

TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - December 2015

Habitat Success Stories
The MNTU Year in Review
The Lost Trout Streams of Burnsville
Little Rock Creek and Mid MN Trout
Book Review - Listen for the Whitethroats
Fly Fishing Film and Video Competition
And Lots More!

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ON THE COVER

Casting on the Middle Branch of the Whitewater River in Whitewater State Park. This is one of the recently opened year-round fishing locations in MN. Take the opportunity and head out and fish!

IN THIS ISSUE

- Lost Trout Streams Found
- MNTU by the numbers - Our Annual Report
- Hust Creek Update
- Plan to volunteer in 2016
- And much more!

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MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

Flying Time - The Dark Months

By JP Little, Minnesota Council Chair

Welcome to the 2015 fall Minnesota Trout Unlimited state-wide newsletter. The summer of 2015 was a glorious one, and now we head toward winter. Loads of productive habitat improvement has occurred again this year, and we continue to use the ongoing Lessard Sams grant money to great effect across the state. John Lenczewski, our Executive Director, secured \$1.9Million via the seventh round of OHF funding.

I had opportunity to participate in an electro-shocking of the South Fork of the Vermillion in mid-September along with a volunteer crew from the Twin Cities chapter of TU and three DNR staff. It was a hoot, with lots of big adult trout floating to the surface and a surprising

number of young-of-the-year. The river is on the list to receive some habitat improvement, which is sorely needed, both to improve accessibility and stream flows.

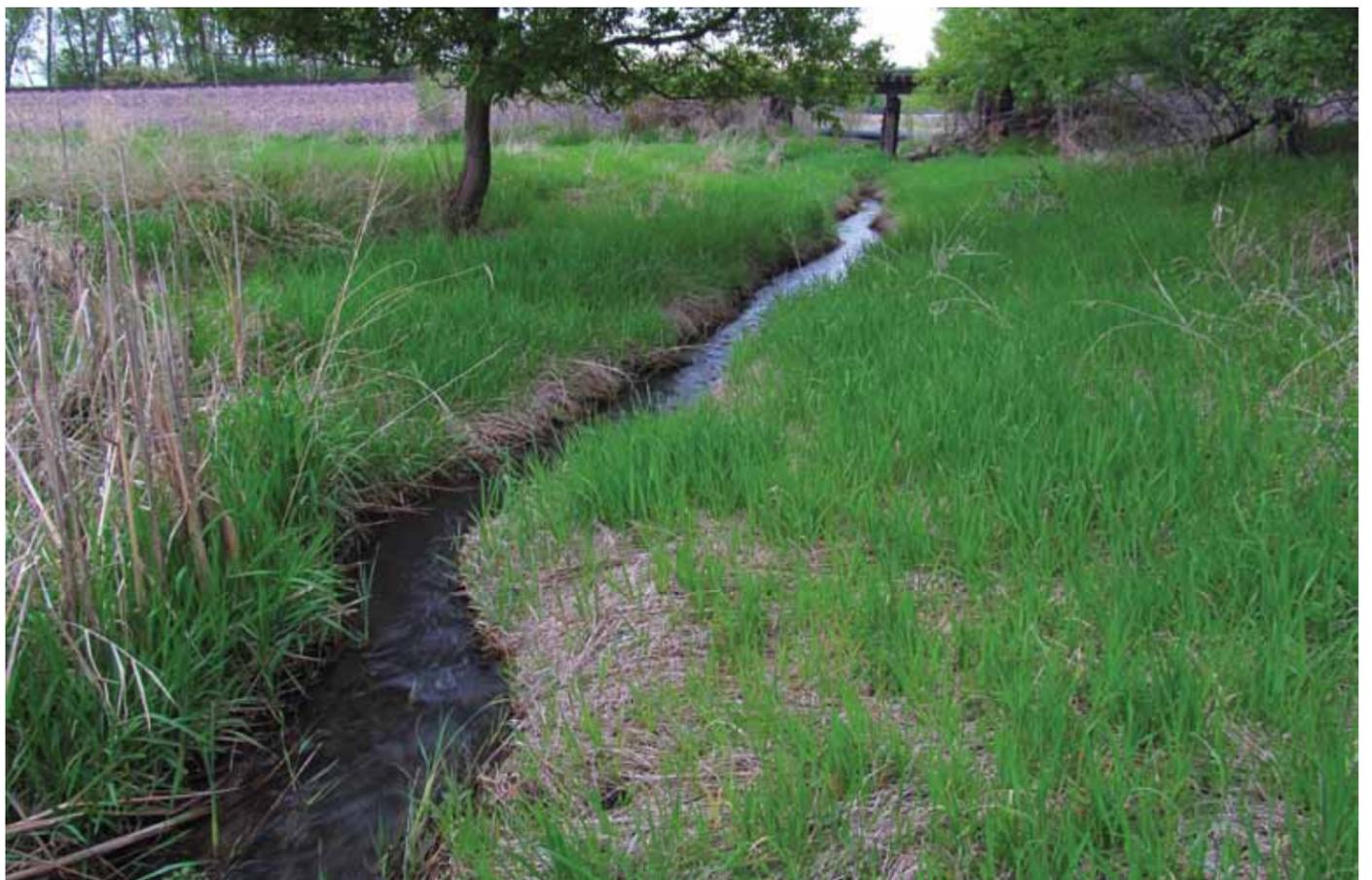
The State Council is in need of a new treasurer to replace outgoing treasurer Don Eckenrode. It would be easiest logistically if the new treasurer was based in the Twin Cities, but anyone in the state with an interest in stepping forward can contact me directly at jplittle999@gmail.com or at 612.207.3305. I'd like to thank Don for his many years of service, both as treasurer for TCTU as well as the state council.

Tight Lines!



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UNNAMED TROUT STREAM #4 WINDS ITS WAY TOWARDS BLACK DOG LAKE IN BURNSVILLE. LEARN ABOUT THIS "LOST TROUT STREAM" OF THE TWIN CITIES METRO AREA AND OTHER BURNSVILLE AND EAGAN TROUT STREAMS ON PAGES 6 AND 7.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Community & The New Great Waters Flyfishing Expo

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

This fall I received word that the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo was closing up shop after 12 successful years. The Helgeson family, who has kept this wonderful event going since the passing of Tom Helgeson, the Expo's founder, had reached the difficult realization that it could no longer dedicate the countless hours and energy necessary to keep the Expo going. The sad news circulated quickly and spurred a few of us to explore whether we could help keep this community celebration of fly fishing and conservation going. I am happy to report that the Expo will be held in March 2016.

The annual Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo has always provided us with a unique opportunity to introduce Trout Unlimited to hundreds of people and convey the importance of conservation to the preservation of fishing all to enjoy. Trout Unlimited is not a fly fishing club. It is a group of dedicated conservationists who pursue trout, steelhead and salmon using every ethical angling method, based on personal preferences. Many choose to fly fish exclusively, but many others have more eclectic tendencies and mix in spinning, drift or bait fishing to match conditions or whim. Like Minnesota TU, the Expo has always drawn a good number of non-fly anglers and others who participate if only to celebrate the fish.

It has become clearer to me with each passing year that conservation success depends upon sharing a sense of awe for our natural world and building a wider community of support for these unique resources. No one understood this better than Tom Helgeson, and his words and writings inspired and energized many of us both in our angling and our conservation work. It is no accident that Tom's Expo has always woven together a joy for the sport and fish, an awe of the special places where we pursue it, and a passionate commitment to preserving both.

I first met Tom in the 1980s in his fly shop on 38th & Grand Avenue. As a starving university student I had only enough money for fly tying materials (who could afford to buy flies?) and tippets. But Tom and Julie welcomed all of us into a community, well-heeled and well-patched alike. Tom shared his knowledge and passion freely, managing to slip in a conservation note as well. His magazine, *Midwest Fly Fishing*, continued the twin themes of joy for the sport and the need for conservation. Not surprisingly, Tom took great pains to ensure that the Expo programming always included a separate conservation track. And having worked with Tom for several years on the State's Trout & Salmon Stamp Oversight Committee, I came to understand just how central conserva-



tion and community building was to everything Tom did.

The annual Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo unites thousands of anglers in a community celebration of the coming seasons. We owe a great debt to Tom Helgeson and the Helgeson family for the countless hours and energy expended to create these community events. By stepping up to keep the Expo going, Minnesota TU hopes to keep this legacy alive and begin to repay some small part of that debt. We look forward to working with many of you and our partners in the fly fishing community to continue the Expo legacy. We hope all of you, whether fly angler or not, will join us March 18th through the 20th to share the joy of angling and rewards of conservation. MNTU members interested in volunteering to help with the expo this year should contact show coordinators Carl Haensel and Jade Thomason. Visit the expo web site for all contact information at:

www.greatwatersflyexpo.com



A BEAUTIFUL BROOKIE FROM HUST CREEK. LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS AMAZING METRO TROUT STREAM ON PAGE 8.

EDITOR'S ANGLE

The Volunteers That Create MNTU

By Carl Haensel, Editor

As I work on wrapping up both this newsletter and another fishing season, I have to take time to thank those tireless MNTU volunteers that write for the newsletter and have helped provide it with excellent content. Regular readers will have noted the continued contributions of stalwart writers such as Bob Wagner from the Headwaters Chapter and the numerous submissions from Dan Callahan of the Twin Cities Chapter. Thanks to them and all others that have contributed and that help to make this newsletter flourish. A shout out is also needed to those who help in the editing process, particularly Jade Thomason and John Lenczewski.

I also deeply appreciate the advertisers and donors, without whom this newsletter would not be able to continue. We always are looking for more advertisers, and we hope that we can continue to expand and increase the newsletter in many directions.

If you have an idea that you are interested in writing about, or if you enjoy shooting photos of some of our great streams and rivers around the state, get in contact with us here at MNTU, and we would like to get you started on the road to being a writer for Trout Unlimited Minnesota!



