

TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - November 2016

Fishing The Vermillion River
Trolling the Web
Book Review - Chasing Rumor
Beyond Minnesota - Fishing Sitka, AK
Fly Tying - The Hare & Copper Nymph
Trout Stream Easements

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ON THE COVER

Tannin stained water churns toward Lake Superior as the Sucker River descends one of many falls as it drops over 1000 feet on its twisting route. Jade Thomason photo.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Trout Stream Easements
- 2017 Expo Headliners!
- Fishing the Vermillion River
- Including TU in your will
- And much more!

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MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

Another Great Year!

By JP Little, Minnesota Council Chair

Welcome to the 2016 fall Minnesota Trout Unlimited statewide newsletter. The summer of 2016 was a glorious one, one in which I think I only watered my yard one time! Trout streams have been full of water all summer, sometimes too full.

Loads of productive habitat improvement has occurred AGAIN this year, and we continue to use the ongoing Lessard grant money to great effect across the state. John Lenczewski, our Executive Director, just secured the Round 8 funds of \$1.975MM. John has raised in excess of \$15MM in funds during the years the Outdoor Heritage Fund has been in existence, and over 30 miles of streams have been improved.

I am very pleased to announce to every-

one who reads this publication that our esteemed editor of Trout Unlimited Minnesota was the winner of the 2016 Trout Unlimited National “Distinguished Service – Communications” award for the statewide newsletter. Carl Haensel, with a big help from Jade Thomason, has been putting out a great product, three times a year, since 2013. Carl accepted the award at the annual Trout Unlimited National meeting in September in Bozeman, MT. Thanks to all the writers who have contributed great content from across the state. We have the top newsletter in the country!

As we head into winter, keep in mind there are many trout fishing options across the state. A number of streams that flow into Lake Superior are open to continuous fishing, as well as many



streams in SE MN. Check out the regulations from the DNR to understand your options.

Tight Lines!

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AN ANGLER WAITS FOR A TAKE WHILE WADING A SE MINNESOTA TROUT STREAM. EASEMENTS ARE VITAL TO ALLOW ANGLERS TO ACCESS STREAMS IN SE MN AND AROUND THE STATE. LEARN MORE ABOUT EASEMENTS ON PAGE 10.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Embracing the Coming Season

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

Every fall it hits me and stops me in my tracks. I am rushing outside headed for a meeting when I feel the smack of the first truly cold air of the season. I stop before I open the car door and just take it in. Slowly breathing in the crisp air. Reacquainting myself with the unique smell of frosty air. If I tarry long enough my eyes might even water a little. I do not cringe, but smile. If it happens early enough, before I have made my first scramble north to Brule River, I will get positively squirrely. For some the cold air brings the urge to throw a football or grab a birding gun. For me, the frosty fall air signals that it is time to grab the steelheading rod and head to Lake Superior. The same cold air that pulls me north also pulls steelhead from the Lake. The prospect of a silver rocket intercepting my fly's swing makes the drive seem short.

This fall has been very mild and, as I write this, the first blast of 20 degree air has yet to visit the Twin Cities area. I will be ready to embrace it when it arrives.

Winter is not far off and I find myself hoping for a "real" one this year - with snow by Thanksgiving and single digit mornings by Christmas. And plenty of snow to play in. Our northern ecosystems, including our fisheries, depend upon snow and enough cold to keep things frozen until March or April. Some early cold, followed by a good blanket of snow before subzero January would be good for our natural world. Last year's mild weather and heavy rains in place of snow prevented the formation of frost, messing up runoff patterns and making for longer stretches of low, warm summer water. The lack of frost even interfered with lowland brush cutting needed to prepare riparian forest for restoration plantings. We will try again this season, but need Old Man Winter to visit like he used to.

The saying we grew up with in Minnesota still holds true today: There is no such thing as bad weather, only poor clothing choices. Indeed, newer high-tech fabrics keep us warmer and drier than ever. So buy yourself a few special layers and



keep your fly rod handy. When that cold air finally arrives do not cower. Instead put on your layers and visit one of the southeast Minnesota state parks open to trout angling year round. Start a new tradition of welcoming that first bite of cold air with artificial nymphs drifted through limestone lined pools.

Embrace the Season!



A MASSIVE WILD BROWN TROUT FROM THE VERMILLION RIVER. LEARN MORE ON PAGE 4.

EDITOR'S ANGLE

Summertime Explorations

By Carl Haensel, Editor

With the steelhead season closing on the South Shore of Lake Superior, it's time to think about preparing for the next trout season. Nearly continuous at this time, the fishing opportunities keep on increasing around the state and region. Die-hard anglers can hit the MN State Parks in the SE corner for stream trout, and more intrepid anglers may venture down to Iowa. Extra warm days at the end of the season lead us all to think about heading out during a season that often brings snow, wind and cold. The 25th anniversary of the Halloween blizzard came this season, and with it a reminder that weather in Minnesota, while often glorious, is also often fickle.

As you dream of next season, take the time to check out the programming

available to you at your local TU meetings, happening this season around the state. With winter fly tying programs around, it's a great time to share stories of the warmer months, tie some flies, plan for spring and get involved.

For those interested in becoming involved with *Trout Unlimited Minnesota*, winter is a great time to consider writing or providing photographs for next season's issues. Our upcoming copy deadline is January 15th for the issue that will be coming out prior to the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo. If you would like to get involved, send an email off to editor@mntu.org. We hope to hear from you this season!

Stay warm and keep casting!



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FISHING OUR HABITAT WORK: THE VERMILLION RIVER

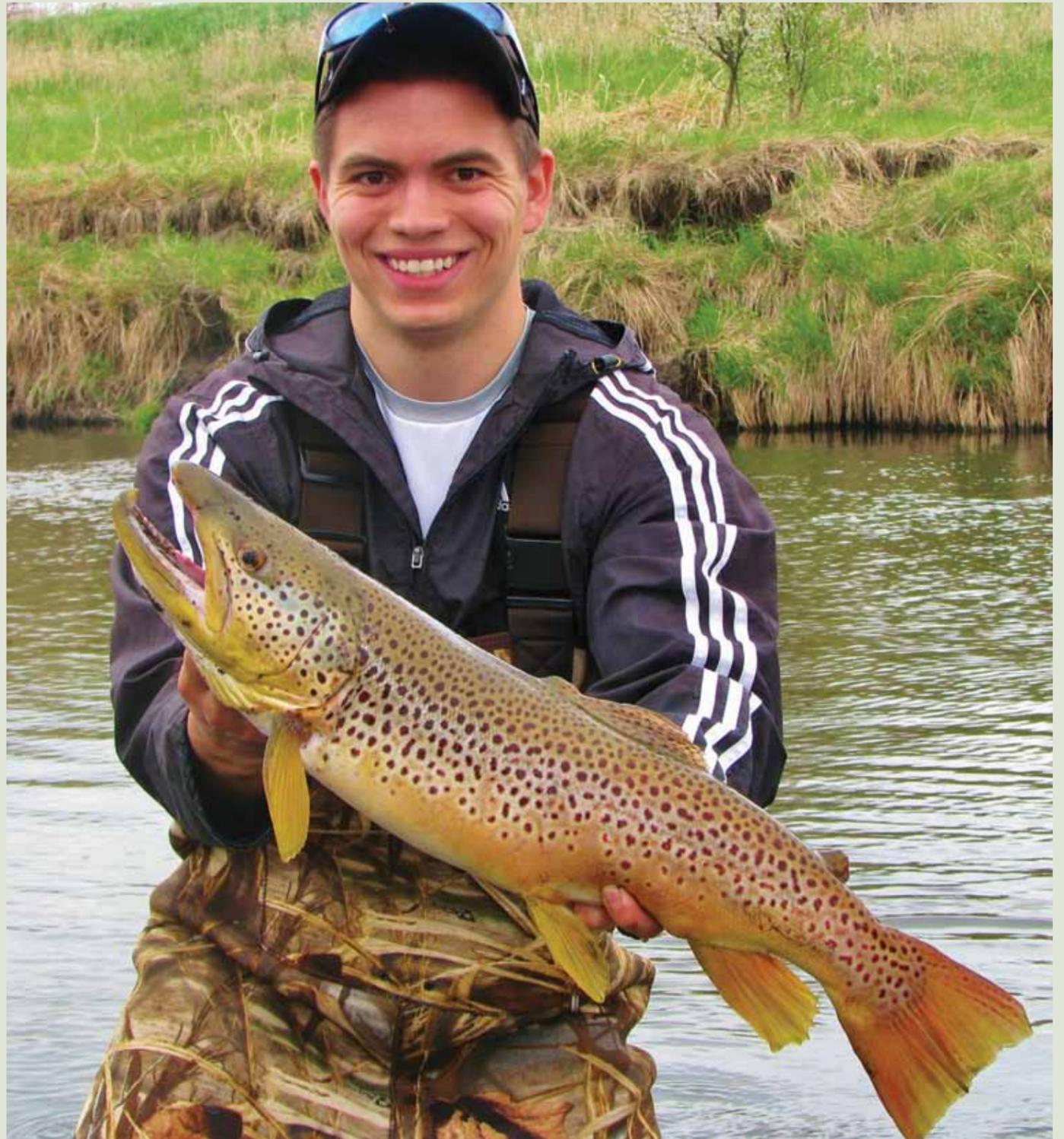
Connecting with Big Metro Area Browns

By Matthew Doth

Put your feet down anywhere in Minnesota, close your eyes and throw a stone; it is likely going to hit some fishable water. We have a wealth of places in this state for fishing walleye, pike, bass, muskie, you name it, and all within minutes of downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul. A little known river just as close as these other places offers the only Blue Ribbon trout water within a major metropolitan area in the entire country. The Vermillion River in Dakota County offers one of the best opportunities to catch one of the largest stream-resident wild brown trout that you can find in the entire Midwest. Not being traditional trout water, it can be a bit frustrating to try and figure it out. This article will help shave off a little of that learning curve time, and give a few pointers from my experience guiding and fishing this unique and amazing fishery.

Access is now better than ever on the Vermillion due to the state's efforts in acquiring property along the river and the creation of several new Aquatic Management Areas. Over the past few years in cooperation with the state, Twin Cities Trout Unlimited (TCTU) has created miles of rehabilitated stream, as well as new habitat to harbor giant trout. When you combine habitat and the ability this river has to provide forage to trout, you end up with an incredible trophy stream. So then the question becomes how do you fish it?

