

# TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - February 2018



 **GREAT WATERS  
FLY FISHING EXPO**  
Presented By Minnesota Trout Unlimited

March 16th-18th, 2018 • Tickets on Sale Now!

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## Winter in the Driftless

Anglers Afield

2017 - A Minnesota TU Year In Review

Fishing Winona County's Garvin Brook

Tying the Purple Haze

Starting a College Fly Fishing Club

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## ON THE COVER

A wild North Shore steelhead caught by Cheri Henderson. Learn more about our habitat work and how we restore North Shore steelhead streams and their watersheds on page 6 of this issue. Photo by Brent Notbohm.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- Fishing Garvin Brook
- How Habitat Restoration Works
- Heading West: Missoula, MT
- TCTU Chapter Banquet Details
- Starting A Fly Fishing Club

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# MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

## Finding Fish

By Steve Carlton, Minnesota Council Chair

Here fishy, fishy, fishy. It's cold out and I'm practicing. Without a good fish call and a better fly, it's hard to catch trout, so I'll keep practicing my fish calls and hopefully my cast-to-catch ratio will improve this season. If it's winter, that means the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo is right around the corner...or by the time you read this, it might be going on already. Hopefully, you will have a chance to attend. The 2018 Expo will rival some of the biggest Great Waters Expos from the Tom Helgeson days. Don't forget the Fly Fishing Film Showcase after the show on Saturday night. Those are always a blast, maybe because there is some beer involved. I will be hanging out at the Expo all three days, so if you run into me, please say hi and ask any questions about Minnesota Trout Unlimited you might have. If you are interested and would like to get more involved with TU, there are always ways to lend a hand. Think about joining your local chapter board or even the Minnesota

Council. We are currently looking for new faces with new ideas. It's a small time commitment, and our watersheds need protecting.

What are my fishing plans for the year? I'll do a little bonefishing in the Bahamas in March. I'll probably get out for early fishing in March and April around here on the Rush River or Kinni, and I always bring a salt water rod on my Mexico spring break trips. I'll bring a rod on my family trip to Croatia in June, yes, they have trout there. Sometime this season, I'll take some "high bidders" out for their first attempt at fly fishing (I donate "guided" trips to nonprofits for fundraising events). I set my record last October with a trip I donated to My Health for Teens which brought in \$2600 for that wonderful organization. I'll always fish the Trico hatch in August and September and will end up fishing out in Redding, California for the annual Trout Unlimited meeting. If I am even luckier, I'll get to the Driftless Area for



a weekend, possibly the Green River in Utah in July, and hopefully, land a steelhead in October.

Enjoy this publication, the new MNTU website and the abundance of clean, cold water we have around here. Let's keep it that way. MNTU works hard to promote conservation and fishing for trout and salmon. We are almost entirely a volunteer organization, so any help or donations are welcome. FISH ON!

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CASTING INTO THE LAST RAYS OF DUSK ON A NORTHERN MINNESOTA TROUT STREAM. READ ABOUT THE BEAUTY OF FLY FISHING ON PAGE 15 IN THE ARTICLE BY HEADWATERS CHAPTER PRESIDENT BOB WAGNER.

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land...

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

The DNR Roundtable in January 2018 highlighted the ongoing threat to public lands both nationally and right here in Minnesota. On a national scale there is growing pressure by some, especially in the Western United States, to engineer a selling of lands which all of us own jointly as Americans. We speak of “public lands,” but this does not do it justice. These are our lands – yours, mine, our children’s and their children’s. The lands and waters which our federal government holds in trust for all of us are one of our birthrights as Americans. These lands also contain the headwaters of most of America’s native trout, steelhead and salmon streams and rivers. In Minnesota, the Superior National Forest and Chippewa National Forest ensure the health of the headwaters of many of our northern rivers, Lake Superior tributaries and most of our native inland lake trout lakes. I expect that

in 2018 all of us will be called upon to speak out forcefully to protect our shared lands from assaults on the national level.

But threats to our heritage of shared lands are closer to home. In 1998 Minnesotans passed an amendment to our state constitution ensuring each of us has a right to fish and hunt in Minnesota. Ten years later Minnesotans passed another constitutional amendment which created a new sales tax dedicated to protecting our waters and natural resources. Minnesotans clearly value our natural heritage and want to preserve it. Amazingly, some state legislators have recently introduced bills to prevent the state and nonprofits from protecting critical land and public waters via land or easement acquisitions. Another of their strategies is to raid the dedicated Legacy Amendment funds and divert them for purposes other than natural resource protection.



Please keep an eye out for attacks on our shared lands this legislative session and speak up to preserve them for ourselves, our children and future generations. Assaults on healthy, publicly accessible lands and waters will invariably arise this year. When they do, we will need your voices to send a strong message that this heritage must be protected for every generation.



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THE SPRING STEELHEAD SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER. WANT TO LEARN THE LATEST DETAILS ABOUT THE RUN AND WHERE TO FISH? GET TO THE GITCHE GUMEE CHAPTER “STATE OF THE STEELHEAD” MEETING ON APRIL 12TH

## EDITOR’S ANGLE

### How Many Flies to Tie?

By Carl Haensel, Editor

It’s a question I ask myself each season around this time of the year. How many flies do I really need? Is there a possible way I’m actually going to lose six dozen size 16 pheasant tail nymphs this year? It is always a balance between time, energy and the quickly coming spring weather when any desire to stay inside evaporates.

In the past few years, I’ve occasionally had a little more motivation to head out into the community to tie some flies at one of the many social fly tying events. It has been helpful with my fly overall supply and a ton of fun at the same time. With that in mind, I encourage you to get out, meet some friends, tie some flies and hold forth in the community. It doesn’t matter if it is a TU-themed event like “Trout On Tap,” or “Beer & Bugs,”

“Hops & Hoppers” or any of the other similar events. They are all great, casual opportunities to hang out, tie some flies, and maybe even drink a beer or two. Often having no agenda or firm time commitments, they’re a great way to get involved in the fishing and conservation community casually. If you’ve never tied flies before or you’re a beginner, it’s also a great place to learn from seasoned pros. It seems that there are always spare vises around for those interested.

Keep your eyes on social media, in our Chapter News, and with your own local chapter communications for upcoming events. With a little bit of luck, there will be an upcoming fly tying event near you this winter or early spring.



# WINTER IN THE DRIFTLESS

## Fishing Moving Water in the Minnesota Winter

By Micah Crider

When cold air moves over a warmer body of water, it creates “sea smoke.” Currently the air is 60 degrees colder than the water passing by our feet, resulting in sea smoke so thick, it’s hard to see the opposite bank.

There are few places where water can be 60 degrees warmer than the air, but we are in one of those places. The Driftless area of Minnesota and Wisconsin is home to dozens of spring-fed creeks where the water coming out of the ground is between 48 and 50 degrees; so even though the wind chill is -10, the water remains in a liquid state.

The morning starts like most this time of year—the sound of a coffee grinder fills the kitchen and the table is covered in flies and warm weather gear. It is 8:00 am and the straight air temps are hovering around 0. During these cold winter months, there is no reason to rush to the stream at first light. Instead, we wait for the warmer parts of the day, knowing that we won’t need to fight crowds for our spots. We make sure to cover all exposed skin and put on our waders in the warmth of our house before leaving.

My 21-year-old truck sings a bit when I turn the key, but it’s a trusty old truck and fires after a few seconds. We drink lots of coffee during the ride down and discuss the various fishing tactics we are going to try upon arrival. It’s hard to know how trout will act in these temps, so every approach is considered.

Fly fishing in our area is a niche sport. We frequently get confused looks when we tell people that we are “going fly fishing” and their faces are even more confused when we say this in January and February. Fishing this time of year isn’t uncommon—seasonal shanty villages pop up on the thousands of frozen lakes, as ice anglers drill holes in hopes of pulling walleye, pike or hand-sized



pan fish through—but we prefer the solitude of the woods, and the sound of the running water.

The scenery we experience on days like today is breathtaking, quite literally. Even though the weather is harsh, the days are peaceful. Our surroundings are quiet with the exception of the crunching snow heard after each step we take. The snow settles like a white blanket over everything and creates a sense of purity and freshness, symbolic of the new year we have just entered. With the start of the new year comes a distinct excitement—each cast we take is filled with anticipation as we wait for our first fish of the year.

We are quickly reminded of the freezing temperatures by the frozen rod guides that require our attention every few casts. We avoid letting our reels slip under the water to prevent them from becoming

ice cubes, rendering them useless. Our breath blurs our vision as we focus intently on our floating line, looking for the slightest twitch. In these temperatures fish tend to be lethargic and their strikes can be very subtle.

As we work our way upstream, our focus is on the deeper pools. Where there are pools, there are almost always fish stacked on the bottom. We cast our

After slipping the barbless hook out of his mouth with ease, she lifts him out of the water just long enough for me to snap a few pictures before releasing him back into the 48 degree water.

We continue upstream, only to find that most of the pools are frozen over. A few small brook trout find themselves in our nets, but the day didn’t end with the same excitement as it began. Neverthe-



weighted streamers up into these deep holes as we approach, and swing them back through as we continue to work our way up stream. Within minutes, a brown trout grabs Abigail’s black streamer. Once the trout figures out what has happened, he puts up his best fight, but it’s too late. Abigail fights him well, keeping tension on the frozen line, and I’m able to scoop him up into our net. It’s a nice-sized fish, dark brown with a slight hookjaw and an abnormally large caudal (tail) fin. We high five each other in excitement, realizing what a beautiful first catch this is for the new year. With the temps being so cold we make sure to keep the fish submerged in the net.

less, this was a day to remember—any day spent fishing is a good day—and in the dead of winter, the taste of success seems sweeter. Rarely do we see other anglers, and when we do we greet each other kindly. The challenges that need to be overcome, with no promise of success, prevents many anglers from putting the waders on when temps are below freezing; but for those that dare to brave the cold, some great memories and experiences are in store.

Winter is a beautiful time in the Driftless that few take the time to appreciate—and in a selfish way, I’m okay with that.



# ANGLERS AFIELD

## Trout Fishing, Rafting, Hiking and Biking in a Beautiful Montana Valley

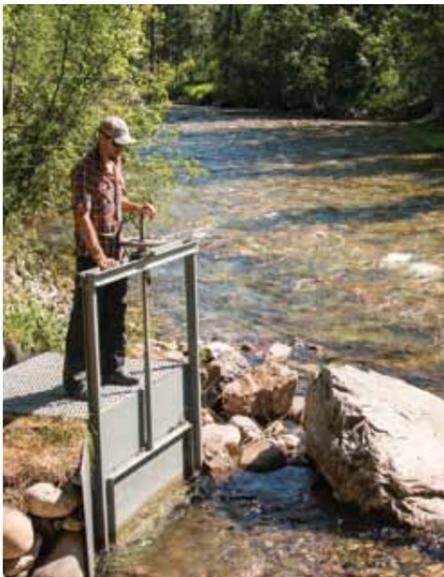
By Hal Tearse



On a trip to Missoula, Montana last July to check out a Trout Unlimited project on Rattlesnake Creek, I visited a part of Montana I had not experienced. I was delighted by what this area offered for outdoor enthusiasts of all kinds.