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2015 YEAR IN REVIEW

An Update on the State of Minnesota Trout Unlimited

John Lenczewski

This was another good year for MNTU, and thus a good year for Minnesota trout and trout anglers. MNTU restored or improved habitat along approximately many miles of stream, and protected fisheries statewide from numerous threats to groundwater flows, fish passage, and loss of core protections afforded by the “designated trout stream” process. We helped achieve progress on riparian buffer legislation, spearheaded strategic planning in the Lake Superior basin, and worked with partners to counter numerous other threats. We also launched an outdoor ed-

of vegetation will take a year or two.

Coffee Creek (St. Louis): This stream had been alternatingly placed inside a long culvert and impounded. The stream was day lighted and the channel restored for native brook trout waiting to recolonize this habitat.

East Indian Creek (Wabasha): While most in-stream work occurred in 2014, important work was done this year to establish native grasses and vegetation which will narrow and deepen this brook trout stream.



HAY CREEK - BEFORE: ERODING BANKS AND A SAND COVERED BOTTOM PROVIDE LITTLE HABITAT ON THIS TROUT STREAM IN GOODHUE COUNTY, MN.

ucation program incorporating the Trout in the Classroom curriculum, began a research effort with UMD to identify vital groundwater recharge areas on the North Shore, and expanded community engagement efforts. Our grant writing efforts also secured \$2,294,000 for additional habitat restoration projects.

Habitat Restoration Work

MNTU and its chapters had a very busy year implementing Outdoor Heritage Fund (“Lessard”) funded habitat projects. Primary construction was completed or substantially completed on more than a dozen projects, although follow up work will be done in 2016 on most of these projects to fully establish native vegetation:

Blackhoof River (Carlton): The historically severe 2012 flood caused slope failures which toppled mature forests into the river, creating channel blocking log jams which blocked spawning runs and buried miles of high quality cobble and gravel habitat under sand. In 2015 we removed more than a dozen large logjams, restoring many miles of spawning, food production and cover habitats. Bank stabilization work was begun and will continue in 2016.

Blagsvedt Creek (Fillmore): Severe flooding deposited large amounts sediment, filling pools and leaving a shifting channel. Typical brook trout habitat was restored, but reestablishment

Hay Creek (Goodhue): More than a mile of overly wide, shallow and sandy stream channel, with high eroding banks has been transformed. By restoring a narrowed, stable channel the heavy sand has been flushed out, gravel and cobble spawning and food production areas restored, and deep pools with overhead cover created. We anticipate an explosion in natural reproduction and overall trout numbers.

Mill Creek (Olmsted): A two mile long stretch of this Root River tributary was restored this summer, connecting past TU and DNR habitat work into more than 4 miles of continuous high quality trout habitat.

Newburg Creek (Fillmore): Restoration of this Wisel Creek tributary focused on creating good brook trout habitat in this small spring creek. Spawning sized brook trout were spotted utilizing the restored habitat this fall. Native prairie was planted in what should become a nice example of native oak savanna.

Pine Creek (Winona): The third mile of habitat improvement was wrapped up this June. Deep streamside sediments had entrenched the stream channel between high, eroding banks with little in-stream habitat. Floodplain terraces were excavated and large wood and rock cover habitat placed. The narrowed low flow channel has deepened and exposed spawning gravel and bug production areas.

Stewart River and Little Stewart River (Lake): Three separate projects restored habitat on more than a mile of flood-ravaged river on a top tier wild brook trout and steelhead fishery. Deep pools with woody cover were created in a restored, stable channel. Through MNTU’s watershed outreach effort, area landowners participated in tree plantings, habitat, fish and temperature surveys, and seeding and mulching work.

Trout Run Creek (Fillmore): Strategic logging was undertaken on a 4,000 foot reach where a canopy of invasive and undesirable, shallow rooted trees was limiting food production and contributing to bank instability. Select trees and shrubs were removed to increase beneficial sunlight (improving macroinvertebrate habitat) and encourage establishment of deep rooted grasses to stabilize streambanks.

Vermillion River (Dakota): More than a hundred volunteers participated in three separate workdays, removing buckthorn and other invasive trees which are degrading riparian forest and trout habitat. Removal of dense stands of buckthorn has allowed the reestablishment of deep-rooted, native grasses which will gradually narrow and deepen the river channel. More workdays are planned in 2016, as is a large scale in-stream project to restore spawning riffles and fish habitat.

and environmental partners, and is especially active during the legislative session. Maintaining a constant presence in St. Paul during session is vital to defeating very bad ideas and making sure good initiatives have the best chance of passing. Frequently MNTU is the only, or first, organization to become aware of a significant threat to trout fisheries and work effectively to defeat it. We are often the only organization testifying forcefully against some very bad policy ideas, and in support of some good ones. In 2015 we succeeded in defeating three very bad policies which were not on other organizations’ radar until we enlisted partners’ support.

Blocked Gutting of Groundwater Sustainability Law: Our trout and steelhead fisheries are dependent upon groundwater inputs to provide cold base flow in summer and winter. Several legislators again tried to roll back basic protections for the shallower aquifers which are vital to sustaining coldwater fisheries.

Minnesota’s groundwater sustainability requirements (enacted in 2010) have begun to influence the approval or denial applications for groundwater pumping permits. Current law accounts for the fact that where surface waters are closely connected to groundwater, the fisheries found there act as “canaries in the coal mine”, warning when sustainability thresholds are being exceeded. The bad bills which advanced would have gutted the law by barring the DNR from denying a permit until after it



HAY CREEK - AFTER: THE STREAM HAS BEEN SHIFTED AWAY FROM HIGH BANKS. A LOW TERRACE (FLOODPLAIN) HAS BEEN CREATED ALONG WITH DEEP POOLS AND UNDERCUT BANKS. THE GRAVEL AND COBBLE BOTTOM HAS BEEN EXPOSED, IMPROVING INVERTEBRATE HABITAT AND TROUT SPAWNING AREAS.

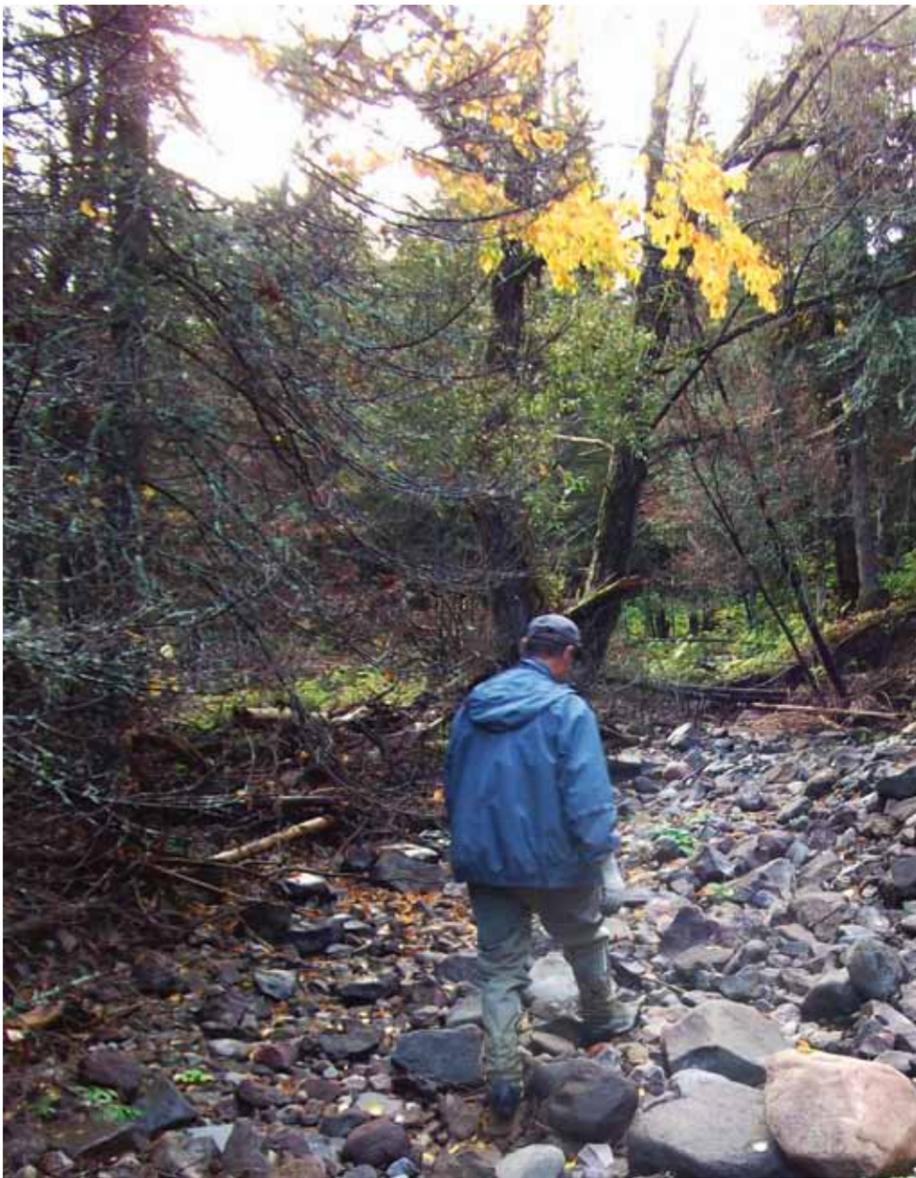
Willow Creek (Fillmore): We improved habitat for wild brown trout on the most accessible half-mile reach of this Preston area trout stream.

Advocacy Accomplishments

It takes constant vigilance and relationship building at the state capitol and with our agencies in order to ensure that our coldwater fisheries are not degraded or destroyed. There are a host of ongoing threats to fisheries, water quality, groundwater, and habitat. MNTU works year-round with our many conservation

“proves” the negative impact will occur by allowing the destruction of the fisheries. The bills were modified to force the DNR to permit every new pumping request until aquifers are so severely depleted that base flows in connected trout streams are reduced by 20%. However, thanks to a vocal response by members to our action alerts, we succeeded in getting these provisions replaced with a study of the issue.

