

# TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - March 2015

**Tying the Stop and Go Soft Hackle**  
**Eagle Creek - History and Lessons Learned**  
**Enter the MNTU Photo Contest**  
**Book Review - Flyfishing the 41st**  
**Little Long Lake - A Hidden Gem**  
**Stream Buffers - The Time to Act is Now!**  
**And Lots More!**

**Fishing Our Habitat Work:  
The Sucker River**

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## ON THE COVER

Fishing Duschee Creek in Fillmore County in Southeast Minnesota after a rainstorm. Photo by Jade Thomason.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Fishing the Sucker River
- How to tie the Stop & Go Soft Hackle with Paul Johnson.
- Flytying and educational opportunities.
- Why we need more streamside buffers now!
- Programming for you to attend at the Great Waters Flyfishing Expo.
- And much more!

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# MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

## The Season of Anticipation

By JP Little, Minnesota Council Chair

Welcome to the 2015 spring Minnesota Trout Unlimited statewide newsletter. Well, it is official: Groundhog Day is behind us and Punxsutawney Phil has seen his shadow, which means that at least six more weeks of winter are ahead of us. By the time you read this we might be right in the middle of the spring snowstorms that invariably seem to accompany the high school sports tournaments. There are a couple big TU events coming in the month of March. First, the Tom Helgeson's Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo will be running March 20-22 at the National Sports Center in Blaine. The Expo is chock full of activities, all related to fly fishing, for young and old alike.

Second, the Minnesota TU council is hosting a regional meeting of TU council and chapter leadership from across the upper Midwest on March 27-29. This will be a good opportunity to share best practices, regional differences and a little time on the water. If anyone who reads this would like to get involved in that please contact me or John Hunt. Incidentally, John has recently become our National Leadership Council (NLC) representative for the state of Minnesota. John is replacing Steve Carlton, who just finished a 5 year term. Thanks to both John and Steve! Have a great spring everyone.

Tight Lines!



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TCTU VOLUNTEER BRIAN BERMEL OF SAVAGE RELEASES A HEFTY EAGLE CREEK BROWN TROUT. CHECK OUT THE STORY ON PAGE 14 TO LEARN ABOUT THE HISTORY OF RESTORATION AND CHALLENGES ON THIS STREAM

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Effective Conservation Requires Unified Focus

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

Minnesota has begun its periodic updating of its management plan for Lake Superior and its tributaries. In chatting with a number of anglers who have spent many decades wading North Shore rivers, we agreed that the altered hydrology of our watersheds stands out as the most significant hurdle facing the wild trout and steelhead trying to survive and thrive in these steep freestone rivers. Historic (and fairly recent) logging practices, road building, gravel mining and land conversion away from forests have increased runoff rates, and reduced water storage, groundwater recharge and base flows in streams. As a result, we now have flashier systems with much lower base flows and much warmer summer water temperatures. Observant anglers and resource managers have correctly identified improvements to hydrology as the most important need for sustaining any wild salmonids, regardless of species.

I recently heard a few well intentioned, yet ill informed, individuals suggest that Minnesota can magically restore “coaster” brook trout by eliminating naturalized, self-sustaining steelhead and the presumed competition for food. This search for an easy scapegoat not only ignores the real hurdles to coaster restoration, but also needlessly alienates countless passionate conservationists we must work with to succeed. Any actual impact of theoretical or actual competition between wild brook trout and wild steelhead is insignificant and dwarfed by the real problems with hydrology, low base flows, high water temps, connectivity and degraded habitat.

MNTU has long led efforts to restore native “coaster” brook trout along the North Shore, including successfully pushing for a 20” minimum size restriction in 1997, conducting the first extensive genetic investigation of brook trout genetics on the North Shore, and working tirelessly to improve land use



practices and hydrology. We remain champions of coaster restoration. However, our knowledge of these watersheds convinces us that if we restore hydrology, base flows and water temperatures wild brook trout and steelhead will both thrive. Effective conservation means working with every willing partner on watershed improvements without reference to which coldwater species may utilize the habitat. MNTU will continue to focus energies on the real issues and avoid counterproductive musings pitting conservationists against one another.



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A WILD LIMESTONE SPRING CREEK BROWN TROUT READY TO HEAD BACK TO THE DEPTHS. LEARN ABOUT HOW CHANGES TO STREAM BUFFER ENFORCEMENT CAN HELP OUR STREAMS IN THE ARTICLE ON PAGE 8.

## EDITOR'S ANGLE

### Opportunities of Springtime

By Carl Haensel, Editor

This time of winter is gear preparation time. At least it should be, if the computer was not distracting me. From building and repairing rods to tying flies, spooling reels and patching waders, they all lead me to think about the opportunities of springtime. Soon, winter will begin to release its grip on Minnesota, and streams and rivers will flow with renewed vigor. Insects will hatch and trout will rise, earlier in the season than a person might think.

A number of years back, when guiding in the Whitewater River valley in the winter trout season, a truly warm day occurred. It was one of those days when you need to take off most of the layers that you are wearing in the midafternoon just to be comfortable. While there was still snow around, there were bare

patches as well and I sat down to relax in the sunshine along the river. It was then when I saw the first blue wing olive mayfly hatch of the year. Big “sailboat” mayflies were gliding down a long pool, and it wasn’t long before the trout started inhaling them. I hadn’t planned on fishing mayfly dry flies that day, but I had a couple along. Soon we were into a nice bunch of fish, hungry after a long winter.

I hope that when you read this, you start to prepare to explore Minnesota’s trout streams this spring, and start packing your fly boxes for all of those “just in case” opportunities. If you are in need of flies, try entering the photo contest - you might just win what you need!

Good luck fishing this spring,



# GETTING TROUT IN YOUR CLASSROOM

An Educational Opportunity for Teachers & Students

By John Lenczewski

Nearly a year ago MNTU submitted a grant proposal to fund an outdoor education program for students in grades 5 to 12, which includes the Trout in the Classroom curriculum and several fieldtrips focused on aquatic resources. While the grant process is a slow one, we are optimistic the education program will be funded beginning this July 1. It is time to begin identifying teachers and schools, primarily in the Twin Cities metropolitan area and southeast Minnesota, interested in participating in this three year outdoor education program beginning in September 2015.

The year-long program, focused on water quality, groundwater issues, watersheds, aquatic life and healthy habitats, will combine placing aquariums in classrooms so students can follow the development of trout from egg to juvenile, off site field studies, and classroom visits by our aquatic education specialist. Proven national TIC curriculum will be adapted to meet state standards and STEM initiatives. All classroom equipment will be provided. Travel stipends will be included. Interested teachers and school administrators should send an e mail containing contact information to John Lenczewski, Executive Director of MNTU at: [jlenczewski@comcast.net](mailto:jlenczewski@comcast.net)



THE TIC PROGRAM ENGAGES STUDENTS AND ALLOWS THEM TO FOLLOW TROUT FROM EGGS IN THE CLASSROOM TO THE FIELD STUDIES AND TROUT RELEASE



# TU REGIONAL MEETING

March 28-29

By JP Little

Join your fellow TU volunteer leaders from across the region at this year's Upper Midwest Regional Meeting in Bloomington, Minnesota on March 28-29. (There's an optional day of free, hosted fishing on Friday, March 27 with local Minnesota chapter members.)

TU regional meetings are a great way to meet people like you who care about our rivers and are working locally to make them better. The meeting will be full of enlightening presentations, inspiring dialogue and engaging camaraderie with those who share your dedication to TU and our mission. This year, Chris Wood, TU's president and CEO, will be attending our regional meeting along with more than a dozen other TU staff from across the country. This is a great opportunity to meet national staff members, ask questions and make connections. Learn more about the meeting, view the draft agenda and register to attend here: <http://www.tu.org/get-involved/national-events/2015-upper-midwest-regional-meeting>

I hope you will join us at the Upper Midwest Regional Meeting in March. It's going to be a great event and an incredible opportunity to network and learn from our TU peers.

**TOM HELGESON'S GREAT WATERS FLY FISHING EXPO**

**Special Guests:**  
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Details at: [www.greatwatersflyfishingexpo.com](http://www.greatwatersflyfishingexpo.com)

**Free Fly Casting Instruction!**  
From the Lew Jewett FFF Chapter

# PRESERVING A LEGACY TROUT UNLIMITED BANQUET

MARCH 7, 2015



You are cordially invited to the Twin Cities Trout Unlimited Banquet on March 7. At Trout Unlimited, we are dedicated to conserving and protecting our region's coldwater fisheries for future generations.

Bring your significant other, children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews and friends to this fun, family-friendly event. Share your love of the sport and help preserve the legacy of fly fishing while enjoying good food for all ages, fun games, and a silent and live auction.

### Where

Nicollet Island Pavilion, 40 Power Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401

### When

Saturday, March 7, 2015

### Time

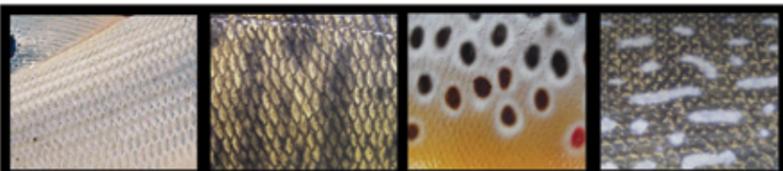
6:00pm

### Tickets

\$75 per adult, \$45 per child 12 and under, or sponsor the banquet at the bronze (\$1000), silver (\$2000), or gold (\$3000) levels to secure a table for 8 and make your gift go further toward supporting TU's river and stream restoration and its mission to teach today's youth about the great sport of fly fishing.

Purchase your tickets online today at  
[www.twincitiestu.org](http://www.twincitiestu.org)

Twin Cities Trout Unlimited - PO Box 2786 - Minneapolis, MN 55402



## The Fly Angler

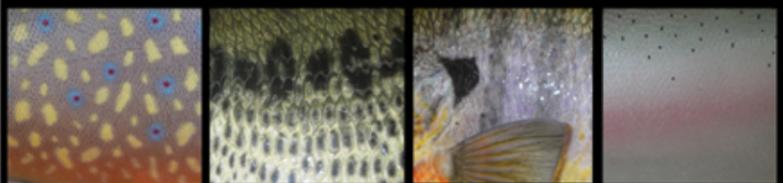
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—Thomas McGuane, author of *The Cadence of Grass*

# Fly-Fishing the 41st



From Connecticut  
to Mongolia  
and Home Again:  
A Fisherman's  
Odyssey

James Prosek  
Author of *Trout* and *Joe and Me*

## FLYFISHING THE 41ST Book Review

By John Hunt

Mention the name James Prosek to a fan of fly fishing and the most common response is often something about his exquisite depictions of trout and other fish. In fact, I have a poster of his hanging in my office at work called "Trout of the World". Not a day goes by that I don't glance at that poster and wonder what it would be like to catch some colorful species of trout in a far-off foreign country. Beyond his paintings, however, James Prosek is also a gifted writer, one of those unique individuals who is able to express his love for fish and their environs in both color and word.

Prosek is a relative youngster, turning 40 only later this year. He published his first book, "Trout: An Illustrated History", while still in college. The poster that hangs in my office is a take-off of his book of the same name. The Prosek title that captured my imagination most recently, however, is entitled, "Fly-Fishing the 41st: Around the World on the 41st Parallel". The book is a compilation of Prosek's experiences after he sets out from his Connecticut home and heads east around the globe, determined to enjoy the fishing and the people he encounters along the way.

As the reader soon realizes, the author's journey is not a simple west-to-east trek. It reads more like a game of hopscotch. It begins in the mountains of northeastern Spain, then detours to follow a young college co-ed to Paris and a chance to catch a giant silure in the Seine River, then resumes in Italy. From there it jumps to eastern Turkey,

with Prosek and his guide mumbling "alabalik" (Turkish for trout) to soldiers at a roadside checkpoint, bribing them with cigarettes to pass through on their way to the mountain headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. After Turkey, Prosek returns to Europe for a spell, before visiting Armenia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Japan, Korea, and Kamchatka. At each stop, Prosek's prose recounts the people he meets and their hospitality. He reminds us that fishing is as much about the conversation, the cuisine, and the human condition as it is about the catch. His experience captures everything from the bustle of a working river like the Seine to the simple daily routine of a family in a village in a remote corner of central Asia.