I mentioned that the Vermillion is not a traditional trout stream. This stream is devoid of the numerous rock substrates, riffles and boulders that areas like southeastern Minnesota provide. The stream is not muddy, but it lacks main stream structure in most areas. For this reason, trout in the Vermillion are very bank related and tend to be vagabonds rather than homebodies. The "V," as I like to call it, has a way of humbling, as well as frustrating you. There are plenty of locations that have deeper runs or pools, as well as plenty of cut banks and areas littered with wood. When you look at some of the TU restoration areas, you cannot help but think of how many trout are hiding in these stretches. It is these areas you will certainly want to concentrate



A HEALTHY WILD MALE BROWN TROUT FROM THE VERMILLION RIVER IN DAKOTA COUNTY, MN

on. Large fish live here and these areas produce. Here comes the frustrating part and time and time again these areas will have you questioning your sanity as you continue to offer up perfect casts and presentations with nothing happening. Many times early on fishing the Vermillion I have blindly stomped up stream, passing what I thought were marginal locations, only to spook off what was nothing less than a spectacularly huge trout. I

have seen large trout in a foot and a half of water seemingly sunning themselves. It pays to fish everything on the Vermillion. Similar to muskie fishing you will want to cover water. Don't work too fast of a pace, but also don't linger too long. Every cast has potential.

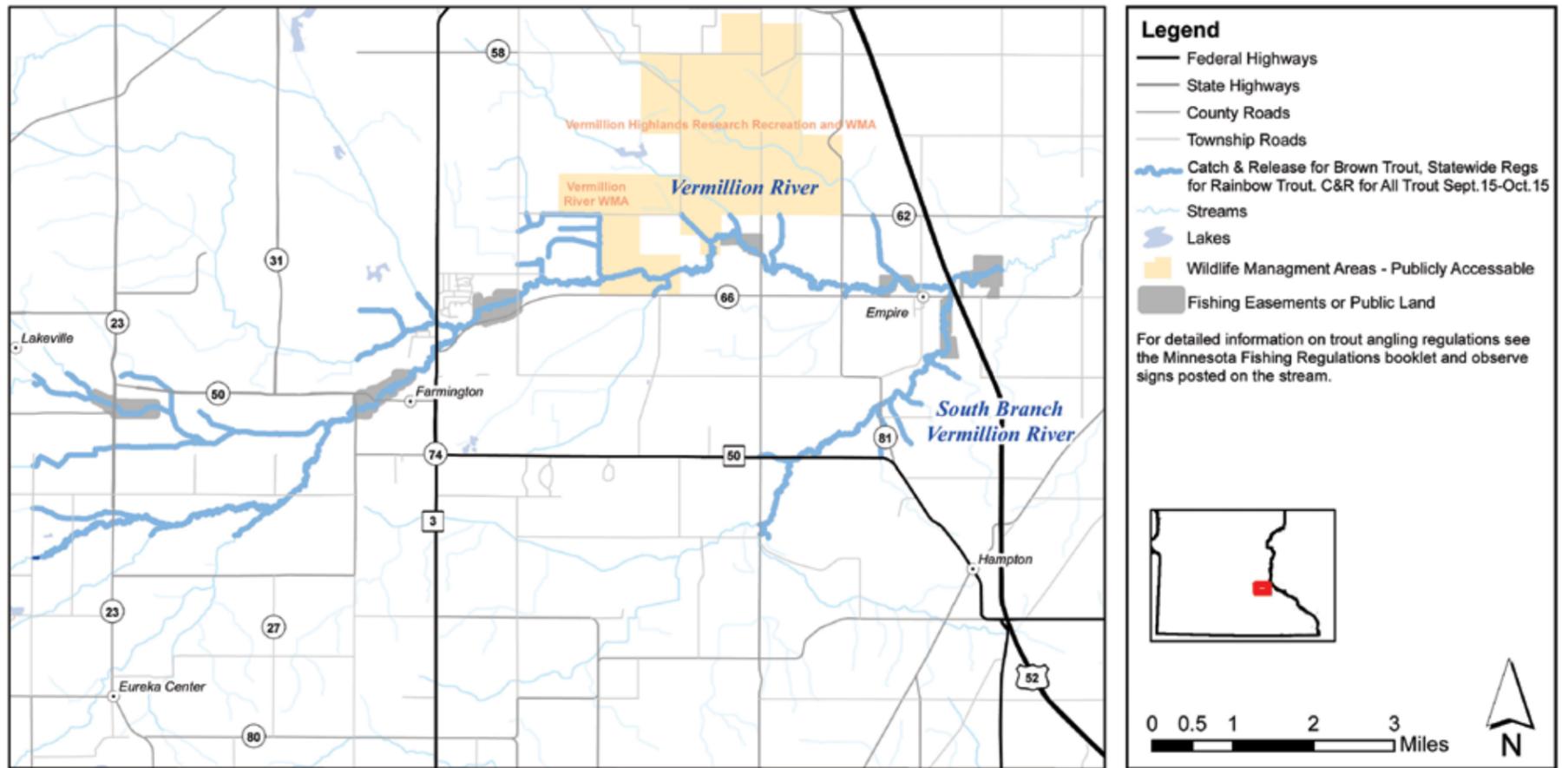
The Vermillion has an abundance of forage and prey for trout. Spring provides a legion of leopard frogs, crayfish, and

nymph opportunities for larger stonefly patterns (think black colors here), as well as many scurrying mice in the grassland portions of the stream. Come late summer and early fall, you can add in armies of grasshoppers of all sizes up to the first frosts. There is a mayfly hatch that will happen anywhere from mid-June to mid-July, it comes quick and ends fast. I have yet to hit it. My suggestion would be to leave the dry flies at home. I have spent a lot of time on this stream and have yet to witness a large trout take something off the top. Research shows that large brown trout, those at the 20 inch or larger range, have a diet that consists of 90% fish. This is very much true on the Vermillion. There is an abundance of minnow species that should be at the top of the list in your streamer box. The clear and number one choice for me is the emerald shiner. I love patterns with some teal glitter, along with a hint or tickle of peach or orange. I am not a fan of things that stand out too much so don't go overboard. Trophy fish can be incredibly tight lipped and rather particular.

Other minnow patterns that should be



ANOTHER WILD BROWN TROUT READY FOR RELEASE ON THE VERMILLION RIVER



FIND THE BEST TROUT FISHING ON THE VERMILLION RIVER IN THE LAKEVILLE, FARMINGTON AND EMPIRE AREAS. MAP COURTESY OF THE MN DNR.

part of the mix for the Vermillion are creek chubs, white suckers, madtoms, and redbfin shiners. All of these species represent something that is worth chasing for a large brown. I would suggest studying some photos of these species and “matching the hatch” as we say. Don’t be afraid to throw patterns that are 4 to 5 inches long either, at all times of the year. Depending on the water level and pace of the flow, some forward weight to the fly may be necessary to get it down in the water column. I have seen fish that were very aggressive come three feet to hit a presentation, but as a rule I would say you want to be down to the half way mark of the water column for depth. The Vermillion does swell quickly with run off from heavier rain events, but it also tends to drop and clear rather well. It will come as no surprise that my best days have come with overcast low clouds, even with light rain and cool conditions. If it is possible to time your efforts for this kind of weather you are going to increase your odds at hookups. Even better would be to time it with a decreasing water level and increasing water clarity. Any day is a good day to fish, we all know that, and in the same respect I have caught large fish on those imperfect “blue bird” days as well.

Nothing improves ones chances on any

stream like learning in the classroom of Mother Nature. Standing on the Vermillion and putting your own knowledge and time in is going to pay dividends. If there is anything I have learned about fishing the Vermillion, in a simple summary, it is this: cover ground, work everything that seems deep enough to hold a fish, use minnow patterns and throw something that is worth a big fat old brown to get off the couch to eat. Grab your 5 or 6 weight rod, a good 3X tippet and go into it with realistic expectations and some patience. The Vermillion is a very satisfying and unique river to fish. Yes, off in the distance you are likely to hear that occasional plane flying over into the Lindbergh Terminal, or cars rushing down Highway 52, but nowhere else in this great country will you find a trophy trout stream so close to home! Let me leave you with a reminder of how important this river is, how delicate a fishery it is, that our work here is not done, and that it is our responsibility to continue to protect and improve The “V”!

Editor’s Note: Check out the Minnesota DNR webs site for access information, details about aquatic management areas and current fishing regulations. Find the recreation compass and detailed maps on the web site here: www.dnr.state.mn.us/maps/compass.html Find contact information for guide Matthew Doth at www.mahiganoutdoors.com

Effective Catch and Release

By John Lenczewski

Flies, jigs, spinners and lures are effective trout catchers, but treble hooks on some lures can make releasing fish unharmed difficult at times. While keeping a few smaller fish in the fertile southeast MN streams will not adversely impact the population, doing lethal harm to large trout or on catch and release waters such as the Vermillion is problematic. Spin fishers have developed several strategies to reduce the chances of seriously harming trout that you can try:

Pinching down or filing off all of the barbs on the treble hooks is perhaps the most common practice. While I prefer to carefully pinch down barbs with flat needle nose pliers, others feel this can create small fractures in the hook point which can later fail. If your lure comes with high carbon steel hooks, which are more brittle, you might consider carefully filing off the barbs.

Clip off two of the three trebles at their bends, effectively leaving a single hook. Alternately, clip off the treble hook entirely, install a small split ring and attach a new, laser sharp single hook. Some of the larger spinners, including the Blue Fox line, are sold with

a replacement hook included. West Coast anglers have been experimenting with these for years and some anglers swear that a sharp single, barbless hook results in more fish landed.

Remove one of the two treble hooks on Rapala style lures and fish with a single barbless treble. The DNR’s Mark Nemeth reports that it is not uncommon for the second treble to become embedded in a trout’s gills on the outside of the mouth. Damage to gills can be fatal for the trout, even if they swim away upon release.

Fishing a single, barbless hook on a Rapala may seem odd at first, but fly anglers know how effective a single sharp hook can be. For a time, several MN streams had artificials only, single hook restrictions in place. Rapala aficionados found that while they might hook a few less trout, their hookups tended to be more secure and just as many, or more, were landed in a day.

We hope these tips help you fine tune your lures and make them less lethal to ensure that released fish are there the next time you or another angler visits the river.



THE VERMILLION RIVER WINDS THROUGH A MNTU RESTORED REACH. AN OLD CHANNELIZED STRETCH IS TO THE RIGHT.