Defeated Attempt to Remove DNR Authority to Protect Trout Streams by Designation: Another bill would have



LITTLE STEWART RIVER - BEFORE: FLOOD DEBRIS FILLED THE STREAM CHANNEL, OBLITERATING ALL HABITAT IN A KEY STEELHEAD NURSERY AREA ON THIS NORTH SHORE TROUT STREAM IN LAKE COUNTY, MN.

barred DNR biologists from adding the protective trout stream designation to previously overlooked wild trout fisheries, unless a purely political vote approved each addition. This is a variant of 2014 bills (which MNTU defeated) that would have removed protections from individual trout streams which special interests wish to degrade. The DNR designation process uses biological and chemical standards and hard data to make science-based determinations. Data must demonstrate consistently suitable water temperatures (below 72 degrees) and dissolved oxygen levels (above 5ppm), and the presence of naturally reproducing trout is viewed as strong evidence that the stream is capable of supporting trout. In the past decade the DNR discovered historic brook trout streams which had suitable conditions for trout, but where trout were missing due to historic abuses. In these cases the DNR made limited re-introduction stockings of native MN strain brook trout and the trout have again become self-sustaining through natural reproduction alone. The bill would have blocked DNR's efforts to protect and restore more such fisheries. Bill language would also have effectively barred the designation of trout stream where habitat has been improved or restored ("man-made" streams). MNTU and its members succeeded in defeating this bill.

Limited the County/Township Exemption from Culvert Review & Placement restrictions to Non-Trout Streams: Poorly placed or poorly sized culverts block spawning runs, prevent movement to cold water refuges in summer and cause extensive damage to habitat. Special interests pushed a bill exempting every county and township from all DNR restrictions on working in trout streams and steelhead rivers during periods of vital spawning and egg development. The provision also enables

them to skip expert DNR review and permitting restrictions designed to ensure that culverts are not undersized or placed incorrectly (blocking spawning runs and degrading habitat). We succeeded in getting this provision modified so that it does not apply to designated trout streams.

Working for Expanded Riparian Buffers:



LITTLE STEWART RIVER - AFTER: OUR PROJECT RESTORED A STABLE CHANNEL WITH A SERIES OF DEEP STEP POOLS. THE FLOODPLAIN WAS RESTORED TO QUICKLY DISSIPATE FUTURE FLOODS' ENERGY. NOTE THAT THE TREE ON THE RIGHT BANK OF THE STREAM IS THE SAME TREE IN THE PHOTO IN THE ABOVE LEFT.

On January 16, 2015, 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. The broad outline of his stream buffer initiative was unveiled at the MNDNR's annual Fisher-

ies Roundtable, and focused on improving water quality by ensuring that there are vegetative buffers along all watercourses. MNTU quickly realized that the Governor had drastically changed the public debate and created an opportunity to secure significant water quality improvements. In the months following MNTU worked with state agencies leaders to help flesh-out the details of the proposal. We also joined a group of dedicated conservation and environmental partners, forming the Buffers Now Coalition, and worked long hours with the administration and key legislators to advance a good buffer bill. Although opposition from agricultural groups was strong, in the end a good (not great) buffer bill was passed with our help. The effectiveness of the new law depends, initially, on thorough mapping of all public waters. For this reason we have been busy this fall working to ensure the mapping does not merely rely on old, flawed maps, but instead uses new technologies to map all public waters using an expansive definition. We will need to watchdog this process well into 2016 to ensure the greatest amount of riparian land is adequately buffered with perennial vegetation.

Testifying for a Meaningful Ban on Synthetic Microbeads:

The plastic microbeads that are used in many personal care products pass right through wastewater treatment systems and persist in our lakes and streams for years, harming fish and the people who eat fish. Particularly troubling is the fact that these plastic beads absorb dangerous chemicals (such as PCBs in Lake Superior) which then pass from the beads into the fishes' flesh. The personal care products industry has recognized that these plastic microbeads are a problem nationwide and it is moving to phase them out on a national scale. However, manufacturers lobbied the Minnesota Legisla-

port through several committee phases. The industry bill was thus transformed into a very good bill. It ultimately did not survive the end of session scramble, but look for us to help pass a good bill in 2016.

Year-round Advocacy Beyond Legislation:

MNTU also worked hard throughout the year ensuring that the concerns of trout and trout anglers are considered by policy makers and agency personnel on numerous other issues. We remain engaged, along with many partners, on several potential threats undergoing environmental review, including: large scale land conversion in central Minnesota from pine forest to irrigated potato fields; the routing of pipelines across sensitive trout stream watersheds; and sulfide mining proposals (esp. Polymet), to name a few. Throughout the year we assisted TU by solidifying the support of Minnesota's Congressional delegation on key national issues, especially restoration of Clean Water Act protections. We also spearheaded the strategic prioritization of Lake Superior watersheds and represented members in revision of the management plan for Lake Superior and its tributaries. We remain vigilant, outspoken advocates on countless other issues which arise or resurface throughout the year.

Educational Efforts

Education is another strategic area of focus for MNTU as it strives to protect, restore and sustain coldwater fisheries and their watersheds for the long haul. This involves educating members, anglers, the general public, legislators, policymakers (including agency staff) and youth. 2015 activities included publishing three statewide newspapers, organizing and running conservation programming at the Great Waters Expo,

maintaining a website, blog and Facebook page, and participating in numerous other community events. We have significantly expanded youth education through an outdoor education program in the schools, which utilizes the Trout *Annual Report continued on page 13*

TWIN CITIES LOST TROUT STREAMS

The Streams of Burnsville and Eagan - Part One, The Glory Days

By Dan Callahan

Unnamed but not unknown, several small trout streams in Burnsville and Eagan start as springs below the lowest bluffs along the south side of the Minnesota River valley. These then flow north into Black Dog Lake, a floodplain lake, or flow directly to the river. All have at least part of their courses protected within the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge or Fort Snelling State Park. Some have startling histories. One in Burnsville supported a popular trout fishing farm in the 1950s and 1960s. But it wasn't idle curiosity that drove me to research these streams.

Three of them are figuratively sitting on a DNR version of Death Row. Unnamed #4 and Unnamed #7 are in Burnsville, and Black Dog/Harnack Creek is in Eagan. The agency has proposed dropping them from the official state Designated Trout Stream (DTS) list which would strip from them the best pollution protections in the state. These streams have been protected as trout streams for more than 35 years. Judgement is handed down on an official state form for such matters that asks for summary justification. The terse terms describing each of the three are about the same:

"Unnamed #4 is a small, flashy stream impacted by storm water, with little or no spawning habitat, dominated by silt. Invertebrate production is low. In addition, it is not fishable."

That's not what two people, at separate times, told us at our Trout Unlimited exhibit at the Dakota County Fair this summer. They fish it all the time, and claim to have caught trout. My belief in Bigfoot hovers around the same level as my belief in fishing stories.

The metro Minnesota River Valley has lost almost all of its original trout streams to urban development. Nine Mile Creek, Purgatory Creek, and the Credit River all once held trout. (An exciting aside: The DNR put a temper-

When subdivisions moved in the trout died out because stormwater runoff made the streams too warm. Two remain viable and protected: Eagle Creek in Savage and Assumption Creek in Chanhassen. We restored another spring creek near the Mall of America and restocked it with native brook trout, but that stream is really only an educational demonstration project for the wildlife refuge's Bass Ponds Environmental Study Area. (See



UNNAMED STREAM #4 FLOWS TOWARD THE MINNESOTA RIVER VALLEY

article elsewhere in newsletter on Hust Creek.)

But on paper, four other designated trout streams exist: The three on death row and Kennealy's Creek in Eagan. Thankfully,

times, and caught nothing. I went there another day, and it was completely dried up. I called the DNR.

It turned out that construction dewatering at the nearby Seneca Sewage Treatment Plant was to blame. Now, some of the water flow is back, but not the fish. Studies done in the early 2000s determined the creek still suffered from an undependable base flow. One study suggested working with Seneca to see if

rounding trout streams.

"When I was a kid (in the 1920s and 30s), the trout season used to open around the first of May," Kennealy said in the interview.

"At that time there would be about 12 or 15 cars parked at the depot at Nicols. These oldtimers from St. Paul and Minneapolis would walk down the tracks and fish in our creek. They tell me that these old time fishermen would fish with flies and that is the only kind of fishing they'd do. And they'd catch them."

He also talked about a different trout stream, that supplied water for a trout fishing farm in Burnsville.

"A fellow by the name of Blick-he owned Blick Pontiac-he came out here in 1950 and bought a 208 acre farm... He dammed up a couple creeks on his property down by the railroad tracks and put trout in them. He made fish ponds."

Reading this intrigued me. I could find nothing in Burnsville's history books and nothing on Google about a Burnsville trout farm, and a search of Blick was not helpful. I started digging through old county atlas maps online that showed property owners. Ross and Hattie Blick had owned some land there in the 1950s. Hmm. More digging brought up name changes, birth certificates, and marriage licenses. One child, Marianne Blick. Minnesota's database says she married David Naasjr. I couldn't find him anywhere. Finally I drilled down in Google far enough that his correct name popped out: David Naas, Jr. A few more online searches and out came a landline number.

Marianne Naas answered the phone. She's 88 years old now and still lives in the same Burnsville house where the Cedar Hills Trout Farm operated. She, her husband, and her parents, Ross and Hattie Blick, opened Cedar Hills in 1958. She's the only one still living. I explained to her that I was a volunteer in the Twin Cities chapter of Trout Unlimited and we were working with the DNR to see if we could restore some old trout streams, including one that apparently fed her trout farm.

"Oh, we had a lot of trout for dinner back then", Marianne told me. "We couldn't let them go to waste, you know, with four kids."

She said she'd be happy to let me come over and take a look at an old newspaper story about the trout farm. She spread out the faded, folded newspaper on her kitchen table. The July 7, 1959 St. Paul Dispatch, South Area Edition had the article on the front page headlined "Scarecrows Guard Trout, But You Can Catch 'Em". The article has three pictures, including one showing her daughter holding a trout, and an-



AN ARTICLE FROM THE JULY 7, 1959 HIGHLIGHTS TROUT FISHING AVAILABLE AT THE CEDAR HILLS TROUT FARM.

ature logger in an exceptionally cold section of the Credit River this summer just outside of Murphy Hanrehan Regional Park Reserve, to monitor temperature swings. We'll learn the results later this year.)