Continuing east and headed for home, the author chases golden trout in the Sierra Nevada wilderness, searches for Great Basin cutthroat, and makes time to visit the (now late) Dr. Robert Behnke in Colorado to talk about native trout and to go fishing. The final leg of the quest passes quickly, with the author arriving home to contemplate the contrast of the urban jungle of the New York City metropolplex with the various locales he visited.

In addition to the fine narrative, the book also includes nearly 20 original water color illustrations that capture scenes from the journey. Taken together, James Prosek presents an enjoyable view of how fish (and fishing) cross cultural and international boundaries.

# FISHING OUR HABITAT IMPROVEMENT: THE SUCKER RIVER

Exploring and fishing our habitat improvement on Minnesota's North Shore

Carl Haensel

From its headwaters at Paradise Lake in the Cloquet Valley State Forest to its mouth in Lake Superior, the Sucker River drops 830 feet. Numerous waterfalls typical of North Shore streams mark its descent, but it is some of the other natural characteristics of this watershed that make it special. They have led to MNTU, the MN DNR, the University of Minnesota-Duluth and many others to work to improve the habitat throughout the watershed.

A medium-sized river on the North Shore, the Sucker River contains over 50 miles of streams within its watershed. The vast majority of the upper watershed is publicly held land, which bodes well for the long-term stability of the river. Forests make up most of the area feeding the river with 25% of the remainder in wetlands. This allows for greater stream stability and recharge compared to neighboring watersheds. Fortunately, only 5% of the land within the watershed is developed, grassland, or in agriculture. High elevation areas within the upper watershed capture more precipitation than surrounding watersheds, which may provide more water to the river. Comparatively, some local streams like Amity Creek have only 3% of their watershed in wetlands and over 25% in open or developed areas.

The Sucker River hosts many different wild and naturally reproducing trout and salmon species, including native brook trout, brown trout, steelhead, pink salmon and chinook salmon. Brook

River has taken two primary forms: in-stream habitat creating deeper water and overhead cover, and tree planting to add shade and diversify the riparian forest.

Work began in 2010 with the first project downstream of the northern McQuade Road bridge. Large white pine logs were added to the stream for woody cover, and rock weirs were created to assist in maintaining deep pools. This site has served as a research project location for UMD and other institutions to examine how effective habitat improvement has been and how we can better design it for other locations around the North Shore. After the installation of the first project, additional Outdoor Heritage Fund and GLRI (Great Lakes Restoration Initiative) funding was secured to work on two more project locations in the watershed upstream of Ryan and Old North Shore Roads. These two sites are further downstream in the watershed and are accessible to lake-run fish including steelhead, coaster brook trout, brown trout and others. The latest project areas have also focused on providing deep water cover for both adult and juvenile fish, including wild steelhead smolts. Smolts have been observed using the habitat work in the Old North Shore road reach nearly continually after its installation.

Habitat work in the form of tree planting has added over 10,000 trees to the watershed over the past 4 years. Species diversification has been a priority since many of the forested wetlands in the Sucker River watershed contain



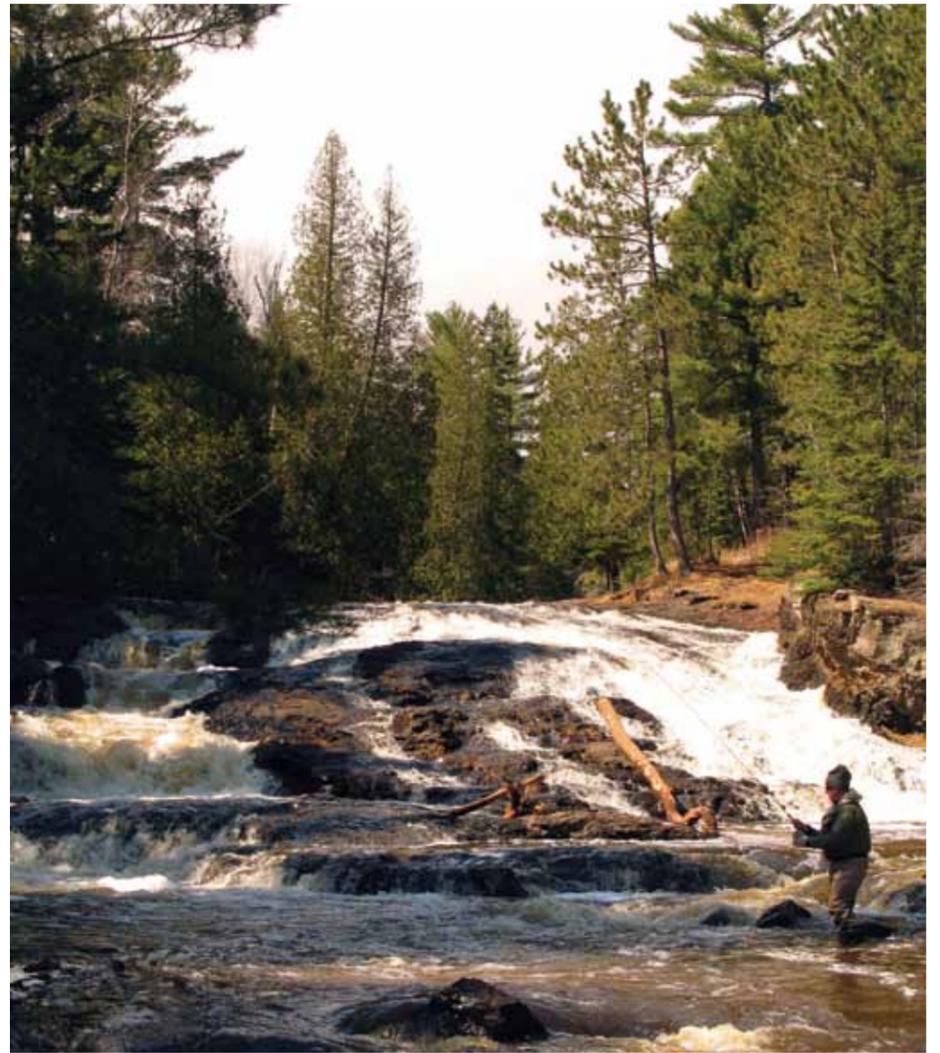
A KAMLOOPS RAINBOW TROUT CAUGHT IN THE LOWER SUCKER RIVER. APRIL AND MAY ARE THE BEST MONTHS TO FIND STEELHEAD AND KAMLOOPS IN THE RIVER. PLAN TO KEEP THE DOMESTICATED HATCHERY STRAIN KAMLOOPS YOU CATCH TO HELP PRESERVE WILD STEELHEAD GENETICS.

trout spawning success is consistent and good, and the river is not stocked. Kamloops rainbow trout regularly stray into the river in spring and are a popular target for anglers.

## Habitat Improvement

Habitat improvement in the Sucker

black ash trees. These ash trees are expected to be hard hit by the emerald ash borer when it arrives. Tree species planted include white pine, white cedar, red pine, bur oak, sugar maple, silver maple, tamarack, eastern hemlock and others. White pine and white cedar trees have been caged to prevent deer browse. Trees have been planted at all three in-stream habitat improvement sites as well



AN ANGLER FISHES FOR STEELHEAD BELOW THE "FIVE STEP" FALLS ON THE SUCKER RIVER. THE FALLS, ORIGINALLY A BEDROCK SLIDE, WERE ALTERED BY THE MN DNR TO PROVIDE MIGRATORY FISH PASSAGE. THEY ARE FOUND UPSTREAM OF THE OLD NORTH SHORE RD. SITE.

as on other on locations in the watershed on both Carlson and Brophy Creeks. Visit the new forests at any of the sites. Plantings are easily accessible at the Old North Shore road parking area, located on the east side of the former bridge site.

Research conducted by UMD that has used data from the habitat improvement sites has been useful and has won awards regionally. Look for more information regarding the research online at [www.mntu.org](http://www.mntu.org)

## Fishing the Sucker River

There are many seasons and opportunities to take advantage of on the Sucker River. From steelhead in the spring to pink salmon in the fall, it offers a small sample of the variety that is available on many of Minnesota's North Shore waters.

The steelhead run starts off the season, and the Sucker is one of the earliest streams on the shore to feature productive fishing. Plan to head north and start fishing after the first large snowmelt has occurred and the stream temperatures have started to warm toward the upper 30's. The parking lot located along the "Scenic Route" highway can get crowded when the fish are in, but it can be worth your time and trouble when the fish are biting. Fishing with egg flies, nymphs and spawn sacs are all productive methods to try depending on your preferences. Usually a nine-foot fly rod in either 7 or 8-weight is good



UMD RESEARCHERS ASSESS THE UPPER SUCKER RIVER



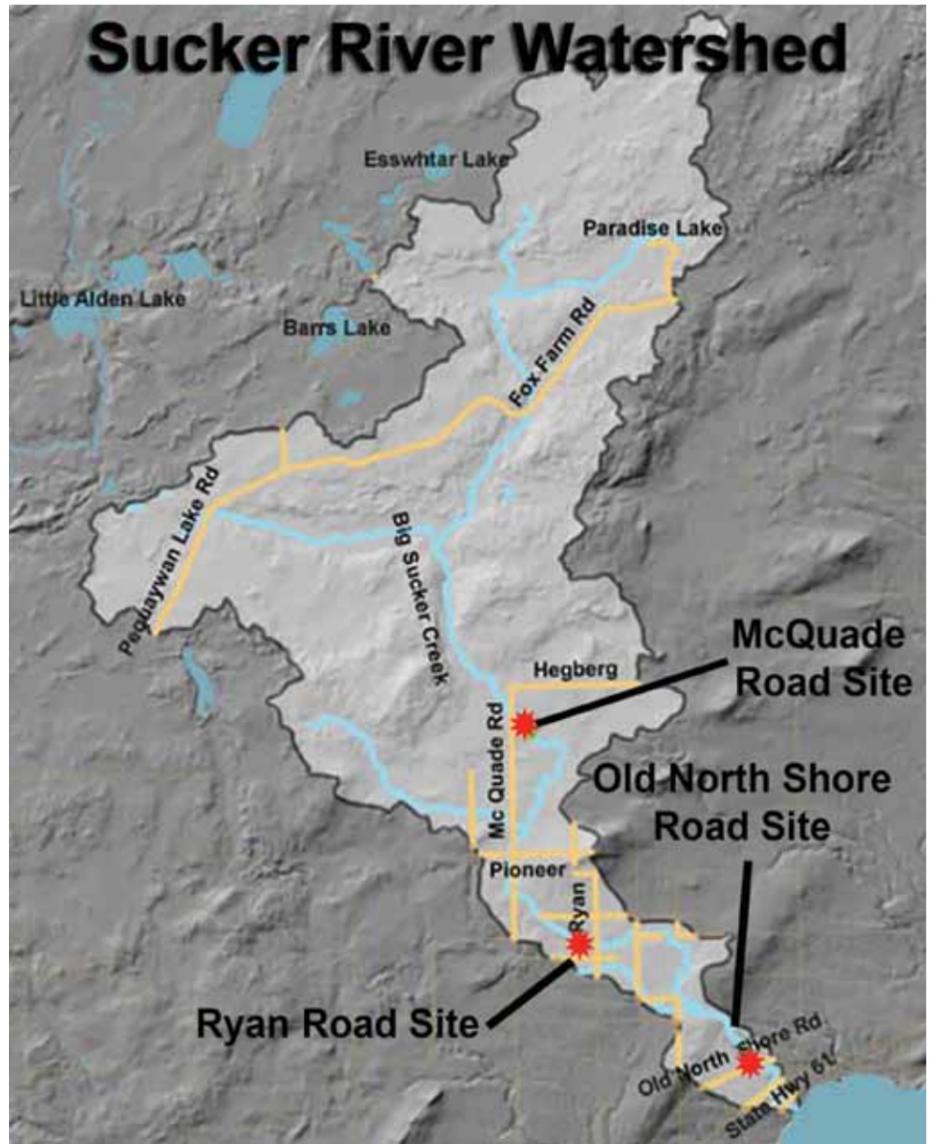
A COASTER BROOK TROUT CAUGHT IN THE LOWER SUCKER RIVER. WHILE COASTERS ARE UNCOMMON ON THE MN NORTH SHORE, THEY ARE MORE FREQUENTLY FOUND IN RIVERS WITH STRONG RESIDENT BROOK TROUT POPULATIONS IN AREAS WITH MIGRATORY FISH RUNS.