BEYOND MINNESOTA

Sitka, Alaska: A Photo Essay

By Jade Thomason



CHUM SALMON AND MISTY MOUNTAINS (ABOVE)

SITKA IS NESTLED AT THE BASE OF SNOWCAPPED MOUNTAINS AND MOST RIVER ACCESS IS VERY CLOSE TO THE OCEAN. MY TIMING IN SITKA LINED UP WITH THE CHUM AND PINK SALMON RUNS. WHILE THESE FISH AREN'T THE MOST PRIZED SPECIES IN ALASKA, THEY PUT UP A PHENOMENAL FIGHT.

SALMON PACKED RIVERS (LEFT)

BARANOFF ISLAND, HOME TO SITKA, HOSTS ALL FIVE SPECIES OF SALMON, AS WELL AS STEELHEAD, CUTTHROAT, RAINBOWS, AND GRAYLING. THE LOCALS TEND TO LEAVE THE FRESHWATER FISHING ALONE SO YOU CAN OFTEN FIND EMPTY WILDERNESS SHORELINES READY TO EXPLORE.



DOLLY VARDEN

BRIGHT DOLLY VARDEN CAN BE A SIDE CHALLENGE TO CATCH WHEN YOU ARE OUT CASTING FOR SALMON. USE SMALLER FLIES AND TRY TO GET THEM BENEATH AND BETWEEN THE SALMON FOR A CHANCE TO CATCH THESE CHROME FIGHTERS. EGG PATTERNS ARE KEY WHEN THE DOLLIES ARE ACTIVELY FEEDING.



THE SEASIDE TOWN OF SITKA

SITKA IS AN EXCELLENT LAUNCH POINT FOR ALL THINGS FISHING. A QUAIN TOWN OF UNDER 10,000, IT OFFERS PHENOMAL FOOD AND AMPLE LODGING. SITKA ALSO HAS A VERY STRONG TIE TO THE LOCAL NATIVE POPULATION AND HAS MANY INTERESTING CULTURAL RESOURCES. AS AN ADDITIONAL BENEFIT, I FOUND QUALITY SHORE FISHING RIGHT IN TOWN FOR SALMON AND ROCKFISH.



PINK SALMON

PINK SALMON WERE EXTREMELY PLENTIFUL IN AND AROUND SITKA AND FRESH FISH WERE MORE THAN WILLING TO TAKE ANY FLY THAT WAS PINK AND FLUFFY.



TEMPERATE RAINFOREST PLAYGROUND

RECEIVING OVER 130" OF PRECIPITATION, THE VAST MAJORITY FALLING AS RAIN, SITKA IS A PART OF THE LARGEST TEMPERATE RAINFOREST IN THE WORLD. BANANA SLUGS AND DENSE MATS OF MOSSES ARE COMMON SIGHTINGS UNDERFOOT.



LOST TROUT STREAMS OF BURNSVILLE AND EAGAN

Update

By Dan Callahan



LOOKING DOWNSTREAM AT BLACK DOG LAKE ALONG THE MINNESOTA RIVER, THE END OF ALL THE MINNESOTA VALLEY TROUT STREAMS.

We won! The MNDNR has withdrawn its plan to strip trout stream protections from Naas Creek in Burnsville (on official records, known as “Unnamed #4”) and Harnack/Black Dog Creek in Eagan. The City of Burnsville is updating its Water Resources Management Plan right now, which may be the mechanism to start the restoration process. You might remember a series of articles about these “Lost Trout Streams” in the last three editions of Trout Unlimited Minnesota.

The Twin Cities TU chapter (TCTU) started investigating these tiny metro trout streams after the DNR announced plans to remove them, and several others, from the official state Designated Trout Stream (DST) list. Streams on the list receive the highest protection from

is viable for restoration. We found records showing that the DNR even had proposed a restoration plan in the early 2000s, but never followed through. Now that it will remain protected as a trout stream, we can take steps to restore Naas Creek. We’re calling Unnamed #4 the Naas family name, because the creek supplied water for their fishing ponds when they ran the Cedar Hills Trout Farm in the late 1950s and early 1960s in Burnsville Township, right next to the Eagan border.

Naas Creek’s watershed includes six or more springs in Burnsville and Eagan at the base of the river bluff, joining to flow north through the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge and into Black Dog Lake. It’s about one mile west of the Cedar Avenue Bridge (MN Hwy. 77),



MARKED BY THE WHITE SIGNS, THE REFUGE ENTRANCE LIES BETWEEN THESE HOUSES

pollution, as well as other special regulations.

Another stream in Burnsville, Unnamed #7, will be going off the list. Our investigation showed it is badly degraded and has little water flow. But our investigation revealed Naas Creek

which is why the stream also has also been called “One Mile Creek.”

If you do a Google search for “DNR Unnamed #4” you’ll find a fisheries web page describing the stream, including how it can only be reached by trespassing west along the railroad tracks from

Nicols Road, which is not true.

Our new research turned up that the Refuge actually has a public entrance to this area, off Hayes Drive in Burnsville (Google 3104 Hayes Drive. The entrance is to the left. Don’t be put off by walking through the backyards. The adjoining homeowners extend their lawns onto the Refuge property).

The access follows the road the Naas family built so people could drive down to the trout ponds. The road is completely overgrown and gullied in spots, with lots of deadfalls to skirt, but it provides the public access, and equipment access, needed to make this a viable restoration candidate.

If you plan to visit, carry a walking stick and wear hip boots. Upper Naas Creek is full of spring holes, old beaver ponds, and wetlands that you can sink into easily.

Harnack/Black Dog Creek also owes its name to MN Hwy. 77, which buried the upper reaches of Black Dog Creek, leaving only its amputated lower course on the east side of the highway.

Harnack Creek starts from several springs at the base of the bluff in Eagan, then runs north between the highway and Nicols Road, which is old Cedar Avenue. You can see Harnack if you are driving north on MN Hwy. 77. Look for the flashing electronic billboard. Harnack runs past the base of it.

Once past the billboard, Harnack runs in a ditch and drops through a series of small beaver dams along the edge of a stormwater pond. It runs under Nicols Road through a concrete culvert, re-emerging to drop about a foot as a waterfall off the end of the perched culvert. A short distance later, it joins Black Dog Creek as it flows through Fort Snelling

State Park into the Minnesota River. The lower portion gets a lot of Eagan stormwater, and is likely too warm to support trout.

Harnack, however, has good water quality. The upper reaches are pretty, crystal-clear rills, but Naas has better prospects for restoration, because of its longer length and higher water volume. Breaching the two beaver-enlarged trout ponds in Upper Naas Creek will help keep temperatures cooler.

The chief challenge for Lower Naas Creek is getting a railroad culvert re-opened.

For most of the last century, a culvert carried another creek, which flows from Burnsville’s Cedarbridge Park, under the railroad tracks and into Black Dog Lake. As subdivisions developed, the city ran the surrounding neighborhoods’ stormwater into the creek, and under the tracks.

However, that major culvert is now blocked, diverting the stormwater north-eastward along the railroad tracks until the stormwater reaches, and pollutes, Lower Naas Creek.

The first step is getting the stakeholders together to work on this. It could involve the City of Burnsville, the City of Eagan, Dakota County, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, MNDNR, MPCA, BWSR, the Lower Minnesota Watershed District, the Black Dog Watershed Management Organization, and importantly, the Union Pacific Railroad.

Editors Note: Contact Dan Callahan, our Communications Coordinator, for more information on these streams and to get involved with their protection and restoration in the future. Dan’s information is on page three on the letterhead.



FLY TYING

With Laughing Trout Fly Fishing

By Paul Johnson



The Hare & Copper is a fly pattern that I picked up several years ago at Parks Fly Shop in Gardiner Montana. The fly was created by and originally tied for the shop by the fine gentleman, Matt Minch. I have had the good fortune to visit with and get to know Matt a little over the past couple of years.

The fly is really just a variation of the standard Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear Nymph. It is also pretty straight forward to tie. As a side note, I will substitute Super Brite Peacock Dubbing for the thorax on the fly. I just think it dresses up the fly a bit more.

Another cool thing about this fly is that it gives you another way to use up some of the bigger feathers that you have left on you Hungarian Partridge skin. Yes, that would be that Partridge skin that is on the bottom of all of your tying supplies. The one that you really should have thrown away, but just couldn't make yourself!

I have had some good success with this pattern here in Minnesota and Western Wisconsin. Tie up a few and see how they work for you.

Tight Lines!

Hare & Copper Nymph

Materials List

- Hook Nymph hook, 1xl or 2xl, size 10-18
- Thread Uni 6/0 or 8/0 Tan
- Bead Copper or Gold, size to match hook
- Tail Hungarian Partridge
- Abdomen Hare's mask dubbing
- Rib Copper wire, size brassie
- Wing Hungarian Partridge
- Thorax Hare's mask dubbing



Tying Instructions:



Step 1. Mount the bead and insert the hook in the vise. Start your thread at the 2/3 point and lay a smooth thread base to the bend of the hook.



Step 2. Prepare a partridge feather by stripping off the fuzzy end. Grab the feather by the tip and pull back the remaining feathers.



Step 3. Tie in the partridge feather by the tip to form the tail. It should be about 1/2 the hook shank in length. Clip the remaining butt end.



Step 4. Tie in a length of copper wire at the bend.



Step 5. Form a dubbing noodle on your tying thread with the hare's mask dubbing.



Step 6. Wrap the dubbing noodle forward to form a slightly tapered body to the 2/3 point.



Step 7. Counter wrap your wire in evenly-spaced wraps to the 2/3 point.



Step 8. Take the remaining part of your Hungarian partridge feather and pull the fibers back to form a "V."



Step 9. Tie in the partridge feather at the 2/3 point. The feather should extend to the end of the abdomen.



Step 10. Form another short dubbing noodle and wrap the noodle forward to the bead. Whip finish.



Top View. The finished fly viewed from above

CHUBB'S PATENT REEL SEAT AND FISHING ROD TRIMMINGS.

SIX-STRIP SPLIT BAMBOO HENSHALL ROD.

