stile with an AIS sign during their September outing in Avalanche.

6,500

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OPINION

Anonymous legislators abusing their authority

They shouldn't be allowed to secretly scuttle land conservation projects like the 70,000-acre Pelican River Forest, one of the largest in state history.

By Mike Carlson and Charles Carlin of Gathering Waters: Wisconsin's Alliance for Land Trusts

There's a time and a place for secrecy. Keeping things quiet about a local creek that's home to a wily 19-inch brown trout? That's totally understandable. Being cagey about the location of your favorite spring ponds, loaded with native brookies? Sure, who are we to judge?

But blocking public land conservation projects with zero transparency and accountability? That's not okay.

And, unfortunately, that's exactly what's happening in the Wisconsin Legislature.

A few legislators on the powerful Joint Committee on Finance (JFC) are abusing their authority and sabotaging the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. Vital conservation projects are at stake.

To make matters worse, they're doing so anonymously, flouting the most basic tenets of the democratic process. These attacks must stop.

Knowles-Nelson is Wisconsin's flagship environmental conservation program. For more than 30 years the program has provided funds to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), local governments, and non-profit conservation organizations to protect Wisconsin's land and water. The program has been a huge success, with more than 700,000 acres of land conserved and thousands of projects completed, ranging from boat launches to park shelters, trails and bike paths.

For trout anglers, Knowles-Nelson funds have purchased more than 300 streambank easements, which grant public access through private land. It was also invested in more than 500 fishery areas projects.

Today, this popular program is reaching a breaking point because of the actions of less than a handful of state lawmakers.

Here's a recent example: A legislator or legislators—we'll never really know because they remain anonymous—blocked the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from completing the largest land conservation project in state history. There's been no public explanation and no rationale given. The Pelican River Forest would conserve more than 70,000 acres of private forestland in Langlade, Forest and Oneida counties for public recreation and forestry. This single project would get Wisconsin more than halfway towards the goal Gov. Evers set in his executive order calling for 125,000 acres of forestland to be conserved by 2030 as part of the state's effort to address the climate crisis.

And it's not just one project that could be lost.

In the past year, anonymous objections threatened to scuttle the conservation of some of the last undeveloped shoreline along Lake Michigan, high quality forestlands in Bayfield and Forest counties, outdoor space for Milwaukee Public Schools and a nature preserve in Ashland County. This dysfunctional process has also caused some conservation partners to question whether it's even worth applying for Knowles Nelson funding in the first place.

At this point you might be wondering how in the world this is happening. How can an anonymous legislator wield this much power over a public conservation program?

The last step to approve a Knowles-Nelson project is what's known as passive review by the JFC.



Jay Brittain

PELICAN RIVER FOREST IN LANGLADE, FOREST AND ONEIDA COUNTIES

The Pelican River Forest would conserve more than 70,000 acres of private forestland in Langlade, Forest and Oneida counties for a variety of public recreation and forestry.

JFC's oversight comes after the DNR has thoroughly vetted the project and after the Natural Resources Board approves it. A lot of smart and qualified real estate and natural resources professionals have worked very hard to put together these high-value projects for the benefit of Wisconsin residents and visitors.

Unfortunately, at the eleventh hour, the JFC can scuttle the whole thing with an anonymous objection. Their secretive approach nearly defies belief. JFC's review process lacks the most basic elements of good governance: There is no transparency, and no clear path for an up-or-down vote. Knowles-Nelson projects have languished for years because of a JFC objection.

A single, anonymous legislator can object to a project for any reason, or for no reason at all. That objection stops the project in its tracks.

There is no legitimate defense of the anonymous review process. It is simply a way to dodge any sort of public accountability for objections by JFC members.

The conservation community would welcome hearty, open debate of Knowles-Nelson projects with JFC members if there are indeed legitimate concerns to be addressed. In order for that debate to happen, however, legislators must be open about the reasons for their objections and hold hearings to debate the projects. Public hearings would allow for open debate, provide an opportunity for legislators who do support land and water conservation to be heard, and give the DNR and other Knowles-Nelson grantees a public forum in which to hear objections and address the concerns behind those objections. As it currently stands, a single unaccountable legislator can sabotage the democratic process.

There are two solutions to the problems of broken oversight and

the strangling of the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program.

The first solution relates to legislative practice and culture. The law is clear. Under state statute, if an objection is raised during the 14 day passive review process, a meeting must also be scheduled to discuss the grant. Unfortunately, that rarely, if ever, happens. Instead, projects get stuck in limbo, Knowles-Nelson funding goes unspent, and Wisconsin's natural resources remain unprotected. Legislators need to hear from their constituents that they must follow the law. And every legislator who cares about government accountability and transparency must speak up and demand that their colleagues follow both the letter of the law and act in the broader spirit of good faith and ethical governance by scheduling and holding public hearings on projects that have been objected to.

The second solution is to reform the law governing Knowles-Nelson objections. The law should spell out clear timelines for holding hearings and votes on conservation projects and should prohibit anonymous objections. Some projects may be voted down for good reason. Nevertheless, every single project that receives an objection deserves good faith, public debate and a vote in which each legislator goes on record in support of, or opposition to, the project.

I invite everyone to join Team Knowles Nelson by visiting Action.KnowlesNelson.org. You'll also learn more about the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and what it's accomplished, including in-depth research on the program, descriptions of conservation projects, and a comprehensive archive of Knowles-Nelson news stories.

Wisconsin has a proud history of conservation and good governance. We seem to have lost sight of both. Working together, we can get Wisconsin and Knowles-Nelson back on track.

"JFC's review process lacks the most basic elements of good governance. There is no transparency, and no clear path for an up-or-down vote. Knowles-Nelson projects have languished for years because of a JFC objection."

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June 3 & 4, 2023
Amherst, WI

News from the Driftless Area

Plenty of good news regarding, grants, partnerships and projects.

By Sara Strassman, TU Driftless Area Program Manager

The Driftless Area Restoration Symposium is March 7-8. I am soliciting speakers now, so feel free to pass along names or ideas. We're envisioning two half-day sessions, conducted virtually and recorded for future viewing. Our audience grew significantly last year, due to that combination. We had more than 500 participants to the live sessions and more than 4,000 additional views of the presentations. We hope that next summer or fall could offer an opportunity for field visits that would allow for in-person interactions that will be missed at the symposium. Stay tuned for details and registration information soon at www.facebook.com/TUDriftless or www.tu.org/events/.

RCPP renewal

Thank you to all the chapters, partners and individuals who stepped in and pledged support for our Regional Conservation Partners Program (RCPP) renewal in September. I've been applauding your generosity and level of engagement every chance I get.

If awarded, the program will run from late 2023-2028 and will continue to make funding available to landowners to improve stream habitat through a variety of practices, including instream habitat improvement and stream bank stabilization. We anticipate approximately \$1-\$1.5 million annually toward projects or the five-year pe-

riod, or about \$200,000-\$250,000 per state per year. Your labor, monitoring and fundraising efforts on these projects are extremely valuable, as they provide opportunities for engagement, building relationships with landowners, helping cover funding gaps and collecting site-specific data.

A map of the eligible Driftless Area habitat for the Wild & Rare RCPP program is here: <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wi/rcpp>

TU/National Fish Habitat Partnership grants

The Driftless Area Restoration Effort is a partnership under the National Fish Habitat Partnership. The program has been co-led by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and TU since 2007 and TU is taking an expanded role over the next year. Stream restoration projects, as well as design work, monitoring and other complementary practices, are eligible for funding through this program. The grants range from \$15-\$40K and require a 1:1 non-federal match. The proposal is available by contacting Sara Strassman at Sara.Strassman@tu.org.

Aquatic organism passage/stream crossing inventories

Most of you are already aware about the aquatic organism blockages that can occur at culverts and bridges. You may have seen firsthand some of the damage that can occur when these structures are not

sized to fit the stream's flow regime. Road washouts, bridge failures and stream avulsions are common occurrences in the Driftless Area.

TU DARE is working with Dan Dauwalter from our science team and partners at the DNR to fund two crews of seasonal technicians who can inventory this infrastructure across the Driftless Area. While the Great Lakes have much of the road/stream barrier inventory complete, the Driftless Area does not.

Collecting information over the next few summers about the hydraulic and biologic impacts of bridges and culverts will feed into two very timely actions. First, it will provide information to our communities that own undersized or misaligned infrastructure that is not able to accommodate flood flows or fish passage so they can capitalize on

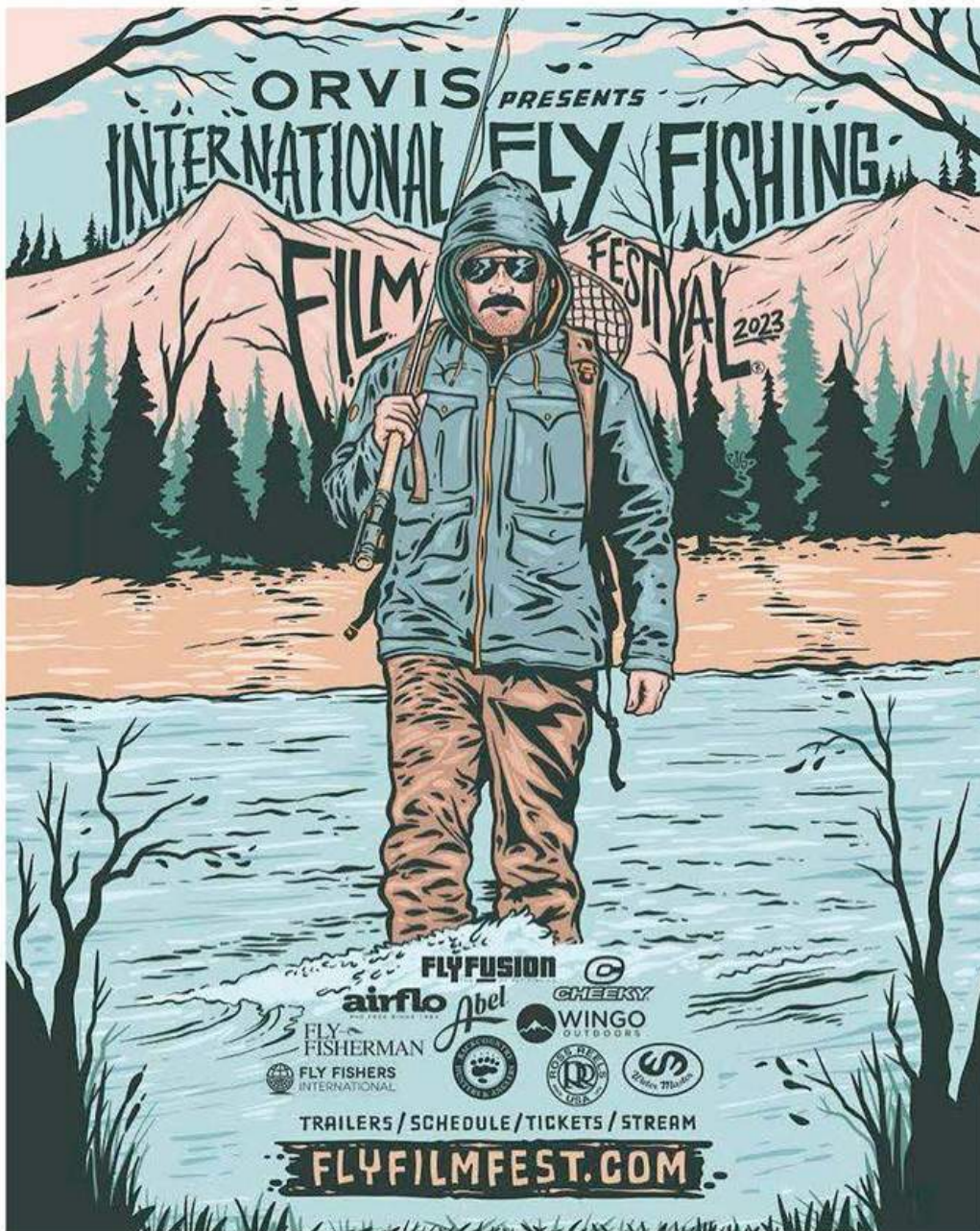
upcoming infrastructure dollars to address some of those problematic sites. We want our small communities to be able to address longstanding hazards using this once-in-a-generation infrastructure funding. <https://www.tu.org/magazine/conservation/from-the-field/why-tu-backed-the-infrastructure-and-climate-laws/>