Further upstream in the Sucker River, brown and brook trout mix in miles of classic riffles, runs and pools. Waterfalls are scattered throughout the middle of the river and offer scenic fishing locations. The Ryan Road habitat improvement location is located in the middle of this reach, and offers good fishing in early summer and early fall. Water levels can drop low in most North Shore streams, and fish can be hard to catch on the hot-

test of days when the river warms into the low 70s and stresses the fish. Use nymphs and streamers to target larger fish, and small dry flies to get fish up on the surface. Caddisflies are the most common hatching insect, though some plentiful mayfly hatches occur in June. Anglers using spinning gear may wish to avoid using treble hooks and crimp the barbs to allow for easier release of the fish.



MN DNR FISHERIES STAFF ELECTROFISH A HABITAT IMPROVEMENT LOG JAM ON THE UPPER SUCKER RIVER TO ASSESS THE BROOK TROUT POPULATION.



LOCATIONS OF MNTU HABITAT IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE SUCKER RIVER WATERSHED ON THE NORTH SHORE. MAP COURTESY OF DULUTHSTREAMS.ORG

The headwaters of the Sucker River are a great fishing option for wild brook trout. Bridge access points on McQuade and Fox Farm Roads offer access to many miles of publicly fishable waters protected by easements. Look to deeper areas and old beaver meadows to hold some of the biggest fish. Fishing is good in the late spring and early summer and can be good all summer long if the North Shore has had adequate rainfall, though in July the mosquitoes can carry you away in the upper sections of this and other area rivers. Since sections of this river are remote, plan to do some hiking

to find the best spots. Small streamers are popular flies to entice the brookies out of their dark holes, though some anglers have had good success with the big fish on dry flies.

Practice catch and release for the brook trout in this stream to allow the population to grow and the large fish to provide others with a good shot at nice fish. Though the river can produce quality sized fish, they are not great in number and it is very easy to overharvest them.

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# Trout On Tap!

Join a casual gathering of anglers touring local taprooms each month. Solve all the problems of the angling world. Excursions are from 5:30 to 7:30 PM

## FISHING IS SPOKEN HERE.

**March 19 - Insight Brewing**  
 2821 E Hennepin Ave, Mpls

**April 16 - Dangerous Man Brewing**  
 1300 2nd St. NE, Mpls

**May 12 - Surly Brewing**  
 520 Malcom Ave SE, Mpls

# STREAM BUFFERS

## The Time for Progress is Now

By John Lenczewski & Brett Lorenzen

On January 16, Governor Mark Dayton surprised the angling, hunting and conservation communities by calling for perennial vegetative buffers within 50 feet of all Minnesota watercourses and DNR enforcement where counties fail to act. This bold initiative was unveiled at the beginning of the MNDNR's annual Fisheries and Wildlife Roundtables to the delight of the somewhat stunned audience. Governor Dayton noted that while 98 percent of the state's rural land belongs to farmers and individuals, "the water belongs to all of us and to all who will follow us." Attendees quickly realized that the Governor had drastically changed the public debate and created an opportunity to secure significant water quality improvements. Every trout angler and fan of clean water needs to do his or her small part to help make this initiative a reality. This opportunity may not come again.

### What Are Vegetative Stream Buffers?

Stream buffers or vegetative buffers are strips of land with permanent (year round) vegetation adjacent to streams, designed to intercept runoff and minimize soil erosion, and protect water quality. Vegetative buffers slow runoff from agricultural fields, trapping and filtering sediment, nutrients, pesticides and other pollutants before they reach the stream or watercourse.

### Why Buffers Are Important For Trout



A SECTION OF PICKWICK CREEK IN WINONA COUNTY WITH NO 50 FOOT VEGETATIVE BUFFER SUFFERING FROM STREAM BANK EROSION

Buffers can reduce the amount of sediment and pollutants carried by runoff to nearby streams, lakes, and wetlands. Soil particles accumulating as sediment in streams, filling in pool habitat and covering gravel and cobble substrates essential for spawning and aquatic insects (fish food). Sediment often carries pollutants such as phosphorus and nitrogen, nutrients used in fertilizer. These nutrients cause excessive growth of algae and aquatic plants, deplete the oxygen level of water, and degrade water quality. Soil microbes and grass in buffer strips, however, can facilitate the transformation and uptake of these pollutants, thus protecting water resources.

Research indicates that buffers may intercept or remove 50 percent or more of nutrients and pesticides, 60 percent or more of some pathogens, and 75 percent or more of sediment from runoff. Buffer vegetation also helps stabilize streambanks and reduce streambank erosion. Buffer vegetation can also increase terrestrial insects (which fall into streams to become fish food) and provide shading to help keep trout streams cool.

Vegetative buffers are especially critical at the very top ends of watercourses to slow and filter runoff. Once sediment and chemical laden runoff reaches the stream channel it is much more difficult to filter these pollutants from the water.

### Current Minnesota Law

Minnesota enacted its first shoreland ordinance in 1969 and last updated the statute in 1989. (Minn. Stat. 103F.211 to 103F.227) The law requires the DNR to develop a set of statewide minimum standards, which are now found in Minnesota Rules 6120.2500 to 6120.3900. Local governments are required to adopt and enforce standards at least as restrictive as these DNR developed minimum standards.

Minnesota shoreland management rules require that a minimum 50-foot wide vegetated buffer be maintained on agricultural land adjacent to designated

public waters, including all designated trout streams (in the "shore impact zone"). The width of the buffer strips is measured from the top of the bank or "ordinary high water mark". Vegetative buffers are also required on steep slopes within the larger "shoreland area" (within 1,000 feet of lakes or 300 feet of perennial rivers and streams). Minnesota drainage laws further require a minimum 16.5 foot buffer strip along public drainage ditches. Local governments (primarily counties) are given responsibility for enforcing the requirements. However, enforcement is very inconsistent.

### Information Technology's Impact On the Public Discussion.

Minnesota Trout Unlimited and other conservation and environmental organizations have long decried that lack of compliance by many landowners with the state's minimum buffer standard, and the lack of enforcement by many counties. And numerous members have reported egregious violations they observed degrading the water quality and habitat of trout streams, only to learn that the DNR lacks clear authority and resources to enforce the law.

Many organizations and state agencies have been frustrated by this problem of noncompliance for several years. Many of their efforts focused on smaller subsets of waters, visual surveys, and examinations of county enforcement actions (or rather inaction), all of which made it clear that the law is being largely ignored in many counties.

Two of these organizations, the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy and Environmental Working Group, recently began to exploring the use of newer technology to identify the scope of the problem. Their efforts have been instrumental in informing the Governor and state agencies, and surely have had a hand in convincing the Governor that the status quo is not working.

The Minnesota Center for Environmen-

<http://www.mncenter.org/issues/water/shoreland-mapping-and-agricultural-encroachment.aspx>

The Environmental Working Group (EWG) took note of MCEA's efforts, and applied computer-assisted methods to very high resolution imagery obtained from the Minnesota DNR to expand the survey and cover 37 counties in the southern half of the state. In April 2014, EWG released a report entitled Broken Stream Banks to set out all of the data. You can read the full report, and see the online maps that show the location and extent of missing buffers on every stream south of the Minnesota River, at: <http://www.ewg.org/research/broken-stream-banks>

Of particular interest to trout anglers is the ability to use the online tool to examine each individual trout stream, including the vital headwater areas located upstream of the designated trout stream sections.

### What EWG Analyzed

Using a combination of four band, high-resolution (0.5 m) aerial photography shot in the spring of 2011 and the Minnesota Public Waters Inventory (PWI) GIS data layer, EWG was able to look at a snapshot of the actual landscape for 37 counties in southern Minnesota. EWG found that while many agricultural landowners maintain the required 50-foot



THE SAME SECTION OF PICKWICK CREEK AFTER HABITAT IMPROVEMENT BY MINNESOTA TROUT UNLIMITED AND THE INSTALLATION OF A VEGETATIVE BUFFER

tal Advocacy (MCEA) began looking at the problem in 2009, using available imagery from public sources and visual inspections to map shoreland areas in Blue Earth County and identify agricultural encroachments. Since 2009 MCEA has completed shoreland mapping in the Root River, Cedar River (MN), Middle Minnesota, Sauk River, Pomme de Terre River, Whitewater River, and Elm Creek watersheds. MCEA's work identifying areas under cultivation in shoreland zones is an invaluable step for targeting both compliance assessments and voluntary Best Management Practices (BMPs) where they will have the greatest impact on water quality. You can find links to a number of these MCEA reports at:

riparian buffers along perennial rivers and streams, many do not. In addition, it found that healthy, effective vegetative buffers are scarcer still alongside smaller waterways, most public drainage ditches, and intermittent streams.

### How EWG Did Its Analysis

EWG's analysis involved three basic steps: creating an accurate representation of waterways adjacent to agricultural land; establishing perennial waterways as identified in the Minnesota Public Waters Inventory; and quantifying the extent to which waterways adjacent to agricultural land maintained the required 50-foot wide vegetative buffers.

To establish an accurate delineation of the current shoreline, EWG used high-resolution color infrared aerial photography (4 BAND) supplied by the Minnesota DNR. This photography was taken during the spring months of 2011, which “pops” grassland emergence, and is ideal for contrasting vegetation with cultivated areas. The near infrared band was optimal for extracting surface water and vegetation. Once completed, the shorelines were intersected with the Minnesota Public Waters Inventory to focus on streams that were classified as “perennial” and “public”, so there could be no doubt that the 50 foot wide buffer standard applied there.

The USDA common land units were used to extract only buffer segments that overlapped cropland based on the USDA’s classification of agriculture. It was within this universe that analysis used the normalized difference vegetation index (NDVI) to track the existence of vegetation within 50 feet of perennial public water on adjacent cropland. These areas were tagged as “missing” or “present” and quantified to generate summary statistics by county, watershed, and waterway.

All missing buffer segments were visually checked against the most recent aerial photography (summer 2012/2013 – NAIP). EWG visually verified each segment of the analysis, and corrected any missing buffer areas that were no longer in production. This same analysis was also done on a smaller subset of ephemeral waterways and ditches within the 37 sample counties.

#### What the Analysis Revealed

EWG’s analysis found that only 18 percent of waterways adjacent to cropland earned an “A grade” - meaning that 100 percent of the acreage within 50 feet of the stream bank was covered by the required buffers, while 21 percent received a “F” or failing grade - meaning less than 60 percent of the required buffer acres was present. Another 14 percent earned a “D grade” because only 60 to 69 percent of the buffer acres were maintained. Combining the highest and lowest grades, 30 percent earned an A or A- (90 to 99 percent of buffers acres in place), while 35 percent earned a D or F.

In some cases, it was obvious that erod-

ing stream banks were cutting into what might once have been an adequate buffer. However, in most cases there was no obvious explanation for the striking differences in the widths of the buffers other than uneven management practices of the landowners or renters involved. In fact, EWG’s analysis found a jumbled pattern in which watersheds and waterways that earn top grades are frequently next door to areas with failing grades.

Interestingly, while coldwater streams fared only slightly better than streams on average, they did reflect a tendency toward higher stewardship generally.

#### The Persuasiveness of Data

On release of the Broken Stream Banks report, EWG worked with numerous partners to examine, confirm and refine what it had learned. In October 2014, the report’s authors were invited to present their findings to the leadership of several Minnesota state agencies. This same month MCEA released its very detailed analysis of compliance in the Whitewater River Watershed. Discussions and the sharing of research results with state agencies continued, thanks to the agencies’ genuine concern with the scope of the problem and the prospect of a new set of tools to assess compliance moving forward.