This cut represents our "Henshall" Split Bamboo Bass Rod; length, 8 feet 3 3-10 inches; weight, 8 oz. This rod has extra tip, light wood hand-grasp whipped with cane. Metal reel seat, or reel bands, as preferred. Hexagonal cap ferrules, with welt, no dowels, anti-friction tie guides. Three ring tops, nickel-plated trimmings fastened on. These rods are all ready for use, with the exception of winding and varnishing, for \$7.50. This rod is made according to the dimensions given us by Dr. Henshall, and is endorsed by him as a "Standard Henshall Rod." Above rod with German silver trimmings, instead of nickel, \$9.25. Also Trout and Bass Fly Rods of same finish and best style, from 9 to 12 feet in length, and from 6 to 12 oz. in weight, with nickel trimmings, for \$7.50 each, or German silver trimmings for \$9.00 each. Send for catalogue of Amateur and Rod Makers' Supplies, to

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TROUT STREAM EASEMENTS

Is Minnesota Dropping the Ball?

By John Lenczewski

Trout stream easements are a critical tool for protecting the banks and riparian corridors of Minnesota trout streams, providing public angling access, and enabling habitat restoration work to be done. The Minnesota DNR's program of acquiring permanent trout stream easements is arguably the most important program available for protecting and improving trout streams and trout angling. Passage of the Legacy Amendment in November 2008 created a dedicated fund for natural resource protection which should have meant a substantial, sustained increase in easement acquisitions, yet the DNR has struggled to take advantage of this funding. There are also disturbing signs that the DNR may be wavering in its commitment to retaining existing public angling access on public lands. At the same time, Minnesota's new buffer law is driving landowner interest in selling permanent trout stream easements, particularly in southeast Minnesota. What can Minnesota do to seize these golden opportunities to protect trout streams for current and future generations?

What Are Trout Stream Easements?

Easements are legal interests in land that allow the easement holder (in this case the State and its anglers) to gain the use of the land for a particular purpose and/or restrict a use of the land. In the case of trout stream easements, the DNR gains use of the strips of land on either side of stream to undertake, or have Trout Unlimited undertake, habitat improvements and to permit anglers access along the stream banks. Trout stream easements are also conservation easements, and restrict some uses of the land in the riparian corridor by the landowner in order to protect the conservation values of the land. Land use restrictions typically include restricting activities such as timber harvesting, tilling, placing dirt fill, etc., within the riparian corridor.

Landowners voluntarily place these restrictions on their property in order to preserve its conservation values. The restrictions, as well as the rights reserved by the landowner, are detailed in a legal document known as a conservation easement. The easements are sold or donated to the DNR to hold and enforce the restrictions and uses. For the past several decades Minnesota has purchased only permanent easements, ensuring that the restrictions will apply to all future landowners.

The Importance and Need for Easements

Trout stream easements serve three major purposes: (1) they guarantee public angling access within the stream corridor, (2) they protect the streams by restricting land use activities which can harm streams and trout, and (3) they provide access by the DNR and its partners (such as Trout Unlimited) to restore or improve habitat. Minnesota Trout Unlimited does habitat work only where there is permanent legal ac-



A WILD BROWN TROUT CAUGHT FROM TU HABITAT IMPROVEMENT ON A STREAM FLOWING THROUGH AN EASEMENT

cess. This ensures that the public can enjoy the benefits of the work and provides a place for citizens to interact with quality aquatic resources and become advocates for resource protection. More and more we are seeing badly degraded habitat on priority streams which would be a top priority for habitat work, but no easement is in place. In some cases the landowner is very interested in selling a permanent easement, but the DNR has not pursued a purchase due to lack of easement funding.

According to the DNR website, Minnesota has approximately 5,500 miles of designated trout water - 3,800 miles on 687 designated trout streams and 2,700 miles on 1,900 small tributaries of these trout streams. There currently

are 900 trout stream easements covering 557 miles of stream. Even if all of these miles were located only along larger trout streams and none on the tributaries, this still means that less than 15% of our fishable trout streams are protected via conservation easements.

In late 2006 the DNR convened a planning committee to develop a 25 year acquisition plan for Aquatic Management Areas, covering both lakes and streams. In October 2007, the committee released its report, "Minnesota's Aquatic Management Area Acquisition Plan 2008-2033." In praising their thoughtful work, Fisheries Chief Ron Payer noted that "... time is running short to protect remaining critical shoreland habitat and to insure that access is maximized on

coldwater streams." He also noted that the ten year accelerated acquisition goals (essentially frontloading acquisitions to counter rising costs and conversion rates) recommended by the Committee were particularly important. The Acquisition Plan calls for accelerated acquisition of new trout stream easements at the rate of 100 miles per year from 2008 to 2017, and a total of 1,500 miles in 25 years. It acknowledged that this might mean spending as much as \$10 million per year for ten years to front load protections. At the time the DNR was spending roughly \$485,000 per year on average (Fy2002 to Fy2009) to acquire trout stream easements. It is worth noting that the report was issued more than a year before the Legacy Amendment was passed by voters.

Opportunity knocks, but . . .

In November 2008 voters passed the Legacy Amendment dedicating additional funds to natural resource protection. Since the first appropriations from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) in July 2009, the bulk of OHF dollars have gone to protection efforts, both fee title and conservation easements. The DNR had early success securing OHF funds for trout stream easements and spent approximately \$4.3 million in OHF funds in the first three funding cycles. However, the amount of dollars which the DNR has requested for acquiring trout stream easements inexplicably began dropping with its fourth proposal, and by its FY2015 proposal (sixth round of funding) the DNR asked for a mere \$840,000. This is in sharp contrast to the \$2.9 million, \$3.5 million and \$2.3 million it sought for FY2011 to FY2013, and a far cry from the \$10 million per year its planning committee recommended. We have yet to be given a good reason for the DNR's apparent backing away from permanent trout stream protection and public access.

An equally disturbing trend has been the declining support shown by the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) for the DNR's aquatic habitat pro-



A HABITAT-IMPROVED REACH OF GARVIN BROOK SPARKLES IN THE SUNLIGHT. THIS NEXT SEASON WILL BRING HABITAT WORK TO THOUSANDS OF FEET OF STREAMS AND RIVERS THAT FLOW THROUGH EASEMENTS IN MN.



HABITAT WORK LIKE THIS REACH ALONG PINE CREEK CAN ONLY BE CARRIED OUT IF EASEMENTS ARE IN PLACE. THE HABITAT IMPROVEMENT THAT WE DO, AND THE FISHING THAT WE CHERISH, IS DEPENDANT ON SECURING EASEMENTS ON MINNESOTA'S THOUSANDS OF MILES OF TROUT WATER.

posals. The reasons for this are not clear. However, given that the LSOHC typically awards the DNR somewhat less than 50% of their original ask, it made little sense for the DNR to reduce the easement acquisition portion of its requests. This year the DNR separated its habitat restoration and habitat protection (acquisition) programs into separate OHF funding proposals. Four of the twelve Council members recommended no funding for the separate acquisition program and it failed to make the funding cut. Unless other funding sources can be marshalled, new trout stream easements will stall even as the number of willing sellers is increasing.

Buffer Law Spurring Landowner Interest

Governor Dayton's push for water quality improvements and passage of perennial buffer legislation in 2015 has resulted in an increase in landowners now interested in selling trout stream easements. Landowners are required by state law to establish a buffer of perennial vegetation within 50 feet of trout streams and other public waters by November 1, 2017. While vegetated buffers have been required on designated trout streams since the 1980s, many landowners have ignored the law. The new push to bring everyone into compliance with the law by next November is causing many farmers to now consider selling an easement. Their thinking appears to be that since they will no longer be able to till in the riparian area, why not get some compensation for this loss of use via an easement sale. Whatever their motivation, the fact is that many stream segments which have been off limits to anglers and habitat restorers such as MNTU could at last be permanently projected. However, this is almost surely a one-time increase in landowner interest which will vanish once buffer enforcement is fully rolled out. It is also likely that landowners who are turned away by the DNR due to lack of easement funding will then pursue CRP contracts. Federal rules may actually block the abil-

ity of participating landowners to sell a trout stream easement within the next ten years or allow habitat restoration along enrolled stream corridors. The DNR estimates that there are already \$3 million in trout stream easements which could quickly be purchased if funding were available now.

Possible Solutions

The State now has a unique opportunity to permanently protect many miles of trout stream corridor and secure public access for fishing as well as for habitat restoration work. MNTU will work with the DNR in future funding cycles to persuade the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council to increase funding for trout stream easements. However, due to the fourteen month grant process, OHF funding is not likely to come quickly enough.

The only major funding source which it is possible to secure in time is State bonding dollars. Bonding has been a traditional source for funding the acquisition of trout stream easements and other AMAs. Bonding for easements was provided in 2006 and 2008 (\$1.2 million), but none has been provided by the Legislature since the Legacy Amendment was adopted by voters. It is time for sportsmen and women to insist that this traditional funding source be renewed at this critical point in time.

Vegetative buffers along waterways are very beneficial for water quality and aquatic life. However, merely adding grasses, even deep rooted grasses, will not prevent erosion of steep, high banks which are being undermined down at the water's edge. MNTU's trout habitat restoration projects transform these sheer eroding banks into stable, grassy slopes, and effectively stop erosion from the streambanks. A typical southeast MN project secures several hundred tons or more of eroding soils. Given the substantial water quality improvements our habitat projects provide, a strong case can be made for providing easement

funding not only to protect the corridor, but also to provide access for our transformative projects. Securing permanent easements through bonding is thus an effective strategy for achieving lasting water quality improvements.

The upcoming legislative session represents the State's last best chance to secure

permanent water quality improvements by bonding for protective trout stream easements. MNTU will need your passionate voices to educate your elected representatives in coming months. Together we can secure a legacy of clean water and healthy wild fisheries. Stay tuned.



EASEMENTS ON TROUT STREAMS AROUND MINNESOTA ARE OFTEN MARKED BY THE MN DNR WITH SIGNS LIKE THESE. PLEASE REMEMBER TO RESPECT LANDOWNER RIGHTS WHEN USING ANY EASEMENT.