The area is packed with hundreds of miles of bike and running trails, tubing, river rafting and even surfing on the Clark Fork River in downtown Missoula. Bird and big game hunting are added to the mix in the fall. For families looking for a destination vacation area, this valley has something to offer for every member of the family. Home to the University of Montana Grizzlies and described to me as “a lifestyle choice,” Missoula is far different and laid back than the glamour and glitz of Bozeman or Jackson Hole.

The Clark Fork River runs directly through downtown Missoula. Rattlesnake Creek, the Bitterroot River and the



THE NEW MONTANA TU RATTLESNAKE CREEK IRRIGATION DIVERSION GATE



GETTING READY TO SURF “MONTANA STYLE” ON A STANDING RIVER WAVE

Blackfoot River all feed into the Clark Fork. These are West Slope Rivers flowing towards the Pacific Ocean and they contain bull trout, west slope cutthroat, rainbows, browns and brook trout, offering the potential for catching multiple species in one day. The Missoula area is a paradise for trout seekers and yet a very family-friendly area.

Montana TU is a very vibrant and creative organization that has a long history of on-going stream restoration and watershed projects. These projects protect the free-flowing rivers and aquatic species that live there. There are 13 local TU Chapters across the state that are all busy raising money and pitching in to restore and protect the habitat that the rivers flow through. The Rattlesnake project we were involved with was primarily funded by the state organization and a few grants and was completed by the State TU staff. In addition, several volunteers chipped in to help with the planting of native plants along the creek.

The state of Montana has a long history of fighting to protect the fisheries and habitat from mining and logging interests. There have also been some major grassroots efforts regarding proposed dams, commercial waste dumping in rivers and land easements of fishing access. They also pioneered catch and release efforts, demonstrated that hatchery fish do not compete well with native trout, and convinced the state to stop stocking fish in many rivers.

The early activists date back nearly 70 years with legendary guides and shop owners Dan Bailey, Bud Lilly and others. From these early roots, the organization has grown to more than 4,500 pas-

sionate members across Montana.

Montana TU is one of only a few states with full-time paid state staff that work in concert with the volunteer leadership statewide. Minnesota, with a single, half-time executive director hopes to move closer to this model in the future. Montana is also very lucky to have national TU staff housed in both Bozeman and Missoula. Their project and policy work is extensive and a great complement to the Montana TU grassroots efforts.

I visited Missoula to inspect a recent project on Rattlesnake Creek that my family and RBC Wealth Management helped fund. Rattlesnake Creek is an 82-mile drainage that originates in the Rattlesnake Wilderness and joins the Clark Fork River in downtown Missoula, Montana. In fact, it runs under the deck of a very popular restaurant in town. The watershed is designated as a Bull Trout Critical Habitat and supports robust populations of native west slope cutthroat trout and other wild sport fish. The Rattlesnake corridor is a recreation hub for Missoulians and visitors, with a large network of mountain bike and hiking trails.

snake Creek project focused on a side channel that not only irrigates private land, but unfortunately diverted young fish into the irrigation ditches and they were not able to return to the main creek. Landowners would call saying that there were small trout in their fields and lawns. Clearly something needed to happen to protect the fish and the water rights of the landowners.

The \$30,000 project cleaned up the streamside habitat and an irrigation gate was installed to prevent fish from leaving the creek for greener pastures. In turn, the side channel is now a great nursery for young trout to grow before venturing into the main river channel. The project was completed very quickly due to the dedicated efforts of the in-house experts and the cooperation of agencies that oversee the river.

The next step is to remove the obsolete Rattlesnake Creek Dam that has prevented fish passage on this important tributary for over 100 years. Originally the creek was the primary water source for Missoula by impounding nearly 3 million gallons of water in an adjacent constructed reservoir.



A GREAT BROWN TROUT CAUGHT IN THE VALLEY NEAR MISSOULA

I had the pleasure to meet David Brooks, the new executive director of Montana TU, and his new very organized and capable development director, Kelley Willett (see the photo of Kelley with her fish!). They escorted me to the project site and provided the project’s background. We walked along the side channel in the afternoon and were sun shaded by the many trees along the channel. They explained the work and demonstrated the diversion gate that was installed.

Most rivers in Montana provide water for irrigation and recreation and Rattlesnake Creek is no exception. The Rattle-

This will be a significantly larger project projected to cost \$1 million but the connectivity it ensures will radically change fish passage for endangered bull trout and other species. The city has greenlighted the project, along with twelve partners, and it is expected to be completed in late 2020.

Now that I have had a taste of what Missoula offers, I know I will return this summer and many more to come. If you are looking for a wide variety of fishing experiences and outdoor family activities, I recommend venturing to the great state of Montana and checking out the many rivers and lakes in the Missoula area.

# MNTU'S STREAM HABITAT WORK IN MINNESOTA

## Part 2 - Effective Use of Log and Rock Vanes

By John Lenczewski

This is the second in a series of articles exploring how MNTU and its chapters go about designing and implementing trout and steelhead habitat projects around the state. In Part 1 we examined broadly our approach to design and the importance of flood flows and flood plains and accounting for each stream's need to transport its sediments. With those principles as background, we now examine a highly visible set of structures which anglers often ask about. I am referring to rock cross vanes, vortex weirs and J-hook vanes. No single method, structure or material is suitable for every project site, but on most projects it is appropriate to select these vane structures from the habitat work "toolbox" for use in some locations.

### What are Rock and Log Vane Structures?

Cross vanes, vortex weirs and J-hook vanes are structures made of large rock, logs and root wads which are placed in the stream channel to both stabilize the stream channel and enhance fish habitat.

### How do Vanes Work?

The shape and angles (elevations) of cross vanes and J-hook vanes combine to roll or direct water away from the stream banks and toward the center of the stream channel. The structures are built well into the stream banks (or one stream bank in the case of J-hooks) and angle upstream and downward into the center and bottom of the stream. A graphic below at the right illustrates how flow is shifted into the center of a weir or cross vane and scours a pool down the center of the stream. Note how the arrows turn into the center as they pass over the vane.

These structures act as grade control to prevent the stream from eroding downward and cutting deeper in to the landscape and help stabilize channel boundaries and width/depth ratios. They decrease water velocity, stream power and shear stress (erosive force) along the stream banks and thereby reduce stream bank erosion, and increase the energy to the center of the stream. This centralized flow maintains the channel capacity and ability to transport sediment, scouring and maintaining a pool below the structure. Note in the picture above how the cross vane on Rush Creek not only helps to prevent bank erosion, but also keeps a long, deep pool free of the heavy sand bedload in this stretch of river.

These structures also provide good fish habitat by creating and maintaining deep holding cover during low and high flows. The downwelling and upwelling forces in the center of the channel creates feeding lanes where the fast and slow water meets. Cross vanes also sort sediments, depositing gravel which trout and steelhead utilize for spawning. Cross vanes can also be built with a combination



THIS ROCK CROSS VANE ON RUSH CREEK IN SE MINNESOTA DIRECTS WATER FLOWS TO THE CENTER OF THE STREAM CHANNEL, SCOURING THE AREA AND MAINTAINING POOL DEPTH FOR A LONG REACH BELOW THE STRUCTURE.

of rock and logs or only logs as on the Kadunce River project.

### Grade Control

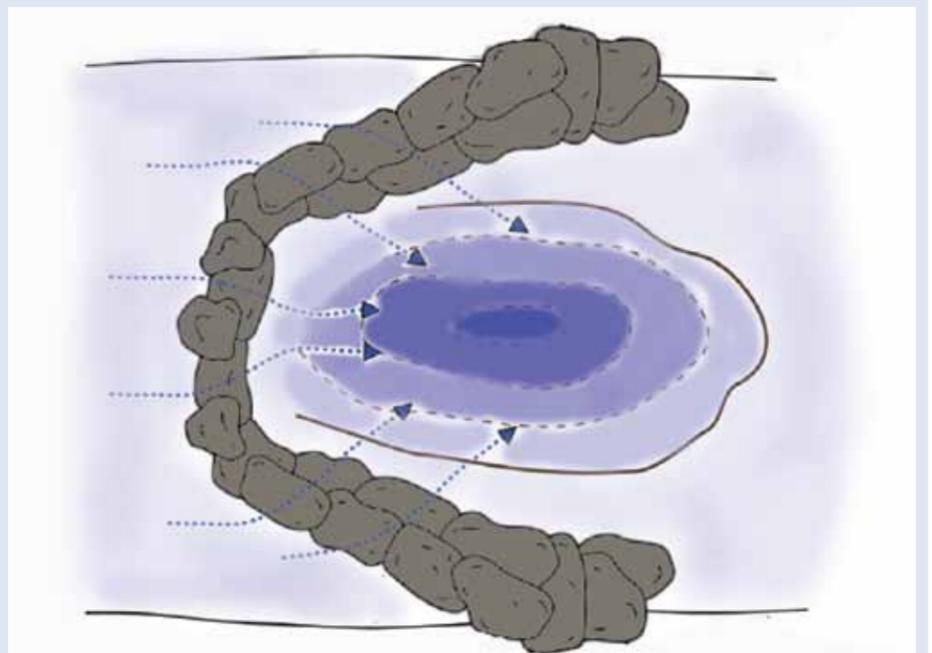
In high gradient reaches a series of vanes can be used to stabilize a longer reach of stream channel. In Minnesota this is most often found on our North Shore trout streams. This can appear as a series of "step pools" that maintain the stream gradient throughout the reach. Note that cross vanes hold back water upstream of the vane and deepen or maintain the depth of the stream immediately above them. In the picture at right observe how each cross vane holds back water, creating a series of short pools.