Governor Dayton also viewed the research results and took a personal interest in the scope of water quality problems in agricultural areas. We suspect that the frank assessments of Commissioners John Linc Stine (MPCA) and Tom Landwehr (DNR) further persuaded the Governor that Minnesota could not reverse the steady decline of water quality, particularly in agricultural areas of the state, under the status quo of erratic buffer compliance.

At the Pheasant Summit in mid December the importance of both riparian buffers and roadside ditch buffers for pheasant and wildlife habitat were identified as top concerns. Several MNTU members arrived at the DNR Roundtable with plans to network with Pheasants Forever and other conservation partners to collectively convince our Governor and state agencies that the time had come for uniform enforcement of existing buffer requirements. The Governor’s surprise announcement that he would press the

Legislature for authority for his agencies to enforce 50 foot buffers alongside all watercourses made short work of that task and shifted our focus to seizing this rare opportunity to improve water quality on all streams.

#### The Governor’s Initiative.

On January 16, 2015 Governor Dayton offered only a broad outline of his stream buffer initiative. He signaled that his primary focus is on improving water quality by ensuring that there are vegetative buffers along all watercourses. Since that time MNTU has been active providing input to the state agencies working to flesh out the details of the proposal. The specifics of the proposal to the Legislature are still being worked out as this article goes to the printer. However, MNTU has arranged for a presentation of the Governor’s proposal on Saturday March 21 at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo in Blaine (see page 16). We anticipate that the key elements of the proposal will include:

- Requirement of a 50 foot wide strip of perennial vegetation, measured from the top of the stream bank.
- Buffers required on all watercourses, not just the current subset having larger drainage areas which are classified as “public waters”.
- Initial assistance or incentives for landowners who were not previously required to maintain 50 foot buffers (e. g., along drainage ditches)
- A phase-in period between now and summer 2017, by which time all riparian landowners will be expected to be in compliance or face enforcement actions.

#### Your Voice is Crucial

Clean, cold water is the most basic necessity for every trout stream. Without it physical habitat and population management can do little. For this reason, passage of the Governor’s streamside buffer proposal is a top priority of MNTU this spring, and we need your help to make this happen. While the Governor is providing great leadership, only the Minnesota Legislature can enact the necessary changes in law and provide the funding for local governments and state agencies

to effectively implement it. The legislative “will” to pass such a law will only come about if every angler and fan of clean water contacts his or her legislators and demands they support the initiative.

#### Simple Steps You Can Take

1. Stay informed, including by regularly checking MNTU’s blog at: [www.mntu.org](http://www.mntu.org)
  2. Contacting your two state legislators to urge they enact the Governor’s buffer initiative. Find out who represents you and how to contact them via the Minnesota Legislature’s District finder tool on the State’s legislative website at: <http://www.gis.leg.mn/OpenLayers/districts/>
- Simply type in your address and you will get a list and links to your representatives. Then click on your legislator’s name and you will be taken to his or her individual web page.

3. Attend a presentation by EWG of its Broken Stream Banks report, followed by an overview of the Governor’s (by then released) buffers initiative by John Jaschke, Executive Director of the MN Board of Soil and Water Resources (BWSR) at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo on Saturday afternoon March 21.

4. Sign up to receive e mail alerts at a few critical times between now and the end of the legislative session in mid-May. Simply send an e mail to [jlenczewski@comcast.net](mailto:jlenczewski@comcast.net) and ask to be added to the list of recipients for buffer law related alerts.

*Brett Lorenzen is the Mississippi River Program Coordinator for the Environmental Working Group (EWG). He has also served as state chair for Iowa TU for most of this century, and chair of the TUDARE Volunteer Steering Committee for the rest of it. He enjoys becoming irretrievably lost while fishing along roads that were placed on the landscape seemingly at random, and thus is a huge fan of SE Minnesota streams he often finds himself fishing.*

*John Lenczewski is MNTU’s executive director, a MN native and a lifelong trout angler and conservationist.*

# MNTU 2015 PHOTO CONTEST

## Share Your Best Fishing Photos and Win!

This is the official announcement of the second season of the MNTU photo contest. Send in your entries early and prepare to use your new flies this season!

#### Rules of the Contest:

- Photos must be shot in Minnesota
- Photos should fall into a category:
  - Minnesota Waters
  - Trout, Salmon & Steelhead
  - Family Fishing
- Photos must include a trout, salmon or steelhead, **OR** a water body that they inhabit.
- Photos must be submitted by May 15th, 2014. Top entries in each category will be published in the June issue of the MNTU Newsletter.

- All photos submitted must be sent in \*.jpg format at their original resolution to the Editor at: [carlhaensel@hotmail.com](mailto:carlhaensel@hotmail.com).

There is an entry limit of three photos per individual. Please include the name of the photographer and the location the photo was taken in the submission.

- Submission of photos gives MNTU the right to publish photos in the MNTU newsletter and in online media.

#### Prizes

The winner in each category will receive a box of a dozen flies ready to catch trout this season. The overall winner will receive a handmade wooden handled trout net.



THE MIDDLE BRANCH OF THE WHITEWATER RIVER IN WINTER

# FLY TYING

## With Laughing Trout Fly Fishing

By Paul Johnson

### Stop and Go Soft Hackle

#### Materials List

Hook: Scud Hook, size 14 - 18  
 Thread: 14/0 or 8/0 Red  
 Rib: Red Wire, size Brassie  
 Abdomen: Green Holographic Tinsel  
 Thorax; Peacock Dubbing  
 Collar: Hungarian Partridge

I was first introduced to this fly several years ago by Randy Lage when I joined Laughing Trout. It took a couple months of being in the group before Randy shared his pattern with me. However, he did not want me sharing the pattern with others outside of Laughing Trout. Over the last several years, it has become my favorite soft hackle. I have even convinced Randy that it is too good of fly not to share with others. Thanks Randy for all the help you have given me and many others over the years. You are one of a kind!



THE STOP & GO SOFT HACKLE READY TO FISH. GIVE THIS FLY A SHOT THIS SPRING AND TRY SWINGING IT IN A RIFFLE WHEN CADDISFLIES ARE AROUND.

#### Tying Instructions:



Step 1.  
Start your tying thread at the 3/4 point. Wrap a smooth thread base half way down the bend of the hook.



Step 2.  
Tie in a length of wire.



Step 3.  
Tie in a length of tinsel.



Step 4.  
Wrap the tinsel forward with slightly overlapping turns to the 3/4 point on the hook.



Step 5.  
Counter wrap the wire forward with evenly spaced wraps. The wire wraps should be a little closer than you would use on a typical fly.



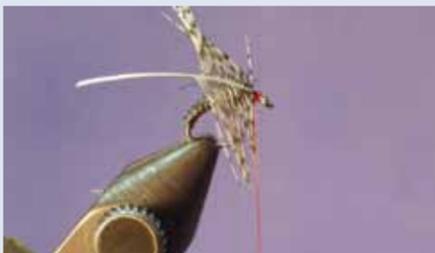
Step 6.  
Form a small dubbing noodle on your thread with the peacock dubbing.



Step 7.  
Form a small dubbing ball right at the 3/4 point on the hook. This small ball is to help keep the partridge collar out and away from the body of the fly



Step 8.  
Prepare partridge feather by pulling the fuzzy fibers from base of the feather. Grab just the tip of the feather and pull down the fibers on both sides.



Step 9.  
Tie in the feather just in front of the dubbing ball by tip of the feather.



Step 10.  
Make 2 or 3 turns of the partridge feather, being careful with the first wrap not to break the feather. Secure with your tying thread, trim, and whip finish.



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**J. Mark Reisetter** 50 Trout Streams within 20 miles of home!

# BURGERS, BEER AND BLUE WINGED OLIVES

By Bob Wagner

It might be pizza, pepsi and PMDs or a BLT, budweiser and bass bugs. Within these seemingly strange food groupings lies a significant opportunity for Trout Unlimited. You have probably figured it out we are ordering dinner and tying flies. So what's the great opportunity?

folks were first-time tiers. Several have become new chapter members and 11 women participated. Who would of think it! As it turns out it's not that hard to organize and put a small PSA (public service announcement) in your local newspaper. I'm sure every chapter has several members willing to share a favorite pattern and drink a cold one.

product-oriented and fundamentally practical. You are making something with "your own hands": a fly that beginners can take home the first night. It is life-long learning at its best with no age or physical ability requirements. It can span the continuum from hobby to art form to business venture and its diversification is unlimited. In Keith Perrault's Standard Dictionary of Fishing Flies we find over 16,000 patterns. The designs, materials, modification and new creative applications are endless. Last but not least, it is a positive addition that connects the tyer to one of the greatest sports known to man, flyfishing.

Fly tying as a scheduled activity provides TU members that all-important winter "off season" involvement opportunity we all need. The word all here includes ladies that are attending tying nights at increasing numbers.

I have been told most chapters in our state don't offer organized winter tying nights. If I can be of any help to your chapter to encourage or share best practice tips, mistakes to avoid, etc. please call or e-mail me. It is really not hard to eat burgers, drink beer and tie flies. Best of all it's a lot of fun! Also what chapter doesn't need new members, and this is a great way to engage with your local anglers and reach people that have been hard for TU to connect with in the past.



WINTER GOT YOU DOWN? A NIGHT OUT TYING FLIES IS HARD TO BEAT!

The story starts four years ago with our first scheduled community fly tying night at the Garden Pub and Grill in Bemidji. Eight or nine folks attended who were eager and excited to tie flies. This initial effort has gradually grown with rather surprising and positive results. So far this winter the Headwaters TU Chapter has sponsored four free tying nights with a total of 65 participants. Plenty of new people have attended and 18 of these

The more I research, read and become involved in fly tying the more interesting and relevant it becomes to TU. Fly tying is a unique art form, craft and/or hobby and anyone can learn the basic skillset in one session. This skillset opens the door of a life-long learning activity that has several amazing traits. With a rich history that goes back 3,000 years (check out Ernie Schwiebert's research), it is



KETCHUP, MUSTARD AND FLYTYING SCISSORS ARE AT HOME TOGETHER AT A NIGHT OUT TYING IN BEMIDJI.

INTERESTED IN TRYING OUT YOUR OWN CHAPTER FLYTYING EVENT? CONTACT BOB WAGNER FOR MORE GREAT IDEAS!

## THE CHALLENGES OF WINTER FISHING

By Phil Pankow

Last week Friday I went out fishing with Rich Enochs from the National Trout Center. We met at Trout Run at the Three Culvert Bridge and went upstream. The sun was out, the temps were pleasant, and the wind was almost non-existent. Rich shared with me some of his favorite holes and midge spots, but I'm afraid you'll have to find those spots yourselves.

It had been a while since I had been out and I hadn't fished in the winter all last year because of the horrible season we had. I felt rusty and out of rhythm to say the least. Rich made some recommendations as far as what flies and sizes to start with. I love fishing tandem flies so he recommended a weighted pink Scud or similar weighted nymph and a Midge dropper. I opened my fly box and spotted a bead-head Pink Squirrel. I pulled out some 6X tippet and proceeded to hold the fly I had just tied on by the bend to form somewhat of a loop to add the tippet to and spent ten minutes struggling to tie an Improved Clinch knot to it. As the title of this article suggests, I finally gave up on trying to add a second fly and used the #16 Pink Squirrel. I settled on a spot to cast to and casted multiple times

with no luck. Winter is not easy fishing at the best of times. The water is clear, the fish are skittish and reduce their metabolism to survive the long cold winter. Cold fingers make it difficult to tie on flies or control line and equipment. I felt like a newbie out learning winter fishing for the first time. I finally managed to add some extra tippet and a second fly. I put on a Chartreuse Midge with about 10-12" of tippet in-between. I cast to a midge hole that Rich recommended and hooked up with a healthy 9" Brown. In case you're interested, Rich caught a nice 12" Brown.