2017 GREAT WATERS FLY FISHING EXPO

Headline Speakers



JEFF CURRIER

JEFF GREW UP FLY FISHING THROUGHOUT NEW ENGLAND AND AFTER COLLEGE BEGAN A FLY SHOP MANAGEMENT JOB IN JACKSON, WYOMING. FOR THE NEXT 23 YEARS THIS WOULD GUIDE HIM FLY FISHING AROUND THE WORLD. JEFF HAS WON SEVERAL BEST OF THE WEST LONG DISTANCE FLY CASTING COMPETITIONS, THE JACKSON HOLE ONE FLY CONTEST AND COMPETED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD IN FLY FISHING. JEFF'S MOST RECOGNIZED ACCOMPLISHMENT WAS LEADING TEAM USA TO ITS FIRST EVER TOP-TEN FINISH IN THE WORLD FLY-FISHING CHAMPIONSHIPS IN JACA, SPAIN. JEFF'S ARTICLES, PHOTOGRAPHS AND ARTWORK HAVE GRACED THE PAGES OF MAGAZINES, CATALOGS, BROCHURES AND BOOKS. JEFF IS THE AUTHOR OF CURRIER'S QUICK AND EASY GUIDE TO SALT-WATER FLY FISHING & CURRIER'S QUICK AND EASY GUIDE TO WARMWATER FLY FISHING GUIDE BOOKS. HE IS A WELL SOUGHT AFTER EXPERT FOR TELEVISION AND COMMENTARY ON RADIO, APPEARING ON FISHING THE WEST, FLY FISHING THE WORLD, IN SEARCH OF FLY WATER, REEL ADVENTURES, FLY FISH TV, AND FLY FISH AMERICA.



GEORGE DANIEL

GEORGE BEGAN FLY FISHING AT THE AGE OF SIX IN POTTER COUNTY, PA AND AT THE AGE OF 21 BEGAN ENTERING LOCAL AND NATIONAL FLY FISHING COMPETITIONS. HE EARNED A SPOT ON FLY FISHING TEAM USA AND REMAINED ON THE TEAM FOR SEVEN SEASONS. DURING THIS TIME HE WAS ALSO ON THE US YOUTH FLY FISHING TEAM'S COACHING STAFF, INCLUDING TWO YEARS AS HEAD COACH. GEORGE HAS WON BACK-TO-BACK US NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS AND PLACED IN THE TOP 5 IN THE 2006 WORLD FLY FISHING CHAMPIONSHIPS. EVENTUALLY, COMPETITIVE FLY-FISHING TOOK ITS TOLL, SO GEORGE RETIRED AT AGE 32 TO SPEND MORE TIME TRAVELING WITH HIS FAMILY AND TO FOCUS ON FLY FISHING EDUCATION. GEORGE CURRENTLY WORKS WITH TCO FLY SHOP IN STATE COLLEGE, PA AND OWNS AND OPERATES LIVIN ON THE FLY LLC. GEORGE HAS WRITTEN TWO BOOKS: DYNAMIC NYMPHING AND STRIP SET: FLY-FISHING TECHNIQUES, TACTICS & PATTERNS FOR STREAMERS.



DAVE WHITLOCK

DAVE IS A NATIVE OKLAHOMAN WHO RESIGNED HIS POSITION AS A RESEARCH CHEMIST MORE THAN 40 YEARS AGO, AND POOLED HIS TALENTS IN PAINTING, ILLUSTRATING, WRITING, PHOTOGRAPHY, FLY FISHING, FLY TYING AND LECTURING TO EMBARK ON A NEW CAREER AS A FULL-TIME PROFESSIONAL IN THE ART OF FLY FISHING. DAVE'S EXPERIENCE AND CREATIVE OUTLOOK ON THE WHOLE SPECTRUM OF FLY FISHING HAVE EARNED HIM THE REPUTATION OF BEING ONE OF THE TOP PROFESSIONAL FLY FISHERS IN THE SPORT. DAVE'S ART AND WRITING APPEAR REGULARLY IN MANY FLY-FISHING AND SPORT PUBLICATIONS SUCH AS FLY FISHERMAN MAGAZINE, FLY FISHING AND TYING JOURNAL, TROUT MAGAZINE AND OTHERS. HE'S WRITTEN FIVE BOOKS: DAVE WHITLOCK'S GUIDE TO AQUATIC TROUT FOODS, THE L.L. BEAN FLY FISHING HANDBOOK, THE L.L. BEAN BASS FLY FISHING HANDBOOK, IMITATING AND FISHING NATURAL FISH FOODS FOR LEFTY'S LITTLE LIBRARY AND TROUT - A COMPACT GUIDE FOR FLY FISHERS. HE IS KNOWN INTERNATIONALLY FOR HIS INNOVATIVE AND EFFECTIVE FLY-TYING DESIGNS, INCLUDING THE POPULAR DAVE'S HOPPER. ALL OF DAVE'S WORK, ESPECIALLY HIS ART, REFLECTS THE REALISM OF NATURE AND RELATED FLY-FISHING SUBJECTS THROUGH THE EYES OF A TRUE SPORTSMAN.

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March 18th, 2017

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TROLLING THE WEB

By Dan Callahan

Periodically, I'll pass along some interesting, trout-related web video makers. This month, I'm highlighting Steve Swedz, who prolifically posts videos of his fishing success on his YouTube channel.

Since you are reading this in a non-linkable format, you could copy down his YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9h2FFB-PB-E2j-Q-z8WxKw> Or, just Google our Twin Cities Trout Unlimited YouTube channel, and get to his site from there. It's one we are subscribed to.

He fishes trout streams near the Twin Cities, such as the Vermillion River, and elsewhere. He fishes. A LOT. And catches tons of trout. He's the best source I've found to find out whether there are big trout in smaller, less popular streams such as the Little Cannon River and Belle Creek. His videos are proof positive: There are.

He's not a fly fisherman. He flips spinners – expertly-- on an ultralight rod. Just watching his technique has taught me a few things about where in the stream to fish spinners, and how. In ad-

dition to spinners, he fishes with night-crawlers, which also work.

He practices catch and release, and will cut the line at the fish, rather than try to drag out something that is swallowed so deep that it will do more harm than good to remove. He revives his fish before letting them go. But he could increase their chances of long-term survival by keeping them in the water more, and trying to unhook in the water, instead of hugging them upside down to remove the treble hooks. Sometimes to get a good shot of his trophy browns, of which there are many, the fish undergo more stress than needed.

We're always learning new stuff to help fish survive. I didn't know you should wet your hands first before touching a fish, or that the best way to hold them is around the tail, and cradle them underneath with your other hand.

I recently learned about reviving fish. Don't pull them forcefully backward, forcing water through their gills the wrong way. Try to push them forward, or gently hold them in place in a quiet part of the stream, nose pointed up-



STEVE SWEDZ REELING IN A NICE BROWN TROUT

stream, so water can wash normally into their mouths and out the gills. Don't put your fingers in the gills, that damages them.

Steve keeps a running commentary going when he begins recording, which is entertaining as well, and he tells you a lot about his other fishing experience.

He also uses his videos as a platform to share his faith.

Let me know if you find more interesting videos, web sites, blogs or other content that you find that may be worth sharing.

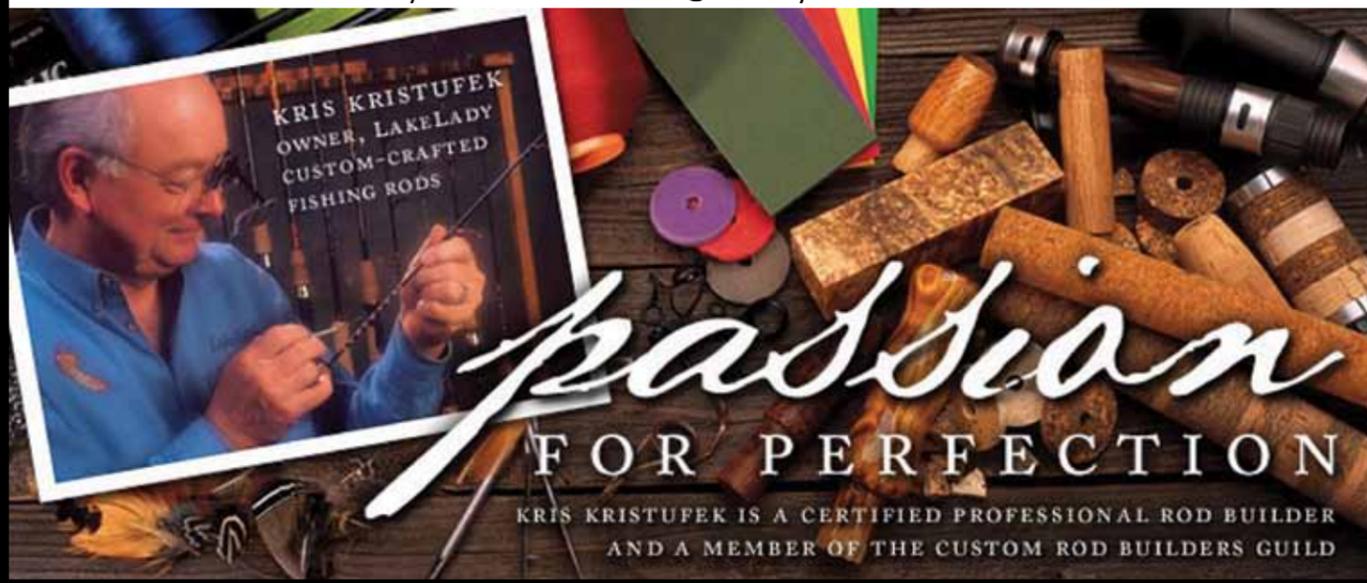
Editor's Note: You can contact Dan Calahan at Dan@twincitiestu.org.