### J - Hook Vanes

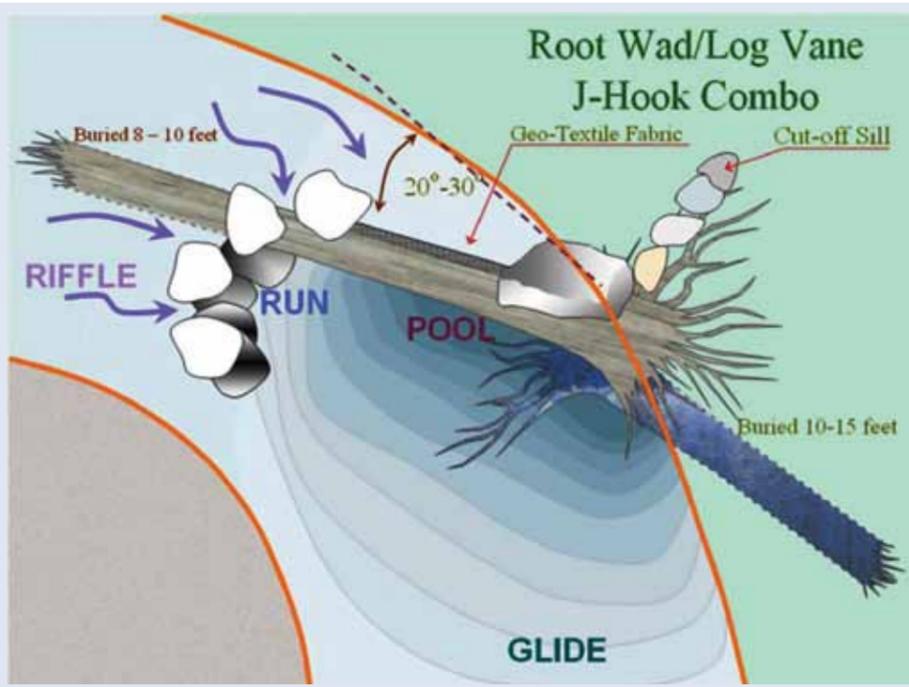
J-hooks are similar structures pointing upstream with a gradually sloping rock or log arm along the outside bend of the stream. They can be made entirely of rock or a combination of rock "hook" and a log or root wad for the long "arm" extending out from the bank. These are used most often at the tops of pools to provide scour and configured to direct flow down the pool to keep it free of sediment. They are designed to reduce bank erosion by rolling water over the log and reducing velocity, stream power and shear stress along the banks. Note in the pictures on the following page how the J-hook scours a run leading into the pool and directs flow down the pool to keep it free of sediment.



THIS SERIES OF ROCK VANES IN THE STEWART RIVER HELP MAINTAIN GRADE CONTROL WHILE KEEPING DEEP POOLS SCOURED. THESE POOLS ARE VITAL FOR SEDIMENT TRANSPORT IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING GREAT TROUT HABITAT.



A DIAGRAM OF A ROCK VANE, SHOWING FLOW MOVING FROM LEFT TO RIGHT AND SCOURING A POOL. GRAPHIC ADAPTED FROM UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



THIS J-HOOK DIAGRAM FROM NRCS SHOWS MOVEMENT OF WATER THROUGH THE STRUCTURE AND HIGHLIGHTS THE DEEP POOL THAT IS SCOURED. THE ROOT WAD ALSO SERVES TO PROTECT THE BANK FROM EROSION.



THIS J-HOOK VANE INSTALLED ON THE STEWART RIVER HIGHLIGHTS NOT ONLY THE DEPTH OF THE POOL SCOURED, BUT ALSO THE EFFECTIVE VEGETATION ON THE BANK, ABLE TO GROW DUE TO PROTECTION FROM DIRECT FLOWS.

## WHY YOU SHOULD START A COLLEGE FLY FISHING CLUB

### How to Start a Club on Your Campus

By Jason Rieke and Jacob Larson

The importance of involvement with a campus club is often stressed by teachers and orientation leaders when you go to college your freshman year. Many times if your campus doesn't have a club for what you are interested in, it will be stated that you can easily make your own club. In recent years, college fly fishing clubs have begun to become more and more popular across the nation. Trout Unlimited's Costa 5 Rivers program is a major reason for this increase and it has led to many college-aged students becoming interested in the sport of fly fishing.

#### How to Start a Club

Starting a TU Costa 5 Rivers club is a relatively easy process. First, you need to have 5-10 people who are interested in fly fishing and would like to help you start the club. Next, your group will need to become a recognized official student organization by your college or university. This is usually done by getting in contact with your campus student union, presenting your proposed club and creating a constitution and roster. While you are forming your club, or once your club becomes official at your campus, you will need to get in contact with the TU Costa 5 Rivers Coordinator, Andrew Loffredo (aloffredo@tu.org), or your local TU chapter directly, and let them know of your interest in becoming involved with TU 5 Rivers.



WINONA STATE ON THE FLY OUT AND ABOUT ON CAMPUS

#### Reasons to Start a Club

Starting a fly fishing club is a really cool way to get a group of like-minded

people together. As a club, it becomes easy to plan events such as fly fishing trips and stream clean ups and it is a great way to connect with other students from your campus who may share the same passion for fly fishing that you do. Here are more reasons why you should consider starting a TU Costa 5 Rivers fly fishing club at your campus:

1. Instill an atmosphere of fly fishing on your campus.
2. Receive support from TU on both the national and local level. The 5 Rivers coordinator can help with everything from getting your club off the ground to getting your club's name out there.
3. Connect with other campuses that are in the TU Costa 5 Rivers club system. This past fall, four TU Costa 5 Rivers campus clubs across Minnesota and Wisconsin got together and hosted the Driftless Area Border Battle (fly fishing tournament in the Driftless).
4. Connect with your local TU members (they are a lot of fun to be around and they are full of fly fishing wisdom and secret spots).
5. Receive pro deals on gear.
6. President of the club (or an assigned person) will get a free pair of Costa sunglasses each semester and the club itself will get a Costa Swag Pack full of hats, stickers and other Costa gear.
7. Depending on your university, you can use university funds to help your club out with trips and gear.
8. Starting up a college club looks great on a resume.
9. Giving back: when your club hosts or helps out with stream clean ups or stream improvement projects it feels great to improve the resources.

#### TU Costa 5 Rivers College Clubs in Minnesota: Beginnings

Jason Rieke - Winona State On The Fly:

During our freshman year at Winona State University a couple friends and I began fly fishing for trout in southeast Minnesota. We found a love for the cold, gin-clear streams in our area and were passionate about pursuing the beautiful trout with the added challenge of catch-



ing them on a fly rod. At the end of our second year of school we had the idea of starting a fly fishing club. After a process of meeting with the student union and filling out forms, we eventually became an official campus club: Winona State on the Fly. In our first year, we began getting involved with the local Win-Cres Trout Unlimited chapter and they led us to become part of the TU Costa 5 Rivers club system.

Jacob Larson - Gustavus Fly Fishing Club:

A J-Term class called Minnesota Aquatic Stewardship, taught by club advisor Eric Elias, is where our club all started. Gustavus Adolphus College now has one of the two TU Costa 5 Rivers College clubs in the state. Through the class, our passion for trout fishing and conservation efforts were born and took hold on how our club is run. We mostly focus on trout, but are expanding into fly fishing for other fish species. Our member base is currently growing and we hope to expand every year. We are very excited to start a college fly fishing movement across the state of Minnesota.

the past couple years and we have an average weekly attendance that ranges from 5-15 people with a handful of core members that come almost every week of the semester. We have some really awesome events planned for this next semester, keep an eye out for upcoming fishing trips and Trout Unlimited events that we will attend!

Jacob: We also have weekly club meetings where we tie flies and talk about upcoming events. Our events range from fly tying nights, conservation events, and even fishing trips! We have also started to put on film nights where club members and the campus community can tie flies while watching some cool fly fishing action. Our attendance ranges from 10-15 core members and have about 30 people on our email list. We currently have members in our club who are first time fly fishers as well as those who have been fly fishing for multiple years. This is only our second year as a club and we plan to continue growing over the next couple of years. Stay tuned for a very cool Earth Day event happening this spring in April!

#### More Information

If you are thinking about starting up a fly fishing club on your campus, we encourage you to get in contact with your local Trout Unlimited chapter, the TU Costa 5 Rivers Coordinator, Andrew Loffredo (aloffredo@tu.org), or either of us (Jason - jriek13@winona.edu, Jacob - jlarso13@gustavus.edu) for help or more information.

#### Atmosphere of Fly Fishing

Jason: During our first couple semesters we met with the student union and used club funds to purchase fly tying tools (vises, bobbins, ect.) and fly tying materials. Our goal for the club was to become a gathering place for anyone who is interested in fly fishing, fly tying, or simply talking about fishing. We have had relative success with our club over

# FISHING GARVIN BROOK

## Exploring our Habitat Improvement on a Top SE Minnesota Stream

By Mark Reisetter

Less than five miles from downtown Winona, an amazing, small trout stream runs through southeast Minnesota. Filled with brown trout and some brookies in the headwaters, it offers excellent fishing opportunities for visiting and local anglers alike. Thanks to Trout Unlimited, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and funding from the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF), Garvin Brook in Winona County has been receiving quite a bit of attention in recent years. Lots of habitat work has been completed, offering ample new fishing locations. The stream will get more attention soon, as an additional habitat project just below Farmers' Park is already in the works for this summer.

Waiting right below the Garvin Brook project completed in 2014 (which was written about in the August, 2016 issue of *Trout Unlimited Minnesota*, which you can find online, along with all the other back issues, at [mntu.org](http://mntu.org).) is a 3,500 foot reach which was restored in 2017 and should become a favorite destination of trout anglers for years to come!

Like the section of Garvin Brook completed in 2014, this 2017 edition (found in the DNR's "Trout Angling Opportunities in Southern and Central Minnesota" on pages 20-21, SE, Map 8) is a special-regulations stretch with a 12-16 inch protected slot for all trout during the catch and keep season, and it requires artificial lures or flies only.

The new owners of this "Oevering stretch" of Garvin Brook will use the property as a dog training site. "Reaction Retrievers" is run by Darren Thompson and co-owned by the landowner, Ron Blume.



NYPHYS WORK! THIS GARVIN BROOK BROWN TROUT FELL FOR A BEAD-HEAD GRAY SCUD. INSECT AND CRUSTACEAN LIFE ARE ABUNDANT IN THE STREAM.

Just off of Highway 14 at roughly milepost 248 3/4, there is a wide spot of gravel where an angler should park, being careful not to block the group of mailboxes present.

From the parking area, the angler should walk down the driveway, cross the railroad tracks, and stay on the driveway until it crosses the culvert over Garvin Brook. Once inside the stream access corridor, the angler can begin fishing or walking the stream bank.

Some finger-like ponds for retriever training have been built away from the stream, and if dogs are being trained, anglers should go about their business and respect the work that is taking place.

Darren Thompson has told me that he and the new landowner intend to construct a streamside pavilion dedicated for angler use for perhaps a lunch break, or a place to get out of the rain or hot sun. Inside the pavilion will be a plaque that honors Trout Unlimited for its role in improving this area of Garvin Brook.

MNTU employed the highly-skilled construction team of Dennis Barth and his heavy equipment operators with Barth Construction, Inc. and oversight team of Tom Dornack and Gary Sobotta of Habitat Solutions, LLC.. The Win-Cres Chapter members constructed the Minnesota Sky Hooks onsite that were used along the project. Also onsite most days was Melissa Konsti, the DNR's Stream Habitat Specialist out of Lanesboro.

Konsti was especially pleased with numerous elements of this project: "The narrowed channel flushes the fine sediment, and the sinuosity allowed us to create overhead cover with good depth in multiple bends where pools are located." Melissa went on to say, "The weirs used as grade control structures will help maintain the riffle-run-pool complexes so critical for healthy trout populations." This work was funded with OHF dollars secured by MNTU, although a small amount of farm bill funding was used (via TU DARE) to add some non-game features in the form of amphibian/turtle depressions.