After I got home, feeling very frustrated, I starting contemplating how to make adding tippet easier and quicker so I wouldn't get frustrated and waste time messing around on-stream. I knew if I could find a loop knot I could tie into a piece of tippet, say a foot or so long, and have it tighten on itself like a noose I could add a quick section, snip off excess material, tie on an extra fly and go. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity as Henry David Thoreau would say. I pulled several knot books from my shelf in my fly fishing room and started thumbing through the loop knot sections. I finally found the knot I was look-



ing for - the Duncan Loop. Paul Krolak, Hiawatha Trout Unlimited's (HTU) habitat improvement coordinator, also suggested the Orvis loop. The Duncan Loop is easy enough to tie, especially at home in optimal conditions, and after placing the loop around the bend of a hook, I was able to slide the loop closed tight enough to stay on the hook bend and add a new fly. I plan to make several of these in different sizes of tippet and take them out

next time I go. I'll let you know how it works out for me in the future. If you have other suggestions, feel free to email me at [pankow.phil0615@gmail.com](mailto:pankow.phil0615@gmail.com) and share with everyone.

"...winter flyfishing takes nothing more than stubbornness instead of actual endurance and courage." (John Gierach, Fool's Paradise)

# LITTLE LONG LAKE

## A Hidden Gem To Share

By Randy Lage

I feel that it is time to tell a little bit about a wonderful lake that has had a good trout fishery for many years.

I, along with several others, have enjoyed catching the trout of Little Long Lake. We kept it to ourselves to keep the lake peaceful and avoid that opening day combat fishing often found on Courthouse and other metropolitan trout lakes. None of us would have dreamed of bagging some trout, taking that bag to a watering hole and slapping them on the bar saying "Look at these Little Long Lake trout!" I guess we were selfish and did not wish to share our good fortune with others. We practiced both catch and release and some selective harvest. The lake was never

clear (around 15 feet visibility) even in the summer. The clarity also makes the lake a great spot for spearfishing in the winter. Consider harvesting the northern pike present in the lake to give the trout a break. This lake provides a more natural 'up north' feel and experience. Now that Three Rivers Park has purchased the surrounding land around the lake it should remain as it is today: woodsy and a bit like being up north.

The low point for Little Long Lake trout came after the DNR budget cuts in 2009. It was determined that not enough folks were fishing for trout there. Our little secret had worked against us. Stocking ceased for two years. Thankfully, we have been able to restore about 1/3 of



STOCKING RAINBOW TROUT IN LITTLE LONG LAKE



A LITTLE LONG LAKE RAINBOW TROUT CAUGHT THROUGH THE ICE IN WINTER

be worth it. There are no areas suitable for shore fishing or wading, despite the depths dropping off drastically. Plan on a small boat, kayak, or inflatable to fish in the summer. All of the usual methods will work during the summer and winter seasons. Four-pound line and a quality rod and reel should suffice. In winter, walk or drive where other locals have made tracks, as there are some springs to be avoided. Don't take chances on the ice. Trout roam the entire lake so you should not have to travel far from the parking lot. Under the ice, trout can be seen cruising at less than 15 feet along still-green weed edges or just below the ice surface. Summertime trout will be a bit deeper in the cold, oxygen-rich waters of this two-story lake.

If you go and experience what has been said so far, please share it with your friends. Our secret was too well kept in the past and a lake like this should really be shared. If you should have a chance meeting with the DNR please thank them for their effort to restore the stocking of trout in this special place.



ANGLERS FISHING FOR TROUT ON LITTLE LONG LAKE. THE LAKE IS LOCATED NORTHEAST OF WHALETAIL LAKE IN MINNETONKA, WEST OF LAKE MINNETONKA. MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND ONLINE AT WWW.DNR.STATE.MN.US

given any promotion by any agency or publication. I think that we loved it too much and shared it too little. Now it's time to share.

Little Long is a metro two-story lake along with others such as Square Lake, Christmas Lake, and Courthouse Pond. You will not experience jet skis or power boating here because of its 10 hp limit. 108 acres in size and 76 feet at its deepest, the water is

what it had been in past years. It is our hope to return to the stocking patterns in the past that were working well. Recently the stocked trout have come from the Peterson Hatchery in SE Minnesota and averaged around 11 inches. These folks produce beautiful trout that are colorful and robust and put up a great fight when hooked. There are even a few carry-over fish that may top 5 to 6 pounds. If you go, expect to work for your fish but catching a couple of these trout will

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# MUSKY ON THE FLY

By Bob Wagner

Take advantage of a great opportunity and come to this special workshop! Tie musky flies and learn the latest in casting lines and leaders to big toothy critters.

Sponsored by Headwaters Trout Unlimited Chapter 642 in Bemidji, the epicenter of Musky water in Minnesota.

### Come Join Us:

May 29th, Friday 6:30pm-9:00pm Tie the Fly, Garden Grill and Pub  
May 30th, Saturday 8:00am -10:00am Casting, Rods, Lines & Leaders Lake Bemidji



A SELECTION OF MUSKY FLIES FROM RIP LIPS

Instructor, Brian Bergeson, experienced guide, casting expert, signature tyer for Montana Fly Company, and field/pro staff member for TFO Fly rod, Scientific Anglers and Fishbum Outfitters. Brian's casting expertise goes back to his participation on the 1999 USA Fly Fishing Team. Brian lives and works his fly fishing business out of the Twin Cities. He grew up in Duluth, Minnesota chasing brook trout, walleye, Lake Superior steelhead and salmon. He is considered one of the fly fishing pioneers of Esox (Pike & Musky) fly fishing in the Midwest. His skill and experience in tying big, beau-

tiful and tuff flies is unmatched. This workshop is designed to be hands on tying Brian's "Musky Meat" signature fly for big fish. You will learn every step, all the tips and secrets from one of the best in the business. Just bring your vice and tools. All the materials will be provided as part of your \$20 fee. Every participant will walk out of the evening session with at least one big fish fly. Saturday will be a "live" casting on the water demo and practice for standard single and switch rod casting techniques.

Fee: \$20 payable to Headwaters Trout Unlimited Chapter 642.

Pre-registration deadline is May 21st To register or questions call Bob Wagner 218-586-2798



INSTRUCTOR BRIAN BERGESON



# BACK TO YOUR ROOTS

By Micah Barrett

From a young age my father would take my brother and I on trips westward to Montana and Wyoming. The catalyst of these trips was of course our desire to fish, though once you are there it is about so much more. The silhouette of mountains appears through the haze as you travel down the road. The dry air touches your skin and gets into your lungs, signaling your body that you are close. Maybe it's the winding dirt path up the mountain, through the tall, endless toothpick pines in the valleys and the cool breeze off the stream. Maybe it's setting camp, sitting by the fire, and experiencing deep nature away from all commerce and civilization. Your fishing trip becomes more than a fishing trip, it is an experience. So about this time every year I start to feel the call to visit the Boulder, Stillwater, and the Big Horn Rivers. Now before you start thinking about how much gall I must have to be focusing this editorial on non-native waters, I promise you I will bring this one back home.

I married straight out of college, which on its own is not inconducive to going on fishing trips. In fact my wife is very understanding of my needs and habits. She was even able to land her first rainbow on a fly just two summers ago. We are now recently into our 30's. We have a young son and a daughter on the way. The pressures and obligations of parenthood, to make more money and provide begin to trump and suppress those westward instincts that have been engrained in me for so long. Time becomes a premium for most of us at this stage in life. Over the past few years I have had to make an effort to satisfy this appetite locally and get back to my Minnesota fishing roots.

Ever since my dad plopped me down on a southern trout stream with that first awkward 30-year old fly rod, an uniden-

tifiable dry fly, and a container of worms (you'd be surprised how easy it is for an 8-year old to catch fish on a fly with a small nugget of night crawler on the hook) I've known of trout fishing possibilities right outside my doorstep. It had been so long though that I had to reacquaint myself with my own state. So a few years back I headed down to Trout Run where it all began. I figured if you can't catch a fish on a stream called Trout Run, where can you? Once there I did find fish but I also found something greater, the experience. I found a landscape that I loved, I found the breeze off the stream, and I found serenity and seclusion. That experience that I loved was right here at home. I also managed to find something else though, a challenge. I have been under the assumption from all my previous western fishing experiences that trout aren't the brightest bulbs in the fish hierarchy, but apparently our wonderful Minnesota education system extends to the stream as well because these fish are a little more astute. I have had to re-train myself to have a better sense of my presence on the stream, the time of year, day and time, the hatch, and my presentation. I have become a better fisherman on our local waters and am constantly rediscovering new streams and techniques for those streams. The abundance of opportunities is almost endless.

So I know many that are reading this are saying to themselves "I've known all of this for ages", but when you grow up in Central Minnesota a trout stream isn't necessarily a stone's throw away. This great local experience can get lost and overlooked by some. I'll never stop going to Montana, but for those that are at the same stage on the path of life as I am, you don't have to lose that coveted experience that we start yearning for this time of year.



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# EXPLORING OUR HABITAT IMPROVEMENT: EAGLE CREEK

## History and Lessons Learned over Twenty Years of Habitat Work

By Dan Callahan

**A**mong metro trout streams, Eagle Creek in Savage, MN is not a great place to fish.

It is, in fact, a short, shrubby stream, running behind industrial buildings and swinging between suburban backyards before entwining its two branches into a main stem that runs under a freeway, through the swampy Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and into the Minnesota River. You can reach this last stretch only by wading through a very long, dark box culvert or parking your car and walking more than two miles along the railroad tracks.

While everything I described above is true, let me explain why this is my favorite place. To be clear, it is not my favorite place to fish. It is my favorite place.

In 1993, Eagle Creek's hidden jew-

The east branch begins below the ironically-named Trout Run Preserve housing development. The DNR had to take enforcement action during construction, when silt fences failed, allowing dirt to wash into the headwater springs.

Springs feed Eagle Creek along its whole length. Hattenberger's Boiling Springs is the largest, a 1930's tourist attraction with its own line of postcards. It's also an Native American sacred site, so you won't find a sign pointing you to it.

Also, it's not really boiling. The groundwater is 49 degrees year around, keeping Eagle Creek open even in subzero weather. The "boiling" action comes from three large, deep bedrock holes in a spring pond, which periodically erupt through the sand and clay.

Johnston's Boiling Spring is also un-

marked and well camouflaged, right in



ELECTROFISHING BY THE MN DNR AND VOLUNTEERS IN THE FALL OF 2014 TURNED UP SOME BIG BROWN TROUT IN EAGLE CREEK. FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: MATT PETERSEN AND KRISTAN MACCARONI, MN DNR; ERIC MORRIS, CONSERVATION CORPS MN; BRIAN BERMELE, TCTU AND MARK NEMETH, MN DNR

Eagle Creek's greatest asset.

Its greatest value comes what we have learned from the mistakes made here. Mistakes that arguably made this one of the most important trout streams in the state during the last years of the 20th Century, and important to Minnesota Trout Unlimited's continued success in this century.

Historically, two farms cradled the west and east branches of Eagle Creek. They were homesteaded in the 1850s, and the original families still owned them in the 1990s. Then the city of Savage moved forward with plans to run urban sewer and water services near the farms, drastically increasing their potential land value. In turn, the city put thousands of dollars in tax assessments on the farmers to pay for the sewer and water they didn't want. This is not uncommon; it's just the way urban expansion works. With no logical way to pay hefty assessments and keep farming, the west branch family sold their land to a housing developer.

The city of Savage took this opportunity to work with the developer on a concept plan for most of the watershed, envisioning intense urban development on both branches, including 500 homes, and on the east branch, an industrial park.

The problem was that the elderly widow on the east branch didn't want to pay her assessments by selling her farm to the city for an industrial park. She wanted to sell her land to the DNR for a bona-fide park.

After giving preliminary plat approval for the west branch housing development, the city decided no environmental review was needed. Trout Unlimited volunteers dropped their jaws, dropped their fishing poles, and picked up their pens.