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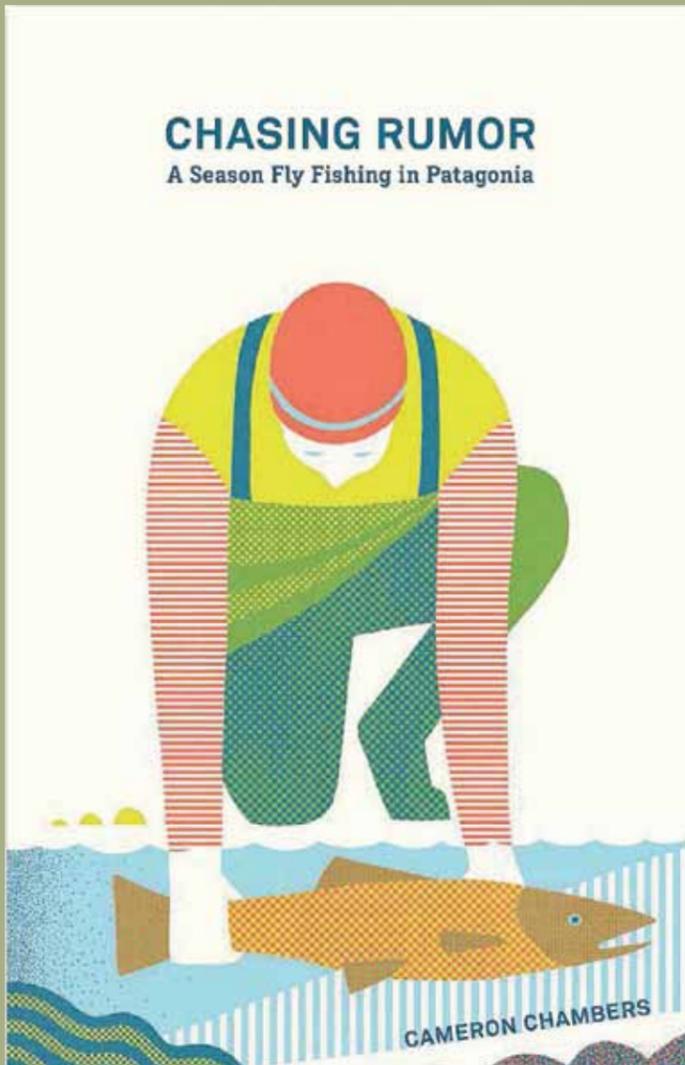
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CHASING RUMOR: A SEASON FLY FISHING IN PATAGONIA

Book Review

By John Hunt



Mention Patagonia and for some people images of rocky coastlines with crashing waves or arid grasslands filled with cattle and gauchos come to mind. For anglers, however, the image is more likely one of clear rivers pouring down from the snow-capped Andes, teeming with oversized coldwater transplants from the northern hemisphere. In *Chasing Rumor: A Season Fly Fishing in Patagonia*, author and former guide Cameron Chambers invites us along on an adventure that may lead any of us to pause and say, “now why didn’t I do something like that?”

Patagonia can also conjure the dream of what it might have been like in the American West “before.” Before what, you ask? Before the “movie,” before the crowds, before ranchettes and no trespassing signs, before whirling disease, before, before. For decades, American anglers have been seduced by the siren call of giant browns and rainbows at the bottom of the world, beckoning them to visit for the best fishing of their lives. Chambers’ book is the record of his attempt to find this utopia. In the process he recounts the fishing, as well as the people and experiences encountered along the way.

This adventure spans both Argentina and Chile, as the author admits to partly retracing the steps of a landmark 1991 book on the region by William Leitch. The historian in me appreciated his synopsis of the origin of trout in South American rivers and lakes, and the genesis of the fly fishing industry that is now such an important element of the tourism base of the area. Cham-

bers recounts the pleasures and frustrations of traveling and living in countries that place more importance on people and the experience than we seem to do at home.

Using his best Spanglish to ask directions when the map fails, he follows roads and trails up the river and around the bend in his quest to catch a legitimate ten-pound trout. We are introduced to well-known waters like the Rio Malleo, the Rio Chimehuin, and the Limay, as well as numerous other lesser-known rivers and lakes that dot the open landscape of the vast estancias. We read of the author’s effort to take a couple of American buddies on a multi-day float with only minimal confidence that their locally hired shuttle driver would be waiting for them when they arrived.

There are also stories of volcanoes and rodeos, and a primer on what seems to be a revolving door industry of American guides moving back and forth between the U.S. and Argentina with the change in seasons. While it was discouraging to read of the decline in fishing quality over the last 30 years, Chambers’ also highlights the growing local conservation ethic and effort to preserve and protect the unique resource that remains.

The disease of fly fishing causes a time in all anglers lives when the desire to fish some exotic locale burns strongly. Think Labrador, the Kenai, Kamchatka, the North Island, and, of course, Patagonia. After reading Chambers’ book, I think I know which destination is currently at the top of my bucket list.

GREAT WATERS EXPO

Be Astonished

By Bob Wagner



A significant accomplishment in Minnesota’s fly fishing community occurred March 18-20th this year and it merits our attention and involvement. Just in case you’re wondering, no one asked me to write this. However, over the past sixteen years, eight states, and 40 shows as exhibitors and presenters, Val and I have invested significant money, time and effort into fly fishing events. Our hope is always that the management will produce a great show.

A great show means several things: high attendance, good parking, ample space for activities, food service, presentation rooms with current technology, good signage, etc., etc. I know from experience, a facility with all of the above amenities at an affordable price is not easy to find.

Obviously the venue is just a small part of actually implementing a fly show. There is massive pre-organization with a thousand details of budget, advertising contracts, volunteers, vendors, fly tyers, presenters, sponsors, TU chapters, board connected agencies and more. One should not forget the three days of “show time” with a couple hundred unexpected details and changes that need immediate attention with good grace and a smile. Last but not least, is post show clean-up, evaluations, reviews of budget, reports and debriefings.

Having spent 28 years doing dozens of similar community events from a management perspective, plus the 40 fly fishing shows previously mentioned, I have a “critical eye,” but also I have great appreciation of a fly fishing show well done.

We have attended every Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo (GWFF expo) and were absolutely pleased at the overall changes and successes of the past year. Last year the GWFF expo, previously operated by the Helgeson family, was given to the management team of Carl Haensel and Jade Thomason operating under the fiscal agency of the MN TU Board.

A huge thank you goes out to Baird Helgeson and family for making the decision to pass the show to MNTU and new management.

As an exhibitor you always want to see lots of people who are not just kicking the tires but actually buying products, which was definitely the case this past spring. The new venue, the new film competition with food and brews, and most importantly, lots of new faces including more women and young families.

The 2016 GWFF expo was a great success which merits “stand up” applause for all the hard work and creative energy accomplished by Carl and Jade. Cheers, cheers, cheers! The facts are that fly fishing shows around the country have been declining in participation and exhibitors over the past several years, and unfortunately the GWFF expo had not been immune. Thanks to Carl and Jade, plus the support of John Lenczewski, J.P. Little and the entire MNTU state board, the downward decline curve has stopped here with a significant upswing.

Most importantly, the GWFF expo is larger than only Minnesota and has a multi-state draw. This event is the #1 premiere fly fishing attraction regionally. It has become the signature statement of TU conservation, education, ethics and restoration work statewide, and has the potential to attract, educate and motivate new members, women, young families and youth. If TU and fly fishing in general is going to be viable and sustainable 15 years down the road we all need to pay attention and do our part. We all need to be involved by attending the GWFF expo, March 17-19, 2017 and supporting your local TU chapters. Pulitzer Prize Poet, Mary Oliver says it best: “pay attention, be astonished and go tell about it!” Yes, go tell your family, friends, neighbors about the Great Water Fly Fishing Expo and let’s all promote this greatest of all sports: fly fishing!

TU COSTA 5 RIVERS COLLEGE FLY FISHING PROGRAM

Start Up a College Fly Fishing Program Today!

Interested in learning about fly fishing or maybe just connecting with students at your college or university who fish? The TU Costa 5 Rivers program is an awesome way to get together, get some sweet gear and connect with TU!

The TU Costa 5 Rivers program organizes campus clubs that teach students fly casting and fly tying and also provide volunteer stream conservation activities on the members' home waters. Students in TU Costa 5 Rivers clubs have the chance to join a sponsoring TU Chapter in their region, lend a young voice, and help shape the TU of tomorrow.

TU Costa 5 Rivers Part of Each School's Club System

Each TU Costa 5 Rivers club is formed under the guidelines and policies of the respective school and usually has a faculty member who acts as an advisor. Students have the freedom to create their club's logo and set up what the club will do each semester. Clubs are encouraged to coordinate outings, guest speakers, and other events with their partner TU chapter.

Minnesota Trout Unlimited is excited to highlight this great opportunity here in the Midwest, and we hope to hear from interested college students at institutions around the state.

Industry Support (and Awesome Free Stuff!) Tied to Success of TU Costa 5 Rivers

Big name brands in the fly fishing industry including Costa del Mar, Orvis, LL Bean, and Temple Fork Outfitters have gotten behind the TU Costa 5 Rivers program, and with their sup-



THE TU COSTA 5 RIVERS PROGRAM PROVIDES A GREAT FORMAT TO LEARN ABOUT FLY FISHING, GET OUT ON THE WATER AND GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR LOCAL TU CHAPTER. AWESOME OPPORTUNITIES FOR GATHERINGS AND FREE GEAR COME ALONG WITH A TESTED AND PROVEN PLAN TO RUN YOUR CAMPUS CLUB. PHOTOS COURTESY OF TROUT UNLIMITED.

port, clubs can put on fundraisers and enjoy quality gear while on the water. There's even the opportunity to get pro deals on equipment to lower the cost of getting into fly fishing! Visit the tu website to learn more and to get details about the program: www.tu.org/5rivers

National Rallies Connect Students

As part of the 5 Rivers network you get to attend one of two national gather-

ings: one on the east coast (the 5 Rivers Rally) every fall, and one in the Rockies (the 5 Rivers Rendezvous) every spring. At the Rally and Rendezvous, students participate in a variety of events including a Pig Farm Ink "Iron Fly" fly tying competition, and a "Get Trashed" stream clean up challenge. Each event is full of prizes and every student walks away a winner with killer swag bags.

Editor's Note: You can also contact MNTU to start working with your local chapter. Chapters are excited to get new members, and there are lots of chapter meetings around the state that students can attend as well. Email the editor at editor@mntu.org to learn more and connect with leaders in Minnesota.

DAKOTA COUNTY, MN NEWS RELEASE Rusty Crayfish Confirmed in Vermillion River Watershed

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources confirmed rusty crayfish were discovered in the Vermillion River in Farmington and Hastings. Rusty crayfish were also found in North Creek in Farmington.

The Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization's routine bio-monitoring carried out by the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District led to the discovery of three rusty crayfish in Farmington. Hastings High School students participating in the VRWJPO's Vermillion River Watch program collected five rusty crayfish in the Vermillion River Linear Park. Rusty crayfish are aggressive invaders. They harm fish populations by eating their eggs and young, driving out or crossbreeding with native crayfish,

and grazing on and eliminating aquatic plants.

Rusty crayfish compete with fish for food by preying on macroinvertebrates such as mayflies, midges, and scuds. The release of a single female could establish a new population.

Rusty crayfish are most likely spread through dumping bait buckets and aquariums. It is a Department of Natural Resource-regulated invasive species, which means release into the wild is illegal. Licensed anglers may collect crayfish for use as bait on the same body of water where the crayfish were caught. Anglers can also harvest up to 25 pounds of any crayfish for personal consumption. Selling live crayfish for bait or aquarium use is illegal.