Kennealy's is not targeted for removal from the protected list. Kennealy's Creek got me involved in Trout Unlimited. In 1989 I learned of the trout stream list. I ferreted out Kennealy's location about a half mile east of the railroad crossing on Nicols Road, went there to fish it a few

Eagan Water Resources Director Eric Macbeth did an interview in 2001 with 79-year old Joe Kennealy who was born on the farm surrounding the creek. A transcript is included in a study on the hydrology of Nicols Fen and the sur-

other of Marianne holding her daughter. Staff writer Bill Martin reported, "...David D. Naas, operator of the trout fisherman's paradise, explained the reason for the tilted, grotesque scarecrows who guard three ponds as jealously as a cornfield.

"The idea is to scare away blue herons, which roam this area," he said. "The birds are pretty good fishermen in their own right, plucking out the trout with their beaks."

"...Naas doesn't mind the trout's main enemies—paying customers, who without fuss and long distance travel, reel in at will brooks and rainbows in a few action-filled minutes."

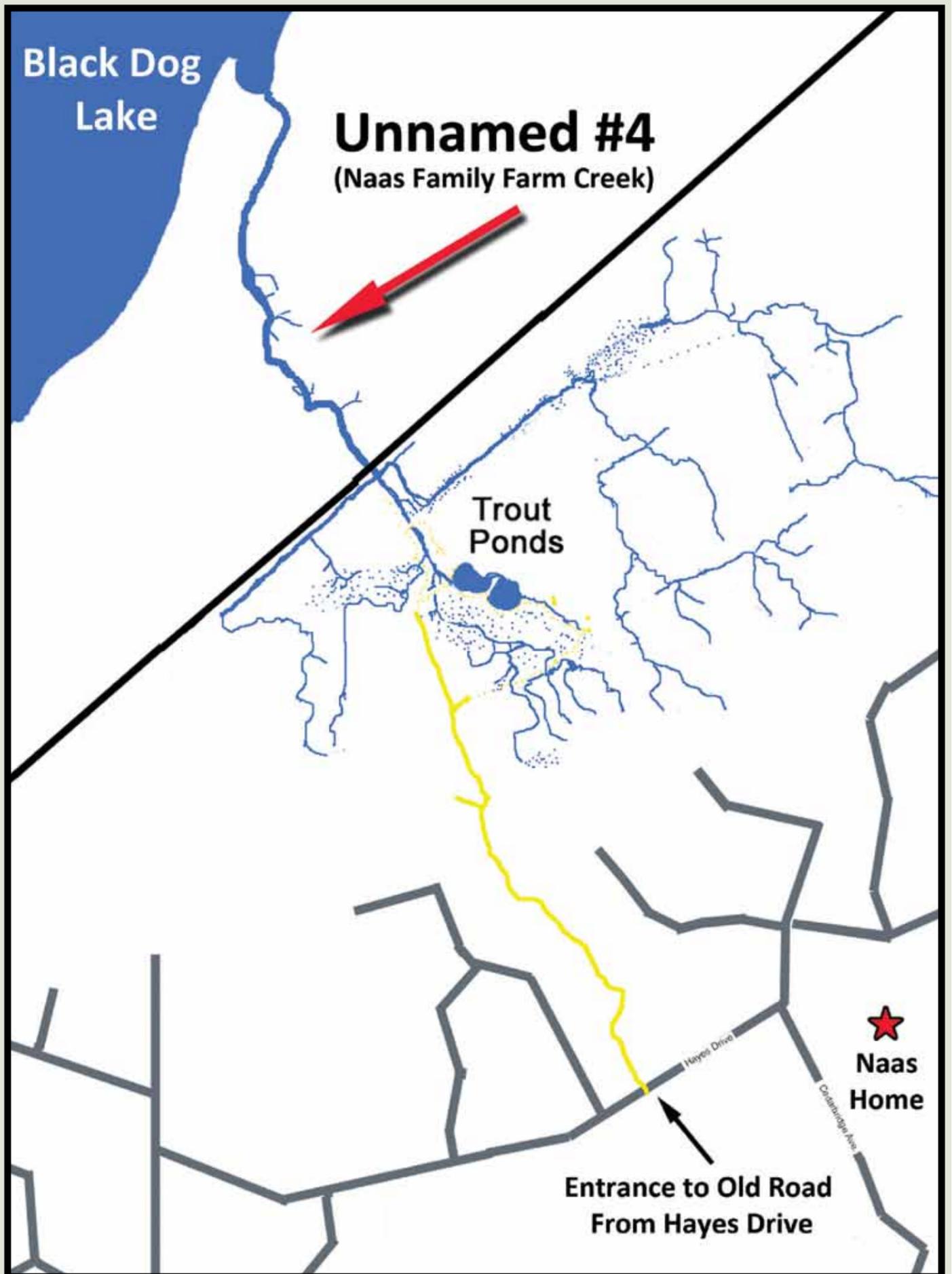
The trout were fed pellet food, "...but would grab as eagerly at worm-baited hooks. The jaded fisherman gets an added "kick" by using a fly rod."

The article says the creek used to be known as One Mile Creek (it's officially called Unnamed #4 on the DNR list). Cool! Marianne explained to me that they built a road down the ravine, using gravel they dug out of their farm's gravel pit. People would drive down into the river bottoms, park by the ponds, and pay to get a cane pole and bait. A caretaker lived in a small house next to the bait shop. The house was moved there from a previous location in Eagan where it did duty as drive-up restaurant, sort of like an old-time Sonic. When trout farm customers wanted to take home fish they paid for them by the pound. Not everyone wanted to take home the fish they caught and the fish weren't always hardy when released; hence Marianne's frequent trout dinners.

The family bought trout from a hatchery farm in Star Prairie, Wisconsin, which is still in business. Cedar Hills had about a thousand fish on hand (or in water) at a time, weighing from half-a-pound to about three pounds each. Marianne was telling me her story in the house her mom and dad built in 1951 near the intersection of Highway 13 and Diffley Road in Burnsville on a bluff with a view of the Minnesota River valley and the Cedar Avenue Bridge. Yes, her dad did own a Pontiac dealership. The times were tough during World War II, but he knew if he could just keep operating until the end of the war, they'd be OK. Successful, he bought the land in Burnsville and moved there to raise horses. Marianne got married, moved away to Florida, then returned in 1956 when she and her husband built a house next door to her parents.

"Oh yes, I've seen a lot of changes in Burnsville over the years," Marianne said. "Not all of them good."

MNDOT bought her first house and bulldozed it during construction of the new Cedar Avenue Bridge and the realignment of Highway 13 in the 1970s. She can't see the stream anymore from her house. Her view of the river valley is partially obstructed by the roofs of houses that slowly crept up around her as the family slowly sold off its land for the Cedarbridge subdivision. The last large chunk of their land started sprout-



THE LOCATION IN BURNSVILLE OF UNNAMED TROUT STREAM #4 AND THE OLD TROUT PONDS OPERATED IN THE 1950S

ing houses in 2002. The family hung on to seven acres surrounding the house and the small barn where they kept their horses. Though not all of their land went to developers, the river bottom land with the trout stream ponds was sold to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is now part of the refuge.

Her daughter, Alix, was born in 1961 with her twin sister Anne. Alix joined us at the kitchen table to reminisce.

"I remember still catching trout in those ponds with Poppa [her grandfather, Ross] when I was about five years old. There are pictures of us holding fishing rods. But I don't think we were

still open to the public then, Mom, were we?" she asked.

Marianne said that was about right. They were in operation for a few years, changed the name to Sioux Trail Trout Farm, but then decided to close in the mid-1960s.

"We had to," Marianne said. "Somebody came up the railroad tracks one night and netted out all of our fish!"



MANY THANKS TO MARIANNE NAAS AND HER DAUGHTER ALIX BLICK FOR PROVIDING MUCH OF THE INFORMATION ON THE STREAM AND ITS HISTORY.

Editors Note: This article serves as part one of a three part series investigating these Burnsville and Eagan streams and how they have changed over time. Look for the next installment in the Spring MNTU Newsletter to learn more about these stream systems and the challenges they face.

You can watch a short video tour of the cascades of Naas Creek, shot December 5, 2015, on the Twin Cities Trout Unlimited YouTube channel, here: <https://youtu.be/qNt193ITKU0>

BIGGER STEPS ON LITTLE ROCK CREEK

Helping Restore a Central MN Trout Stream

By Micah Barrett

The Mid-Minnesota chapter spent part of this past summer focusing efforts on improving the channel and stream banks of Little Rock Creek, just a few miles north of Rice, MN. One of the only regularly stocked trout streams in the area, Little Rock Creek has in the past been home to an abundance of brown trout as well as a smaller, naturally reproducing population of brook trout.

This past summer's work consisted of brush layering techniques to narrow the stream channel, as well as some brush clearing. Given the amount of sandy soil and significant agriculture in the area, Little Rock Creek has been highly susceptible to large amounts of sediment deposit along the stream bed which has covered precious reproductive ground for the fish. With the help



A NICE BROWN TROUT FROM LITTLE ROCK CREEK

of approximately 15 volunteers over the summer along with financial support from the RBC Blue Water Project, the chapter was able to rebuild and reinforce the stream bank in several locations

across a designated project area that spans over a half mile of stream length. The ultimate goal of this project, which will continue at least through 2016, is to create more stream energy and scour in order to give these fish the best opportunity to reproduce. The project managed to catch the attention of Outdoor News which highlighted the chapter's work in their July 10th issue. MNTU submitted a funding request to the LSOHC and it is likely that MNTU will receive funding in 2016 for us to expand the project to include some toe-wood work on the stream as well.