The heavy construction work occurred in April-June of 2017, with tree removal

taking place prior, when the ground was still snow covered. The project flooded out five times during and immediately following construction, which really played havoc with establishing ground cover, and necessitated reseeding several times. John Lenczewski, MNTU's Executive Director, says, "We anticipate minor maintenance will be done for the next two years using non-OHF funding. Every project experiences settling of rock, wood, structures, etc., and needs some repair or maintenance before it is complete. It will also take two full



CLEAN, COLD WATER FLOWS THROUGH A RESTORED REACH OF GARVIN BROOK

growing seasons (through September, 2019) for vegetation to become fully established, and then the project will truly be complete." Lenczewski went on to say, "Everyone wants to rush to see the newly-completed projects, but folks should realize that they all look relatively 'raw' until vegetation becomes fully established in two or so years."

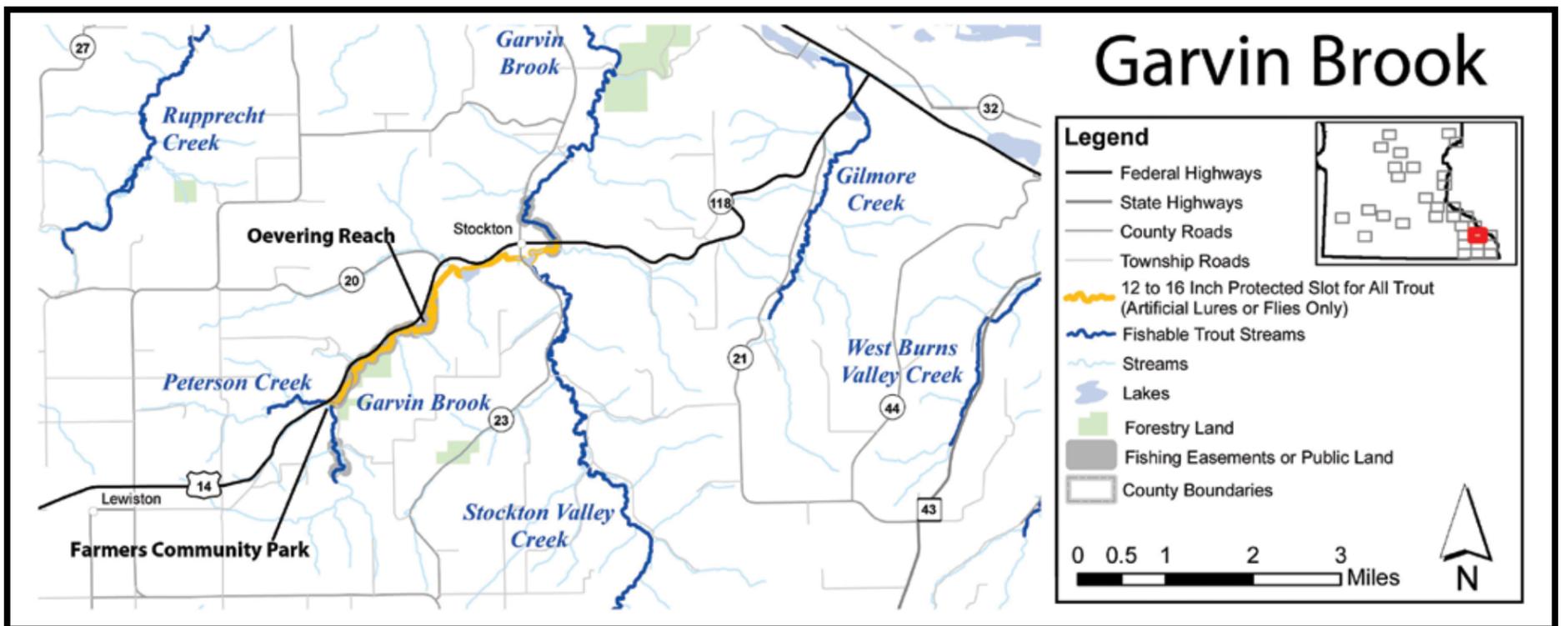
Jim Clark, long-time Win-Cres Chapter leader, fly angler and fly tier summarizes the positive reception this project has received when he says, "Before the project, there were perhaps six or seven places where you would catch fish. Now there are over twenty spots where you will find trout in good numbers." Jim says he also thinks "the improved cover may have convinced some of the big spawners migrating from the lower section to stick around."

Jim and other Win-Cres members have expectations this could be a premiere fishing location. This section has large trout potential. In fact, Dr. Neal Mundaahl, an active TU'er, and his Winona State University students, have electro-fished trout in this section of Garvin Brook for a number of years, occasionally netting brown trout in the twenty-inch category (see his photo). Since the headwaters of Garvin Brook (above Farmers' Park) have a population of brook trout, trouters are pleased once in a while to catch a "Garvin Brookie" in the lower parts of Garvin as well.

As far as fishing strategy goes, once I arrive at the stream, I have two choices. Since I prefer to fish upstream, I can either start fishing upstream from the culvert crossing, or go downstream to the



WIN-CRES TU CHAPTER VOLUNTEERS CONSTRUCT HABITAT STRUCTURES



bottom end of the project and fish back up. Over 2/3rds of the project is below the driveway crossing, so that is the direction I usually head. Fishing upstream from the crossing would allow you to fish some runs and a couple nice pools (one fed by a sizeable spring tributary which enters on the left) before reaching the railroad trestle, and then you could continue under the trestle, accessing the 1.2 mile previously-improved portion of Garvin Brook.

But if you choose to walk downstream, you will be tempted to ply your trade at the corner pools that provide such nice depth (often 4 to 5 feet) in this stream. Since you will be fishing these pools on your way back upstream, it is smart to at least scout them out a bit on the way down.

Garvin Brook has some excellent and often quite profuse hatches, especially its caddis hatches. The *Brachycentrus* (grannom) hatch began last year in the last half of April and was excellent! Fishing the tan caddis (size 18) in the summer often produces good action, especially towards evening.

Garvin has some good mayfly hatches, also. Look for the Light Hendricksons in May and there are good Baetis hatches in the spring (late March to early May) and fall (into October). One of our friends has seen an enthusiastic response during the Baetis event using a parachute BWO



A LARGE WILD BROWN TROUT FROM GARVIN BROOK CAPTURED BY THE WINONA STATE CREW WITH DR. NEAL MUNDAHL

and also sparkle dun patterns down to size 20 in the fall.

Garvin Brook remains very clear, often even after a recent rain, so its trout can be skittish. But even in the absence of a hatch, anglers find active fish ready for your offerings. Some of the Win-Cres

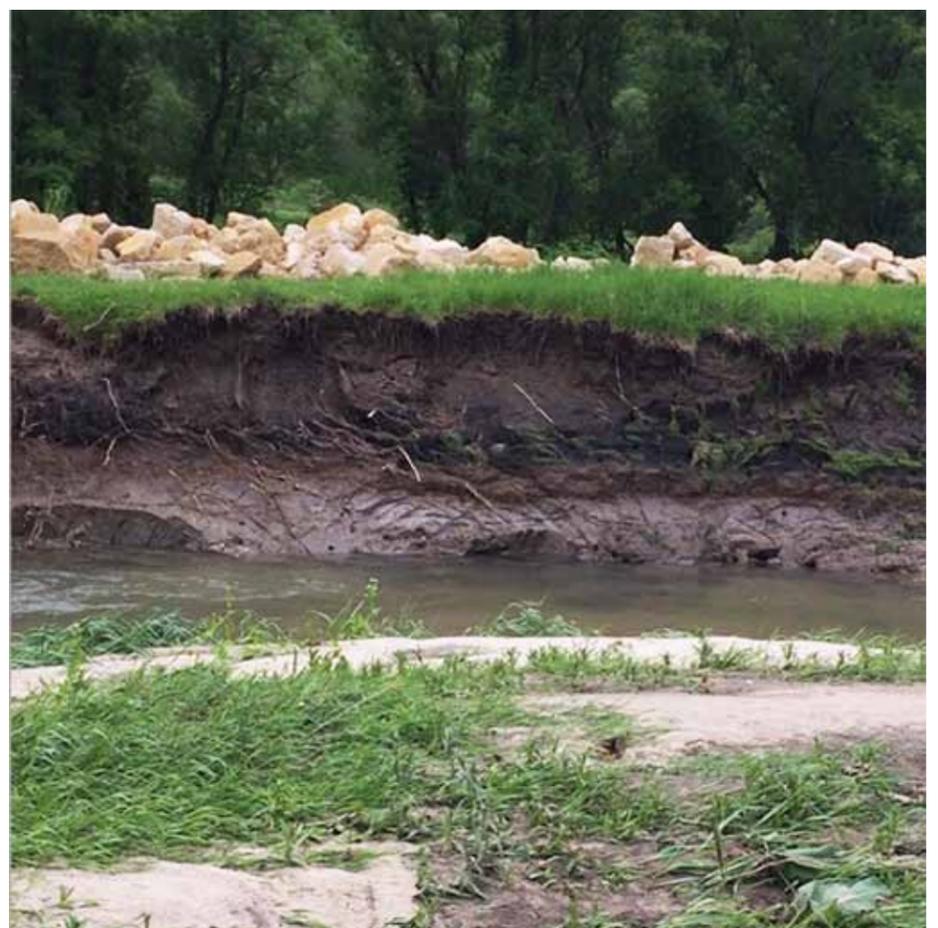
fly anglers who fish Garvin make sure they have a good assortment of flies as they fish Garvin Brook. Small pheasant tail nymphs, regular and with beadheads, are a favorite here. Also the small beadhead Shop Vac is effective. See the pattern below. Soft hackle patterns also work very well on Garvin Brook.

With all the streambank grasses along this stretch and upstream, terrestrials will take a lot of trout. Cricket patterns on early summer mornings and small hoppers/beetles/ants in late summer afternoons extending into fall will bring you a lot of action.

With the increased depth added to this reach of Garvin Brook (four-plus feet in over a dozen places), you will need some weighted flies at times to effectively fish this stream. Weighted streamers (including leech patterns, sculpin patterns and perhaps Clouser minnows) are most effective as water starts to clear up after rain events. As we said, those off-color days are infrequent as Garvin Brook is known for clearing up quickly. Beadhead grey scuds work well for me. I also tie a weighted beadhead hare's ear on a size 12 hook that really gets down quickly and plumbs the depths easily, even in faster currents, and is a consistent fish taker.

Following the devastating flood of August, 2007, the DNR restored Garvin

Brook in Farmers' Park. Counting that work and the work scheduled for this next summer just below the park, anglers will be able to fish and enjoy four recent habitat improvement projects, now connected as one three-mile parcel of quality, spring-fed trout stream known as Garvin Brook!



A SECTION OF GARVIN BROOK PRIOR TO RESTORATION WORK. THE BANKS WERE LATER GRADED TO GRADUAL 3:1 SLOPES, AND ROCK WAS USED TO HOLD THE SLOPE'S TOE UNTIL GRASSES TOOK HOLD. LIMESTONE ROCK SITS ON TOP OF THE BANK, READY TO USE IN THE NOW-COMPLETED PROJECT WORK.