Second, identifying barriers to fish movement is an important part of our baseline data collection for TU's Conservation Portfolio analysis as well as strategic planning. We hope to finally have the data for the Driftless Area to support our inclusion in the Brook Trout Conservation Portfolio and Range-wide Assessment. Go to <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f70da52f45304ab8be440885d32d3866>



COLLECTING DATA ON A POTENTIAL PROJECT IN IOWA

Sara Strassman



2023 International Fly Fishing Film Festival - IF4™

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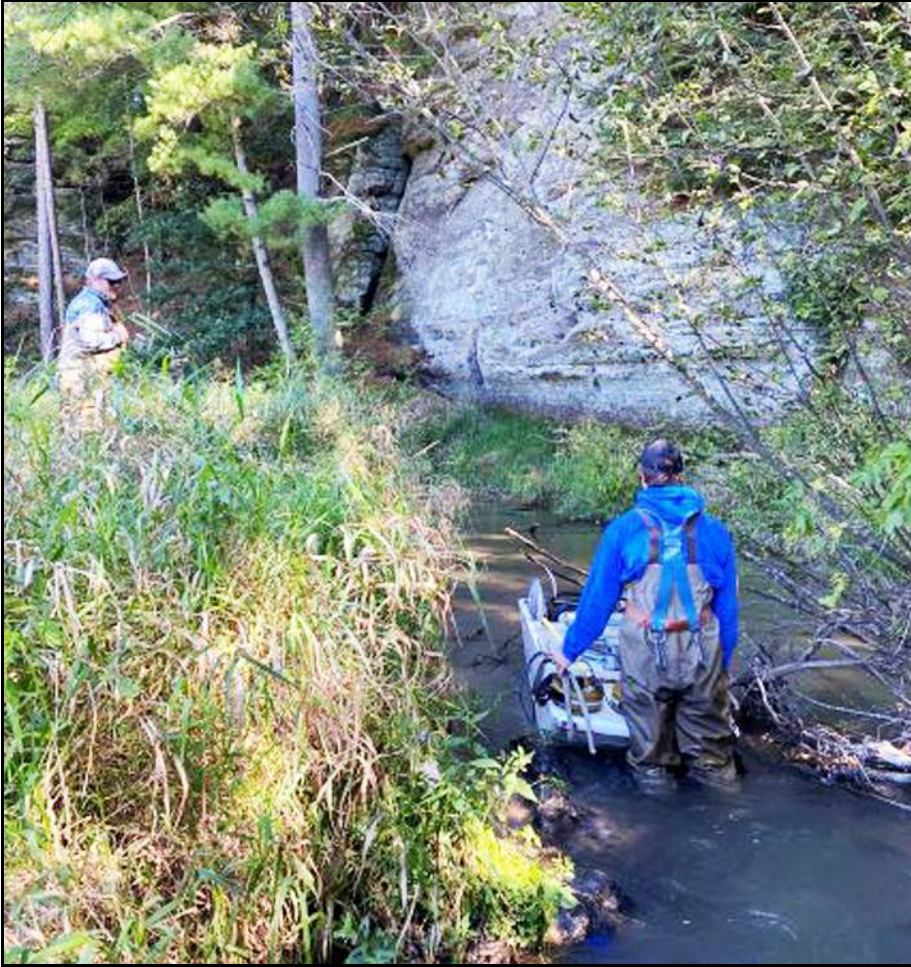
Tickets are \$15 online in advance at www.flyfilmfest.com
\$20 at the door

Doors open 6:00 pm and films begin at 7:00

Food and drink will be available for purchase during the evening.

All proceeds from this event will be used to support the conservation work of Trout Unlimited and its coldwater stream habitat projects in North Central Wisconsin.

Detailed Wausau IF4™ information at: WRVTU.ORG



Sara Strassman

POST-PROJECT SAMPLING

DNR technicians electroshock a section of the Little Lemonweir River to gather data following habitat restoration work.

Driftless Strategic Plan and Priority Waters.

As part of our new responsibilities managing the Driftless Area Restoration Effort National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP), we will need to develop an updated strategic plan. I welcome this opportunity to reflect on how far the effort has come and chart a course for our future endeavors. We will utilize science as the baseline for this effort. We will also incorporate lessons learned from years of field work, fishing observations and social interactions.

Trout Unlimited has also already started the process of establishing Priority Waters. A small working team has been drafting an outline of priority waters for Wisconsin. The entire Driftless Area in all four states is considered Priority Waters. We plan to drill down further as we work on our strategic planning process. We have many interested parties who wish to engage in our strategic planning process. We are still contemplating the best approach to solicit feedback, but we do plan for a presentation on the draft to be ready near the end of January for the annual meeting.

Hoffman moves to Minnesota DNR

Dusty Hoffman, our Southeast Minnesota Project Manager, has accepted a new position with the Minnesota DNR in their fisheries program. He leaves a hole on the TU team, but we know that we'll continue to collaborate with him in his new capacity. You can reach him at Dustan.Hoffman@state.mn.us or 507-765-7066. Thank you for all your great work, Dusty.

Projects and your wish list

There are several projects in the pipeline in the four Driftless Area states. I've included information about some of these projects below. As you have learned through this partnership program, not every project that comes through the door makes it all the way to completion. However, we are always interested to gather your project ideas to see if we can help. To this end, we want to make sure everyone feels welcome

to reach out to TUDARE to request some stream walks with your chapter or an interested landowner. We can assess current conditions, discuss restoration concepts and consider eligibility for funding. If your chapter has priority watersheds you are working in that you would like to discuss, please reach out to Paul Krahn at paul.krahn@tu.org or 608-606-0565.

Completed and active projects

- North Bear Creek (Phase 1)—This quarter-mile project in Winneshiek County, Iowa included 24 habitat features. This was the first RCPP-funded project in Iowa and included significant engagement from TU chapters in Iowa and beyond. There will be more than two acres of riparian area seeded to native plants.
- Bruce Valley Creek—This project is in Trempealeau County, Wisconsin on a Class 2-3 brook trout stream. Once a pastured stream corridor with eroding banks and little fish habitat, it has been revitalized by the hard work of local contactor and conservationist Rob Herman. The project involved two years of planning and was made possible by the collaboration of the Independence Elk Creek Rod & Gun Club, Associated Conservation Clubs of Trempealeau County, Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter, Trempealeau County Department of Land Management and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, through the NFHP Driftless Area Restoration Effort. This is just one of many projects completed by these partners over the years. To learn more about how they accomplish conservation projects, please go to <https://videooplayer.telvue.com/player/fMWo4eSQjGIGe8vIKeK2-vo4wt2rKKj2/media/761398?autostart=false&showtabssearch=true&fullscreen=false>
- Trimble River—This project in Pierce County, Wisconsin is a pilot project using new NRCS forestry practices with minimal rock to restore habitat in the headwaters.

Potential Driftless Area stream habitat projects

Wisconsin:

- Halfway Creek—La Crosse County, Wisconsin. We have had early discussions with interested partners to address lacking habitat and watershed conservation practices in this watershed with significant public access near Holmen. This stream runs through a community park in Holmen, giving it potential for outreach, education and community engagement.
- Traverse Valley Creek—Trempealeau County, Wisconsin. The partners from the Bruce Valley project and many other projects in Trempealeau County are looking at project sites on Traverse Valley Creek, a class 2 trout stream.

Illinois

- Winneshiek Creek, Stevenson County

Iowa

- North Bear Creek, Winneshiek County: continued phases with adjoining landowners.
- Patterson Creek, Allamakee County: work likely in 1-2 phases for grazed area along an Iowa DNR easement.
- Yellow River, Allamakee County: large scale project to include non-game habitat

Minnesota

- Cedar Valley Creek, Winona County
- Trout Brook, Dakota County
- Hay Creek, Goodhue County
- Mill Creek, Olmstead/Fillmore: three-phased project to address high banks, lacking habitat and riparian buffer along private and public property in Chatfield

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Reel Recovery Retreat returns

Held in Eau Claire in September, 14 volunteers teamed up with Reel Recovery therapist Ted Larrison to guide nine men living with cancer through the three-day retreat.

Words by Scott Wagner. Photos by
Trenity White.

Participants from across the Midwest took part in the first Midwest Reel Recovery Retreat since the pandemic. Held in Eau Claire in September, 14 volunteers teamed up with Reel Recovery therapist Ted Larrison to guide nine men living with cancer through the three-day retreat. It included guided Courageous Conversations, shared meals, one-on-one fly fishing opportunities with volunteer fishing buddies, lots of laughter and a few tears. Participants ranged in age from 26 to 83 and were all living with, and courageously fighting, one or more kinds of cancer.

Courageous Conversations, led by Ted Larrison, gave retreat participants the opportunity to share what it was like for them as men to suffer, be weak and need to receive help from others, which conflicts with the traditional male role of being strong for others and not needing help. Between these group conversations, volunteers from across the Midwest guided retreatants on local streams and rivers in search of trout. For most retreatants, fly fishing was a new and completely different experience. Yet all retreatants caught fish on flies and most retreatants caught at least one trout. The guided fly-fishing expeditions were followed by either shared meals or a Courageous Conversation.

After three days, participants had shared a lot with each other, were surrounded by nature, spent time fishing on trout streams and had all grown quite close to each other. The 14 volunteers were humbled by the retreatants' stories and by their courage to both acknowledge and fight their cancers. As volunteers who thought we were there to "help" the retreatants, we felt like the retreatants were the ones who helped us by their examples of courage and hope. At the closing ceremony, the retreatants and volunteers all gave each other one great big, collective bear hug, then shared addresses and phone num-



REEL RECOVERY CLOSING CEREMONY: KEEPING THE CIRCLE TIGHT

Closing ceremonies at Reel Recovery retreats are a powerful way to bring closure to the retreat, and to reinforce the strength and bonds of the group. Retreatants circle tightly holding onto the thumb of the person next to them while their fishing buddies stand behind them with a hand on their shoulders. This tight circle is a strong representation of the physical and emotional bonds formed throughout the retreat. Group facilitator Ted Larrison sums up the retreat wisdom, and encourages everyone to remember this circle and the men who are forming it, and to keep the circle tight even after the retreat concludes.

bers and headed back to life, with the retreatants knowing that they were no longer alone in their battles with cancer.

Reel Recovery is a national non-profit organization that conducts free fly-fishing retreats for men living with and recovering from all forms of cancer. Combining expert fly-fishing instruction with directed "Courageous Conversations," the organization offers a unique experience for men living with cancer: A time to share their stories, learn a new skill, form friendships and gain renewed hope as they confront the challenges of their recovery. This

Reel Recovery Retreat was co-coordinated by Tom Sather of the Wisconsin Clear Waters Chapter and Scott Wagner of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter. Tom and Scott are planning to co-coordinate another Reel Recovery Retreat in Eau Claire in September 2023. Please contact

Reel Recovery if you, or someone you know, would like to either take part in this upcoming retreat as a participant or volunteer fishing buddy.

For more information call 1-800-699-4490, email info@reelrecovery.org or visit reelrecovery.org.



HEADING TO THE STREAM AND HONORING THE JOURNEY

Fishing buddy Bill Heth (left) and retreat participant Larry Smith have a conversation while heading out to a trout stream near Eau Claire. Reel Recovery participants wear fishing vests signed by retreat participants from years past as a way to honor each man's cancer journey, and if you look closely you can see the signatures on Larry's vest.



SHARING LAUGHS, STORIES AND A BROOK TROUT

Retreat participant Dwight Mater (left) celebrates the catch-and-release of a beautiful Wisconsin brook trout with fishing buddy Peter Jonas.

Does your fishing car have a TU license plate yet?

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



RECOLLECTIONS

Rubber moose and the Yellowstone trip

Another classic road-trip adventure from the memories of Rick Larkin.

Words and photos By Rick Larkin

It was July in the summer of 1980 and our annual western trip consisted of just Howard and me, driving across the country in my blue pickup truck to trout fish in Yellowstone National Park. As the trip date got closer, cancellations caused by weddings, girlfriends and (of all things) jobs had yet again reduced our number to just us two, despite the promises from our trout-fishing friends all saying that they would accompany us. It was just like last year, but we went anyway. After all, it was an annual trip and central to our trouting identity. Unlike the others, Howard and I deeply valued this annual sacred western trout tradition. Plus, neither of us had a girlfriend.

This year, we had two weeks blocked out and we took our time, puttering across the plains, and seeing more of the Great American West. We fully utilized my pickup and its camper cap for overnight camping stops.