TU quickly filed an appeal with the state, just days before Savage was to give final approval to the platted development. The state agreed with us: An environmental review was required. They halted development. And so it began. Many TU volunteers, like TCTU chapter president Elliot Olson, didn't have time to fish for two solid years.

Fast forward through the legal wrangling, the angry mayor throwing people out of public hearings, the volumes of information that had been missed in the initial environmental review, and jump to us losing. The development would go forward as planned, with a few tweaks based on the environmental study, which was undertaken by the City of Savage, which approved its



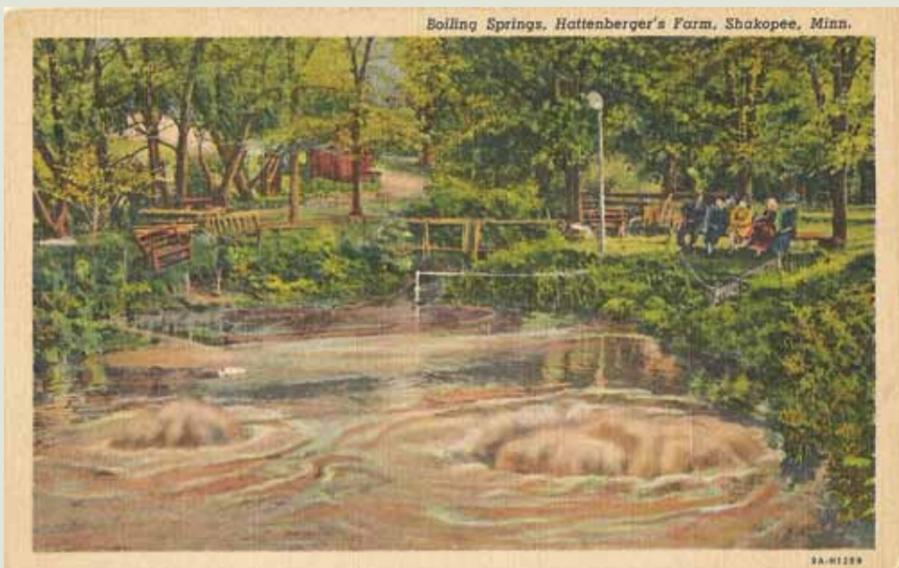
A LARGE WILD BROWN TROUT FROM THE 2014 STREAM ELECTROFISHING SURVEY READY TO HEAD BACK TO THE DEPTHS OF EAGLE CREEK.

els included the last unstocked, wild brown trout in the Minnesota River Valley. They were threatened by urban development.

Eagle Creek is a spring creek, consisting almost entirely of groundwater, beginning on the west branch at Nathan Springs at the base of the bluff.

the center of the stream. Most of the creek has a sandy bottom, and this ankle-deep stretch is unremarkable. Until your next step leaves you sinking in water up to your waist, or deeper. Tests have encountered no resistance even 20 feet down this spring hole!

Yet none of these natural features are



A HISTORICAL POSTCARD DEPICTING THE BOILING SPRINGS ON THE HATTENBERGER FARM ON EAGLE CREEK



THE BOILING SPRINGS ON EAGLE CREEK AS THEY LOOK CURRENTLY. WHILE DIMINISHED IN VOLUME, THEY ARE CERTAINLY WORTH YOUR TIME TO VISIT.

own work. No other agency disputed the adequacy of the review.

We asked the developer to wait, to see if we could work out a way to still purchase enough land to save the stream. Every study done on Midwestern streams showed trout would not survive if the watershed was covered with that much pavement, rooftops and other impervious surfaces.

The developer waited.

In 1995, Republican State Senator Terry Johnston of Prior Lake succeeded in getting bonding money for the DNR to buy land to save the stream, and establish Minnesota's first state Aquatic Management Area (AMA). The compromise meant protecting only a 200 foot wide corridor on each side of the stream. Would it be enough to save the trout?

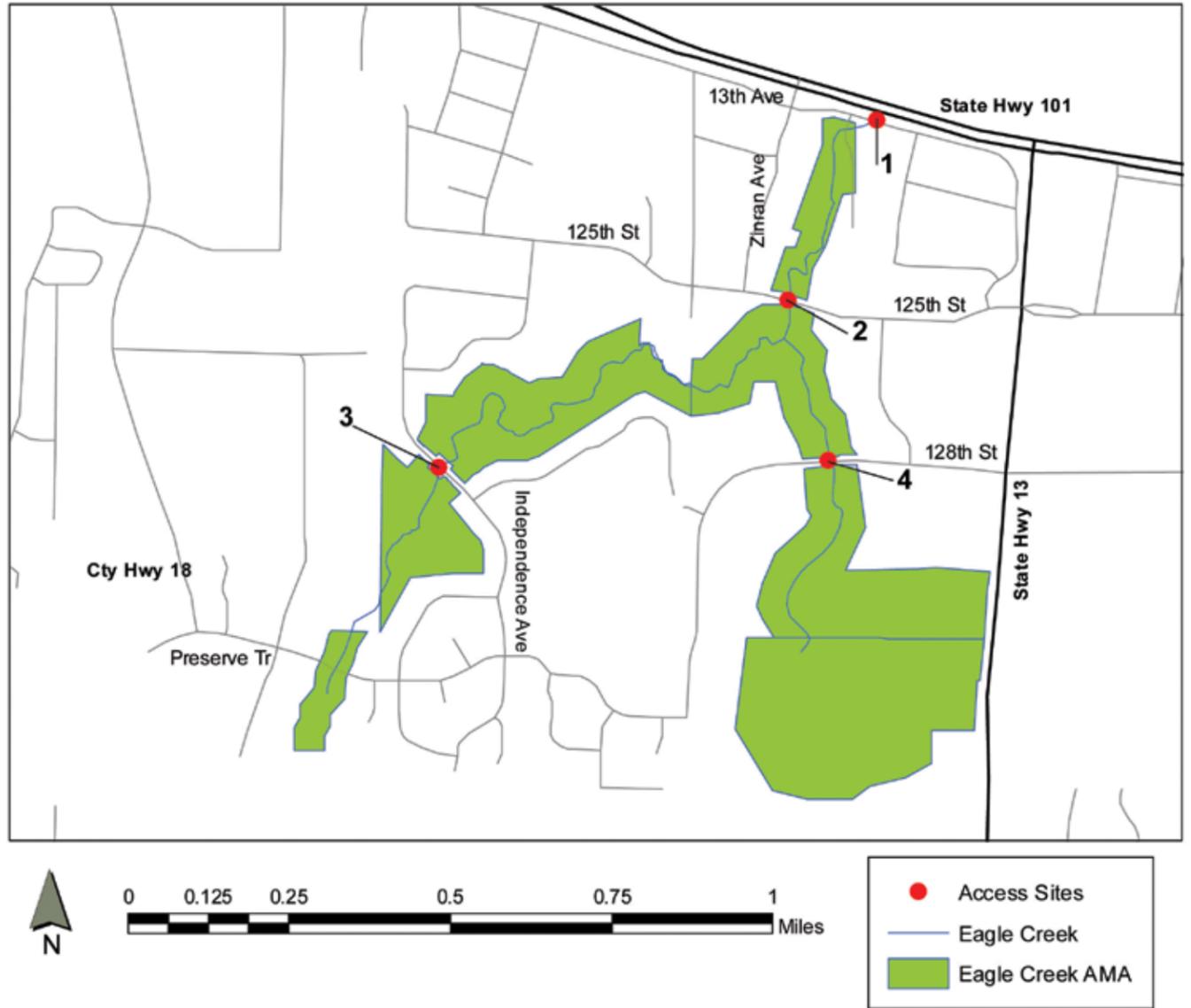
All around there was agreement that mistakes had been made in not identifying and valuing the few trout streams remaining where most of the state's population lived. Immediately the DNR began a review of metro trout stream resources. That led to getting out in front of urban development to protect the Vermillion River. It also led to the establishment of many more state Aquatic Management Areas.

Perhaps lesser known is the role Eagle Creek played in Minnesota Trout Unlimited's collaboration with the DNR over the past 20 years. In 1995 at the state capitol, two powerful DFL state senators reached across the aisle and joined Terry Johnston to save Eagle Creek. Senator Gene Merriam was head of the Senate Environment Committee, and Steve Morse was head of Environmental Finance. They toured Eagle Creek with Terry and the TU volunteers, and saw what an amazing resource was at risk.

Years later, Gene Merriam was appointed as head of the DNR. Later Steve Morse was appointed head of

# Eagle Creek AMA Access Map

Brown Trout (self reproducing, not stocked) Catch and Release Only



### Street Parking Locations

1. Hwy 101 frontage road (south side of road only)
2. 125th St. bridge crossing
3. Independence Ave. bridge crossing
4. 128th St. bridge crossing

Shoreline is public along stream corridor. There are no designated DNR parking areas. Do not access the stream or park in private lots without permission. City law: No street parking 2am to 6am

AMA (AQUATIC MANAGEMENT AREA) MAP COURTESY OF MN DNR WEST METRO FISHERIES

the DNR's stream survey of Eagle Creek in the fall of 2014. They are living proof the stream is continuing to survive, thanks in part to special regulations.

can make your trip.

If you visit the stream, take the time to explore and find Johnston's Boiling Spring. It is located on the west branch upstream of the Town and Country Campground. Park on the 125th Street by Cavelle Avenue, and walk straight south to the mowed path that leads to a pretty foot bridge. Walk upstream until

you find a sharp bend, Callahan's Corner. The spring is just upstream. Hattenberger's Boiling Spring is further upstream on the west branch of Eagle Creek.

Interested in seeing more? Find videos online at the TCTU Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCT4oDGAhijkezBWdsOW6n2g>



EAGLE CREEK WINDING THROUGH THE MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY BELOW THE BLUFFS IN SAVAGE, MN

the DNR. Both reinforced the collaboration TU and the DNR had forged at Eagle Creek. TU has a solid reputation as a levelheaded conservation organization with a statewide reach, whose several thousand members rely on science to make their case for the protection of our coldwater fisheries.

### Fishing Eagle Creek

Twenty years later we know our experiment worked. The big brown trout pictured in this article were found during

The best way to fish Eagle Creek is to take Highway 13 to 126th street. As you go west, you'll cross the bridge over the main stem. You can park on the street west of Zinran, and walk back to fish up or downstream. There are no large fish upstream of the junction of the two branches. You also can drive down Zinran Avenue and go east on the frontage road. A small parking area borders the stream. The best fishing is from the culvert upstream to the 126th Street bridge. Though extremely brushy with challenging casting, even one nice fish



MN DNR FISHERIES STAFF TAKING SCALE SAMPLES OF WILD BROWN TROUT. CONTINUED MONITORING WILL HELP TO ENSURE STREAM HEALTH

# GREAT WATERS FLYFISHING EXPO CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

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## Saturday March 21 – 11:00 am

### Groundwater Pumping and Trout Stream Impacts

Jason Moeckel, MN DNR Ecological & Water Resources Division, will give a concise, compelling overview of how the MN DNR's review of groundwater pumping requests have recently changed. Hear about which areas in the state are threatened and which streams are under pressure. Learn how the changes the MN DNR is making will protect our trout streams and aquifers. Get the facts and your questions answered.

## Saturday March 21 – 2:00 pm

### Stream Buffers: Protecting our Streams and Creating Fishing Hotspots

Learn why vegetative stream buffers are key to healthy trout stream habitat in Minnesota. Receive new maps pinpointing the latest habitat project locations where TU chapters have installed buffer strips along with in-stream habitat. Get details of the Environmental Working Group's Broken Stream Banks investigation, presented by Craig Cox, Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources, EWG. Learn details of Governor Dayton's buffer initiative from John Jaschke, Executive Director, MN Board of Soil & Water Resources. Take the opportunity to ask questions and participate in discussion with key players working to increase buffer habitat.

## Sunday March 22 – 12:00 pm

### Cisco Lakes: Big Fish Forage in Trouble

Healthy cisco populations are the key forage base of major muskie, pike and lake trout fisheries around the state. Pete Jacobson, MN DNR Fisheries researcher, will reveal which lakes in MN and WI contain ciscoes and how they grow big fish. Put some new top fishing spots on your map and learn what threats they face from a warming climate, and what we can do to protect them and our best fisheries.