### A Fly For Garvin Brook: The Shop Vac

Hook: Scud hook such as a TMC 2457 in sizes 16-20.  
Thread: Black 6/0 or 8/0  
Bead: Gold, 3/32-inch.  
Rib: Fine copper wire  
Body: 6 to 8 pheasant-tail fibers.  
Wing: White Antron fibers.  
Adhesive: Head cement.



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# FLY TYING

## With Laughing Trout Fly Fishing

By Paul Johnson



### Purple Haze

The Purple Haze came somewhere out of the mountains of Montana a few years ago. It has just a little different look than the standard Parachute Adams. Fish it at any time that you would a traditional Adams. There just seems to be something about purple that fish like.

When I tied this fly step by step, I was using a purple stretchy floss from Montana Fly Company called Wonder Wrap. Of course now they don't make that material anymore, but they do have their Sexi Legs that works

well. There are several other similar stretchy flosses on the market such as Life Flex. You can also use Uni Flexx and Uni Stretch on this fly. The fly can be tied in sizes 12-20. I like the fly in a size 16.

Give it a try and see how it works for you. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Paul Johnson  
Laughing Trout Fly Fishing  
Paulwaconia@gmail.com  
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Step 1. Start your tying thread at the 2/3 point and wrap a smooth thread base back to the bend of the hook.



Step 2. Clip a small clump of Spey Hackle and tie in for the tail. The tail should be roughly 1 to 1.5x the length of your hook shank.



Step 3. Advance your tying thread to the 2/3 point and tie in a clump of Widow's Web with crossing "X" wraps to secure it to the hook.



Step 4. Lift the Widow's Web upright and make thread wraps around the base to form the parachute post.



Step 5. Return your thread to the bend of the hook and tie in a length of Wonder Wrap. Tie the butt end down to the post. Keep the thread wraps as smooth as possible.



Step 6. Palmer the Wonder Wrap forward in touching turns to the post. Secure with your tying thread and clip the excess.



Step 7. Advance your tying thread to the front of the post and tie in a Rooster Hackle. Wrap the quill back to the post and secure it by wrapping the thread around the post.



Step 8. Form a small dubbing noodle with the purple dubbing.



Step 9. Wrap your dubbing noodle with several "X" wraps around the post. Leave your tying thread directly below the post on the back side of your hook.



Step 10. Palmer the Rooster Hackle in 4 to 6 turns, working your way down the post. Secure the hackle with several thread wraps. Clip the excess and whip finish.



Step 11. Trim the parachute post to roughly the hook shank in length. Go fish!

#### Materials List

- Hook: Dry Fly Hook Size 12-20
- Thread: 8/0 Uni in Purple or Black
- Abdomen: Purple Montana Fly Wonder Wrap or Purple Dubbing
- Tail: Grizzly Rooster Spey Hackle
- Parachute: White Widow's Web or White Zelon
- Collar: Grizzly Rooster Hackle

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A WILD MINNESOTA NORTH SHORE BROOK TROUT

# MINNESOTA TROUT UNLIMITED YEAR IN REVIEW

## 2017: A Successful and Busy Year of Conservation Success

The year 2017 was another busy one for Minnesota Trout Unlimited, fighting for clean water and healthy streams, restoring miles of critical habitat and offering diverse opportunities for members and non-members to learn and become engaged in watersheds and communities.

Many copies of this newsletter will reach non-members who attend the 2018 Expo. For this reason, we are taking a moment here to remind readers who we are and what we do. Minnesota Trout Unlimited is a grassroots nonprofit conservation organization, not a social or fishing club. To be sure, we enjoy many social events and are passionate anglers, but our concrete actions conserving aquatic resources are what define us. The mission of MNTU and every TU chapter is to protect, restore and sustain coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.

### Who is Minnesota Trout Unlimited?

The Minnesota Council of Trout Unlimited, or “MNTU”, is the statewide umbrella organization, led by volunteers from the six local chapters. The volunteers provide the leadership and time necessary to ensure our effective, unified voice is heard at the state capitol and around the state. We fight to protect groundwater, watersheds, and clean water. We secure funding to restore streams, rivers, and lakes, statewide. MNTU is keenly aware of threats facing Lake Superior and our waters in every corner of the state, and combines that knowledge with a strong voice in St. Paul, where the key policy decisions affecting statewide resources are made.



DNR FISHERIES STAFF AND TU VOLUNTEERS SAMPLE A RESTORED REACH OF STREAM FOR YOUNG STEELHEAD IN LAKE COUNTY, MN

### PROTECT

Protection of coldwater fisheries is our core mission and this means protection of the water, watersheds and aquifers upon which trout, steelhead and salmon depend for survival. Public policy decisions, especially those ultimately made in St. Paul, can have huge consequences for the health and long term viability of Minnesota’s coldwater fisheries. Ensuring clean, cold water is central to fisheries protection. For the first time in its history, in 2010 MNTU pooled its re-



MNTU SUCCESSFULLY FOUGHT TO PRESERVE STREAMSIDE BUFFERS LIKE ON THIS RESTORED STREAM IN SE MINNESOTA

sources and hired a half-time executive director to be our advocate and strategist during the legislative session, and a year-round watchdog and spokesperson for clean water and coldwater fisheries. MNTU receives no funding from Trout Unlimited National or member dues. In 2017 our executive director was again active on a myriad of issues, and in partnerships with like-minded organizations. Our most important initiatives are detailed below.

### 2017 MN Legislative Work

#### Funding Fisheries Work

MNTU led the successful push for a \$3 increase in the annual fishing license fee to ensure adequate funding for fisheries management activities. Protection of self-sustaining coldwater fisheries requires science-based management. This requires professional staff and resources. Yet rising costs over the past decade had reduced the purchasing power of fishing license dollars. Delay or cancellation of

ence at which the fee increase proposal was unveiled. MNTU and Gary Botzek of the Minnesota Conservation Federation worked hard to recruit a broad coalition of more than 50 conservation and sporting groups. MNTU’s executive director spent hundreds of hours from January to May lobbying legislators and publishing press releases, editorials, fact sheets and action alerts in support of the fee increase. After the omnibus environment bill containing the license fee increase was passed by the Legislature, Governor Dayton vetoed it for several good reasons, including provisions that would have rolled back long-standing buffer protection requirements for trout streams. MNTU stepped up its pressure as a new bill was negotiated in a special session (extra innings) and ensured that the new bill included the license fee increases, but removed the buffer rollback provisions. The fishing license fee increase passed on the final day of the special session and the Governor signed the bill into law. This win for science-based fish management was a huge victory for trout and trout anglers. Thanks to the many of you who responded to our alerts and acted to get this done!

#### Effective Defense

Given the makeup of the 2017 Legislature, few clean water or trout-friendly bills could advance. Instead, protection of our fisheries and waterways meant “good defense” to prevent bad ideas from becoming bad laws. MNTU was very effective again in 2017, thanks to strong relationships and partnerships developed by MNTU and its executive director over the past several years. With more than 2,000 bills introduced by both the Minnesota House and Senate in 2017, there were a host of bad policies to defeat. The most significant threats that MNTU and its partners helped turn back included: (1) a serious effort to eliminate the long-standing requirement that vegetative buffers be maintained along trout streams; (2) attempts to eliminate or delay implementation of buffers on headwater streams; (3) proposed bans on protecting sensitive land via acquisition by the DNR or nonprofit land conservation organizations; (4) numerous measures to limit or roll back the ability of state agencies to adopt science-based rules to protect water quality; (5) assaults on Minnesota’s groundwater sustainability and water appropriation laws; (6) measures weakening environmental review; and (7) raids on dedicated fund-

ing in the Outdoor Heritage Fund, Clean Water Fund and Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund.

### Federal Legislation and Agency Actions

MNTU and its executive director remained engaged on several troubling federal legislative and administrative actions in 2017. MNTU worked closely with the government affairs team in Trout Unlimited’s Washington, DC office on several issues, but especially to defend the Clean Water Act, preserve Bristol Bay in Alaska and defeat attacks on continued public ownership (i.e., ownership by all of us) of our birthright – accessible public lands.

MNTU also continued its leadership role within TU on Great Lakes issues. Protection of the Lake Superior ecosystem remains a priority of Minnesota members and MNTU. Major threats, which we have been working to address with members of Congress, other Great Lakes TU councils and several partners, include aquatic invasive species, water diversions from the basin, potential impacts from sulfide mining, and impacts of a changing climate. MNTU also defended the integrity of the Great Lakes Water Compact through public testimony and written comment on the first test case of the Compact, the Waukesha Diversion.

Ballast water discharges from both ocean-going and intra-Great Lakes shipping vessels are the primary source of aquatic invasive species such as zebra mussels, quagga mussels, and spiny water fleas. The Minnesota waters of Lake Superior receive the majority of all bal-



last water discharges in the entire Great Lakes! For this reason MNTU has led the fight for stronger ballast water discharge standards for nearly a decade, including watchdogging repeated efforts in 2017 to preempt Minnesota’s tougher regulations and rallying regional and national TU support.

MNTU also worked to build congressio-



LYNCH CREEK IN FILLMORE COUNTY PRIOR TO RESTORATION WORK



LYNCH CREEK IN FILLMORE COUNTY AFTER 2017 RESTORATION WORK

nal support for renewal of \$300 million in Great Lakes Restoration funding. We continued working with partners to halt the spread of Asian carp into the Great Lakes via the Illinois River and other points.

#### Advocacy on State Agency Policies

State agencies such as the DNR, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), and the Board of Soil & Water Resources (BWSR) are our constant partners on efforts to protect and improve water quality, groundwater supply, and quality, healthy water function and fisheries health. However, the agencies often receive competing pressures from legislators, businesses, other stakeholders and less-informed individuals. MNTU must, and does, step up to advocate effectively on behalf of clean water and the many other needs of robust, self-sustaining populations of all trout, steelhead and salmon. We advocate for science-based management, watershed protection and habitat restoration, as these ensure long term resilience and maximum sustained productivity.

Significant advocacy work in 2017 included: (1) challenging reduced protections for some trout waters via MPCA's proposed reclassification of streams from 2A (coldwater fishery) to 2B (cool/warm water); (2) supporting increased protections for many trout waters via the adoption of the Tiered Aquatic Life framework; (3) challenging the DNR's process and unwarranted removals of "designated trout stream" designations from many streams around the state, and advocating for overdue additions; (4) driving improvements to the trout stream easement acquisition process; (5) pressuring DNR to protect our uniquely-adapted wild North Shore steelhead populations by discontinuing the DNR's destructive practice of stocking kamloops rainbow trout, a domesticated hatchery product now known to stray widely and cause destructive hybridization and genetic introgression; (6) participating in groundwater planning efforts in the Little Rock Creek area and statewide; (7) challenging the DNR not to divert trout stamp funds or reduce its traditional level of spending on coldwater fisheries from the general fisheries budget, including as hatchery expenditures are reduced; and (8) working to prevent the elimination of existing access to trout streams when state and county lands are sold.