The Minnesota DNR stocks Little Rock Creek with brown trout two out of every three years. This past fall, several chapter board members joined local DNR fisheries personnel to electrofish the stream's trout and other indigenous fish populations. Although the official results have not been reported yet, initial thoughts are that the numbers will

be down from previous year's samples, the most recent of which occurred in 2012. Most noticeably, the brook trout population appeared down significantly. The chapter board is optimistic that with continued work on the stream in conjunction with the continued efforts from local fisheries to stock and monitor the stream, that fish populations and reproduction will rise in the coming years.

For more information on the Mid-Minnesota chapter and the Little Rock Creek project, contact chapter president Micah Barrett at (320) 241-0870.



THE VOLUNTEER CREW FROM THE LITTLE ROCK CREEK PROJECT



THE VOLUNTEER CREW HARD AT WORK ON THE LITTLE ROCK CREEK PROJECT NEAR RICE, MINNESOTA THIS SUMMER.

HUST CREEK UPDATE

By Dan Callahan

The latest DNR fisheries survey of Hust Creek, a spring creek near the Mall of America in the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, shows that the descendants of native brookies the Twin Cities chapter of Trout Unlimited planted in 2007 are flourishing after stream improvements. Trout numbers are up to about 300 fish per mile and, after a dam was removed and

the stream was re-meandered, fish have been populating all areas of the stream.

Some of these brightly colored native brookies have been photographed by MN DNR staff. If you're in the area, stop by the National Wildlife Refuge and visit the small stream. It's a great escape if you need to visit the Mall of America!



THE ELECTROFISHING CREW SAMPLING HUST CREEK.



A WILD BROOK TROUT FROM HUST CREEK NEAR THE MALL OF AMERICA

FINDING SECRET FISHING SPOTS

By Dan Callahan

You can find your own secret fishing spots, using three online resources:

1. A new set of historic photos for the entire state, that the U of M recently has posted online here: <https://www.lib.umn.edu/apps/mhapo/>

2. Property ownership information and new aerial photos that many counties have now made available through interactive online GIS websites. You can reach Dakota County's here: <http://gis.co.dakota.mn.us/DCGIS/>

3. Google, including maps, aerials, and Street View.

I've used this information to discover hidden spots on the Vermillion River that probably see no fishing pressure because they are way far away from well-known public access spots. No one can tell these remote spots are on public land. Public ownership comes, thanks to park dedication requirements, when new development occurs. No one knows one

of my spots is just a short plunge through the woods from a recently constructed walking path, far back from the river, near an apartment complex.

I've used this technique to prospect for trophy smallmouth too. My brother recently moved to Otsego, not far from the Mississippi River's trophy catch and release section. I had never fished it. I wanted to find a spot where I could fish from the bank or wade in shallow water and reach good habitat. Using recent Google aerials around his house, I found a large, rocky riffle that looked good with a big rock fairly close to shore. I used the county's online interactive GIS photos to discover that the bank was in public hands and that a new bike path ran along the top of the thickly wooded, steep bluff.

Older aerial photos showed a narrow area where the bank woods had been cleared and sloped to construct a storm sewer outlet for a new neighborhood. New aerials showed the bike path crossed that spot, and that two boulders were sitting

next to the path, no doubt unearthed during the storm sewer construction seven years before. The spot had grown over by now, rejoining the thick woods that hide one's view of the river.

The next Sunday, I drove to the neighborhood, parked on the street by the bike path entrance, which is about a quarter mile from the river, put on my hip boots, strung up my rod, and drew suspicious stares from the neighbors as I walked onto the bike path.

I found the two boulders I saw on the aerial and crashed blindly into the thick brush. I scrambled down the steep bank, holding saplings as I went, and eventually emerged at the storm sewer pipe outlet and the river.

I saw the big rock downstream, and after a short hike I made it to my new secret fishing spot. I cast a black and white floating Rapala in front of the boulder, twitched it as it was swept into the eddy behind the boulder, and caught an 18 inch smallmouth. So much fun!



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LISTEN FOR THE WHITETHROATS

Book Review

By John Hunt

Official scientific theory tells us that 150 years ago lake trout lived in Lake Superior and a number of deep, clear lakes scattered across Minnesota's Arrowhead region. Brook trout inhabited the big lake's tributaries below their natural barriers and in the headwater streams of the Mississippi River and St. Louis River watersheds. The streams and lakes located "in between" were originally devoid of trout. Trout-less, that is, until the heyday of commercial logging that spanned the late 1800's into the first couple of decades of the 1900's.

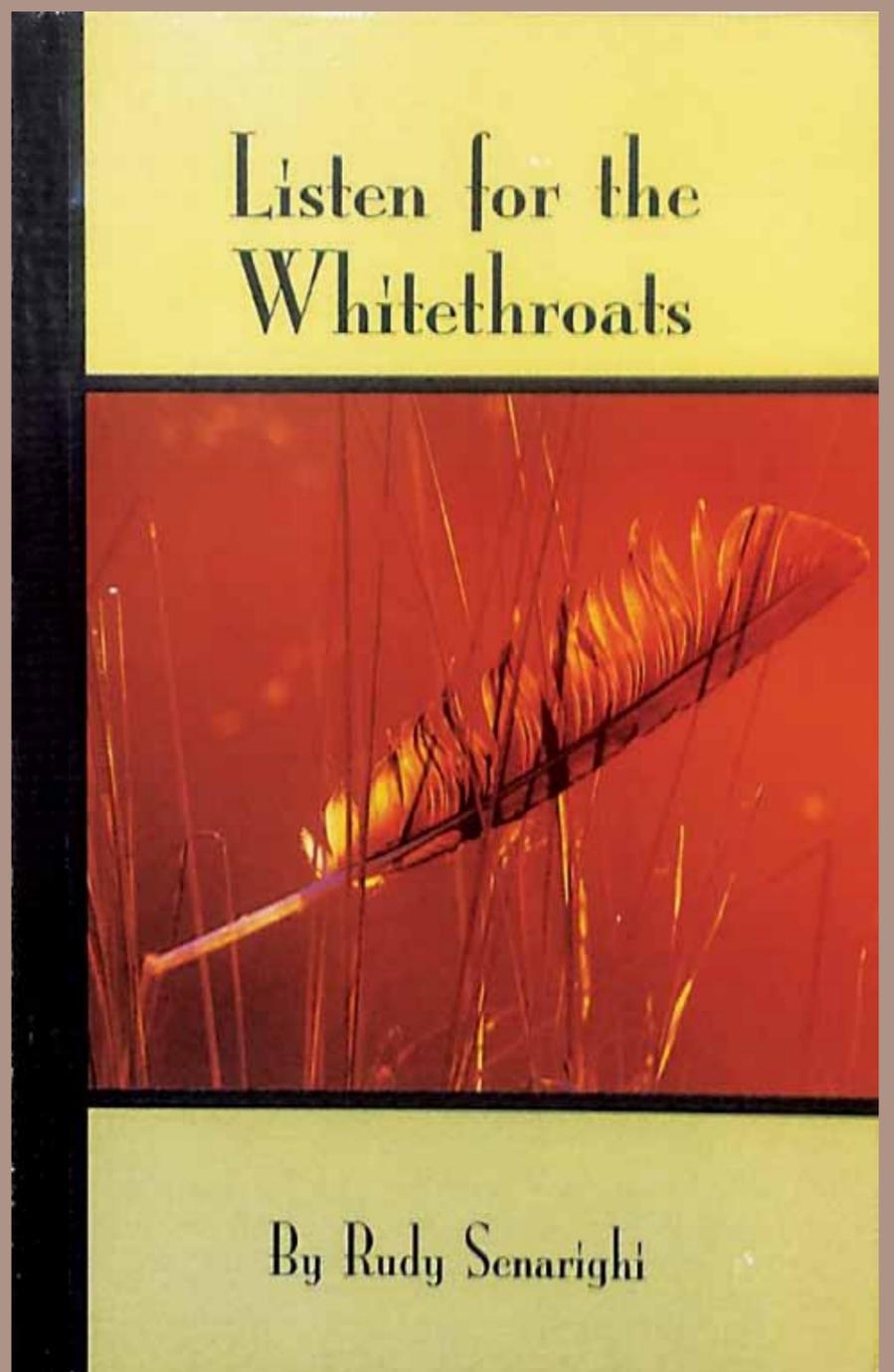
Before the term "bait bucket biologists" took on a negative meaning, the idea of transporting game fish from one watershed to another was encouraged, even by natural resource professionals. Such was the history of the Arrowhead. Railroads (mostly short-duration affairs) were pushed through the rugged countryside to facilitate access to Minnesota's virgin pine forests. Occasionally, where a railroad crossed a stream, the proverbial milk can of fish was dumped, all in the name of progress. When the big trees were gone, so went the rails, leaving behind miles of abandoned railroad grades and countless miles of newly stocked trout water just waiting to be explored.

In "Listen for the Whitethroats", author Rudy Senarighi provides a glimpse of what it was like to cut one's trout fishing teeth in northeastern Minnesota during a time when the region was still crisscrossed with old railroad grades and abandoned logging camps. Many of these providing access to streams

holding plentiful populations of brook trout that were virtually unfished.

Senarighi sets the stage for the reader by describing the boyhood joy of riding his bike with a friend to fish a small creek near his hometown of Cloquet, as well as the exhilaration of tagging along with a sympathetic uncle to first fish the streams near Isabella. In subsequent chapters, the author builds upon the theme that the best day fishing is often spent with friends or family. The adventures that play out page by page introduce us to a number of the author's fishing buddies: John, Doivo, Arvo, Neal, Chris, Ron. Many of his stories will have you reaching for your Minnesota Gazetteer to see if you can still find the place names he mentions, like the Cramer Grade, Houtaling Creek, Kennedy Mountain, and Baptism Crossing. With the benefit of hindsight, Senarighi recounts the anticipation, the exertion, the reward, and, in more recent years, the realization that sometimes the paths that once led to fishing nirvana are now best followed only in our memories.

This isn't an anthology for fly-fishing purists, for there are plenty of anecdotes that involve a Zebco 66 reel, red worms, and/or Mepps spinners. Regardless of your preferred flavor of trout fishing, however, it will make you pause and recall your own special places or memorable days on the water. By the end of the book, the reader fully appreciates Senarighi's choice of an introductory quotation from Henry David Thoreau, "Many go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not the fish they are after."