## Sunday March 22 – 2:00 pm

### Third World Deforestation in North Central MN: How it Affects the Waters You Fish

Learn what is driving destruction of rare jack pine forests and what are the consequences are for pristine rivers in the area. Local watersheds are threatened and huge areas are being impacted. Learn about how it could change your fishing and what can be done about it.

## DEFORESTATION IN THE HEADWATERS

### Third World Degredation Over North Central MN's Sand Aquifers

By John Lenczewski

In the past year or so it has come to light that a North Dakota company is in the process of destroying vast amounts of pine forests in north central Minnesota's sand plain, putting shallow aquifers and water resources in danger of contamination and depletion. The planned conversion of more than 12,000 acres to chemically intensive potato farming is dependent upon private interests pumping out huge volumes of the public's pristine groundwater (and drinking water) from shallow, vulnerable aquifers. Contamination of these public drinking water sources, which also support storied trout rivers such as the Straight River, would likely be inevitable.

The foreign based company is the largest single irrigator in Minnesota, with permits to pump up to 12 billion gallons of groundwater per year on 30,000 acres, according to the Freshwater Society. Fortunately, the MNDNR is now taking action to examine whether giving out permits to pump still more water from vulnerable aquifers is in the public's long term interest.

#### MNTU's Battle to Protect the Pineland Sands Aquifer and Area Trout Waters

In the 1990s Minnesota TU fought hard to force the MNDNR to consider the cumulative impact of groundwater withdrawals for irrigating potatoes in this area, near Park Rapids, MN. Our lawsuits forced groundwater studies which documented the negative impacts of groundwater appropriations for irrigation on the base flows of important trout rivers, including the Straight River. These ultimately helped convince the agency and

legislators that the permitting process for groundwater appropriations needed an overhaul and that the sustainability of aquifers (especially shallow aquifers in sandy soiled areas of the state) needed closer examination.

The DNR gave a presentation at the January 2015 Roundtable of this escalat-

ing practice of stripping off intact pine forests to plant potatoes in very porous sandy soils. "Third World deforestation" was the phrase I heard many attendees use. This conversion of our native forests would not be possible without large scale withdrawal of groundwater from the shallow drinking water aquifers. And it is the large volume of water

from irrigation which hastens the leaching of agricultural chemicals through the sandy soils into the aquifers. Contamination of the aquifer near Park Rapids with nitrates has forced taxpayers to pay millions of dollars for a system to remove these contaminants from its drinking water. Our groundwater is a finite public resource and the drinking water supply for the majority of Minnesotans. It is encouraging to see that the state may at last be considering protecting taxpayers from short sighted approaches to the use of finite public waters.

#### Text of DNR News Release:

The DNR press release accompanying its decision to require environmental review follows:

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is undertaking a closer examination of a trend in northwestern Minnesota where pine forests are being cut, cleared and converted to potatoes and other rotational croplands.

Because the pine-to-potatoes land conversion could potentially pose a threat to water supplies and impact fish and wildlife for years to come, the DNR will prepare a document known as a discretionary environmental assessment worksheet (EAW).

A North Dakota-based potato processor, R.D. Offutt, has been purchasing and clearing the forest land in four counties: Becker, Cass, Hubbard and Wadena. The DNR estimates that the processor has already purchased about 12,000 acres of pine forests. Some of this land has already been cleared, and the remainder is slated for clearing and conversion to irrigated croplands. The DNR estimates



DESTRUCTION OF MINNESOTA'S PINE FORESTS AND COVERSION TO AGRICULTURAL FIELDS THREATENS TENS OF THOUSANDS OF ACRES. IMPACTS TO WATER QUALITY COULD BE DEVASTATING AND TREATMENT COST MILLIONS.

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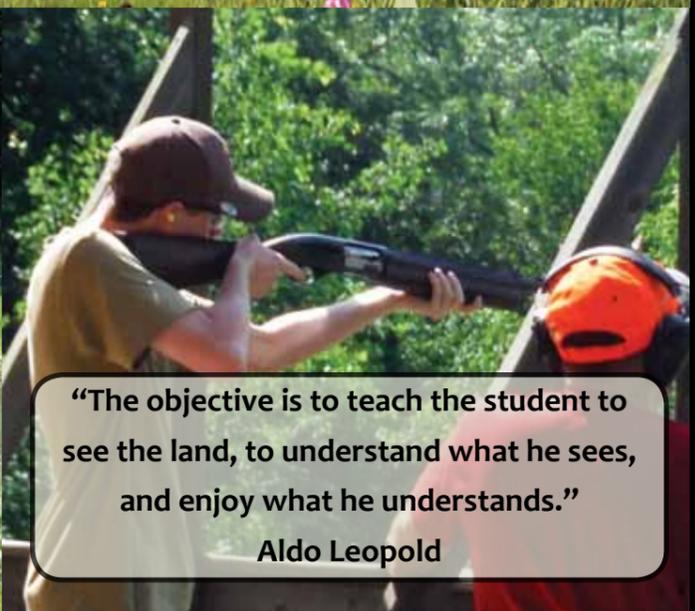
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— Aldo Leopold



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that another 15,000 acres of pine forests have the potential to be sold and converted to crops.

Altogether, the forest lands that have been cleared, or are at risk of being cleared, cover a total area of about 42 square miles – an area approximately covered by the cities of Bemidji, Brainerd and Detroit Lakes combined. Experts say the current rate of forest loss in this region has not been seen in recent memory.

The region’s sandy, permeable soil contributes to the potential impacts from this land conversion. These potential impacts include the risk of crop fertilizers contaminating local water supplies, groundwater overuse, and impacts to fish and wildlife. R.D. Offutt is asking the DNR for permits to construct groundwater wells to irrigate new and future croplands.

Before deciding whether to grant those well permit requests, the DNR will prepare the discretionary EAW in order to fully understand the potential environmental effects of any appropriation decisions and associated land clearing activities.

“It’s important that the DNR carefully

consider the implications that this rapid forest land clearing and conversion will have on water quality, water supply, and related resources in this region and beyond,” said DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr. “People rely on these water sources, and we want to take a hard look at any potential impacts.”

The EAW could take up to a year to complete. The potato processor has been informed of the environmental review process, which puts on hold any further land clearing and decisions regarding well permit applications.

#### Potential Impact of Forest Conversion on Area Water Supplies

The pine-to-potatoes conversion is occurring in an area known as the Pineland Sands Aquifer that has sandy, permeable soil. The aquifer is directly connected to local lakes, streams and wetlands. The combination of permeable soils and agricultural fertilizers pose a risk of nitrate contamination to groundwater and surface water.

Experts say nitrate contamination in water is difficult to avoid when growing potatoes in sandy soils and that contamination could impact drinking water resources, fish, and other

aquatic species. The cumulative volume of water being sought is also a concern. The DNR must carefully analyze the potential impacts of this water use on the sustainability of both groundwater and connected surface waters.

These surface water supplies in northwestern Minnesota are the source of drinking water for downstream users as far south as Minneapolis and St. Paul, via the Mississippi River.

The DNR is the state agency that approves and regulates permits for agricultural irrigation and other large volume water uses. To date, the DNR has issued 32 irrigation permits to this applicant, associated with about 4,000 acres of land conversion, and the applicant is proposing an additional 54 irrigation permits.

#### Potential Impact of Forest Conversion On Area Wildlife

The forest conversion could also negatively impact local wildlife populations, water runoff and soil erosion. Loss of pineland habitat will impact deer within the state’s highest deer goal population areas and create the potential for increased deer depredation on crops in the area. These pineland forests are, in some cases, home to rare plant and animal species.

More information about the pinelands issue and EAW can be found on the DNR’s website at [www.mndnr.gov/pinelands](http://www.mndnr.gov/pinelands).

#### Links to Background Articles

Below are links to two excellent articles by Star Tribune reporters. We especially encourage you to read the thorough background piece by Josephine Marcotty.

Minnesota struggles to slow deforestation, protect water. Article by Josephine Marcotty on February 1, 2015: <http://www.startribune.com/local/290436161.html>

DNR halts pines-to-potatoes conversion in central Minnesota. Article by Tony Kennedy on February 5, 2015: <http://www.startribune.com/local/290946331.html>

#### Don’t Miss The March 22 Expo Program

MNTU has organized a program examining this issue to be held Sunday March 22 at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo in Blaine. See the program on page 16 for details.



# MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

## Gitche Gumee Chapter

Our December meeting was dedicated to identifying the top tier of watersheds on the North Shore – those that currently support the most robust populations of wild trout and steelhead, and which we believe stand the best chance of sustaining coldwater fisheries in the face of climate change. With many, many decades (centuries) of experience in the room we were able to reach consensus on a list of 18 watersheds. In late January GGTU's list was used as a starting point for similar discussions with conservation and angling groups, fisheries managers, other agencies. This collaborative planning effort continues in March.

**Blackhoof River Project:** Last summer we assessed the habitat conditions along the 10 to 12 miles of river between County Roads 5 and 6. To our knowledge this is the first comprehensive survey of the river following historically severe flooding in June 2012. We documented numerous locations where high water caused entire slopes to fail and sections of forest to slide into the river. This has created 15 to 20 logjams ranging in magnitude from significant to massive. The natural process of "sediment transport" has been blocked in each case and the habitat above each logjam is slowly being buried under accumulating sand. Spawning gravel formerly used by wild steelhead, brook trout and brown trout is being covered. Pool habitat is being filled in and the gravel and cobble substrates which provide homes for aquatic insects is disappearing. Fish passage is likely being substantially curtailed.

Removal or strategic notching of 15 major logjams upstream from County Road 6 is planned for most weekends this July and August. The MN DNR and Carlton County agree this is the top priority for the river. We have been working with local landowners to secure easy access to each work site. We can use plenty of volunteers from local clubs, as well as from TU chapters across the state. Please save a weekend on your calendar between July 7 and August 30 to help with this rewarding undertaking. Look for a full length article in June. Add your name to the list of volunteers by sending an email with your name, phone and club affiliation to [jlenczewski@comcast.net](mailto:jlenczewski@comcast.net)

Monthly membership meetings begin at 7:00 pm at Hartley Nature Center in Duluth, MN:

Thursday March 13 - Upcoming habitat projects and revisions to the Lake Superior Management Plan

### Annual Meeting Notice

Thursday April 9 - State of Steelhead, plus our annual meeting and elections

Thursday May 7 - TBD

Jon Aspie

## Hiawatha Chapter

Trout in the Classroom (TIC) is growing in scope and enthusiasm. Kelli Schmeling is the Hiawatha Trout Unlimited (HTU) youth education coordinator and a teacher at the Stewartville Middle School. She organizes the program for the schools involved and coordinates with teachers Kevin Landherr, Mayo High School, Bruce Frutiger, Century High School in Rochester, and Steve Hinrichs from the newest school joining TIC, Plainview/Elgin/Millville High School. Approximately 550 eggs were delivered to each school in early December thanks to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fisheries Division and these eggs have already hatched into hatchlings. Kelli has the Facebook page set up so please "like it" and check out the progress.

Habitat Improvement work continues with winter removal of non-native trees on Trout Run. Project construction is now complete on Cold Spring Brook, East Indian and Camp Creeks, while construction continues on Pine Creek in Winona County. Designs were completed for work on Mill, Willow, and Newberg creeks, with construction to begin next year. Future work also includes invasive tree removal on Spring Valley Creek and restoration work on Lynch Creek. Looking even further into the future, a large-scale project on the Root River in Preston has been moving through the Lessard-Sams and legislative process with the rest of the Minnesota Trout Unlimited projects. Hiawatha TU Chapter work days were held on East Indian Creek (beaver dam removal and tree cutting) and Camp Creek (tree cutting on banks adjacent to the bike path).