MNTU also participated in the environmental review process in a number of controversial projects, including proposed silica sand mines in southeast

MN, feedlots, sulfide mining proposals in northeast MN, pipeline routing, and a tire-shredding facility.

### RESTORE

Restoration of degraded habitat is central to our mission as Trout Unlimited. Protection is essential, but doing the concrete work of restoring damaged streams and stream corridors has defined Trout Unlimited for nearly 60 years. Minnesota TU members, chapters and MNTU have participated in and supported local habitat restoration projects since at least the 1970s. But with passage of the Legacy Amendment, MNTU, through the work of its executive director, has annually secured Outdoor Heritage Fund grants, enabling MNTU and our partners to complete more than 60 separate projects totaling more than 60 miles of restored stream habitat and six reclaimed trout lakes over the past eight work seasons. More than seven miles of stream habitat were restored or enhanced in 2017 alone.

#### Habitat Restored in 2017

The projects below were substantially completed in 2017, although many will



THE 2017 GREAT WATERS FLY FISHING EXPO BROUGHT TOGETHER THOUSANDS OF ANGLERS AND CONSERVATIONISTS LAST MARCH IN ST PAUL, MN.

look a little "raw" until grasses take off in the spring. Please remember that every project is prone to high water events and susceptible to minor erosion and seed loss until vegetation becomes well-established over the next couple years. These projects will likely need (and will receive) minor repairs, reseeding and other tweaks, before they are truly complete.

**Garvin Brook (Winona):** Approximately 3,500 feet of stream were restored using a mixture of "traditional" and newer

habitat improvement techniques. The two contiguous miles of improved habitat will benefit wild browns and some brookies. See the article in this issue of Trout Unlimited Minnesota for details.

**Pickwick Creek (Winona):** More than a half mile of trout habitat was improved in close partnership with the DNR Lanesboro Area fisheries crew. The work in this pastured reach extends upstream from the 7,400 foot long project MNTU completed here in 2010.

**Root River (Fillmore):** This 1.4 mile long habitat project through the heart of Preston, MN is drawing lots of happy anglers. MNTU and Hiawatha TU partnered with the City of Preston, with great cooperation from DNR Parks & Trails, to ensure no serious disruption for users of the bike trail which parallels the river here. The site was graded to accommodate a drift boat launch which the DNR will install in 2018. MNTU supported the DNR's proposal to open this stretch to year round angling in 2018! This reach has a good mix of wild browns and stocked rainbows.

**Lynch Creek (Fillmore):** This 4,700 foot long project is located east of Chat-

article in the November 2017 issue of *Trout Unlimited Minnesota*. This stream is not open for winter angling, despite its proximity to Goodhue County waters.

**Kabekona Creek (Hubbard):** Dense alders were falling into this brook trout stream, slowing flow and causing the channel to fill with sand and become wide and shallow. Alders were cut along a couple miles of stream, made into bundles and the bundles were strategically placed in the channel to narrow and deepen the stream. Tree plantings to restore forest canopy will follow in 2018. This project was a joint project with the DNR Park Rapids Area Fisheries Office and Headwaters TU.

**Chester Creek (St. Louis):** Restoration of Chester Creek in Duluth's Chester Bowl was completed this past fall in partnership with the South St. Louis Soil & Water Conservation District, the City of Duluth and the DNR. MNTU will lead additional work upstream on this brook trout stream in 2018.

**Stewart River (Lake):** Approximately 2,000 feet of stream were restored adjacent to work MNTU helped fund in 2015. This reach is located above Big Rock Road and the barrier falls. It holds wild brook trout as well as juvenile steelhead which were stocked as tiny fry in even-numbered years. Similar work in 2015 is producing good growth rates for juvenile steelhead and should bolster adult steelhead runs on the Stewart River in future years.

**Split Rock River (Lake):** Habitat for wild brook trout was improved along nearly 2,000 feet of stream. The project site is located on DNR land just upstream of Hwy 3 near Beaver Bay, MN. The DNR's Stream Habitat Specialist Jeff Tilma did a great job leading this work.

**Spruce Creek (Cook):** A Conservation Corps crew used power winches and hand labor to improve nearly 2,000 feet of brook trout habitat which had been walloped by heavy flooding in the past three years. The project was done with the Grand Marias Area Fisheries Office and the support of Cascade State Park. Work is upstream of the Cascade State Park access trail off Hwy 61.

**Trout Brook (Dakota):** We restored 3,000 feet of this wild brook trout stream located in a picturesque county park, in partnership with Dakota County and TCTU. Lots of brook trout were observed spawning in November. See the

**Kadunce River (Cook):** Habitat for juvenile steelhead was improved in a 1,500 reach of prime steelhead spawning water. The DNR's Jeff Tilma did a great job incorporating a log cross vane into the classic Hewitt ramp design, which

have proven to be effective “trout condos” for lots of wintering juvenile steelhead, as well as brook trout. Special thanks are due to the Grand Marias Area Fisheries Office and Cascade State Park, with whom we worked closely. Touch up work and plantings will be done in 2018 (yes, volunteers are needed).

### More Restoration Steps

The key to sustaining our habitat restoration work is effective grant writing and navigation through the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC) and legislative processes. The process for securing an Outdoor Heritage Fund grant takes 16 months or more with no promise of success. The process moves from project development, to grant writing, to competitive screening and testimony, to lobbying for inclusion in state spending bills, shepherding recommendations through legislative hearings and bill passage, and signing by the governor. Then MNTU signs an agreement under which we must first do the work, pay project invoices, and then see reimbursement. MNTU does not actually receive any money. TU national acts as our piggybank and pays construction invoices, and later gets reimbursement from the state under the grant agreement.

From January to May 2017 MNTU steered the previous year’s LSOHC recommendation through the Legislature and ultimately secured a reimbursement based grant for ten projects to be built in 2019 and 2020. We also developed project ideas with our chapters and DNR from February to May, then crafted our Phase 10 proposal and submitted it in May. Our August presentation went well and the LSOHC is recommending



TEACHING FISHING SKILLS AND WORKING WITH YOUTH IS ONE ASPECT OF OUR OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

that MNTU receive funding for nine more habitat projects across the state. Our executive director will be busy from February to May 2018 steering that proposal through the Legislature.

We are developing an annual monitoring program for all past habitat projects and getting closer to having a smart phone app for volunteers to fill out a basic inspection report, attach a photo and submit, as well as a template for e mail reporting. To volunteer or get more details send an e mail to [monitor@mntu.org](mailto:monitor@mntu.org)

In 2017 we purchased four backpack sprayers and other gear to enable us to more consistently fight invasive plants such as wild parsnip that colonize our restoration sites and easement corridors. We now have a well trained and experienced crew boss and are looking for volunteers this summer to work with us to rid riparian corridors of nasty invasives,

such as wild parsnip.

### 2018 Habitat Projects

Numerous projects currently in the design, permitting and construction bidding processes will be constructed in 2018. These include Garvin Brook, Rush Creek (2 projects), Cedar Valley Creek and Trout Run Creek all in Winona County, Spring Valley Creek (Fillmore), Vermillion River (Dakota), Eagle Creek (Scott), Blackhoof River (Carlton, 2 projects), Chester Creek (St. Louis), and Stewart River (Lake). Construction will also begin on one or more of the following: Wisel Creek (Fillmore), Money Creek (Fillmore), West Indian Creek (Wabasha) and the South Branch of the Whitewater (Winona).

MNTU will work with local chapters to provide members and non-members with opportunities to volunteer for hands-on habitat work on these streams in 2018: Eagle Creek, Vermillion River, Seven Mile Creek, Trout Brook, Chester Creek, Sucker River, Stewart River, Kadunce River and more.

### SUSTAIN

MNTU works to sustain the protection, restoration and other improvements we achieve in local trout fisheries and watersheds through advocacy, education, outreach and engagement. In 2017 we again went about this in diverse and creative ways, which all raise awareness of our great local resources, teach people how these aquatic systems work and what threatens them, and provide folks with opportunities to tangibly connect with trout and trout watersheds through hands-on habitat work and recreation. Here’s the top ten list for 2017:

**Newsletter:** MNTU published three colorful, informative issues of *Trout Unlimited Minnesota* in 2017. Approximately 17,000 copies were distributed last year. Countless hours volunteered by Carl Haensel, Jade Thomason and Dan Callahan, plus a host of writers, make for a truly professional piece..

**2017 Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo:** This three day event provided a great opportunity for Minnesota TU and the chapters to get out and introduce themselves to a passionate slice of anglers. We are not a fly fishing club, but the event includes lots of conservation and educational opportunities to get our message out to a broad audience. Special thanks are due John Hunt, Dan Callahan and bunch of other dedicated volunteers.

**Minnesota TU Fly Fishing Film & Video Showcase:** In 2016 MNTU organized a festival of short (2 to 6 minute) films which highlight MN and Midwestern fisheries. The idea is to celebrate great local fisheries, local filmmakers and local craft brewers while having a lot of fun. Our 2017 film showcase was again held in conjunction with the Expo and sold out quickly. Brent Notbohm, UWS Film and Video professor, again shared his considerable talents curating this beautiful show.

**Increasing Angling Opportunities:** MNTU believes that providing more trout angling opportunities will “hook” more people on these fisheries and build support for protecting and restoring them.

In 2016 we championed the DNR’s proposal to open all southeast trout streams to winter angling. Members enjoyed the inaugural season in 2017! In addition, in 2017 we supported a proposal by the DNR Lanesboro Area Fisheries Office to provide still more recreational opportunities by opening select reaches in several southeast MN towns to year round trout fishing! Our 1.4 mile long Root River project site in Preston is one such segment where anglers enjoyed catching trout in November and December.

**Fishing Equipment for Chapters:** In addition to leading the protection and habitat restoration efforts for fisheries around the state, MNTU provides local TU chapters with tools to engage members and non-members. MNTU secured an angler recruitment grant from the DNR (\$25,000) and through a generous donation of \$48,000 from Temple Fork Outfitters (TFO) parlayed it into 265 high quality fly fishing outfits from TFO, as well as dozens of spinning outfits, waders, and other gear. These were distributed to every chapter in 2016-2017, as well as through our outdoor education program and statewide mentoring initiative. More than 50 separate casting and fishing events have been held involving approximately 5,000 participants. Contact your chapter to see how you can help with an event in 2018.

**Mentoring Program:** MNTU provided twenty fly outfits and essential gear for mentees in MNTU’s Foster the Outdoors mentoring program, organized by Tim Hemstad. Laughing Trout fly tiers and TU members donated many hundreds of flies. We got a good start in 2017, but would love to grow this program substantially in 2018. See Tim’s article and contact information elsewhere in this newsletter.