We skipped Wall Drug. Howard decided once was enough. We did, however, stop at the Corn Palace in Mitchell South Dakota and marveled at just how silly it was. We opted out of going inside for a tour. We also checked out the Badlands and saw some dinosaur fossils. Later, after stopping in Billings, Montana, we drove to Cody, Wyoming and checked out all of its cool Old West attractions. I especially liked one old saloon in particular with its old cowboy memorabilia. Howard liked the cheesy fake gunfight in front of the Hotel Irma. He started calling me “pardner.”

After a couple of days of fishing the Cody area with minimal success, we headed up the Sunlight Basin Road and drove back to Cooke City, Montana to visit our old friend, Al.

We decided to hang around there for a bit and enjoy some familiar backpacking and trout fishing. We were now old Beartooth hands and the mountain streams and lakes were now familiar old friends. Visiting our stomping grounds seemed natural. The Clark Fork’s brown and brook trout cooperated nicely, and we camped there for a couple of days. We even did a quick day trip up to Fox Lake and revisited the Pegasus adventure. The hungry rainbows and cutbows were still

there.

After a few days, our attention returned to Yellowstone National Park, which was the main reason for the trip. The park was a quick drive from Cooke City to the northeast entrance just outside of Silver Gate, Montana. It was now the height of summer and the wide open spaces and the solitude of the Beartooth’s mountain lakes and streams were replaced by crowds and traffic jams at every turn.

Traffic jams on the roads...and the streams

We hadn’t bargained for this summer phenomenon. We had driven less than 10 miles into the park when a huge traffic jam, caused by a herd of buffalo, had cars, trucks and campers backed up for miles as people piled out of their vehicles with cameras, video recorders and binoculars. We crawled along at walking speed. Despite the magnificent scenery along the way which included Barronette Peak, The Thunderer, and other spectacular sights, we were getting frustrated. We could care less about a bunch of dumb buffalo. We wanted to trout fish.

Howard was driving as we crept along, I busied myself by looking at the maps, noting that we would soon be at the Pebble Creek Campground where Pebble Creek crossed under the road and flowed a short distance before emptying into Soda Butte Creek. We decided to start fishing there and pulled into the campground parking lot. While we were stuck in the buffalo traffic jam, I studied the Yellowstone fishing regulations and I learned that all of the fishing in Yellowstone was catch and release and that only artificial bait with a single barbless hook was allowed. No big deal, I thought and busied myself nubbing off barbs on some flies for my first attempt at fishing in Yellowstone.

Howard, never a big reader of regulations and somewhat frazzled by the hours of driving through the traffic, was surprised about the rules requiring barbless, single hooks. That meant removing two of the three hooks on his beloved Daredevils. Down, but not out, he set to work with pliers and was soon a legal fisherman.

We put on waders, strung our rods, and crossed the road. We fished our way down Pebble Creek,



SODA BUTTE CREEK IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK

We started fishing near here before discovering that many other anglers would soon be showing up.

catching small enthusiastic cutthroats as we went along this small tumbling creek. After a short while, we reached the much larger Soda Butte Creek for some bigger trout.

Saying Soda Butte is a popular trout stream is like saying Paris and Rome are popular European tourist destinations. There were trout fishermen everywhere. Up and down the banks and in the water were dozens of trout fishermen. The confluence of Pebble Creek and Soda Butte had a welcoming committee of fly fishermen, except they weren’t too welcoming when we showed up, giving us dirty looks as they flailed away.

Fishing with buffalo

Howard and I looked upstream and downstream and headed off to where we saw the fewest fishermen. Downstream, we came to an area which seemed pretty open, so we waded in. That’s when we saw the buffalo herd getting ready to cross just upstream from where we were. This was apparently why the area was less fished. The herd began to cross about 50 yards upstream, above a large riffle with a big hole just below it. Howard and I hugged the bank and just stayed still. Buffalo eat grass, not trout fishermen, we thought, so we just let them go about their business and waited.

After the herd crossed the creek, the water looked a little muddy, and not too different from the aftermath of a herd of Holsteins crossing a Wisconsin stream. We figured that the buffs churned up the bottom and released some bugs, just like back home. I switched to a nymph

and began to cast. Howard chucked a small daredevil which was he reasoned would imitate a small fish feeding on the buffalo-churned bug bonanza.

We were right, and soon began to land chunky Cutthroats. While none topped 12 inches, they were eager feeders and fought with energetic jumps and runs. Surrounded by towering mountains and catching a lot of fish on our first try exceeded our hopes.

Yellowstone, we both thought, was indeed a pretty cool place. We fished the hole till dusk, steadily catching fish, before finally deciding to hike back before some of Yellowstone’s more carnivorous wildlife showed up. Once back at the truck, we peeled off our waders, made a quick freeze dried meal on the camp stove, and drove off to look for a place to hide the truck and spend the night.

The next day we got up early and thanked the park gods that we had not been rousted out during the night by the park rangers or had been visited by the park’s famous bears. We headed down the road which paralleled Soda Butte Creek and headed for the Lamar River and Cache Creek. Looking at the map, both looked to be in close striking distance, so we planned to fish both. The map showed what appeared to be a short hike which included crossing Soda Butte Creek. As is always the case with the mountainous parts of the west, there is no such thing as a short hike. We tried anyway.

See **YELLOWSTONE**, page 23



CRASHING IN THE PICKUP

Taking a nap while still in my dirty hiking boots. Note the cheezy straw cowboy hat, the “Think Trout” bumper sticker and the grocery bag of fireworks which was one of the purchases which depleted our cash.



RUBBER YELLOWSTONE PARK MOOSE? NOPE. THEY’RE REAL.



Chapter News

Aldo Leopold Chapter

We are just getting started with our Bar Flies winter fly tying here at Aldo Leopold, with one night every month through March in each of our three counties: Columbia, Dodge and Sauk. By the time you read this, we will have completed our December events. We will be at KD's Bar & Grill in Lodi on Tuesday nights Jan. 10, Feb. 7 and March 7. We will be at Ooga Brewing Company in Beaver Dam on Thursday nights Jan. 26, Feb. 23 and March 23. Finally, we will be at Balanced Rock Brewery in Baraboo on Wednesday nights Jan. 18, Feb. 15 and March 15. The official start time for all events is 6:30 p.m., but some may show up earlier. Feel free to come and join us for some tying, a drink or just to talk fishing. All are

welcome, even if you don't tie flies.

All chapter members should have received a survey included in the last newsletter, with the chance to win one of three prizes just for returning the survey by January 1. If you forgot to send it in and missed the January 1 deadline, we will take electronic replies until January 7 for a chance to win a prize. Even if you missed both deadlines, please return the survey as it gives us valuable insight as to what programs and events we offer to our chapter members and the public. There is a link on our Facebook page to the survey, or go to <https://forms.gle/LUm3T77a9H1v5PK59>. The winners will be drawn at our next board meeting on Jan. 11.

—Dan Endres

Antigo Chapter

It's been a busy year for our chapter in 2022. Our March 2022 banquet was a great event and we raised money to fund our projects.

In early spring we made boxes for anglers to discard fishing line. Thanks to Mike Heinrich for the wood and design. We placed approximately 24 of them at stream and dock accesses around our area and arranged times to have them checked and emptied.

We held two work days brushing and cutting grass on two sites on the East Branch of the Eau Claire River this summer and placed more wood mulch on the canoe path that was built last year off River Road.

In June we held our annual Kid's Fishing day at the city park. It was a fun day for the kids and TU members. About 375 kids showed up for prizes, trout fishing, hotdogs and

hamburgers. Then we gave away a girls and boys bike to lucky winners.

We funded a beautiful bench with a TU plaque to be placed at Remington Lake in Spring. This is an urban fish pond in the city that's dedicated to kids and handicapped to fish in.

In October we planted trout in Remington Lake for the kids to catch during the winter.

We recently participated in the winter Northeast Region meeting. We presented chapter reports and reviewed the reports from area DNR fisheries personnel, U.S. Forest Service personnel and TU National staff. They also submitted funding requests for 2023.

We are starting to plan for our next fundraising event at the end of March, 2023.

—Scott Henricks

Central Wisconsin Chapter

Work Day Coordinator Chad Tucker organized five stream work days between May and September. Most of our efforts were focused on the West Branch of the White River, except in August when the work day was held at Bird Creek Park, as part of the Council's Youth Trout Fishing Camp. Thank you to the following individuals for their many contributions: Ira Giese, Tom Meyer, Northway, Laura Tucker, John Tucker and Dan Harmon, III. A very special thank you to our DNR crew members: Shawn Sullivan, Steve DeVitt, Kyle Siebers, Adler Schmidt and Ryan Eastman. And finally, a big thank you to our volunteer stream work day crew volunteers. Your commitment to conserving, protecting and restoring our coldwater fisheries is what makes this whole thing work.

October saw CWTU continuing in-person board meetings followed by educational programs. These are at the Fin 'N' Feather in Winneconne on the second Wednesday of the month, with the board meeting at 6:30 p.m. and program at 7:30 p.m. October's program "Fish, Bugs, And Those Dam Birds" was presented by John Gremmer. It was a showcase of photographs and stories about an urban stretch of water 15 minutes from his home.

November featured a group program called "Famous Trout Flies of Michigan." Wayne Parmley gave a short presentation on all the flies to be demo tied that evening. Each of the 10 CWTU tyers got to comment

on the pattern they chose. A box of these flies was collected and raffled off at the end of the evening. Thanks to Tom Meyer for assisting, and all the others who contributed. December's presentation was "Laborator: Place, People & Possibilities" presented by Wayne Parmley.

January's program will be "Exploring Trout Trends in the Upper White River Watershed" by Senior Fisheries Biologist Adam Nickel.

TroutFest 2023 is Saturday, Feb. 18, 2023, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Mt. Morris Camp and Conference Center near Wautoma. This free event will include five presentations, numerous fly tyers demonstrating their craft, various vendors, information booths, several guides, artists, raffle prizes and much more.

Presentations include:

- "CWTU River Keepers Stream Monitoring" by CWTU River Keepers Coordinator Bob Jozowski,
- "Trout Management in Northeast Wisconsin" by David Boyarski – DNR Northeast District Fisheries Supervisor and the statewide Trout Management Team sponsor,
- "Atlantic Salmon Fishing Newfoundland" by Owner/Maker Speyco Fly Reels Tim Pantzlaff,
- "The Giant Mayflies of Wisconsin" by FVTU & TU-CARES Tom Lager,
- "Fly Fishing Isle Royale" by Owner/Guide of Dark Waters Fly Shop Seth Waters.



Deb Jozowski

CWTU'S RIVER KEEPERS OF THE YEAR

Bob Jozowski presents the Central Wisconsin Chapter's "River Keeper of the Year" award to Bill and Mary Jo Vance.

The CWTU annual banquet is Saturday, April 29, 2023, at Mt. Morris Camp and Conference Center near Wautoma. We have a robust committee working to pull this event together. Watch for more information, and if interested in knowing more, please email central-wisconsin@central-wisconsin.org

In November we hosted a wrap-up meeting for our River Keepers WAV stream monitors, with about 40 monitors attending. The purpose of this event was to thank all those who spent six months collecting data, including 28 teams totaling more than 90 volunteers, who monitored 35 stream sites. The event also included discussions about new programs and procedures for next year and how to resolve any problems experienced in 2022.

New teams were installed on Radley Creek, Kaminski Creek, the White River and Taycheedah Creek in 2022. New for this year was the introduction of the WAV Data Dashboard on the wateractionvolunteers.org website that allows for easier creation of reports for data gathered over the course of the monitoring season.

Coulee Region Chapter

Coulee Region members enjoyed our annual holiday gathering at Christos Taverna in La Crosse. It is always a good time and we were pleased to provide some repast so that our angling friends old and new could enjoy a bit of camaraderie.

The board is planning for our annual banquet on February 24 at Cedar Creek in Onalaska. The absence of one of our esteemed members in the planning is keenly felt, but we wish him a full and speedy recovery and we will endeavor to proceed in his absence. The perennial apex for our club, our banquet is well-catered with a surprising number of prizes and giveaways. We do some fine work in our chapter, but this might be the most fun we have. Funds raised from the event support conservation and habitat improvement in our area. We are always on the lookout for donated prizes. Contact any board member if you are interested in donating. We look forward to seeing returning guests and new faces alike. Members and past attendees should watch for the banquet mailer. Further information is always available on the Face-

book page.