TU FUTURE BRIGHT WITH YOUTH

By Bob Wagner

We probably all have concerns about TU's future. Who will pick up the torch in 20 years and carry on the important work of Trout Unlimited? This concern becomes more relevant with current reports of outdoor deficit in youth and declining sales of fishing licenses. However, there are two rising stars that bring hope to TU's long-range concerns. One young rising star at the national level is an 11 year-old girl, Maxine McCormick, who broke eight national fly casting records. Another rising star at the local level is Julian who caught 28 trout this summer all on flies.

Maxine McCormick is a normal fun-loving 11 year-old girl whose father, Glen McCormick, took her camping and fishing whenever possible. Glen believes "exposure to the outdoors is really important for youth." Hallelujah, Praise the Lord and pass that parental attitude around the table. In a telephone interview with Glen, I congratulated both he and his daughter's accomplishments at the National Fly Casting Championship in San Francisco on August 14, 2015 where they both won National titles. Maxine however made nationwide news headlines scoring 289 out of 300 possible points beating the re-

cord set in 1990 and tying fourth place among all casters no matter what age, gender or past achievements. Wow! She is 11 years-old and "loves fly casting and practices twice a week with great focus and determination," states her father, Glen. Maxine not only broke the women's all time record but also broke 7 junior national records. Chris Kovich, Glenn McCormick and Steve Rafferty were the only three competitors to score higher than Maxine (and they are considered America's best casters). All four, including Maxine, made the All American National Fly Casting Team. She also catches trout on that fly rod!

At the local level, Tim Carroll from Duluth called me as I was writing this article wanting to share exciting news about his great grandson, Julian. Julian is 7 years-old and his story fits perfectly with Maxine's. Julian caught his first trout on a fly at age 5. This past summer he caught 28 trout on his own (under Grandpa Tim's watchful eye) all on flies, including a trophy brook trout. Tim Carroll and Glenn McCormick have both followed a winning formula: Invest quality time with youth in the great outdoors and introduce them to patience and love of fishing, then let them choose



MAXINE AND HER DAD SHOWING OFF HER NATIONAL FLY CASTING CHAMPIONSHIP MEDAL IN SAN FRANCISCO.

if they want to continue. Fortunate to the future of TU, youth like Maxine and Julian choose to continue making Trout Unlimited's future look a little brighter.

Maybe the real lesson here is that Maxine and Julian are not just cute stories but rather real examples of what youth can accomplish if we adults, par-

ents, grandparents and TU members give youth the support and opportunities necessary to allow them to actually be the future of TU.

NORTH SHORE TROUT STREAM TEMPERATURE REFUGE PROJECT

By Peder Yurista

Effective management of North Shore trout streams is dependent on cold groundwater to keep stream temperatures below thermal limits for trout and steelhead. Groundwater is not abundant in this region. Documentation of where cold water discharge occurs is critical for restoring, protecting and managing North Shore trout streams for long-term sustainability. The DNR, Minnesota Trout Unlimited and other organizations need to know where cold water input exists to focus habitat restoration and protection efforts on North Shore watersheds and support trout fisheries into the next century.

The Natural Resources Research Institute, University of Minnesota Duluth (NRRI-UMD) received a grant to conduct a temperature study of Minnesota's North Shore tributary streams to Lake Superior. The Temperature Refuge Project is being funded from Minnesota's lottery proceeds (Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund). This research project is being led by Dr. Lucinda Johnson. The study also supports modeling of long term changes in stream temperatures by researchers at the UM St. Anthony Falls Hydraulic Laboratory. The survey results will be used to identify key cool-water inputs necessary to support trout and steelhead and to model in-stream temperature habitat. The modeling will help to forecast the long-term thermal health of trout streams across the region. Locations of critical cool water inputs will aid resource

managers' in maximizing efforts for watershed protection or stream habitat improvement, especially in reaches of high priority streams and in mitigation



GITCHEE GUMMEE CHAPTER PRESIDENT JON ASPIE SEARCHING FOR COOL WATERS ON THE MINNESOTA NORTH SHORE.

of climate change effects. Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and Minnesota Trout Unlimited are important components in this project by supplying advice and hands-on surveys as interested stakeholders.

The grant was awarded July 1, 2015 and is to run for 3 years. The geographical coverage of the survey is the Lake Superior watershed from the Nemaadji River watershed in Carlton County to

the Canadian border in Cook County. The survey is based on sound scientific practices with approximately 100 stream reaches selected using a probability pro-

cedure from a GIS coverage of stream catchments covering the entire region. The stream reaches range in length from about 0.5 to 6 miles. Based on field survey data, temperature loggers will be strategically placed to continuously record changes throughout the season and record input values to calibrate and test the model. Startup of the project was well into the summer due to the timing of the grant.

With the short timeline this summer it

was a bit of a scramble to acquire temperature probes and GPS units, map the region, select the sites, and develop log sheets and site maps. This year we were able to get volunteers from TU (Gitchee Gumee chapter, and several from the Twin Cities), Arrowhead Flyfishers (Duluth), and the local public through newspaper publicity. On a few weekends in July and August teams received brief training on equipment and data logging in the morning and volunteers spent the rest of the day wading stream sections. The initial phase of data collection was in streams primarily around Duluth to Two Harbors. NRRI was able to place a few temperature loggers this year based on the initial data.

The field survey will continue next year 2016, but many more volunteers will be needed to spend a half day or more helping to map the locations of groundwater. We expect to sponsor several combined fishing/survey weekends to concentrate on watersheds in Lake and Cook Counties. Sites with nearby camping will be selected early in the season with plenty of notice to allow volunteers to set aside a weekend or two for camping, fishing and monitoring temperature. Come up on a Friday and fish the evening, take the opportunity to explore North Shore streams on Saturday looking for cool-water input, fish the evening and Sunday morning while enjoying conversations with other fisherfolk. We hope to see you next summer on the North Shore.



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A FISHING OUTING ON HAY CREEK

Taking the Time to Gather at the River

Paul Wilson

On Sunday, September 20, Twin Cities Trout Unlimited hosted a fishing event on Hay Creek, outside of Red Wing. We had 37 guests all told, with nine under the age of 16. We also had at least 12 women in attendance, some of which came with their families, others by themselves or with a friend.

We met two miles west of the Haycreek Campground on Hay Creek Trail and had to scramble a bit, as the Recreation Area, our original rendezvous location, was overrun with horseback riders. We regrouped at the restored area by the bridge, making the transition without a hitch.

So assembled, Tony Nelson, the TCTU board Chair for Habitat, gave a spirited talk on the restoration work done along that stretch of stream under the auspices of Minnesota Trout Unlimited. Tony, who has been deeply involved in habitat work as a volunteer for several years, described how the river was narrowed

and the bank reshaped to that of a more natural flood plain. He also explained the innovative process of "planting" tree trunks perpendicular to the stream with the root balls in the river, and how this technique had the triple advantage of anchoring the bank, disposing of trees cleared during construction, and providing cover under the root balls for trout.

We then divided into several groups, with TCTU members and volunteers Nancy Willette and Don Eckenrode coaching the under-sixteens on casting, equipment and technique. Scott Criqui, a TCTU board member, conducted a casting lesson to a line up of about a dozen adults. Protesting that he was "no expert," Scott broke down the art of casting into such fundamental steps that within fifteen minutes every one of his students had caught on. Douglas "Scottie" Scott, the Midwest Fishing Specialist for Patagonia, was also very generous with his time, giving a presentation on the use of the tenkara rod and coaching several of the kids.

Then it was down to the creek, with folks splitting into small groups. Brian Schaefer and Dan Callahan, also TCTU board members, were on hand to mentor, with Dan getting some excellent video of the event. Steve Smith, a staff photographer at Best Buy and a TCTU member, was also on hand to take the photos, which you see here.

When I wasn't busy tying on hoppers and woolly buggers for the kids, I tried to talk to as many of attendees as I could. For the most part they were not folks who had fly fished before, nor had they visited Hay Creek. And although the water was stained from a recent rain, and the fish largely uncooperative due to a bright afternoon sun, everyone had a pretty good time. In particular there was the family with three boys, the mom and dad following the meander of the creek as their sons raced ahead to the next beckoning riffle. Not fly fishers, they nevertheless enjoyed the chance to be outside with their boys.

The takeaway is that as important as the restoration work is, Hay Creek and other restored trout streams are not museums pieces to be admired from a respectful distance. They are to be enjoyed and the really important work remains in communicating to our membership, and in showing the way.

We all need gather at the river a little more often.

Editor's Note: Check out the photo from the outing on page 15 in the Chapter News section.

TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

Connecting Students with Watersheds through Hands-on Learning

By Benji Kohn

It has long been a goal of Minnesota Trout Unlimited to truly connect Minnesota youth to their watersheds. In this day and age of technology, computers, cell phones, and texting, there seems to be a constant struggle to connect youth with their environment. Particularly, their connection with water. A recognized goal among many groups, organizations and agencies is to encourage angler recruitment, but also need to provide our students with the opportunity to learn and care about water, habitat and wildlife? How is a student motivated to go fishing or buy a license if they don't care about getting outdoors or what clean water really is?

These ideas led MNTU to develop a grant proposal which it submitted in March 2014 to the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) to create an environmental education program that encompassed clean water, habitat, watersheds, stewardship, hands-on science, field work and career paths.

It was a long process, but in July of 2015, Minnesota Trout Unlimited received a grant through LCCMR to create and implement a three-year pilot program in 18 schools reaching several thousand students. I was hired in mid July to coordinate MNTU's program, entitled "Connecting Students with Watersheds through Hands-on Learning". I came to MNTU with an extensive background in environmental education, program development and an love of the outdoors, which I have shared with hundreds of students over the years.

Once on board, schedules needed to be set and lots of planning and ordering of equipment was underway throughout

August and September. Schools were contacted in April and May, submitted applications June, and notified of their acceptance in July. In September, teachers participated in an informational workshop and were trained in Project WET, an internationally recognized water education program, MN DNR's MinnAqua Aquatic Education Program and fish biology. They learned about permits, raising trout, fish testing and the equipment they will be using. The Minnesota Department of Education also assisted with additional resources that teachers can use in the classrooms.