**Outdoor Education Program in MN Schools:** This program aims to get students in grades 5-12 outside in the natural environment to learn about watersheds and what it takes to ensure healthy aquatic ecosystems. Because one component involves students raising trout from eggs to fingerlings in classroom aquariums, utilizing the “Trout in the Classroom” or “TIC” curriculum, members often refer to the broader program with those monikers. We also introduce students and families to angling. The program is funded by a three year grant from the State of Minnesota’s Environment & Natural Resources Trust Fund which MNTU secured in 2015. In 2017 we completed the second year and began the third year of this program. The program and each participating school presents opportunities for chapters and members to help pass on the magic. Contact your chapter to see how you can help. See the regular updates in *Trout Unlimited Minnesota* for more details.

**Website Redesign:** In 2017 we began a complete rebuild and upgrade of the MNTU website. While we are “live,” this is a work in progress and major content and functionality upgrades are coming this spring.

**Trout on Tap:** These purely social events regularly bring trout and steelhead enthusiasts together to swap news, debate the finer points of tackle and tying, and share trip ideas. Of course we support the local brewing scene, just



OUR MENTORING PROGRAM HAD SOME GREAT PARTICIPANTS IN 2017

as we do the local angling scene. The Trout on Tap artwork is the handiwork of Phillip Clark, along with our tagline: “Obsess with other obsessives.”

**Habitat Work Days:** MNTU works with local chapters to provide opportunities for members and non-members to get their hands dirty improving trout streams. It is rewarding work and the comradery over a hot lunch is unbeatable. 2017 work days were held on Eagle Creek, Garvin Brook, Sucker River, Stewart River and three separate Saturday mornings on the Vermillion River. Kudos to TCTU super volunteers Tony Nelson and Dan Callahan for organizing the four metro area work days, Rich Frick, Don Eckenrode and other dedicated chefs for feeding the masses, and hundreds of generous volunteers.

We are organizing even more volunteer opportunities in 2018, including work days on the Vermillion River (3/3/18), Eagle Creek (4/7/18), Chester Creek, Sucker River, Stewart River, Kadunce River and several southeast MN streams. In addition, there are opportunities to participate in the invasive plant spray crew. We will also need lots of folks to help get our stream monitoring program rolling this spring.

### ADVANCING CONSERVATION

Everyone can help MNTU advance our shared mission of protecting, restoring and sustaining coldwater fisheries and watersheds. As a grassroots conservation group, our goal is to provide all of you (the grassroots members) with opportunities to directly contribute to conservation of Minnesota resources in 2018. These opportunities can be through participation in advocacy efforts, habitat projects, education and outreach, or cash donations to MNTU to keep all this good work going strong. MNTU relies solely on local fundraising and receives no funding from TU or your member dues. Your TU dues do not fund MNTU’s executive director or our habitat work. Habitat grants cover the habitat work itself, but do not cover all of MNTU’s costs. We depend upon local donations. If you like what we are accomplishing together and want to keep us moving forward, please consider donating directly to Minnesota Trout Unlimited. Visit [mntu.org](http://mntu.org) to donate today.

If you would like to share your talents on the MNTU board of directors, please contact Chairman Steve Carlton at [steve@twincitiesstu.org](mailto:steve@twincitiesstu.org) or executive director John Lenczewski at [jlenczewski@comcast.net](mailto:jlenczewski@comcast.net). Thanks again to all of you who helped make 2017 a good year for coldwater conservation!

# WHAT DOES THE FUTURE OF FLY FISHING LOOK LIKE?

By Tim Hemstad

I refuse to get political about the answer to that question because I honestly don't have a clue. But what I can speak to, is my past and what led me to this very moment. Just as you all have to-do lists, families, jobs, priorities and even Lay-Z-Boys that occasionally need weighing down, I have a story.

My journey starts in Bemidji, Minnesota. I grew up with the ideals of a stable home, living with both of my parents. I have three siblings and my parents have twelve siblings between the two of them, most of which lived around the Bemidji area while I was growing up. There was always someone around to keep an eye on me, feed me, take me to practice and, of course, the annual the 4th of July Water Carnival.

I can still remember my neighborhood boundary I was sequestered to stay within while riding my bike as a child and how it felt like I had lapped the entire world when I rode around Lake

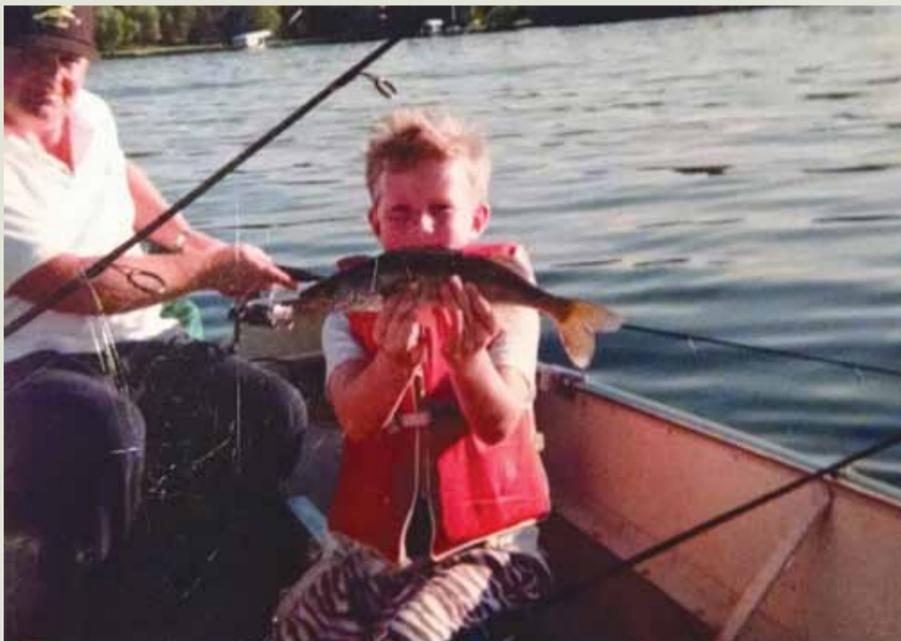
a flannel-wearing Bemidji Lumberjack. Playing soccer, skateboarding around town and snowboarding on the continental divide, a.k.a "the top of the world" (Buena Vista Ski Area), were at the top of my priority list.

Life hit fast forward, as it often does after high school and I'm now in my mid-thirties. I work as a commercial project manager in the construction industry. I've been married for nearly 13 years to the most beautiful woman I've ever met. Here's a photo of our beautiful daughter holding the very first trout that she legitimately caught without me helping her on a fly rod. She's probably within a year or two in age of me when I was walleye fishing with my uncle back in the 80's.

One of my two best friends from high school will be getting married in Montana this summer to a gal from Alaska. The two of them literally save lives for a living, with him working as a paramedic/firefighter and her working as a pediatric nurse. The third stooge in our



VERONA HEMSTAD, (TIM'S DAUGHTER AGE 6) HOLDING HER VERY FIRST STREAM TROUT CAUGHT ON A FLY ROD



TIM HEMSTAD WALLEYE FISHING WITH HIS UNCLE IN THE LATE 1980'S

Bemidji for the first time. My first job was working as a grocery bagger at the Food-4-Less in town, where my Uncle Mick worked for many years. That's Uncle Mick and his boat with me pictured holding a walleye sometime in the late '80s and yes, those are Zubaz I'm wearing.

Entering high school, our mascot was

gang of three works as a project manager erecting wind mills around the nation. He seems to be working in a new state every few months. With the long distance between the three of us, I can't say for sure if our friendship would be as strong as it is today, if we hadn't started an annual fly fishing trip about six years ago.



MINNESOTA'S YOUTH IS THE FUTURE OF FISHING IN MINNESOTA. GET INVOLVED IN MENTORING MN YOUTH IN THE SUMMER OF 2018!

Everyone has a story. Not everyone has an uncle Mick. At the time I wouldn't have thought twice about it, but looking back I wonder how different my life would be without the influence of the many mentors I had the privilege of growing up with. Would I have caught any fish back in the 80's? Would I have gone to college? Would I have met my wife? Would I have cared to join my friends for an annual fishing trip? Would I have been patient enough to teach my 6-year-old girl how to fly fish? Would I have joined, or even known about Trout Unlimited as an organization?

We would all be very different as individuals without the influences and experiences of our younger years. Being a mentor to a young person is a personal thing. It takes someone willing to push past their comfort zone and a willingness to take a family member or someone you've never met under your wing. I can tell you from experience, it is not uncommon for the adult mentor to be more apprehensive than the youth. As adults, we become accustomed to our daily routines, and changes outside of that routine don't appeal to us. The raw energy and curiosity of a child experiencing the outdoors is rejuvenating, if not therapeutic. You may find that you have more to gain from becoming a mentor than you have to offer.

All too often kids these days either don't have a stable home environment or a parent with the ambition to take on something new. Fly fishing is much more challenging than shooting hoops in the driveway or playing catch in the

backyard. But 2-3 outings with a mildly experienced angler, such as yourself, can break down those walls and all of a sudden, the child is pushing the parents to get outside, not vice-versa.

One youth/adult pair that I worked with over the summer continues to send me photo updates of their adventures together. They've also kept in touch with questions like, "what do we do differently in late fall/early winter?" Simple suggestions build confidence and spark new ideas to try. Now he and Dad are tying their own flies together with the help of YouTube videos. When it comes to most things in life, believing is about 90% of doing.

What does the future of fly fishing look like? Reach out to me, Tim Hemstad and you can contribute to mentoring Minnesota's youth this summer. We have a very simple program description to share with you. If you like what you see, you will be added to the mentor roster for 2018. We also desperately need mentor-coordinators within each chapter to step up and help in their area. Another way to help is by donating flies. We need to hear from you by March 30th, 2018 so that we can set goals and start planning for the summer of 2018. The future of our Minnesota waters is in the hands of Minnesota youth. For starters, let's put a fly rod in their hands.

Tim Hemstad  
MNTU Mentorship Coordinator  
612-247-1536  
fostertheoutdoors@hotmail.com

# FLY FISHING: A TREASURE OF BEAUTY

By Bob Wagner

Ernie Schwiebert was the first person in my early days of fly fishing to describe how the sport was filled with beauty. If you're not aware of or haven't read Schwiebert, you're in for a real treat. I was told by one respected source that the guy was a genius, another said, "He had a photographic memory." My first and only personal encounter with Ernie was at FFI Fair in Livingston, Montana in 2005. Curiosity drew me towards a dozen men gathered in a tight circle with their attention fixed on something in the center. After watching for a few minutes, a thick orange line would rise up over the circle to form a perfect loop, go back, pause, forward, pause, back again and finally unroll forward over the casting pond. This fly casting was absolutely a thing of beauty, not rushed, not muscled but had controlled rhythmic timing and long tight loops.