On the topic of conservation and habitat improvement, the board is currently considering a number of small projects in our area for 2023. The DNR and TUDARE have provided us with several project options for partnership in La Crosse, Monroe and Vernon counties for our consideration. Those project partnerships will be decided in the coming months. One way you can contribute to these efforts from afar is to consider making CRTU the beneficiary of your Amazon Smile donations. Amazon donates .5 percent of eligible purchases to charities like us at no expense to you.

Although no upcoming dates are posted, we are still actively searching for more volunteers for our Project Healing Waters partnership. This is a great cause that does much good. If you have questions or would like to volunteer for next year, contact John Newton at jnewton919@gmail.com or 608-385-4718.

Our fall meetings have been informative and enjoyable for our members. In November, Jeff and

Chapter News



Lynette Moore entertained us with a video they produced of their fishing experiences in West Yellowstone and the surrounding area. In October, we heard from Sara Strassman, project manager for TUDARE. For

our first meeting of the season, in September, area guide PJ Smith provided information on fall fishing in the Coulee Region.
—Brad Bryan

Fox Valley Chapter

Fox Valley Trout Unlimited is emerging from our pandemic cocoon and embarking on a number of important initiatives.

Membership Coordinator Chris Firkus developed a plan and program to engage our membership. He calls this initiative Membership Outreach and Coordination. It is designed to engage all of our 220-plus chapter members in discussions. “The goal here is personalized messaging and human connection. We’re building relationships to drive interest, retention and involvement.” How will it work? Each board member is given a list of 10-12 chapter members to call or email. He then records the contact on a spreadsheet supplied by Chris’ membership group. The board members are given a list of topics, questions, talking points and survey results to guide their discussions. This is a very ambitious outreach which we hope will help us to reach our lofty goal.

Jerome Herro reports the year’s final FVTU/Central Wisconsin Chapter Conservation Day was September 17 near Wautoma, on the West Branch of the White River. Approximately 20 TU members worked alongside Shawn Sullivan’s Wild Rose DNR fisheries crew to install a mid-stream log sill and clear invasive streamside brush. CWTU served a delicious lunch of Christiano’s Pizza. Stream improvement will restart in May 2023.

FVTU President Tony Pudlo thanks you for supporting our just-completed fundraiser, Cabin Fever Day (CFD) 2023. The mission of FVTU is trout stream improvement and habitat work. Tom Lager said funds raised at CFD are given to the DNR Trout Habitat Restoration Team in Wild Rose. They hire limited-term employee crews to do the work. Input and direction come from the four regional TU chapters: Central, FVTU, Shaw-paca and Frank Hornberg. FVTU, thru CFD, is proud to have raised and donated \$40,384 during the past five years. These funds are part of \$115,000 total raised by the other three regional chapters and the Council’s Friends of Wisconsin TU grants. Donations of this magnitude enable Shawn’s Wild Rose crew to stay together yearlong, retaining trained and experienced crew members.

Our Stonefly Social was a casualty of the pandemic, but no more. Former and current FVTU presidents Nate Ratliff and Tony Pudlo have announced that the Stone Fly Social will resume in January at the Stoneyard Appleton bar/grill on Hy JJ North of Appleton. The social will be held twice each month on the second and fourth Tuesday of the first quarter. Please check our website for the exact dates at foxvalleytu.org

—Don Clouthier

8. Doors open at 6 p.m., and the film starts at 7 p.m.. The Frank Hornberg Chapter has been invited to join them. You do not have to be a TU member to attend. Bring your friends. Cost is \$15 in advance and \$20 at the door. There will be food and refreshments for purchase, and raffle items. Mark your calendars and come join us. It will be a good

time. I will post a link on our Facebook page when it becomes available.

Email and Facebook are the two ways we keep our members informed. Please check your email address on the TU website to see if it is correct. Many are not. Also, follow us on Facebook for the latest information.



DOUG SEIDL RECEIVES GBTU DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD



JOHN TILLEMANN RECEIVES GBTU MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD

—Doug Erdmann

Green Bay Chapter

After wrapping up summer work projects and youth education events, Green Bay Trout Unlimited (GBTU) transitions to our meeting mode. Our chapter traditionally meets the first Thursday of the month from September through April. We typically host 4-6 guest speakers during this stretch. The first week in December our typical Board of Directors (BOD)/guest speaker meetings are replaced with our Awards Dinner/Holiday Party. For the first time in about eight years, we moved our meeting location, and the event was held at the Village Grille in Green Bay.

At our September meeting, our board passed a budget which we presented to our membership at our October meeting. The budget was subsequently passed by our members.

Also at our October meeting, we were joined by guest speaker Craig Cook. Craig is the owner of Fall Line Outfitters in Steven’s Point. He shared insight on trout fishing the Central Sands, as well as the origins of his business. Green Bay fish biologist Jason Breeggemann spoke at our November meeting about

managing trout waters in Brown and Manitowoc counties, as well as walleye and musky management in Green Bay.

December featured our Awards Dinner/Holiday Party at the Village Grille Events Hall. It was a wonderful evening featuring an all-you-can-eat home-style chicken buffet. We were also treated to excellent entertainment by the barbershop quartet Something Old, Something New, as well as thirteen Christmas-themed door prizes courtesy of Christina Meseberg (my wife).

We presented two Distinguished Service and one Member of the Year Awards. Our Distinguished Service Award is given to a member who has shown “Undying contributions giving freely of time, money and talent for many years. It truly is like a life-time achievement award. This year’s first recipient was Bruce Duechert, who has been an extremely active member for many years. He can be seen at meetings, work projects and even youth events. He has been our chapters’ representative to the Brown County Conservation Alliance for as long as I can remember. With that said,



FOX VALLEY AND CENTRAL WISCONSIN TEAM UP FOR WORK DAY

The year’s final FVTU/Central Wisconsin Chapter Conservation Day was September 17 near Wautoma, on the West Branch of the White River. Approximately 20 TU members worked alongside Shawn Sullivan’s Wild Rose DNR fisheries crew to install a mid-stream log sill and clear invasive streamside brush. Stream improvement will restart in May 2023.

Frank Hornberg Chapter

Looking back at the 2022 season, we had a productive and fun year. The following is just the last quarter.

In September we were back on Flume Creek doing fishability brushing with the UW-Stevens Point Flyfishing Club and the Shaw-Paca Chapter. A big thanks to Kyle Kossel for organizing this stream day.

In October Associate Professor in Fisheries at UW-Stevens Point Bobby Davis made an interesting and informative presentation on fishing trout and salmon near Ketchikan, Alaska. This is something we should all put on our bucket list.

Tom Lager gave a presentation in November on giant mayflies of Wisconsin. I learned a lot about brown drakes, Hex, and white mayflies and

how to catch trout during those hatches. Thank you, Tom. If you live in central Wisconsin, you need to try these hatches. They are truly special.

Jennifer Bergman and Jason Spaeth delivered an update in Marshfield about surveys and projects in Wood, Adams and Portage counties. The Wisconsin River Valley Chapter planned this event as some of our membership in both chapters call Marshfield home. The One Mile Creek project in Juneau County is something that I will have to check out.

The Wisconsin River Valley Chapter is hosting an International Flyfishing Film Festival at the UW-Stevens Points-Wausau Center for Civic Engagement Wednesday, Feb.

Jerome Herro

Dave Ostanek

Dave Ostanek



Chapter News



Dave Ostaneck

BRUCE DUECHERT RECEIVES GBTU DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Bruce's largest legacy to GBTU must be his many years as our Conservation Banquet Chair. He stepped down a few years ago but his blueprint on successful fundraising has remained.

The second Distinguished Service Award recipient of the evening was Doug Seidl, who has been on our board for several years, including serving as the chapter vice president and also our State Council representative for four years. Doug is a regular at work projects and kids' events. He is currently serving on the Conservation Banquet and GBTU Trout Educational Trail Committees. One of Doug's largest GBTU legacies has to be his spearheading of our chapters' work project trailer. This was a large project that took multiple years. The trailer is amazing and includes almost every tool our group needs to conduct successful habitat improvements.

Our final award given on this evening was for Member of the Year. This is presented to an individual who has demonstrated outstanding efforts over the past year. This year's recipient was John Tilleman. John was on the BOD for several years when he approached me in 2021 and expressed interest in filling our chapter's vacant treasurer seat. Our former treasurer had retired and moved out of the area, so John really did not have someone

right there to answer his questions. Much of what he figured out was trial-by-fire. This has not stopped him. Over the past year John has been fantastic in his role. On top of that, John serves on the GBTU Trout Educational Trail Committee and is a regular at our meetings.

The Trout Unlimited Northeast Wisconsin Regional meeting was in December. This year TU chapters throughout the NE regional met with representatives from the Antigo and Lakewood DNR offices, plus the TU Great Lakes staff to help cover \$34,900 worth of total funding for habitat/conservation efforts in the area. At the end of the day, the TU chapters stepped up and covered all the requests.

Finally, GBTU continues to run our Veteran's Service Program every other Monday. They are held at Tight Lines Fly Shop in De Pere. If you are a veteran who would like to participate, or if you would like to volunteer, please contact GBTU Veteran's Program Coordinator Paul Kruse at kruser2@new.rr.com or 920-639-2361.

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

The Harry and Laura Nohr Chapter will be holding a Lie and Tie on Saturday, Feb. 25 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Dodger Bowl in Dodgeville. Drop in at any time to enjoy tying demos, speakers, door prizes and refreshments! You are welcome to bring your vice and join the tying. Stay tuned to the Nohr TU Facebook page and Nohr-TU.com for details and updates. Join us.

We are doing stream restoration on the only eased section of Big Spring that we have not worked on. It is just above the confluence with Six Mile Branch. We had to stop for a couple months and let the area dry out from several locally heavy rains.

Kurt Meyer led the way at a school outing held at Wyalusing State Park, teaching Fennimore school kids about the Driftless Area and fly fishing. Our members helped teach fly tying and fly casting.

We have had several work days putting in stiles and working with

the Southern Wisconsin Chapter on brush clearing. We have done four work days on Smith Conley Creek. We joined up with SWTU to fell large box elders and other invasive trees to open the area for oak regeneration. We also removed trees from the stream that were causing problems. The DNR brought in a machine to help remove those trees and create burn piles. This is a new DNR easement that connects to fishing easements upstream. The DNR's Justine Haglund and Vince Schmitz lined this up. We installed two new stiles on the Blue, two on Smith Conley and one stile on Pompey Pillar. Our next slated stile locations are on Gordon Creek, where we will be putting in two brand new stiles south of County A and rebuild four additional stiles that have rotten cross boards. If you are interested in work days, please contact Ted Swenson at swensonted@gmail.com or 608 469-2038.

—Carol Murphy and Brian Larson

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter

Chapter meetings continued this fall starting in October with a presentation by Dennis Pratt, President of the Brule River Sportsmen's Club. His presentation covered the spawning cycle of the brook char (brook trout), which featured his use of underwater videos captured on Wisconsin's Bois Brule River. In November Matt Doth from Mahigan Outdoors presented "Trout Fishing the Driftless." This was a thorough presentation especially suited to less-experienced anglers.

The Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Event and Awards Program was Dec. 6 at Junior's Bar & Tap House in River Falls and was well received by those who attended. The event started with a round of well-prepared appetizers followed additional main course servings. Based on anecdotal information, members gave the food selections high praise. Kudos to Junior's kitchen. The serving staff from Junior's was very attentive and worked extremely hard to make sure everyone attending was satisfied with the food and drink.

The main awards program started with our president, Greg Olson, giving a brief summary of upcoming events. Greg then turned the microphone over to Duke Welter of Viroqua. Duke spoke of the removal of the two Kinni dams and the funding efforts that are currently in place. His second priority was to present a beautiful bamboo fly rod to Randy Arnold, courtesy of Bill Lamberson a member of the Mid-Missouri Chapter of TU. Bill has given Duke the mission to give some of his beautiful bamboo rods to worthy volunteers working in the Driftless area, in recognition of their contributions to our coldwater resources and to Trout Unlimited.

Three individuals received Kiap-TU-Wish chapter awards. Randy Arnold was presented the Golden Trout Award for his work as the chapter's Volunteer Coordinator. Joshua Cunningham, a renowned Plein Air artist, was presented the chapter's Silver Trout Award for contributions of his original paintings to the chapter's 4 x 100 fund raising events. Suzanne Constantini received the Silver Trout award for her work as the chapter's treasurer and secretary and for her fundraising efforts related to the removal of the two Kinni dams.