October was a busy month as students and teachers explored local watersheds to learn about fresh water systems, trout habitat, pollution, groundwater, macro-invertebrates, invasive species and fish biology through hands-on learning in the field. Through a series of field days that were hosted across the metro and southeast, presenters from the MN DNR, Mdewakanton Sioux Community and volunteers shared their expertise in natural resources and provided a solid background as the students began their journey of raising trout in their classrooms. It was exciting to see the students begin to link indicator macro-invertebrates as they relate to clean water and healthy habitat for a variety of fish species. This is the purpose of MN Trout Unlimited's education program: to make these connections and teach the students to become stewards of their environment.

The next few months will be quite exciting as the classes will get their fish eggs and they will begin to explore topics that they can investigate in their watersheds. The spring will find the students gearing up for a summit where the schools come together to share what they have discovered. They will also learn how



STUDENTS ASSESS EAGLE CREEK IN SAVAGE MINNESOTA, ONE OF ONLY A HANDFUL OF REMAINING TWIN CITIES METRO AREA TROUT STREAMS.

professionals in the field chose their career and what it took to attain their current positions. In late spring, students will release their DNR tested fish and learn more about the recreation aspects of having clean water to fish. They will be invited to take part in the many opportunities that MNTU will offer with

other partners throughout the summer to get students enjoying the outdoors. We look forward to an exciting year ahead and welcome volunteers to assist us on our watershed journey!



LAKEVILLE SOUTH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SORTING AQUATIC MACROINVERTEBRATES AS PART OF THE MNTU TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM PROGRAM.

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ANNUAL REPORT CONTINUED

An Update on the State of Minnesota Trout Unlimited in 2015

John Lenczewski

Annual Report continued from page 5
in the Classroom curriculum. This is used as a springboard for more comprehensive education about the role of watersheds, groundwater and land use in sustaining healthy coldwater fisheries. This program is being funded by a state grant from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (lottery proceeds). MNTU invested much effort over more than two years formulating the program, building DNR support, crafting a grant proposal and sheparding it through a 16 month process culminating in a July 2015 appropriation. The \$400,000 grant will fund the program for three years. Read elsewhere in this newsletter how ten schools have already started the program.

Research

In 2014 MNTU began collaborating with the University of Minnesota Duluth to help it secure a grant to fund research to identify the areas of key groundwater inflow into trout streams in the Lake Superior basin, as well as groundwater recharge areas. We reworked the funding proposal and presentation, now stress-

ing the pressing management need for the research. We explained that MNTU (and hopefully others) is strategically focusing habitat restoration and protection efforts on a subset of North Shore watersheds most likely to sustain coldwater fisheries and quality angling into the next century. We made the case that we and the DNR need detailed information on the locations of groundwater discharge areas in priority watersheds to most effectively target habitat restoration and watershed protection efforts. This resonated with the LCCMR and ultimately led to the July 2015 appropriation of \$416,000 to UMD to lead this great research effort. Please read the article in this newsletter about this research and how you can help the Gitchee Gumees Chapter with the field work next summer.

Habitat Grants

A vital activity on which MNTU focuses a major part of its executive director's efforts is grant writing, presentations and related follow up necessary to secure grants which fund the implementation of numerous habitat restoration projects

around the State. These efforts were again very successful in 2015. MNTU secured an additional \$2,294,000 in grants to fund future habitat work of MNTU and its chapters. This includes a July 2015 appropriation of \$1,890,000 from the Outdoor Heritage Fund for large projects on Amity and Chester Creeks in Duluth, Stewart River near Two Harbors, Vermillion River near Farmington, and Root River near Preston, as well as numerous smaller projects around the state targeting riparian vegetation treatments. Three other grants secured another \$404,000 for work on the Blackhoof and Stewart Rivers. Considerable time was also spent in 2015 crafting and presenting MNTU's funding proposal for the next round of OHF funding. The Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council scored our proposal #2 of the 44 proposals received! We are very hopeful that the 13 month process will result in another appropriation in July 2016.

Critical Challenges

All of the accomplishments outlined above flow directly from MNTU's careful use of a very small operating budget,

which represents less than 2% of overall program activity. The small portion of member dues rebated to the state and chapters do not even cover the costs of printing and distributing this newsletter. MNTU's executive director is not funded in any way by TU dues or national fundraising efforts. Instead MNTU is dependent upon gifts and donations. Unfortunately, unrestricted gifts in 2015, including from our members and local chapters, have lagged and we are at risk of not being able to "keep the lights on". Through grant writing MNTU was able to secure more than \$2.7 Million dollars in 2015 for habitat and education programming. However, none of these funds can be used to fund MNTU's core operations, including grant writing, advocacy, communications, outreach efforts, etc. MNTU must secure significant donations or other unrestricted funding in the next 6 months to be able to continue operations, including its habitat grant writing. We need members and non-members alike to step up and contribute to continue the good work that MNTU is doing.



HAVE A VIDEO OF A SPECIAL FLY FISHING ADVENTURE?

Then submit it to the first ever MNTU Fly Fishing Film and Video Contest

CONTENT

We are seeking short films and videos that showcase fly fishing in the upper Midwest. Share your experiences of connecting with the water, hooking the big one, or that day when all the fish were rising. We encourage entries that display creativity, adventure, exploration and wise resource use.

SUBMISSIONS

- Must be 2-6 minutes long
- Must portray fly fishing in Minnesota, Iowa, Michigan, or Wisconsin
- Any species of fish may be included
- Must contain no copyrighted material without permission
- Must be edited (no uncut video) and have a mixed sound track

HOW TO ENTER

To have your video considered, send a YouTube or Vimeo link of it to blnotbohm@hotmail.com by Friday, February 26th, 2016. Include your phone number with your submission. Entrants of films and videos to be included in the screening will be notified prior to the event on Saturday, March 19th, 2016.

SCREENING AT THE EXPO

Selected films and videos will be screened during an evening event on Saturday, March 19th, 2016 at the Great Waters Flyfishing Expo. Tickets to the evening screening and following social will be available in early 2016. Look for more information online:

www.greatwatersflyexpo.com



MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

Gitchee Gumee Chapter

MNTU helped craft a grant for the North Shore Trout Stream Refuge Project led by the Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI), University of Minnesota Duluth. Volunteers from TU spent many weekends in July and August walking streams collecting site-specific temperature data and mapping the locations of cold water seeps. Cold groundwater is essential for North Shore trout streams, keeping stream temperatures below the thermal limit for trout and steelhead survival and providing base flow during summer. Yet groundwater is not abundant in this region and is particularly important for sustaining these prized coldwater fisheries. The DNR, MNTU and other organizations are focusing habitat restoration and protection efforts on a subset of North Shore watersheds most likely to sustain coldwater fisheries and quality angling into the next century. They need detailed information on the locations of groundwater discharge areas in priority watersheds to most effectively target habitat restoration and watershed protection efforts. North Shore watersheds from the Nemadji River (southern end) to the Canadian border will be included in this study, which will continue in 2016.

This project's success depends upon pairs of volunteers to collect data. Volunteers will walk 1-2 mile long stretches of stream carrying quick-reacting thermometers to find and plot with GPS areas of cool water that can serve as thermal refuges for trout and steelhead. MNTU/GGTU will coordinate volunteer efforts with training and equipment provided by NRRI personnel. More information will be presented in the future for volunteer opportunities.

Chapter meeting season is now underway. The Gitchee Gumee Chapter conducts meetings the 2nd Thursday of most fall and winter months at the Hartley Nature Center in Duluth at 7 pm.

Scheduled dates and topics are:

December 10, 2015 – Winter fishing SE Minnesota Driftless streams

January 14, 2016 – Ice Fishing Arrowhead Trout Lakes

Everyone is always welcome – non-members, children, families, friends and neighbors.

Jon Aspie

Hiawatha Chapter

October 5 was the Hiawatha Trout Unlimited (HTU) member's meeting at the Izaak Walton League Cabin in Rochester, Minnesota, with the third annual chili feed and fly tying night. In the early beginnings of HTU, the first chili feed and fly tying night occurred which brought in many members who enjoyed getting together with like-minded people and having fun doing what they

love: fly tying. We revived it three years ago and found it to be a great way to increase the amount of members showing up for fun-filled events.

November 2 we will have a short update of our habitat improvements, where we are for the end of the 2015 season and what is coming up for 2016. We will also be teaching a class for beginners on the basics of fly fishing, gear, where to fish, and good knots to use.

December 7 will be our annual Christmas party. All members and their better halves are welcome and encouraged to attend. We will have many very nice items for raffle and a potluck. HTU will provide the main dish and beverages. Many wondrous things happen with good company, good food, raffles that feel like opening your presents on Christmas Day (but you get to preview them first to make sure you will like them), snow, and the warm glow of a fire.

January 4 we will be teaching about tactics and tricks for winter fly fishing for trout. All information and times can be found at www.hiawathatu.org.

HTU has wrapped up the 2015 year of habitat improvements (HI) as well. Our HI coordinator Paul Krolak reports that the projects on Pine Creek near Rushford Village, Willow Creek, Newburg Creek, Mill Creek in Chatfield, Blagsvedt Creek just outside of Preston, and logging on Trout Run, just outside of Chatfield, have been completed. Nearly four miles of streams were worked on in 2015. Stream projects in 2016 include East Indian Creek, Mill Creek (new channel and continued vegetation planting from 2015), Lynch Creek, and South Branch of the Root River in Preston. Another three to four miles will be worked on in 2016.

Final thoughts – I want to remind everyone of the new regulation rule changes that the Department of Natural Resources Fisheries (DNR) made at the end of last year. October 15 is the end of catch and release season for all streams in Southeast Minnesota. From October 16 until the end of December Whitewater, Forestville, and Beaver State Parks will be open in the park boundaries to catch and release only. January 1 until the opener in mid April will be catch and release only, but in all streams. They also did away with the barbless hook rule, but I strongly encourage everyone to continue that practice. You really won't lose that many fish and it cuts down on the release time while also being healthier for the trout we love. I encourage all TU members to continue their support both financially and in service to their chapters. Encourage youth and women to join you on the streams as well. Tight lines.