Adult rusty crayfish are usually 3 to 5 inches long. A visible identifier on these

olive-colored crayfish is a rust-colored spot on each side of its body. These spots may be lighter in color on younger crayfish.

Rusty crayfish may breed with native crayfish, producing a hybrid without the usual rusty spots. They have more robust claws than native crayfish.

The best method of control is to prevent their introduction. Inspect and remove aquatic plants and animals from watercraft and recreational gear. Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash. Never release crayfish, fish, or plants from one body of water into another.

Contact: Mary Beth Schubert, marybeth.schubert.@co.dakota.mn.us



RUSTY CRAYFISH. PHOTO COURTESY OF DAKOTA COUNTY, MN

WIN-CRES CHAPTER WILD GAME FEED AND FUNDRAISER

Friday, December 2, 2016

Plan to visit Winona coming up on Friday, December 2nd for an exclusive wild game feed in support of the Win-Cres chapter of Trout Unlimited!

- Bucket Raffles, Silent Auctions
- Meal Served at 7:00 pm
- Tickets \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door
- Sponsor Ticket \$100; Meal Plus 40 Prize Tickets



- Doors Open at 5:00 pm
- Attendance Limited to 60 - Get Your Tickets Early
- Proceeds to Purchase a Brushhog-Style Mower to Clear Streamside Paths

Holzinger Lodge, 925 W Lake Blvd, Winona, MN 55987

Contact Dr. Chuck Shepard (507-452-8898) for Advance Tickets



OUT OF THE WAY WATERS: THE NET RIVER TUMBLES THROUGH CARLTON COUNTY, MINNESOTA ON IT'S WAY TO WISCONSIN AND EVENTUALLY LAKE SUPERIOR.

TU NATIONAL MEETING & AWARDS

By Carl Haensel

Earlier this summer I was offered the opportunity to attend the annual national meeting of Trout Unlimited, held this September out in Bozeman, Montana. I was fortunate enough to be able to attend and accept the Distinguished Service award in Communications, presented to the top publication within Trout Unlimited. It was an honor to accept the award, and I would like to reach out to acknowledge that bringing our state publication back online has been a combined effort from all involved, and my thanks go out to all of the writers, photographers, editors, advertisers and other contributors to this publication. Without all of the input that we receive, it would be impossible to put it all together. I hope that all of you involved can continue to support and provide content for Minnesota Trout Unlimited. Our state council has been particularly supportive, particularly with the administrative tasks associated with running the publication. Again, my thanks go out to all those behind the scenes that help make sure that Trout Unlimited Minnesota ends up in the mailboxes of thousands of members around the state.



ACCEPTING THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE IN COMMUNICATIONS AWARD

As I mentioned in my short Editor's Angle on page 3, We continue to need more input to keep the newsletter thriving, expanding and providing the quality content that has attracted an audience for MNTU not only in the state but around the region and beyond.

Attending the TU national meeting itself

was a very worthwhile experience and offered the chance to meet a wide variety of people within Trout Unlimited from all components of the organization. They were welcoming and communicative about TU, and provided a glimpse into how our organization runs. From the minutiae of the financial side of the organization to the broader context of

how our national magazine, TROUT, is published, there were great possibilities for insight within the TU community.

While expensive and challenging to attend, I encourage those who may find the time to venture forth to the next national meeting if the opportunity arises. Key opportunities for TU are often highlighted at the national meeting, and it's a great way to jumpstart projects and programs that MNTU might want to be involved with.

Look to learn more about some of the opportunities that I and other MNTU representatives learned about while out in Montana elsewhere in this issue. MNTU members can look forward to hearing more in the future as we explore many of the potential ways for MNTU to grow, including youth engagement, fundraising, habitat improvement and much more.

Thanks again to all for the chance to helm this publication and accept an award on behalf of all of you.

REMEMBERING A MINNESOTA ANGLER

Benjamin (Ben) Jay Ness, 38, of Rochester, MN, passed away August 12, 2016 after a brain hemorrhage. Born on May 5, 1978, Ben was the son of Ann L. Ness and the late Maurice J. Ness. In his youth he enjoyed skiing through the Northfield High School club, snowboarding, international travel, and the family's annual vacation to Woodlawn Resort where his passion for fishing began. Ben took pride in his profession as a licensed body piercer and was well loved by his clients. In recent years, Ben developed passions for catch-and-release fly fishing especially in Whitewater State Park and biking on southeast MN trails. He was fun-loving, gregarious, and had numerous friends. Ben is survived by his mother Ann Ness, fiancé Emily Akkerman, sister Maureen (Bill) Colburn, niece Amelia Colburn, and many close aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Minnesota TU extends its sincere condolences to the family and friends of Benjamin Ness. His family requested that memorials to Ben be directed to Minnesota TU. We thank them for thinking of us during such a difficult time, and appreciate those who knew Ben and made a donation to MNTU in his name.



INCLUDING MNTU IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING

Any loss in a family is challenging. It's much easier to delay answering uncomfortable questions such as "What happens to my assets and my loved ones when I or my partner dies?" So it's no surprise that roughly half of Americans don't have a will, and even fewer have an estate plan. While it is a hard subject to discuss, an estate plan goes much further than a will. Not only does it deal with the distribution of assets and legacy wishes, but it may help you and your heirs pay substantially less in taxes, fees, and court costs, as well as benefit the people and causes that you care about.

Including MNTU in your estate plans not only helps to provide for future programmatic and organizational security, it can take many different forms to balance your financial and philanthropic goals. Drafting these documents may seem like a daunting task at first, until you realize all the good that comes from having them. A gift in your will or living trust lets you make a meaningful gift to MNTU with ease and be flexible in your commitment. You can give cash, specific property

or a percentage of your estate, with restrictions or without. Because your gift doesn't come to MNTU until after your lifetime, you can change your mind at any time. To make sure your will accomplishes your goals according to your wishes, we recommend that you obtain the professional counsel of an attorney who specializes in estate planning. We've included specific bequest language below for usage with individual or estate planning.

Bequest Language

The official bequest language for Minnesota Trout Unlimited is:

Unrestricted General Legacy:

"I give Minnesota Trout Unlimited, a Minnesota non-profit corporation, presently at 7201 West 78th Street, Suite 207 Bloomington, MN 55439, the sum of (dollar amount)/ or percentage of (___%)/ residue of my estate to be used at the discretion of its governing board."

Specific:

"I give Minnesota Trout Unlimited, a Minnesota non-profit corporation, pres-

ently at 7201 West 78th Street, Suite 207 Bloomington, MN 55439, my (specific personal property item(s) and/or real property located at _____) to be used at the discretion of its governing board."

Gift of Residuary Estate:

"All the rest, residue and remainder of my estate, both real and personal, and wherever situated, I give, devise and bequeath to Minnesota Trout Unlimited, a Minnesota non-profit corporation, pres-

ently at 7201 West 78th Street, Suite 207 Bloomington, MN 55439 to be used at the discretion of its governing board."

The information above is not intended as legal or tax advice. For such advice, please consult an attorney or tax advisor. Contact our executive director John Lenczewski with any questions or for assistance with estate planning, using this language or this process: jlenczewski@comcast.net or at 612-670-1629



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Friday, Jan 20, 2017 - Badger Hill Brewing
4571 Valley Industrial Blvd S. #500, Shakopee



MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

Gitche Gumee Chapter

The Gitche Gumee Chapter had a busy season of work and reasearch on the North Shore this season. Peder Yurista coordinated the ongoing temperature monitoring study, with outings on streams throughout the Lake Superior basin in Minnesota. Lots of miles of streams were covered, and many details logged about our northland trout waters. Thanks to all those that came out and helped with the monitoring.

Dr Karen Gran from the University of Minnesota - Duluth brought graduate



UMD STUDENTS SURVEY THE SUCKER RIVER IN SEPTEMBER

students out to the Sucker River for another year of ongoing habitat improvement assesement this fall. With one of the only ongoing habitat evaluation sites in the state, Dr Gran's students took a wide variety of measurements to quantify how the work installed in 2010 on the Sucker River has been faring. Flood damage from the 2012 flood appears to be abating, and deeper scour holes are returning as sediments brought in by the flood eventually clear out.

Members and other local anglers take note: Mark your calendars for Thursday, December 8th and make your way to the Great Lakes Fly Shop in Duluth for our annual Fly Tying Meeting. We'll be demonstrating techniques, tying flies and just hanging out around the fly shop, and it's a great opportunity to buy some materials and gear as well. We'll have vises and materials for those who would like to learn some of the fly tying basics, as well as those who might just not have a vise. The meeting starts at 7PM, and location information can be found at the Great Lakes Fly Shop website: www.greatlakesflies.com

The chapter is currently planning a large film event for January. Look for more information on the chapter facebook page and via email in the coming weeks.

Jon Aspie

Hiawatha Chapter

Hiawatha Trout Unlimited (HTU) has had a very busy year, with much stream work completed and more going on, including the start of work on the South Branch of the Root River in Preston, Minnesota. We also have held meetings at the Izaak Walton cabin. There is still one fall member's meeting coming up at the Ike, a favorite meeting location for the fall meetings. A fireplace, natural stone and wood, what could be better?

On December 5, join us for the HTU annual Christmas party. Again, doors will open at 6:30pm for set up and the potluck will start at 7:00pm. If you have

ever been to one you know how awesome they are. Not only is Christmas a wonderful time for family, friends and good food in your home, it is the same at the HTU Christmas party as well. HTU will provide the main meat dish and other items including all beverages. What we ask of you is all members with their last names from A to M to bring a main dish to pass and N to Z bring a dessert.

We hope to see you there!

Phil Pankow

Headwaters Chapter

Like every chapter in Minnesota, we fly fishers love spring, summer, and fall. The only problem, even for the retired people, is too many rivers, too many lakes, too many friends to fish with and way too many distractions.

The TIC (Trout in the Classroom) program is going great. We have added another classroom and are now serving three elementary classes and looking at a decade of this truly collaborative program between the DNR, TU, and the school district. An integrated multi-curriculum design covering conservation, fisheries, limnology, aquatic biology, outdoor adventure and ethics is used. This is a great program thanks to our TU coordinator Steve Young and our elementary teachers Jeff Wade, Joe Adams, and Allison Tisdale. They could be grooming the next Rachel Carson or Aldo Leopold!

5th Grade Fly Fishing Course

We continue to be astonished that in a world of monitor screens, where outdoor activities are seldom appreciated, our 5th graders really want to have fun tying flies and can't wait to try out their casting skills. Volunteers will be needed in April so mark your calendars.