Lastly, four Kiap-TU-Wish logo hats, and two wader bags made by

board member Missie Hanson, were given away. Tom Schnadt, who was fortunate to win one of the wader bags, stated that he would no longer have to carry his gear in a cardboard box.

Our seven Trout In the Classroom (TIC) programs are doing very well. A few of our classes went to the hatchery to pick up their eggs and the others had them mailed. All the teachers are reporting that this is the finest batch of eggs they have received yet. Almost all the eggs hatched with very little mortality of the alevin. The kids have been very excited each morning to see how many hatched while they were away and now are witnessing the alevin leaving the egg basket and exploring the big world of the 55-gallon tank!

We are pleased to report that in November, the River Falls City Council voted to proceed with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (COE) feasibility study, at an estimated maximum cost of \$800,000. This study is the first step towards an aquatic ecosystem restoration project on the Kinni that would remove both dams and restore the river.

The chapter has held six workdays this fall. The first was at the South Fork of the Kinni where we cut willow saplings which are over-taking the banks there. Volunteers have worked for five weekends cutting box elders and buckthorn at the DNR Quarry Road access point on the Kinni. For the third year, we are working with Greenwood Elementary 4th graders in River Falls to provide them with a service-learning opportunity in December. The 4th graders helped drag the brush to several bonfires where it was burned. The students also visited the site which they helped to clear in the past two years.

DNR fisheries biologist Kasey Yallaly talked about riparian corridors and habitat which trout need to thrive. These students at Greenwood also participate in TIC each year.

Our major project for this winter will be clearing mature box elders from a 1/4 mile stretch of Cady Creek, one of the Brook Trout Reserve streams in our area. The trees have grown up and reclaimed the banks since the restoration work was done on this stretch of Cady about 20 years ago.

—Gary Horvath

Lakeshore Chapter

Greetings from the Lakeshore Chapter. Thanksgiving is fresh in my mind as I write this fall report and my heart is full of gratitude for Lakeshore TU's incredible sponsors and volunteers. The financial donations from our sponsors, big and small, enable our chapter to acquire the resources and maintain the equipment that is required to do both the environmental and educational work that we do.

The hours put in by LSTU members and friends volunteering their time and talent transforming the environment and positively impact people's lives. Thank you to all who contributed to an amazing year for our chapter. You can find all of our sponsors on our website at www.lakeshoretu.com.

Nine volunteers did some great work on Ben Nutt creek on a beautiful Saturday September morning. This was the first work that we have done on Ben Nutt this year and it really needed some attention. We had plenty of work removing the downed trees and logjams to keep us busy the entire morning. When the work was done, we had re-opened the entire segment of Ben Nutt from the snowmobile bridge to the confluence. We finished the day with a super lunch of burgers and brats grilled by Steve Girardi. Thanks, Steve.

At our October work day we accomplished a lot with five hard-working guys on a previously unworked stretch of the Onion River. We were able to clear out every im-

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LAKESHORE CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS AT WORK

The Lakeshore Chapter crew works on a previously unworked stretch of the Onion River, clearing every impediment from the river and brushing the overhanging trees. This section of river needs some serious repairs but until recently the family has been hesitant to grant access. Now the chapter is working with the family on an easement agreement so it can fully restore this beautiful stretch of river.

pediment from the river and brush the overhanging trees. This section of river needs some serious repairs, but until recently the family has been hesitant to grant us access. We are working with the family on an easement agreement so that we will be able to fully restore this beautiful stretch of river in the future.

Herb Twiss, Brian Richterkessing, Nate Julich, Larry Doebert and Al Wertz spent a crisp Saturday in September helping 45 scouts, boys and girls, earn their fly-fishing merit badges at the Lakeshore District Boy Scout Fish-o-Ree. The event was held at Plymouth Springs Trout Farm in Plymouth. The kids camped for the weekend with the fishing seminars on Saturday.

Each of us ran a workshop to teach a specific set of skills or knowledge. The kids broke into eight groups that rotated through 45-minute seminars. We instructed them in fly casting, knot tying, fly tying, fly fishing equipment and care, and finally putting it all together to catch a trout. It was a very full day. Interestingly, fishing is still fishing even at a trout farm. The kids caught fish but it was not necessarily easy. What was easy was getting

those kids interested in fishing. It was clear that we created a lot of memories and sparked a ton of interest in fishing in those kids. What a fantastic day.

Myk Hranicka is running our TIC program again this year. Thank you, Myk. We are involved in four TIC programs in the area: Random Lake Middle School, Farnsworth Middle School in Sheboygan, Plymouth Middle School and St. Mary Springs in Fond du Lac. Random Lake, Plymouth and Farnsworth will be raising brown trout while St. Mary Springs will be raising brook trout. All of these programs do amazing work.

Our very own Greg Zimmer is the St. Mary Springs science teacher, doing incredible work with TIC. Greg began his program last year and had some good success. This year he has expanded his setup to include two 125-gallon tanks to raise brookies. Greg recently received about 300 brook trout eggs that will be raised, with a great deal of care, into fingerling brook trout that will be released in Calumet County. How exciting.

—Al Wertz

Southeastern Wisconsin Chapter

SEWTU sprinted to the finish line in the fourth quarter of 2022.

Starting in October, at the request of the Oconomowoc High School AP Environmental Studies class, we provided oversight to work performed by the class on Rosenow Creek. SEWTU members Rick Larkin, Ken Rizzo and Steve Krakow lead this endeavor.

The class cleared woody debris from three dammed areas in the stream, leaving an ample amount of woody debris in and along the

shoreline.

Also in October our chapter volunteers divided and conquered at a booth at the Shorewood Fish and Feather Festival at the Root River Steelhead facility in Racine.

The Fish and Feather festival is an annual event to introduce the community to the salmon and trout runs on the Milwaukee River. Members Herb Oechler, Johnnie Nelson and Steve Krakow, led by board member Brian Mullins, offered casting instruction, explained



SEWTU MANS BOOTH AT FESTIVAL

In October SEWTU volunteers manned a booth at the Shorewood Fish and Feather Festival at the Root River Steelhead facility in Racine. The festival is an annual event to introduce the community to the salmon and trout runs on the Milwaukee River. Members Johnnie Nelson, Herb Oechler and Steve Krakow, led by board member Brian Mullins, offered casting instruction, explained flies commonly used for salmon and trout, and provided information on TU's activities in southeast Wisconsin.



STUDENTS HELP SEWTU ON ROSENOW CREEK

Oconomowoc High School AP Environmental Studies students helped the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter with work on Rosenow Creek. The class cleared woody debris from three dammed areas in the stream, leaving an ample amount of woody debris in and along the shoreline.

flies commonly used for salmon and trout, and provided information on TU's activities in southeast Wisconsin.

At the steelhead facility open house hosted by the DNR, chapter President Andy Avgoulas, Treasurer Stan Strelka and members Harry Filip, Katie Halmo and Mark Marcott talked about TU's mission and helped provide casting instruction and fly-tying demonstrations to kids and their parents.

In late October 22 volunteers cut and removed brush from the south bank of Bluff Creek in northwest Walworth County. Alexa and Art Cottrell from the Oak Brook Chapter joined the SEWTU workforce that day.

The completed work is a continuation of work started at the June workday. The brush cut at this workday will be moved this winter and used as fill behind biologs installed upstream at previous workdays.

On October 27 we hosted the International Fly Fishing Film festival at the Bavarian Bierhaus for our annual fundraiser. More than 100 members and non-members enjoyed films, food and fish stories. Joe Schaefer took home our big door prize of a fully loaded kayak and fishing gear. Thank you to all the volunteers and our sponsors who

helped make the event a huge success.

At the writing of this article our chapter membership meetings continue to be at the Bavarian Bierhaus in Glendale. However, our start times are moving up 30 minutes, with socialization beginning at 5 p.m. and our program starting at 6:30 p.m.

Please look for our email blasts and our Facebook, Instagram and Website pages for the latest updates. Important note: We may be looking for a new venue in 2023, so keep an eye out for our emails and check our social media for any changes. If you are not getting our emails, please let us know.

Have a suggestion or question? Need some fishing tips? Want to help out? Please reach out to Andy via email at andyavgoulas@yahoo.com or 262-893-4965. For general inquiries email us at southeasternwisconsin@troutunlimited.com.

—Andy Avgoulas



SEWTU MEMBERS TAKE CPR/AED TRAINING

In early December 10 SEWTU members took steps to make our workdays safer by completing six hours of online and in-person training led by Perry Perkins. They received their CPR/AED/First Aid certifications.



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SOUTHERN WISCONSIN CHAPTER FREE FLY-TYING CLASSES

Whether in person or online, SWTU continues its legacy of free fly-tying classes for beginning and experienced tyers.



SOUTHERN CHAPTER OFFERS BEGINNING AND INTERMEDIATE CLASSES

During the pandemic our instructors provided online classes that were well attended and highly praised. We are looking forward to once again gathering in-person to share and learn from one another.

Southern Wisconsin Chapter

It was a fabulous fall for SWTU with many stream workdays, monthly meetings and continued partnerships with landowners, state and county officials.

A large group brought the workday year to a close with our chapter members joined at Smith-Conley by many helpers, including UW-Madison students, friends from the Nohr Chapter and employees of the DNR. The boxelders came crashing down and then were put to use – as massive brush bundles that were secured to the streambank with direction from the DNR. Over time, these will silt in to narrow and deepen the stream to provide better trout habitat.

We've done brush bundles before and seen the positive affect they have in very short order. Many large sections of tree were left aside for the DNR to come back later and install with heavy equipment as they work a plan to revitalize a mile of stream along two easements. It was cold, but the work kept us warm, and we can't wait to get back there in the spring to see how it's developed and continue the work.

We've also had a fun and engaging slate of chapter meetings with

interesting presentations and conversation. In December, we tried something new with a holiday party featuring local guides and shop owners plus a gift exchange. We will continue to gather and hope you can join us.

Winter activities will include our annual, no-fee fly-tying classes, one for beginners and one for more experienced tyers. During the pandemic our instructors provided online classes that were well attended and highly praised. We are looking forward to once again gathering in-person to share and learn from one another.

Many of those reading this have attended our longtime Icebreaker fundraiser, which like many things was ended by the pandemic. Last year, we tried something new with an outdoorish Spring Fair Fundraiser and it was a huge success! Planning is underway for the 2023 version so watch for more details. We look forward to seeing you there.

As always, we have much more going on, so please visit swtu.org for the latest and greatest information.

—Drew Kasel



SOUTHERN CHAPTER WORKS ON SMITH-CONLEY CREEK



COLLEGE STUDENTS HELP WITH SWTU WORK DAY

On a cold December day, SWTU was happy to have help from many, including four UW-Madison students, in clearing trees and installing brush bundles along Smith-Conley Creek.

Wild Rivers Chapter

The Wild Rivers Chapter had a productive 2022 with member activities that included fly-tying instruction at the Hayward Family Fishing Expo, fly tying and casting with students from Drummond School and Washburn Middle School, fishing assistance and oversight at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center Kids Fishing Day, brook trout fin clipping and PIT station monitoring with the Red Cliff Tribal Coaster Brook Trout project, tree planting/bank stabilization on the White River with the DNR and on the Marengo River with U.S. Forest Service and Great Lakes TU staff, creation of an angler river access

trail and a campsite on the Ounce River with Douglas County Forestry staff, our annual July summer picnic on the Namekagon River, macroinvertebrate sample collections for baseline data, and an October Fishing Day on the Bois Brule.

We continue our monthly board meetings by Zoom due to our seven-county geographic area. Our Winter Fly-tying calendar is set at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., on three consecutive first Saturdays, 1/7/23, 2/4/23, and 3/4/23. Everyone is welcome to join in. Come share a pattern or learn a new one.

—Kevin Seefeldt

Wisconsin River Valley Chapter

October 4 was our Plover River Stream Study day. I was trying to remember how many years ago that I had attended my first one. I believe it was 2004. Herb Hintz convinced me to take a day off of work and come out and play in the water. "We'll be working with high school IB biology, physics and chemistry kids and helping the biology kids identify aquatic bugs and occasionally help pull them out of some sticky mud," he told me. "They are led by a really great teacher, Dave Coenen."