As we utilize more designers and gain more experience with stream restoration in the Driftless Region, different techniques and varied approaches are being applied to match varied site conditions. We work closely with the DNR throughout each project's life cycle and we have learned from our colleagues in Wisconsin and Iowa, thanks to events sponsored by Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Restoration Effort (TUDARE). "We are utilizing a number of different consultants and contractors selected through a competitive bidding process required by state law. And as a practical matter, no single consultant or contractor has the capacity to work on the many projects going on simultaneously.

We here at HTU continue to monitor and learn as our local projects mature so we can provide restorations that improve habitat and hold up through whatever nature can dish out. As we work on local HTU projects, the construction plans are posted to [hiawathatu.org](http://hiawathatu.org).

### Annual Meeting Notice

Our March meeting is the HTU Annual Members Meeting where we say goodbye and thank you to officers and board members leaving their seats and welcome



MATUSKA'S CREEK NEAR GRAND RAPIDS MINNESOTA AFTER THE RECENT CULVERT REPLACEMENT. NOTE THE DRY CULVERT ON THE LEFT DESIGNED TO HANDLE HIGH FLOW EVENTS.

to the new officers and board members being voted in. The HTU Spring Conservation Banquet will be held April 11th at the Canadian Honker Event Center in the Kahler Apache. Additional events coming up include the MinnAqua adult and youth weekend through the DNR May 29-31 and T.U.N.E. Camp run by Pheasants Forever and TU June 25-28. More details coming soon.

Yours Truly, Phil Pankow HTU Newsletter Editor

Phil Pankow

## Headwaters Chapter

Bemidji DNR Fisheries work crew made significant repairs on the Clearwater River to the handicap board walk footings, bench work and fishing docks. Bank stabilization work completed just north of the board walk looks great. More bank stabilization will be announced this summer for TU members to participate in.

Park Rapids Fisheries will coordinate another Helicopter tree drop on the Straight River this summer. Mike Kelly will keep us posted on volunteer opportunities; we in turn will contact TU members. If you are a new member and want to make sure we have your email, just call me, Bob Wagner and I will check the list.

Steve Young our TIC coordinator reports both of our 5th grade classroom projects are going well. Teacher, Jeff Wade, is in his 8th year of TIC raising Brown Trout. Joe Adams is in his 2nd year of TIC and his classroom is raising rainbow trout. It's been interesting for the two adjacent classrooms to compare size and behavior differences. March 27th starts our Friday 6 week 5th grade Fly Fishing course. I will contact all volunteers.

Our open free community fly tying nights continue to be a great success

for results see Burgers, Beer and Blue Winged Olives article.

### Annual Meeting Notice

March 31, Tuesday will be our spring membership meeting at Cattails Restaurant 5:00 pm social, 5:30 order dinner, 6:30 meeting, 7:00 program-A panel of coldwater fisheries specialists from Park Rapids, Bemidji, Walker and Red Lake. They will share what, where and how the DNR are managing 30 some trout lakes and rivers within the north land. Mark your calendars. Also our chapter raffle tickets will be available to win a custom fly rod or a Jeff Korbel walleye rod.

We also will have a May 29th Special Musky on the Fly Workshop. See separate article on page 13 for more info.

Bob Wagner

## Mid-Minnesota Chapter

### Annual Meeting Notice

The Mid-Minnesota Chapter will be hosting an upcoming meeting:

Tuesday, April 28th – 5:30 to 6:30  
Great River Regional Library, St. Cloud  
Mississippi Community Room 106  
The meetings is open to the public and all are welcome.

This meeting will be a presentation and discussion on the 2015-2016 Little Rock Creek Summer rehabilitation project. The talking points will include a DNR Fisheries presentation on the techniques and structures that will be used, project goals, dates for the project, funding and volunteer needs, and the most recent population numbers recorded on the stream. Please come and share your opinions on the project and direction of the chapter. Members and guests are welcome.

Micah Barrett

# MNTU CHAPTER NEWS



## Twin Cities Chapter

The Twin Cities Chapter of Trout Unlimited is currently working on four projects for 2015. There is plenty for all interested members and the public to get involved with.

**Hay Creek:** the current project (5300 feet) is just downstream of the campground in the town of Hay Creek. We completed most of the instream work in 2014 and will complete the rest beginning in May (depending on wet weather). Members should watch for announcements for upcoming volunteer opportunities with this project, such as root trimming. It will be similar to what we did last September. We also should have a prairie burn on the older stream restorations on Hay Creek, coordinated with the burn crew from Goodhue Pheasants Forever. This again should be done in April, depending on weather. They have told us that because of the narrowness of our stream-side corridors they will need volunteers to man fire brooms to keep the fire from spreading beyond the easements. Watch for news of this as it develops, it will be a great opportunity to participate in prairie restoration.

**Trout Brook:** This brook trout stream located in Miesville Ravine Park near Cannon Falls. We have chosen about a 3000 foot section that has extremely clear water, a few decent pools, good numbers of young of year brook trout, but little habitat for producing larger adult trout, but in need of re-construction. We hope to work with the owner of a private section in the park that is part of this stretch, to get a fishing easement. We are moving ahead with bid requests from engineering firms either way. The chapter has a goal of implementing this project this year, though obtaining permits in the summer can be slow.

**Rice Creek:** This is a tiny brook stream near Dundas. We have walked this with the DNR but feel that the best water is below the DNR easement. Will be working w/local citizenry to see if we can

expand the easement. We plan on implementation no later than 2016.

**South Branch of the Vermillion:** This stream has a 7000 foot stretch on a AMA owned by the state. We hosted 2 volunteer sessions last year and removed & treated buckthorn on about 1000 feet. We are planning another session to remove more buckthorn this April. There is a tentative date of April 11 with April 25th as backup depending on flooding and weather issues. Watch for confirmation on the TCTU website and Facebook page.

As always, the chapter is looking for volunteers on our projects but also for people to get involved with the planning and management of the restored sections. If you always wanted to be part of this team (no experience necessary), feel free to e-mail Tony Nelson at [Tony@1igprint.com](mailto:Tony@1igprint.com) or call me at 952-486-2282. We welcome all, and you are welcome to give as little or as much time as you want.

### Annual Meeting Notice

The Twin Cities Chapter of Trout Unlimited will hold its annual meeting at 6:30pm on Tuesday, April 28, 2015, at the Woodlake Nature Center. The Nature Center is located at 6710 Lakeshore Dr, Richfield, MN 55423. The meeting is free and open to the public. Elections of officers and board members will be held. Anyone interested in learning more about fly fishing is invited to attend.

Mark Johnson

## Win-Cres Chapter

The Win-Cres chapter will have a busy spring and early summer. Join us for some of our events and get involved in the chapter this season!

On Saturday, April 18, we will host the MN TU state council meeting at a location yet to be determined.

We will be hosting an "Evening with

Trout" on Garvin Brook on Wednesday, May 20, to showcase the Lessard-Sams dollars at work on the recently completed 1.2-mile section of Garvin Brook that parallels U.S. Highway #14.

While we still have two more sections of Garvin to work on, we want to let the people living in the area know how and why the habitat project happened. Plus with the busy traffic on that highway, many more people than the locals are interested. In planning for this big event, we will partner with the Winona County Soil and Water Conservation District, the DNR Fisheries Crew from Lanesboro, the Lewiston DNR Forestry office, the local Watershed District Board, as well as the Winona County planning department.

Our Chapter will help support the "Take a Kid Fishing" day at Whitewater State Park on June 13. Win-Cres will bring fishing guides and refreshments to the event.

A few days later on June 16, our Chapter will partner with the Lewiston Sportsmen's Club and Lewiston Summer Recreation program at Lake Winona in their annual fishing outing that involves teaching Lewiston youth how to spin fish and fly fish.

We plan to work on Garvin Brook throughout the summer maintaining the habitat improvement. Our big concern is working to control invasive species like Japanese knotweed, garlic mustard, and controlling the re-emergence of willow stands.

### Annual Meeting Notice

Win-Cres Annual Meeting  
March 25, 2015  
Holzinger Lodge, Winona  
6:00 pm social, 7:00 pm meeting

Contact chapter president Joe Lepley to get involved. You can reach him at 608-865-1327 or 608-323-2339

Joe Lepley

## Waybinahbe Chapter

I am pleased provide more information on the completion of the work on the Matuska's Creek Restoration Project this last summer. Our contractor, Newsight Landscaping, began the site work on August 25, 2014 and with Mr. Jeff Tillma of the Minnesota Fisheries Department soon realized that a modification to the original plan was required. It was evident that two culverts placed at different elevations side by side would be needed to handle larger volumes of water, such as what occurred in 2014. We were able to obtain the alternate culverts and additional fill needed. I believe that this project will benefit the native brook trout in Smith Creek, giving trout renewed access to spawning areas in the spring-fed Matuska's Creek.

At this time I have to report that I was notified by Kathy Krook that she will be resigning as Secretary Treasurer after completion of the Matuska's Creek project. After sending out letters to each of our members inviting them to the meeting about coldwater fishing opportunities in our area I was disappointed in the turn out at the meeting. We had a couple from the Headwaters Chapter, two local members and one non Trout Unlimited person show up for the meeting.

With the resignation of Kathy as the only other officer of the chapter I feel that we have essentially ceased to function as a chapter. If the chapter is to continue, we need some folks to step up and get involved with our local trout waters and to play a role in the chapter.

I want to thank the members of the council for their encouragement and support.

Rod Prusi

## Hiawatha Spring Conservation Banquet

April 11th, 2015 - Canadian Honker Events at Apache - Rochester, MN

An outstanding evening for anglers, friends, spouses, and anyone who appreciates good food and wine in a social atmosphere, plus the opportunity to socialize with conservation minded people at a fundraiser to support our cold water conservation in SE MN.

This year's food features:

- Assorted finger foods & cash bar
- An evening of paired appetizers and quality wines presented by the Canadian Honker

Cash prizes, raffles, and silent auctions items featuring:

- Top quality fly fishing and tying items
- Guided trips to local and exotic fly fishing destinations
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## REELING IT IN

An Angler's Journey

By Sam Troutt

Most of us folks that fish start out early. It was the same with me, sitting in a canoe when I was three years old. Not that I remember it, but I've heard tales of fishing for cats in the living room and of stubbornly refusing to believe that I had a northern pike on the end of my line and not a pile of weeds. Between then and now I've made a lot of memories fishing, from mountains, to rivers to different oceans. Those experiences and memories have helped make me an advocate for both the sport and the resources that I love. What concerns me now is that we have challenges getting people into the sport. Also, we have challenges figuring out how best to make that happen. We need people to care about our trout streams and lakes. People that care and will take action when they come under fire and are threatened. So how can we insure that it will happen?

One of the first things that I think we need to acknowledge is that anglers certainly all need to be introduced to the sport. From MN DNR programs to T.U.N.E camp there are a number of great ways that young folks get exposed to fish and fishing. This, however, is not the answer that we need. As much as I would like to pretend that conducting a few short fishing programs will get more people in TU, and more anglers caring about our resources, it will not.

Think about when you started fishing. Who was there for you? I will bet that 9 out of 10 of you would tell me it was someone in your family. Maybe your mother or your father. Or an uncle or

grandparent. Someone who was there time and again to help out when you couldn't remember the knots, or when you just couldn't figure out how to get that bluegill off the hook. These people that taught you how to fish were your social support system, and that's what is lacking in fishing education these days. Too often our programs stop when folks go home. There is no possibility for continued interaction, and if there is, it rarely happens.

So there is the prescription for success: continued social interaction, one on one. In the field and in at your local chapter meetings. If you want to recruit anyone, young or old, social interaction is a big part of it, if not the defining component of success. The trick to this is that it's hard. It takes time. It leads us down a path where we might not reach as many people. Sometimes it feels better to introduce 100 kids to fishing than to walk 10 of them through unhooking a panfish for the umpteenth time. Or untagging that leader with 10 wind knots in it - again... But, that's what it's going to take. Patience, caring, compassion, and more than a few flies lost in trees. And you won't always win. Kids - most of them that will call themselves anglers later in life - will pause from the sport in their late teens. Keep reaching out, and with luck and perseverance, we might lure some back and create a new, bigger batch of people who care about our trout streams.

I think it's possible.



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