Free community fly tying nights will be starting Dec. 1 and 15 at the Garden Pub and Grill in Bemidji. Beginners are welcome and equipment is available but you must call if you need it (Bob Wagner, 218-766-7757). The intermediate and advanced instructor is Jeff Korbel. We order off the menu at 5:30pm and start tying at 6:30pm. January-March dates will be set later.

Great Waters Booth Committee

This is a new committee effort and is open to anyone interested. We have ten committed volunteers but can always use more. Next meeting will be November 3rd at Garden Pub and Grill from 6-8pm.



TCTU SETTING UP AT THE MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

Kabekona River stream work has been on going this fall to open areas of the river with alder brush that is overgrown. The Clearwater River will have funding next year for fencing and bank stabilization. We are gearing up for the fourth and final helicopter tree drop on the Straight River in Park Rapids. We appreciate John Sorenson, river restoration coordinator, for his efforts on access easements and brook trout signage work.

The fall membership meeting was held September 20 and speakers were Darwin Sumner on Red Lake Fishing and Carl



A HAPPY ANGLER FROM THE WOMEN'S WORKSHOP HOSTED BY VAL & BOB WAGNER FROM THE HEADWATERS CHAPTER EARLIER THIS SEASON

Haensel on Fly fishing the Caribbean and warm climate areas.

Headwaters Chapter has a facebook page so check it out: TU Headwaters Chapter 642.

Bob Wagner

Mid-Minnesota Chapter

Groundwater use Central to the Future of Little Rock Creek

In January 2016 the MNDNR initiated the Little Rock Creek Sustainable Groundwater Use Planning Project to examine issues arising from growing demands on groundwater and related water quality concerns in and around Little Rock Creek, a trout stream located just north of St. Cloud, MN. Groundwater use in the Little Rock Creek area has been increasing at a rate more than five times faster than across the rest of the state. The risk of overuse and contamination grows along with increased groundwater use. Cold groundwater is the lifeblood of Little Rock Creek's trout fishery. The DNR has convened a group of citizens which is dominated by irrigators, but a representative from the Mid-MN Chapter has been participating. The project will develop a five-year plan to guide DNR actions in managing the

MNTU CHAPTER NEWS



A FLY TIER WORKS ON A TROUT FLY AT A WIN-CRES CHAPTER EVENT. CHECK OUT THE DETAILS ON THIS PAGE AND ATTEND A LOCAL TU MEETING!

use of groundwater, especially through groundwater appropriation permits. The group's seventh meeting will be December 14, 2016. More information can be found on the DNR's webpage. MNTU secured funding for additional trout habitat work on Little Rock Creek and design work will begin soon.

Micah Barrett

Twin Cities Chapter

Autumn's arrival has brought the 2016 trout season to a close, but the Twin Cities chapter has been super busy with habitat, outreach, and event activities over the last few months.

In August, we were out in front of the public at the Dakota County Fair, talking about our chapter's work on the Vermillion River, a great fishery right in the backyard of many attendees. We got a lot of interest, and we signed up many new volunteers as part of our "Vermillion River Keepers" program. A few weeks later on August 27th, Dan Callahan gave two crowd-pleasing presentations about fly fishing basics on DNR's Outdoor Stage at the Minnesota State Fair, and together with other board members talked to many passers-by about MNTU's many efforts across the state. Thank you to Dan Callahan, Tony



BOB WAGNER OF THE HEADWATERS CHAPTER WITH A NICE PIKE. LOOK FOR MORE PIKE PROGRAMMING COMING FROM THE CHAPTER NEXT SPRING.

Nelson, Brian Schaefer, Rob Noirjean, and Jason Saathoff for contributing their time and energy to these events.

Of course, September starts the new school year, and so has begun a second year of Trout in the Classroom in the greater Twin Cities metro area, expanding this year from 10 to 17 schools under Benji and Janine Kohn's leadership. Last year this fantastic program brought important lessons of environmental stewardship to nearly 2000 metro area kids! On October 14th, the Twin Cities chapter held its inaugural "Fall Festival Fundraiser" with a focus on the Vermillion River; about 100 guests attended. It was a very fun social evening that included games, raffles, silent auction, and a very engaging presentation on fishing the Vermillion River by local guide Matt Doth (www.mahiganoutdoors.com). We were also very pleased to have a special guest drop in for a visit: United States Senator Amy Klobuchar, who shared some of her experiences and reflections on the importance conservation and stewardship, then joined us for dinner.

It's a particular highlight at our major fundraising event each year to present the Duke Hust Lifetime Achievement Award to an individual who during the course of their involvement with TU has contributed at such a high level as to clearly distinguish him/herself among our many current and former chapter leaders. We are very pleased this year to present TCTU's highest award to Don Eckenrode, who has served in the past as Treasurer for both TCTU and MNTU, and whose leadership and dedication over many years made him a driving force behind Project Healing Waters in the Minneapolis area. Please join me in congratulating Don on this very well deserved recognition! It has been a pleasure to work with you, my friend.

October 29th marked our first habitat work day this fall: about 50 volunteers helped clear invasive buckthorn from the South Branch of the Vermillion, a stretch obtained by DNR about two years ago. More such project days are in the planning: check our Events page at www.twincitiestu.org to keep informed!

There are many ways for you to get involved! We always need volunteers for habitat work days on Hay Creek, the Vermillion River, and elsewhere. Not your thing? How about connecting with veterans through Project Healing Waters? Helping us organize events like attending state or county fairs to promote TU? Maybe you'd like to help plan our next fundraiser or film festival event? We would love to have your help! We can be reached here: info@twincitiestu.org.

Join Us On Our Last 2016 Work Day!

Vermillion River Buckthorn Cut
Saturday December 3, 2016 – 10AM to 1PM, followed by hot lunch. Contact us at info@twincitiestu.org to learn more.

Dean Campbell

Win-Cres Chapter

The Win-Cres chapter had a quiet summer. We kept up our efforts to control Japanese knot weed on Garvin Brook and a few members sprayed the knotweed twice, once in June and again in September. Controlling the knotweed is a multi-year project.

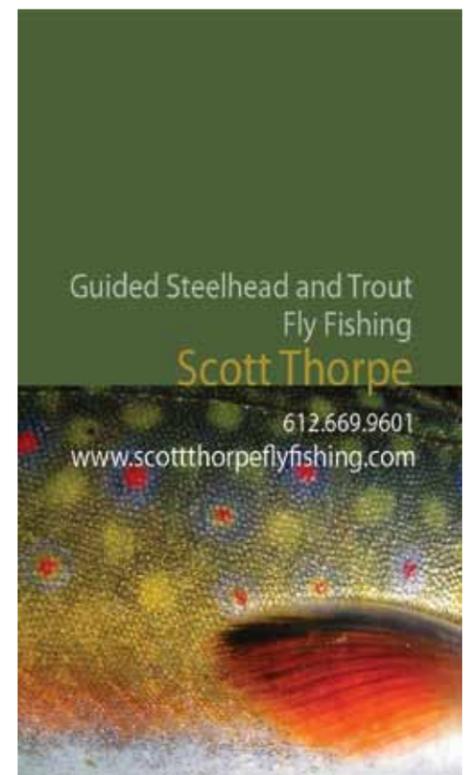
Our members assisted White Water State Park staff to introduce kids and families to trout fishing. Win-Cres members also helped the Lewiston Sportsmen's Club introduce kids to fishing. Win-Cres hosted two fly casting evenings with Mark Reisetter and Marlene Huston as instructors. Interested beginners and novice fly anglers

were able to learn how to get started or improve their casting techniques.

At our September meeting, members demonstrated fly tying and shared stories about their summer fishing success.

On Friday, December 2, Win-Cres will host a wild game feed/fund raiser at Holzinger Lodge. Members will share wild game appetizers and the Elk Stroganoff entrée while bidding and taking a chance on donated items. Tickets are limited to 60. If you are interested in attending, contact Chuck Shepard at 507- 452-8898. Tickets are \$20.00 for the meal or \$100.00 for a sponsorship.

Joe Lepley



A WILD BROOK TROUT FROM THE HABITAT PROJECT ON EAST INDIAN CREEK IN WABASHA COUNTY, MN. ONE OF THE FEW WILD BROOK TROUT WATERS IN SE MN, HABITAT WORK WILL HELP IT REMAIN A STRONGHOLD FOR NATIVE TROUT



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STILLWATER AREA HS STUDENTS SURVEY BROWNS CREEK IN WASHINGTON COUNTY DURING A TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

REELING IT IN Sparkles in the Tank

By Sam Troutt

The first time that I saw a tiny trout swimming in a tank I was transfixed. It was barely an inch long, and if I looked close enough, I could see speckles and parr marks along its sides. Having grown up with aquariums and as a trout angler, trout were only a dream as a coldwater species. Without the means to keep cold water flowing through my parents basement, all I could do was wonder if it could work.

Fast forward a few decades and aquarium technology has thankfully improved and changed greatly, and raising trout outside of hatcheries is a reality. Now, the young students gathered around the tank watching the fish were just as engaged as I was, if not more. They cared for the trout living in their classroom environment much more than I could imagine. Feeding, cleaning, measuring, and counting the fish provided a huge draw to care about the tiny eggs, then fry, then fingerlings in the tank. When the fish were finally stocked into a local trout stream, the students had transitioned to caring about the stream, since it was the new home for their fish. "What do you mean it could get too warm?" was asked with sincere concern for the progeny they had just released. "What happens when it rains and things run into the stream?" The Trout in the Classroom program brought out honest

and forthright thoughts about the future of our local trout waters, and created a new crop of advocates.

As we expand our Trout in the Classroom program around the state, an opportunity exists for MNTU members and others to get involved. Join in the program and help steer our next generation of anglers and advocates for trout. We need your help to teach fly tying, casting, help out on stream outings and much, much more. We need dedicated anglers to help make the connection for students that caring about these streams and rivers will ensure that they have a place not only for their trout to go, but for them and their families to fish, hike, camp and recreate.

As more schools join, more opportunities exist for MNTU to help use these little "sparkles in the tank" to create more than just a learning experience. You can help create new anglers and play a role. Visit the MNTU Trout in the Classroom Facebook page to see students in action and progress of the trout as they hatch and grow this season. www.facebook.com/mntutic

Contact your local TU chapter to learn more about the program and how you can get involved today!

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