I did not really know what I was getting into all those years ago but I can report that this event has been a highlight for me each fall since then. I always enjoy seeing how the kids

react to looking at bugs. Some are a bit hesitant and some really get into learning about this aquatic environment. The teachers were always making rounds to see what the groups were finding, making sure everyone was safe, answering any questions and providing suggestions and encouragement. Thank you to Dave Coenen for the past 18 or so years of letting our chapter be part of this event. Being able to connect with you and the students has meant a lot to us, and we sincerely thank you.

After two years of COVID, the Plover River Stream study returned under new leader Bruce Maatta. Due to the increasingly heavy traffic at the Y and N intersection, the lo-

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cation was moved to the Legion Memorial Park in Hatley. I had been to the park but had not walked that section of stream before to look for any deep holes. I had found only one that could be easily avoided near the bridge on the north end of the park.

The day arrived and we were fortunate to have a fairly warm and sunny day. As usual, a few kids got wetter than others, but it was a great day. This year among the critters that were collected was a baby snapping turtle about the size of a ping pong ball and a dead mad tom. This is a fish that I have only seen in reference books. After a lunch of hot dogs and brats prepared by Maatta, the students gathered for a discussion about the aquatic species they found. Many thanks to John Meachan, Kirk Stark, Al Hauber and Perry Nikolai for your help and stream knowledge.

In October Craig Cook of Fall Line Outfitters gave a presentation on "Fishing and Guiding in North Central Wisconsin" at the Sawmill Brewery in Merrill.

Our November meeting was in Marshfield at Nutz Deep. DNR fisheries specialist Jennifer Bergman gave a presentation on "Trout Management in Juneau, Adams and

Wood counties."

Many thanks to all who were able to attend in person or virtually.

In December we celebrated our 40th Birthday Party at Bull Falls Brewery.

On Jan. 9 at the Sawmill Brewery in Merrill the Antigo/Wausau DNR will discuss "A Night with the DNR," regarding projects and issues affecting our coldwater resources. Social hour is at 6 p.m., followed by chapter news and the presentation.

Feb. 8 is the International Fly Fishing Film Festival at the UW-Stevens Point Center for Civil Engagement Theater. Tickets are \$15 online in advance at www.flyfilmfest.com or \$20 at the door. Doors open at 6 p.m. and the film starts at 7 p.m. Detailed information is available at wrvtu.org

On March 13 at Nutz Deep II in Marshfield Fall Line Outfitters will present "Fishing into 2023," discussing what's new in the industry, with tips on locations and methods. Social hour is at 6 p.m., followed by chapter news and the presentation.

On April 10 at the Sawmill Brewery in Merrill, Carmen Hardin will discuss "Tips for Trips - Where to find beer, bathrooms and fish." Social hour is at 6 p.m., followed by

chapter news and the presentation.

On May 8 at The Bar in Rothschild we'll present "Hexteria!" - Fishing the Hex Hatch. Social hour is at 6 p.m., followed by chapter

news and the presentation.

Please watch for updates on our website www.wrvtu.org or via email.

—Linda Lehman

Wolf River Chapter

With anchor ice forming around exposed rocks and frazil ice floating down the Wolf River, winter in eastern Langlade County has apparently settled in. Thoughts have turned from wading the river to standing on frozen lakes to catch fish.

In November we sent out the latest issue of The Wolf River Hatch to more than 260 folks interested in fishing the Wolf River. Hard copies, beautifully printed by Witthuhn Printing in Appleton, are available at Mike's Service at Langlade for those without email addresses. This is our biggest issue yet, with 20 pages. If you would like a copy please contact me at lznetzow@me.com or you can look at a copy on our website at www.wolfriver.org.

On February 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Zach Buchanan will host The Wolf River Chapter Fly Tying Rendezvous. Bring your own vise and supplies to The Bear Paw Resort on Hwy 55 for fly-tying fun, fishing

tales and tips on tying flies that catch Wolf River trout. For more information contact Zach at zbuck50@gmail.com.

Our next meeting is April 15 at The Bear Paw Resort at 10 a.m. Spring elections and work day plans will be on the agenda. Lunch will be served following the meeting.

If you are interested in learning about fishing the Wolf River, please join us for the Wolf River Meet & Greet on May 20. This fun event includes mentoring sessions with Wolf River Chapter members and lunch at the Livingston's on the banks of the Wolf River. Contact Bill Livingston for more information or to register at wolfriverfish@gmail.com.

Hope you all have a wonderful winter.

—Laurie Zen Netzow

YELLOWSTONE, from page 17

It was still pretty early when we started hiking and the hordes of fishermen had not arrived yet. Howard and I smiled smugly at one another. We had beaten the crowds. We crossed Soda Butte and headed up the Lamar, hoping to get to the confluence of Cache Creek. The terrain was getting rougher and we began to notice that the herds of buffalo which grazed up and down Soda Butte Creek also patrolled the Lamar Valley. The only difference we saw was that there were a lot more of them. We went slowly, keeping an eye out for buffs, especially cows with calves.

Just short of the confluence with Cache, we came across a big hole that said, "Fish Me." We quickly strung our rods, slid into our waders and started fishing. Howard, as usual, connected first and netted a nice cutt. I followed after a few minutes with another, making a big deal about catching one on a dry fly. Howard responded by catching two more in quick succession on his single-hook devil. This casual competition continued into the morning with Howard, as usual, putting up greater numbers of fish.

Here come the fishermen

After a while, we could hear the sound of horse's hooves coming up the trail. Looking down the valley toward the road, we could see little strings of riders heading up the valley. The fly-fishing outfitters and their clients were heading up the Lamar. We looked at each other. We had to get further up the valley before the best spots were taken. The race was on.

Two fishermen waddling across rough country in waders trying to out-distance mounted riders was a losing bet. Plus, our hurried waddling in the warm morning sun made our canvas and rubber waders into sweaty torture devices and soon we were wetter on the inside than we were on the outside. It was also

more than 6,000 feet above sea level, so we were panting like overheated dogs. Despite this sweaty discomfort, we kept going up the Lamar until we found a riffle and two big holes. We waded in ahead of the riders and staked out our territory, remembering our Soda Butte experience from the previous evening. Soon the groups of mounted guides and their fishermen caught up with us.

As the outfitters and their clients rode by, we waved and asked where they were going. "Fishing," was the typical answer. It soon became apparent that useful fishing information was not going to be forthcoming. So, when they asked us how the fishing was, we usually replied "Stinks!" which proved a little awkward when Howard shouted this while fighting another nice cutt. We were quickly learning that fishing Yellowstone National Park was a very competitive game. We had never seen this much fishing pressure.

After the groups of riders passed, we noticed more groups of fishermen now hiking and wading up the Lamar. The fly-fishing foot soldiers were coming. The place was filling up. It was Soda Butte all over again. Now midmorning, the prospect of moving even further upstream, and repeating our sweaty experience did not appeal to either of us. We stayed put and fished our spot on the Lamar. Cache Creek would have to wait.

We sat on the bank, eating an early lunch as more grim-faced fly fishermen trudged by, dismayed that we were occupying these nice looking fishing holes. We wondered how many of them knew they were following about thirty guys on horseback. We just sat there, eating peanut butter sandwiches and drinking canteen water, thankful that we got out of bed early and got in some decent fishing before the crowds showed up. After lunch, we took off our waders and hiked back to the truck. It was time to see more of Yellowstone.

For the remainder of the day, we hopscotched around the park and

piled out of the truck when we saw a fishing opportunity along the various rivers and creeks which ran parallel to the road. Our success was mixed, catching a few trout here and there, but seeing a lot of good looking trout water.

On another positive note, we generally avoided the crowds of fishermen which seemed to increase by the hour. Further down the road, the Lamar dumped into the Yellowstone River which was the biggest trout stream we had ever seen. We tried fishing this big river, quickly noting that either the access in was way too steep, or the strong current was too hard to wade. Given these challenges, we fished from shore or the shallows, and managed only a few small trout. The day eventually faded into evening, and we were fished out. Despite the crowds, it had been a pretty good day. It was time to go and look for a spot to hide the truck again and spend the night.

Everything stunk, including our financial situation

The next morning we realized we had been sleeping in the back of the truck for about a week. Days of backpacking, and trout fishing had taken a toll. Howard and I smelled terrible. A little nervous buffalo perspiration and racing the mounted fishermen up the Lamar Valley probably pushed us over the top. We were filthy. All of our clothes were filthy. So were our sleeping bags. Everything stunk. An occasional cold water splash was just not enough. We agreed it was time for a hot shower with soap and possibly some shampoo. We also had no clean clothes, so a stop at the laundromat was also needed.

During this assessment of our overall condition we also determined that due to a few too many meals (and beers) out, and some ill-conceived tourist purchases which included some fireworks back in Cody, our cash was dangerously depleted. We were now a little short,

so a little strategic planning was in order. We heard you could get a shower for fifty cents at the Roosevelt Lodge Campground, just down the road from Slough Creek. There was also a coin-operated laundromat there. So, we drove to Roosevelt, windows open, in search of personal hygiene. The trout could wait till later.

Roosevelt was a beehive of activity on that hot summer day. People from everywhere were milling about, buying t-shirts, souvenirs, cold pop, signing up for the horse-drawn wagon rides, looking at brochures and maps, and generally cluttering up the place.

We parked near the legendary fifty cent shower building. It was a glorious example of sturdy 1930's CCC log-and-stone construction. It was huge. One side showered the boys, the other, the girls, in assembly line fashion. We half-expected to see Teddy Roosevelt himself, standing in the shower line, clad only in a towel, and a Roughrider hat. The smell of steaming humans wafted into the parking lot with a heady mixture of humidity, humanity and soap. We went back to the truck and dug out our towels and shower kits.

Upon our return, we noticed two large motor coaches were now parked in front of the shower building. Each motor coach disgorged a compliment of what looked to be college students who were now queued up for the shower. They were not speaking English and appeared to be European. "Look at their shoes," whispered Howard.

We tried to figure out what language they were speaking. French, or maybe Dutch, we thought. Howard's Spanish One from high school did not prove terribly useful and my German One was equally as useless. We stood there, attempting some small talk and assessed the likelihood of our showering anytime soon. While standing in line, we noticed that, likely due to a lengthy cross country bus confinement, these guys needed a shower as bad as we did. So, in the spirit of international goodwill, we deferred to

the fragrant tourists, bought a six pack of cold beer, decided to go drink beer somewhere, enjoy the park, maybe fish some more, and wait till the crowds cleared.

There were many scenic choices in Yellowstone for afternoon beer drinking. We settled on the nearby Buffalo Ford on the Yellowstone River which provided sweeping mountain vistas, herds of buffalo, an occasional elk or moose, and the possibility of some evening fly fishing. The shower might have to wait until tomorrow. After a short drive, we pulled up to the Buffalo Ford's parking area. We grabbed our six-pack, climbed up onto the hood, leaned back, cracked a beer, and settled in to watch the critter show.

A small herd of buffalo was in the river cooling off and a couple of bedded elk were visible in the grass on the far shore of the river. As an extra bonus, two very large bull moose were sitting in the middle of the river, each in their own patch of emergent vegetation. Every so often, a trout would rise in the middle of the river to complete the scene. This was truly one of the best places in the whole world for drinking cold beer. We were starting to like Yellowstone more and more.

A word about what we looked like at this point: Imagine two unshaven greasy-haired young men in their mid-twenties lying on the hood of a blue Chevy pickup truck with their backs leaning on the windshield with a six pack of beer between them. We were wearing dirty jeans, mud-caked hiking boots, flannel shirts with the sleeves cut off, aviator shades, bandanas and cheap straw cowboy hats.

Clad in this manner, we passed a pleasant afternoon, nursing the six-pack. We fell sound asleep, the cowboy hats now covering our faces. It was at this point that a large motorcoach eased into the parking area at the Buffalo Ford. We didn't hear it.

American cowboys

Did you ever have that kind of dream-like awareness when you are physically asleep but become aware of something going on in your immediate environment? Maybe we got this from camping in bear country. Howard and I became aware of footsteps in the gravel of the parking area, muffled conversation, and the furious clicking of camera shutters. We both slowly opened our eyes and peeked out from under our cowboy hats. We were now the photography subjects of a motorcoach full of Japanese tourists who were now arrayed around the front of the truck, photographing two authentic, sleeping, American cowboys. Surely, this was the highlight of their trip.