Phil Pankow



PARTICIPANTS IN THE WIN-CRES WORKDAY THIS SEASON ON RUSH CREEK.

Headwaters Chapter

Community Fly Tying nights - This past winter set a new record with 96 total participants, 23 new tyers and 13 ladies attending the 6 sessions. It is free instruction with Jeff Korbel and beginners are welcome. Sponsored by TU Headwaters Chapter at the Garden Pub and Grill, 5:00-5:30PM Set up and order food, 6-6:30 start tying, Nov 12, Dec 3, Jan. 7 & 28, Feb 25. Call Bob Wagner if you are a beginner and/or need equipment.

New Women's Flyfishing - Thanks to our two chairpersons, Rose Brown & Val Wagner, new opportunities are underway to promote and support women in flyfishing.

A special flyfishing weekend for ladies is being planned for beginners to learn what flyfishing is all about. More details after the New Year, a weekend is planned for early summer.

Trout in the Classroom (TIC) - Steve Young, Program Coordinator & Board Member. Our chapter has begun its ninth year of TIC at Northern Elementary School in Bemidji. Five hundred eyed brown and rainbow eggs have been ordered from the DNR set to arrive the 2nd week in November. This year instead of separating the eggs we will mix brown and rainbows in each of our two tanks giving the kids opportunity to examine and compare differences in growth, coloration, behavior and (unfortunately for rainbows) piscivorous tendencies.

Straight River - John Sorensen, Straight River committee representative & Board Member.

June Hex hatch was productive with 24" and 23" Browns back-to-back in night fishing. Mike Kelly, fisheries specialist Park Rapids, reports good water temps thru summer monitor checks, plus survey results show strong reproduction rates. Currently we are working to secure easements rights downstream from Osage. Future stream work, which has been approved, will help further improve

the Straight by narrowing and deepening the flow with cooler water.

Clearwater River - Tony Standera Fisheries Specialist Bemidji reports for the first time significant natural reproduction is taking place. Future projects are planned for next year including fencing and a cattle watering spot with rock restraining guards.

Necktie and Sucker River - both are natural reproducing Brook Trout streams with survey results showing a definite bounce back with higher numbers than the past three years.

**Special "Congratulations" to board members, great volunteers, founding fathers of our chapter, Gale Brooks 90 years young and Vince Cafaro 88 years young and both guys still fly fish! That's real inspiration.

Bob Wagner

Mid-Minnesota Chapter

The Mid-Minnesota Chapter had a good season working on Little Rock Creek near Rice, MN. Check out the article and photos on page 8 for more information.

For more information on the Mid-Minnesota chapter and to get involved with the Little Rock Creek project, contact chapter president Micah Barrett at (320) 241-0870.

Twin Cities Chapter

The Twin Cities Chapter of Trout Unlimited has been busy and has quite a few events scheduled. Regular chapter meetings are held at Wood Lake Nature Center in Richfield on Lake Shore Drive and begin at 6:30 p.m.

MNTU CHAPTER NEWS



There is no December meeting scheduled because of the Christmas holiday but the next meeting will be January 26th at Wood Lake Nature Center. The February meeting will be held at Surley Brewing's tap room, check out the details below. Watch for additional information in your email and check the events calendar at twincities.tu.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Thursday, December 17, 2015 – Trout on Tap – Drink local beer, enjoy local music, watch some fly tying and talk trout fishing each month at a different Twin Cities Brew House.

5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Able Seedhouse and Brewery, 1121 Quincy St. NE, Minneapolis.

Tuesday, January 26, 2016 – “Ask Us Anything About Trout Fishing in Minnesota and Western Wisconsin.” Learn everything you want to know from the local experts on our panel!

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Wood Lake Nature Center, 6710 Lakeshore Dr. Richfield

Monday, February 15, 2016 – Twin Cities TU Special Event at Surly Brewing: Exclusive preview of a new book on SE MN trout fishing from author Bob Trevis, expert fly fishing guide. His website is www.troutchasers.net

6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Surly Brewing, 520 Malcolm Ave. SE, Minneapolis. Also keep checking the events calendar at www.TwinCitiesTU.org.

Go to our Facebook page and like us, then under More, set your notifications to be alerted when we hold an event near you. <https://www.facebook.com/Twin-Cities-Trout-Unlimited-TC-TU-503634533028835/>

Got a question? Email us: info@twincitiestu.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITES

Interested in getting involved in our habitat work? Contact Tony Nelson @ 952-486-2282 or Tony@1igprint.com

Tony Nelson

Win-Cres Chapter

Win-Cres Trout Unlimited had a busy summer outside of fishing. Members worked with Whitewater State Park staff to lead kids and parents on a trout fishing experience. After several hours of fishing, the families returned to the Welcome Center for a lunch provided by Win-Cres.

Chapter members helped the Lewiston Sportmen's Club with their “Kids in the Outdoors” education program by providing instruction on casting and fishing, and lending a hand at Lake Winona during a fishing experience for 40 youngsters.

We visited Garvin Brook more than a few times to look at plans for habitat improvement below our recent project on state land. The new project is on Tom Oevering's property below the railroad trestle where last year's project ended. Plans and permits are nearly complete. Hopefully, work will begin there in the spring.

We also spent time with the MN Conservation Corps addressing the issue of Japanese knotweed on Garvin. Working with Jaime Edwards (MN DNR) we spent a few half-days spraying the knotweed with Milestone and Polaris. Our efforts were aided by donations from the MN Conservation Corps of herbicides, spraying equipment from TU DARE, and time from Win-Cres members and conservation crew workers. The spraying efforts have shown a good effect. The real story will come in the spring when we see how many new plants reappear. We are aware this is a multi-year project. We also, with the help of Steve Erickson from Lanesboro Fisheries and Neal

Mundahl's students at WSU, built cribs for habitat improvement on Rush Creek.

On a warm summer day, a half-dozen Win-Cres members cleared the lower end of East Beaver Creek of overhanging trees and other debris. Mike Jersek reports the fishing access is much improved.

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

Joe Lepley



PARTICIPANTS PRACTICING CASTING ALONG HAY CREEK NEAR REDWING, MINN.



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Obsess with the obsessives
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FISHING IS SPOKEN HERE.

Thursday, Dec 17th - Able Seedhouse & Brewery
1121 Quincy St NE, Minneapolis

Tuesday, Jan 19th - Fair State Brewing Coop
2506 Central Ave NE, Minneapolis

Thursday, Feb 25th - Lake Monster Brewing
550 Vandalia Street, St Paul

WANT TO GET THIS NEWSLETTER?

THERE ARE NOW **TWO** WAYS!

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Healthy streams benefit everyone, not just anglers.

We'll assign you to a local MN chapter. Chapters meet regularly to hear about fishing hot spots, discuss conservation issues, plan work days on their home waters, organize fundraisers, and of course, swap a few fish tales and learn how to tie the latest fly patterns.

All members also receive this publication as well as TROUT, TU's national magazine. Other benefits include a 16-month TU calendar, car rental & hotel discounts and more. TU offers a variety of membership categories.

Visit www.tu.org today to sign up.

OR SUBSCRIBE!

TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA IS NOW OFFERING SUBSCRIPTIONS

For those of you who are members in other chapters in other states, or who would like to directly support MNTU's newsletter, we are now welcoming subscribers to the newsletter. Sign up to get three colorful issues annually. Mail in this form today to receive the next issue arriving this fall in November!

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VOLUNTEERS AND MN DNR FISHERIES STAFF SURVEY LITTLE ROCK CREEK NEAR RICE, MN. LEARN ABOUT EFFORTS TO RESTORE AND ENHANCE THE STREAM ON PAGE 5.

REELING IT IN

Observations on Tying a New Fly

By Sam Troutt

In the cold frozen north that is Minnesota, winter is a time for introspection, dreaming, and the tying of flies. From one season to the next, my boxes stay pretty much the same. A menagerie of nymphs occupy one box, a mixture of bead-head patterns and natural imitations. From caddisflies, to scuds, to the classic mayfly nymph patterns, they make the heart of a box to be used in the Driftless Region. My dry fly box varies with the seasons, small mayflies early on, followed by caddisflies, and then 27 different versions of small yellow mayflies to take advantage of all the pale little yellow things that flit about in May and June.

It is these small yellow mayflies that can confound the anglers, myself included. Once I spent the better part of a cloudy day casting every pattern that I had to a pod of large, rising brown trout. They rose and sipped in pairs and singles, big fish hovering just below the water's surface. Giant fish were in there too, including some that seemed for all intents and purposes to break that magic

mark of over two feet long. When the hatch started and the fish began to rise, I felt that I had found Nirvana. I had the right flies, the hatch was going and the fish were eating with abandon. I quickly learned that fish don't get that large by chance. While I pulled a number of respectable fish out of the pod, the big fish refused all flies and yet they continued to rise. I don't know how many thousands of drifts I actually cast over those fish. I tried nearly every fly that I had. Then I finally got down on my hands and knees to look at the level surface of the water and see what those big fish were taking.

It was a revelation when I finally saw it, a hatch within a hatch. While nearly all of the fish were eating mayflies, the largest fish were eating only craneflies. I quickly used some scissors to create a version that I could use from an old cad-dis pattern. Within a few casts, a nice fish, not a huge one, took the fly. The need for another pattern was added to my box.

It's time to tie up some crane fly patterns.

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Minnesota TU is the leading voice, your voice, advocating for coldwater fisheries and watersheds in Minnesota and the region. Our effective advocacy work and successful habitat grant writing efforts **cannot continue without your direct financial support of Minnesota TU.** We receive none of the donations raised from TU's direct mail and other fundraising efforts, and the small portion of your membership dues we receive is less than the cost to print and mail this newsletter. We need direct support from you - members and non-members alike - to keep us working effectively for you, your family and your friends. Every dollar of that donation will be used here in Minnesota.

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