I opened one eye and peeked out from under the brim of my hat. The group was all well-dressed men. None of them looked like they needed a shower. Most of them wore blazers, white shirts and ties. I thought it could have been a company group or something. About half wore little black and white beanies with the name of the tour company on it. They did not look particularly outdoorsy. Howard and I sat up at more or less the same time and they scattered like startled ants.

In Yellowstone at that time, organized tour groups from Japan were extremely common. They were known to be quiet, polite, a little shy and possessing some of the best camera equipment available at that time. They moved in organized columns, typically following a leader with a tour flag. We had seen some of their tour buses while driving

around the day before and had seen groups stopped along the road and photographing the mountains, the buffalo and each other. It looked to us like they were having a pretty good time.

My dad served in the Army of Occupation in Japan after World War II. He taught my brother and me a little song in Japanese, and the words "arigato" which means "thank you," and "kon'nichiwa" or "hello." That constituted my entire Japanese vocabulary. Armed with these two words, I greeted the group with a hearty western-style "kon'nichiwa!" and slid off the hood. I skipped the song. Knowing my dad, it was probably dirty.

A couple of empty beer cans rolled off the hood of the truck and clanked to the ground as we slid off the hood and approached the group. Smiling, we slowly walked towards them. They smiled back. "Kon'nichiwa" must be working, we thought, and Howard brought along our last two beers and offered them to the two closest guys. They accepted them with an "arigato" and passed them around. We now were surrounded by a bunch of excited Japanese guys who, through a mix of halting english, excited Japanese, and sign language, got Howard and me to pose for pictures with them. As far as they knew, we were genuine cowboys.

Happy chatter ensued, dozens of pictures were taken, and more cold beer magically appeared from inside the motorcoach. It was now a little beer party. Soon, even more photos were taken of the two dashing, authentic, honest to goodness, slightly stinky, rugged American cowboys and their new Japanese friends. Some took turns being photographed wearing our cowboy hats while we were photographed wearing their little tour beanies. Now, more cold beer emerged from the cooler inside the bus.

Rubber moose

Well, it was a beer party after all, so now it was time for a little party fun. I sidled up to one of the guys who I saw could speak a little English. I pointed to the two moose still lying motionless in the river. They had not moved the whole time we were there. "Hey buddy," I motioned to the guy and pointed, "Moose" I said.

"Ah, yes, Moose." He smiled excitedly. I continued and gestured, "Rubber moose." He looked confused. "Rubber moose?" He repeated.

"Park puts them in the river." I said.

"For the tourists" I said "Rubber moose! Fake moose! Not real. Toy moose," I continued in an impromptu pidgin english. It took him a couple of seconds to register this but he appeared to get it.

"Ahhh" he said as he studied the situation. He called to some of the group and explained this amazing news in excited Japanese to his buddies. This produced a huge amount of rapid-fire conversation as the guy now explained about the fake moose. Cameras with long telephoto lenses now swung towards the moose and exited laughing cries of "rubber moose! fake moose!, ha, ha, ha" now echoed through the parking area. The thought of rubber moose being put in the river to fool the tourists really got them going. They were laughing like crazy and clicking away and having what seemed like a great time. Imagine the gall of those darn Americans, fooling the poor tourists. One guy had me pose, pointing to the fake

rubber moose in the distance with a look of feigned shock. Hundreds of pictures of the counterfeit moose were taken.

At this point, the tour leader, a stern-looking older Japanese man who had been watching all of the fake moose excitement gave me a knowing look. He said nothing but gave every sign that he had been there before and knew the moose were real and would eventually move. This was apparently not his first Yellowstone moose rodeo. He just shook his head at me.

Well, the first moose stood up and the crowd grew silent. Jaws dropped. No more rubber moose. Some looked confused and some looked annoyed. I gave them a look of complete incredulosity as if to say, "Beats me?" or "First time that ever happened!" Confusion now descended upon our little international moose and beer party. Our new friends milled about, mostly sensing our trickery at their expense.

Now, the second moose stood up, and, along with his buddy, slowly headed to the far shore and the woods. Their shift was apparently over. All hell broke loose. Now our new friends milled about in an agitated fashion and took more photos of the departing moose. The volume of the conversation got much louder and a little heated. While knowing only two words in Japanese, I think I may have heard some cursing coming in my direction. My "Beats me" expression turned into my "Yup, I'm bullcrap" expression. Howard headed for the truck. "Ricky, get in the damn truck before they kill us!" he said quietly, his teeth clenched in a fake smile as he walked by me.

At that point, the tour leader wisely held up the tour flag, blew a whistle and said something in Japanese. It was not "arigato." The group immediately lined up and went back into the bus in a perfectly orderly fashion. He was the boss and fully in charge, further reinforced by the tour flag and his stern demeanor. He was the last to board the bus. He turned to me: "Rubber moose" he said sternly with a scowl, followed by a slight grin which I took to mean "you jackass."

The bus started up and idled in the parking lot for a moment. Howard and I waved lamely. Suddenly the windows on the bus opened and the guys leaned out, cheered, and waved. "Rubber moose! Rubber moose! Rubber moose!" they shouted and cheered as the motorcoach pulled out. Wow! I thought. "What the heck did that old guy tell them?" We could only speculate, but we would never know. I think, in the end though, they all had a pretty good time.

Somewhere, in maybe more than one Japanese home, is a framed picture of a Japanese man in a cowboy hat and an American cowboy wearing a little black and white tour beanie. Both men are smiling and a moose can be seen in the distant background of the photo. Both men are holding cans of beer. The photo clearly shows two guys having a very good time in one of the most beautiful places in North America. And, maybe, the story of the sleeping cowboys and the rubber moose of the Yellowstone was now enshrined in Japanese travel lore.

After the bus was out of sight, we strung our rods and headed into the Yellowstone River. The river was wide here and the current was manageable, even for a guy who had a few beers. The light was fading but we thought we could fish for a little while. We waded out into the river, close to where the rubber moose had been. A nice run of current

went through there and I could stand in the shallower slacker water and cast safely. Any surface activity was pretty much non-existent due to a stiff evening breeze, so I pitched a streamer. Howard tossed a big, red and white Daredevil. "Bigger water, bigger spoon, bigger fish Ricky," he grinned. No little trout for him.

Big take, big cuttie

After a few unproductive attempts in my first spot, I moved on and swung the streamer further downstream. I was rewarded by a vicious take. Big cutty, I thought, and a big trout battle ensued. The little reel on my fly rod screamed as the big fish took its first run. I let the big trout run for a while before slowly starting to reel. After a bit, I thought I was gaining on this big fish and got it close enough for a look. The trout was big, 20 or so inches, with the pale yellow color and small spots of a Yellowstone cutthroat. I could see the classic crimson-orange throat slash and a reddish-purple colored gill plate. Truly, I thought, what a beautiful creature.

As I got the fish even closer, it saw me and shook its head violently and ran again, farther downstream this time, taking me deep into my backing. Again, I slowly worked the big fish back toward me. But, after its third run, my line went slack. The big trout had won.

It was getting dark and time to sound the retreat. I saw Howard trudging back about 50 yards upstream. We headed for the parking lot. It had been a long day and we needed to find a place to spend the night.

"How'd ya do Ricky? He asked. I launched into the story of my epic big trout battle. It was a lengthy saga, of course, with me playing the tragic hero. Howard listened politely. After all, I had the truck keys.

After a while, I asked, "How about you?"

"Got four" he said, smiling.

"Four! Any size?" I asked

"Yah, pretty good" He said, holding his hands apart to indicate trout of not only significant size, but bigger than the one I lost. Now crestfallen, I didn't feel like interrogating him any further. I just didn't want to know any more. The fly fisherman was skunked again and the Daredevil had prevailed as usual. Some things never change. We got in the truck and drove off.

We got lucky and found a legal campsite at the Slough Creek campground and cooked some freeze-dried food for dinner. The label said it was supposed to be chili. We unrolled our bags and settled down in the back of the truck. We could rest knowing that a midnight rousting by a ranger was no longer a possibility.

The next day, we planned to fish Slough Creek by the campground, work our way towards the Madison, and then the Firehole. It was an ambitious plan as usual, but what the heck, we were young and chasing trout was what we had come to Yellowstone for. Plus, we could get a shower anywhere.

"Wooo, what a day!" I said to Howard.

"Yup," he replied.

"Rubber moose," I whispered.

"You stink," he whispered.

"You stink, too," I replied.

"No wonder we don't have girlfriends," added Howard.

And in the quiet of the Slough Creek campground, in the back of a small pickup truck, the two genuine American cowboys laughed till they fell sound asleep.

Wisconsin Fly Tyers

John Gremmer: Teaching the art of fly tying.

By Bob Haase

Recognizing some of Wisconsin's great fly tyers, this series looks at the role they played and are currently playing in the art of fly tying and fly fishing. Through this series we will learn more about them, the flies they tie and tips to make us better fly tyers.

John spent most of his working career as a high school science teacher. After his retirement from teaching, he continued using his teaching skills by teaching others how to tie flies and use them on the stream to catch fish.

John was the person who got me involved in Trout Unlimited through a CWTU Masters Fly Tying program years ago. He also got lot of other people involved in Trout Unlimited through the fly-tying and fly-fishing classes that he taught through Fox Valley Technical College. He not only got people to join TU, but he also got them more involved by taking on leadership roles as officers and board members of CWTU.

There is a lot more that I could say about John and the role he played in introducing people to the art of fly tying, fly fishing and the importance of protecting and enhancing our coldwater resources, but I will let the rest of the article cover that.

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

I grew up in Peshtigo and, as kids, we spent most summer days in or along the Peshtigo River fishing and swimming. When we saw fish rising for bugs, we went to our chicken coop, gathered some feathers, and wrapped them around hooks. Later we were thrilled to have rock bass take our flies. That started my interest in flies and fly tying. The fun has never stopped. So, I guess the answer is about 70 years.

Do you remember who taught you to tie your first flies?

Sometime in the 1970's I took a formal class in fly tying. There were four sessions, and this provided some technical training to fortify the fundamentals. Then I turned to fly-tying books from the library. I learned about 10 percent from the class and the rest from the books. Today, with the Internet, it is much easier to learn fly tying. Check out all the videos on youtube.com; it has everything you need.

Were there any specific fly tyers who you learned from as you were developing your tying skills?

A long list of people shared information about fly tying with me. Many were authors of books, and others were people I fished with. At the risk of leaving someone out, I would mention Tom Young, Jack Holewinski, Jim Hauer, Bart Landwehr, Dave Whitlock, Alec Jackson, Marty Kwitek, Bob Haase, Jeff Treu, Ira Giese, Ross Mueller, John Nebel, Bob Hunt and John Gribb as people who have influenced my fly tying.

What do you think are some of the benefits of tying your own flies?

There is a reason 20 percent of fly fisherman catch 80 percent of the fish. Besides being a bit fanatical about fly fishing, they tie their own flies. They study the bugs in the stream they fish, learn their names, and tie specific flies to imitate them.

Fly tying is an art, and creating art has a multitude of benefits.

Could you tell us about some of your favorite fly patterns and how you fish them?

I, like everyone else, have my own favorite flies. They are favorites because those are the flies I have had success with. My favorite dry fly is the size 19 black foam beetle from Ross Mueller's book, "Fly Fishing Midwestern Spring Creeks." It imitates those little beetles that fall from the trees and stream-side vegetation.

The Bead-Head Prince is my favorite nymph pattern. Small or large, it gets down and does the job. I have two streamer/bugger patterns that I fish. I tie on a Hornberg when in doubt and start searching with it. Tom Young introduced me to the Angel Fly. With it I have caught everything from bluegills to coho salmon. It's heavy, flashy and has superb action.

If a person has never tried tying their own flies, tell us why they should at least give it a try.

The main reason to tie your own flies is that you will become a better fisherman and catch more fish. Learning fly tying will open up new avenues of personal growth, whether it's techniques, the history of fly tying, the satisfaction of creating something or the connection you'll make with other tyers.

What tips do you have for people just getting started in fly tying, and for those that have tied for a long time and are looking to try something different?

For those just starting, I would say get a good book on fly tying. Ross Mueller's books on Flies that Catch Trout and Fly Fishing Spring Creeks are two of my favorites. Ross strips it down to one fly per page. On that page he provides a picture of the fly, the recipe, step-by-step tying instructions and how to fish it. The books are out of print, but maybe you can find a used one on eBay or Amazon.

Starting out, pick 10 flies you want to tie. Then gather the materials for all of them and start tying. Get the best vise and fly-tying tools you can afford. Cheap tools lead to a frustrating experience. For experienced tyers, I would recommend gathering the materials and tying some Carrie Stevens Rangely Lake Flies. They are beautiful and rich in history.

What are some of the major changes you have seen in fly tying and fly fishing since you first got started?

In fly tying, there has been movement from natural to synthetics, which is great. Vises and tools are better, the Internet provides all the instruction you need to get started. There has been an explosion of patterns in all areas of fly fishing. Magazines like Fly Tyer come up with

new patterns for each issue. New fly-tying books are not being created as much today because of the available content on the Internet.

When I started tying, streamers and dry flies were the staple of a trout fly box. Today, the average box has more nymphs than streamers or dries. Being a geezer, I prefer dries, then streamers, and lastly nymphs, but I believe nymphs catch more fish. Is there anything more thrilling than a trout taking your fly off the surface? Of course, the gear is much better today. Rods, reels, vests and rain jackets are all superior to what was available in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's.

You have had a lot of experience tying flies and fishing the flies you tie. What are some of your most memorable experiences on the stream fishing the flies you tied?

My best experiences have been fishing in central Wisconsin on the Mecan and the many streams in southwest Wisconsin. One early morning on the Westfork, south of



Avalanche, I was in the middle of a trico hatch, but the fish weren't rising. I looked in my flybox and decided to switch to a streamer. I tied on a Hornberg, and on the first cast across the stream a trout came six inches out of the water and ate the fly. The Hornberg has been a go-to fly ever since.

You have introduced a lot of people in to the art of fly tying and fly fishing. Tell us about some of the fly-tying and fly-fishing programs you started.

I retired from teaching biology at the age of 55. I wanted to learn more about fly tying and fly fishing, so I joined the Central Wisconsin Chapter. The chapter was struggling a little, and I got into a discussion with one of the officers, Bob Chamberlain, on how we could revive and grow the chapter. This became our mission and other members joined in that mission.

I started teaching fly rod building, fly fishing and fly-tying classes for Fox Valley Technical College. At one time, 90 percent of the CWTU Board had passed through these classes.

We held an event called "Trout-Fest" and it was a huge success. We had fly tyers, speakers, artisans, conservation groups and some vendors. Eventually Trout Fest moved to the Fin 'n Feather in Winneconne and has had a long run of packed houses. This helped expose our chapter to the public and resulted in recruit-

ing new members.

Wanting to learn more about fly tying, I threw out the idea of getting some expert fly tyers to come in and teach our members, as well as members from other chapters, about fly tying. We called the program the Master's Fly Tying Program, and limited it to 25 participants, which usually filled with a waiting list. The series ran for 22 years with more than 100 master tyers sharing their skills with us.

From 2000 on we started having monthly programs related to coldwater resources and trout fishing. We paid our presenters a small stipend, and some of the best speakers came right out of our own chapter. This increased our attendance to 50 to 70 people. The programs were advertised, with the public invited. That also allowed us to grow our membership.

In the early 2000's Bob Haase, Bob Rennock and I initiated the CWTU River Keepers program. We went down to Madison to receive training from the Wisconsin DNR on how to monitor the health of our coldwater streams, as part of the DNR's Water Action Volunteer program. Once a month from May through October, we gather information on water and air temperature, water clarity, biotic bug life, oxygen levels, flow rate and a habitat assessment. This program is still going strong with more than 35 teams and more than 80 individuals participating.

It was a pleasure to be involved in the conception and establishment of these programs. It took good people to believe in and accept these programs and make them successful.

You have done a lot of different things for the Central Wisconsin Chapter. Tell us why you think it is important to join an organization like TU and what you may have gained over the years as a member.

I may have joined to learn more about fly fishing for trout, and I did get plenty of that. Still, the main reward was making connections with so many wonderful people. Being in TU means you get a chance to give back to the community and environment. I have no regrets about getting involved with TU and I would do it again.

Is there anything else that you would like to share about yourself, accomplishments, tying techniques or anything that might be of interest or of help to other tyers?

To have a good journey in fly fishing, get good gear, become friends with your local fly shop and buy that good gear from them, share what you know with others, learn to fish close to home, get a Wisconsin Gazetteer and start making notes in it, find a good fishing partner who is compatible with your style of fishing, learn to tie your own flies, be grateful for the beautiful streams we have in Wisconsin, join TU to ensure that these streams remain protected, and vote for politicians who are going to protect our environment.

Ninety percent of your learning about fly fishing for trout will occur through trial and error on the stream. The more you go, the better you will get. So, go fishing. It will enrich and lengthen your life.

I am not religious, but I can't deny that there is something spiritual about wading in a beautiful trout stream. The water pushing up against your legs, birds singing, bugs in the air and trout rising are as close to heaven on earth as I know.

Partnership a boon for state's streams

What the \$40 million Forest Service agreement means for Wisconsin.

By Jamie Vaughn, TU Great Lakes Engagement Coordinator

You may have heard the news of a \$40 million restoration partnership recently announced between Trout Unlimited and the U.S. Forest Service.

Under this new agreement, the U.S. Forest Service will provide up to \$40 million to TU as part of a five-year agreement to restore and reconnect watersheds on national forests and grasslands, home to many of America's most important trout and salmon watersheds, made possible with funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Projects funded by the agreement will include cleaning up abandoned mines, removing barriers to fish passage and restoring stream habitat throughout the country. This work will protect clean water, make rivers and streams more resilient to the changing climate, and boost native trout and salmon populations.

And that's great news for Wisconsin trout streams.

Thanks to this new agreement, TU's Great Lakes Program will be receiving funding to build capacity for watershed restoration projects in the Chequamegon Nicolet National Forest (CNNF). Led by TU's Chris Collier and our partners at the National Forest, this funding will facilitate the planning and preparations

for the replacement of two undersized culverts on the South Branch of the Oconto River to allow for fish passage and increased flood resilience, along with partnership building for future aquatic organism passage projects.

The South Branch of the Oconto, which is a Class 1 trout stream, is one of the highest quality coldwater systems on the east side of the CNNF and one of the most visited. Much has been invested in this system by TU chapters and partners over the years to reconnect and restore habitat and increase public access. This new project will build on those significant efforts, leading effectively to the reconnection of the headwaters to the rest of the system.

When this project is complete, trout and other species will have access to 15 more miles of cold, clean, high-quality habitat.

While the benefits to our beloved coldwater resources will be vast, these projects ultimately lead to healthier, happier and more resilient communities.

We're thankful for the Wisconsin legislators who prioritized the care and recovery of these special places by voting to pass the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, including Sen. Tammy Baldwin and Representatives Ron Kind, Gwen Moore and Mark Pocan.

Projects funded will include cleaning up abandoned mines, removing barriers and restoring stream habitat.



Chris Collier

TU'S GREAT LAKES PROGRAM GETTING MAJOR FINANCIAL BOOST
A new partnership will mean more projects like this 2022 culvert replacement on an unnamed tributary to Hay Creek.

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Great Lakes Stream Restoration Program update

By Chris Collier, Great Lakes Stream Restoration Manager

Every year it seems like field season stretches a week or two longer. Maybe it's the unseasonably warm fall we've had the past two years or maybe it's the nature of a program that continues to grow. Whichever it is, I'm not complaining about an extra week or two working in Northwoods trout streams.

As part of our road-stream crossing and aquatic organism passage program, we worked with partners to replace six crossings, reconnecting more than 15 miles of coldwater habitat. This brings our total projects completed since 2017 to 44 barriers removed, reconnecting 152 miles of trout streams. This year's work was highlighted by a crossing we replaced with the U.S. Forest Service on Barney Spring in Oconto County. Not only did this project reconnect more than three miles of class 1 trout water and a spring pond, but it's also one of Danielle's fish movement monitoring sites, which means we could start seeing some important data in the coming years.

Speaking of Danielle, since adding her to the team in 2021 we've seen a significant growth in the amount of monitoring our program can do. Not only is she managing two long-term brook trout movement study sites, but she's also been leading electroshocking efforts to

monitor trout response at project sites before and after construction. Danielle also launched a temperature monitoring program in the Upper Wolf River Watershed this summer that we are hoping to use to help develop projects that will help secure coldwater inputs to the main-stem river. There's already more being planned for next year, but more on that later.

We had three seasonal staff join us for the field season to help with our stream crossing and monitoring programs. Two of those staffers were college interns from UW-Madison and Stevens Point. Kyle and Carter spent May through August helping us with road-stream crossing inventories, habitat improvement projects and fishery surveys. Along with our college interns, we hired a lead seasonal technician, Emma Balliet, who has already introduced herself to you with an article in the last issue of *Wisconsin Trout*. Emma was an amazing addition to our seasonal team who helped manage the day-to-day oversight of our crew, which allowed Danielle and I to work with the seasonal team and take time to pursue new projects. Emma did amazing work this summer and we were not looking forward to saying goodbye to her...so we didn't.

Emma has officially joined the TU Great Lakes team as a full-time field coordinator. In this position she will help lead field efforts in



Chris Collier

NEW FISH-FRIENDLY CULVERT ON BARNEY SPRINGS

This new fish friendly culvert was installed on Barney Springs in Oconto County, in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service.

northern Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. We're excited to have her join the team and be a key part of continuing to grow our Great Lakes program. Speaking of building capacity, in August we hired a Stream Restoration Specialist Scott Allen to allow us to design more projects and keep up with a growing project list in the Northwoods. We are excited to have him on the team and I can't wait to see all that we can get done with him and Emma.

As we take time to reflect on the successes of another field season, we are also already planning our 2023 projects. We have several crossing replacements planned, existing and new monitoring programs to launch and exciting new partner-

ships in places like the Lake Superior basin.

Thank you all for the support you've given our program. We would not be able to do this without you and I look forward to working with you more as we continue to grow. If you would like to learn more about these projects, are interested in helping with some of this work (We have opportunities for volunteers.) or if you want to organize a field trip to see what we've been up to, please reach out to me at chris.collier@tu.org.

Now it's time to settle into winter, so I'll see you on the ice or behind the vise, but before we know it spring will be here and I'll see you on the water.



Chris Collier

PADDLING THE WOLF RIVER

A day was spent paddling the Upper Wolf River and tributaries to deploy temperature loggers as part of a new monitoring effort.




Chris Collier

SURVEYING FOR A FUTURE CULVERT REPLACEMENT

Field coordinator Emma Balliet takes measurements for a future culvert replacement on the South Branch Oconto River.

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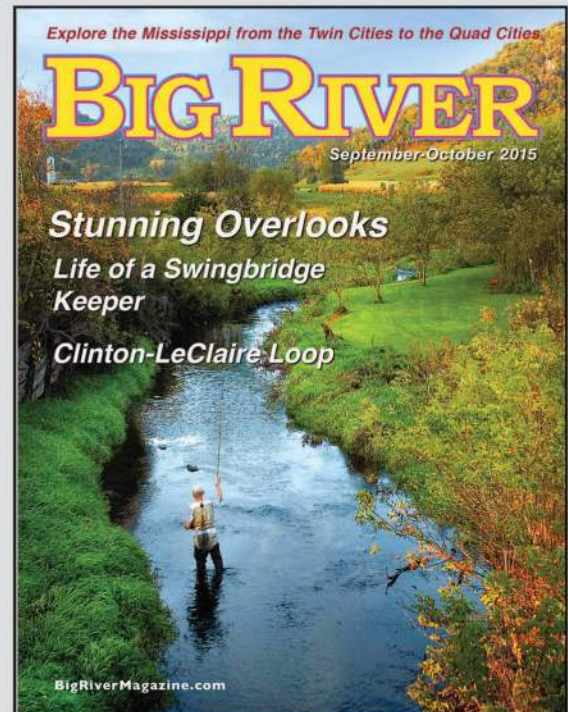
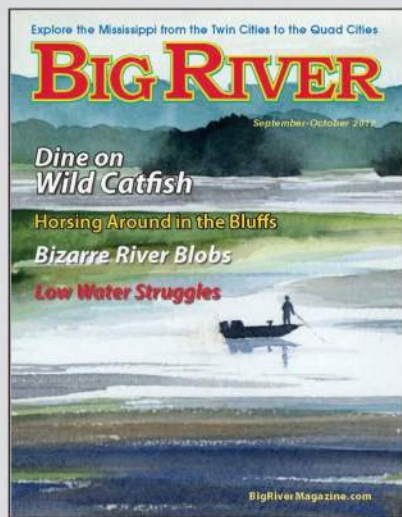
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