Who was this fly caster? The tight circle of men was asking many questions and I could barely hear the soft, careful answers coming from the center. I was amazed when the circle opened, and the caster appeared. He looked frail and was a short, older man holding a bamboo rod. Of course it was Ernie Schwiebert. Unfortunately, Mr. Schwiebert's health was failing and he passed away four months later, December 10, 2005. Dr. Ernie Schwiebert is nationally respected and the author of eight acclaimed books. Ernie earned a double doctorate at Princeton in fine arts, planning in architecture and history of architecture. However, during his undergraduate work, he shocked the fly fishing community by publishing *Matching the Hatch*. Many couldn't believe a sophomore in college could be such an expert in entomology and produce artwork of such technical perfection and brilliant beauty.

Most memorable to me about his key-

note address at the FFI Fair was he said, "I can finally answer the question of why have I spent a lifetime fly fishing around the world and writing and speaking about it." He said, "It's one word, 'beauty.' The sport is filled and immersed in beauty, everything about it." Ernie went on to describe the fish and where they live, rods, reels, literature, manuscripts of more than five centuries, methods of fishing, flies and the delicate materials in eloquent language as only Schwiebert could.

Schwiebert's revelation about beauty has intrigued and haunted me in a good way for a dozen years. The more I think about beauty in this sport the more beauty I see, and the more I see the more levels become visible that connect the fly fisher to the fish, our environment and to each other. I believe these connections and levels of beauty are an absolute treasure we need to share that enrich our fishing experience. First, it's important to add a current aspect to Ernie's words. We're so fortunate to have a plethora of all types of artists around us. Artists sharing their interpretation of beauty in a multitude of styles and formats. At fly fishing fairs and expos, around the country and abroad, we get to rub elbows with Emily and Dave Whitlock, Bernie Sundell, Bob White, Derek DeYoung, Joseph Tomilleri and James Prosek to name but a few of hundreds more.

Speaking of Prosek, an artist and author of several books, his words in *Early Love and Brook Trout*, describing a spawning male brook trout, "The males had ripe black bellies with crimson red seeping out, oozing a brilliant cadmium red up the sides and then the yellow of buttercups and spots bright like lamp posts." Yes, these artists all help us see, hear, feel and smell beauty.

I would be remiss to not mention the historic beauty of a 3000-year history, functional necessity and artistic pursuit of fly tying. It's hard to imagine that 3000 years ago in a Chinese dynasty blue feathers of a king fisher were being tied on golden hooks. Fast forward to salmon fly masters, Paul Ptalis and Paul Schmookler, who weave color, line and feather that flow together like Michelangelo accomplished with oil paint.

It's interesting to note that other than the beauty connected to fish and their environments, almost every other aspect of beauty in this sport is directly connected through people. All of the fly fishing visual arts and associate forms come to us by people, the informative literary works come from people, and the light perfectly balanced rods, all come from master rod builders. The reels meticulously machined to silky smooth are all results of fine craftsmanship. Lines are specialized to species and habitat. The clothing, boots and waders are made for every climate and infused with current fashion design. All made available to us by people and adding great pleasure, joy and beauty to our sport. Simply put, fly fishing connects thousands and hundreds of thousands of people worldwide working hard every day adding beauty to this sport. One of the personal rewarding aspects of fly fishing is making a direct connection with another person. Often these contacts become lifelong friendships.

Beauty in nature comes in many levels, some visually familiar, some comforting like an old friend and some mysterious. Mystery seems to lurk in the waxy red fluorescents of the pitcher plant growing on the bog stream bank. Meanwhile, the small, brilliant lichens, British soldiers, are growing only three feet away on an old stump. Another few feet further

finds the brook trout proudly wearing both reds in the depths of the stream.

There is also a level of beauty, maybe the most important of all, that seems to transcend from the eye to the mind. This mosaic of beauty feeds and grows a deep internal gratitude and a peace, a calmness, in our being. Often steelhead fishing, bringing the multitude of sounds of rushing water combined with the visual sparkling light dancing on, in and through the water, is a therapeutic tonic that provides peace and thankfulness. Beauty feeds gratitude and gratitude shows us a deeper appreciation of people and the innate connection we have. I can think of no other sport that advocates its participants to catch and dance with its star players. Then carefully after the dance, release it back into its rightful home, all with a smile and gratitude wrapped up in a rewarding outdoor adventure.

Our most current form of connecting people, fish and natural beauty is the explosion of social media. I must admit I was shocked when two years ago I first posted a fish and a fly on Instagram and within seconds people from two countries in Europe liked my post. It's hopeful to see how the appeal of beauty in fly fishing is global.

My belief and hope is that this connection between people, beauty and gratitude moves us to a greater purpose in conserving and protecting this sport for future generations. Fly fishing is a treasure of beauty that we need to keep accessible to all and free. Beauty has no ticket price, no classism, no racism, no sexism with who, when or where we see, feel or hear beauty. As Julie Sarah Powell states in a poem, "Simplicity – silence – beauty – join in listen...let beauty seep in."

## BOOK REVIEW: FLY FISHING THE INLAND OCEANS

By John Hunt

Mention fly fishing to someone in the Pacific Northwest and you are likely to generate conversation about steelhead or salmon fishing. Bring up the topic in Florida or the Caribbean and you might hear stories about tarpon, snook, bonefish, or maybe redfish. In the Great Lakes region, however, we have a wide variety of fly fishing opportunities that most people don't fully appreciate. In *Fly Fishing the Inland Oceans*, author Jerry Darkes gives us a fast-moving guide to the fishing adventures that are within an easy drive of millions of anglers.

The book is well organized, providing background on each of the Great Lakes and on a diverse list of both warmwater and coldwater species that inhabit the variety of near-shore, open water, and structure-oriented environments. The sections on recommended gear and techniques for lake fishing are especially helpful for those more acquainted with stream fishing for trout. Darkes then leverages his 40-plus

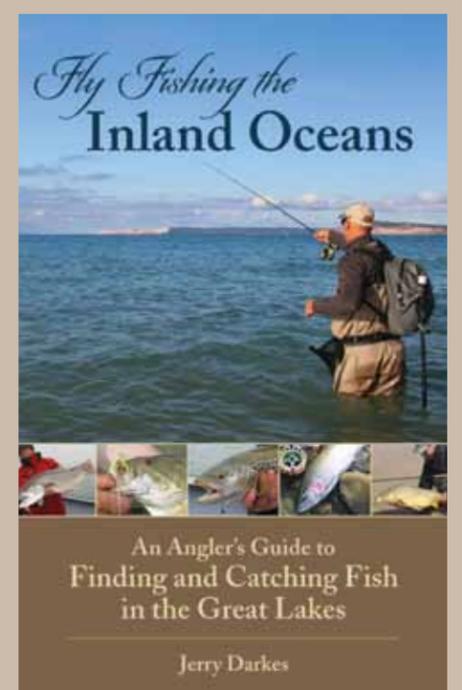
years of angling experience to give readers lake-by-lake suggestions on where to fish for different species, what times of year are most productive, and what flies and techniques typically provide the most success. The list of fly shops, guides, and other sources of information included at the end of each lake-specific section is a jump start on trip planning for the interested angler.

For someone whose own Great Lakes experience is limited to the west end of Lake Superior, it was interesting to read of chasing carp and gar and freshwater drum. The author covers a variety of fishing styles (wading, kayaking, boat) and offers tips for fishing the urban waters of the Chicago metro area, the remote wilderness of the Canadian shore of Lake Superior, and everything in between.

The abundance of color photos of fish and flies and the glossy paperstock are high quality, but my eyes would have appreciated a slightly larger font size for the text. I also found it a bit strange that

Darkes did not include even one map in the entire book. I almost felt like I needed an atlas with me as I paged through this book so that I could fully appreciate the descriptions of rivers, boat landings, harbors, and nearby towns. My only other criticism, if it can be called that, is I don't recall reading any cautionary advice concerning fishing along in strange, oftentimes big water. Maybe it goes without saying these days, but a reminder or two about the risks of wading unfamiliar shorelines or fishing in the low light of dawn and dusk might have been warranted.

Taken as a whole, *Fly Fishing the Inland Oceans* is, as its subtitle "An Angler's Guide to Finding and Catching Fish in the Great Lakes" suggests, a terrific introduction to a resource that many of us have barely explored. With 11,000 miles of shoreline, there is more water on the Great Lakes than can be fished in multiple lifetimes. With this book, however, author Jerry Darkes gives anglers a tool to help plan and prioritize fishing trips for years to come.



THINKING ABOUT HEADING FISHING AROUND THE GREAT LAKES? FLY FISHING THE INLAND OCEANS IS A GREAT PRIMER THAT PROVIDES DETAILS ON FISHING STYLES, LOCATIONS, FISH SPECIES, FLY SELECTION, RIGGING AND MUCH MORE.

# GILL LICE

## A Potential Expanding Problem

By John Sorensen

In the late summer of 2017, I was retrieving a Pass Lake fly in a beaver pond in a small northern Minnesota brook trout stream. A fish hit and it seemed to be a nice one but it soon felt like I was pulling in a shoe.

I quickly unhooked the healthy looking female brook trout and released it, only to see it go to the bottom and lay on its side. I netted it and held it upright and worked to revive it for over 10 minutes but to no avail. After killing the fish, I inspected the gills and found that they were covered with gill lice (*Salmincola edwardsii*). It was no wonder the fish expired - it could barely breathe. It was as if this fish had been asked to run a marathon while it was out of breath. I had seen gill lice on trout in this stream before but never this heavy. I spoke to a friend who said they had been in this

stream for more than 40 years.

I did some research and found that when conditions are right for infection, it appears that when gill lice larva are released from egg sacs they have about 24 hours find a host and attach to their gills. They only infect brook trout and other char. The best conditions for completion of their simple life cycle have a few key aspects. The first is slow water. Fast water makes it challenging for the larva to find and attach to the gills. Second, high trout density and third, warmer water all allow the lice to reproduce at a faster rate. Warming trout streams put our brook trout at further risk.

I recently did additional research into this issue, checking with fisheries biologists from around the state and finding articles from North Carolina, Wisconsin



A INFESTATION OF GILL LICE (*SALMINCOLA EDWARDSII*) ON A FEMALE BROOK TROUT IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA



A NICE FEMALE NORTHERN MINNESOTA BROOK TROUT THAT DIED IN PART DUE TO THE STRESS OF A GILL LICE INFESTATION

and Pennsylvania as well. I called personnel from all three North Shore Minnesota DNR offices and none have reported seeing gill lice in their sampled brook trout. At the Finland Fisheries Management Office they reported that they had been recently been looking for gill lice and have found none. I spoke to biologists at the Bemidji, Brainerd and Park Rapids offices as well. The Park Rapids office reported finding gill lice in local brook trout for many years. I called the Lanesboro office and spoke to Vaughn Snook. He also reported that they have had gill lice in their streams in Southeast Minnesota for many years.

Articles I have read from North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin seem to indicate that they are spreading in those states. I didn't find any firm evidence that they are spread by wet waders, boots or other gear, but it is always a good idea to clean and dry your gear before changing locations. Gill lice are one more challenge for our brook trout in Minnesota, and I don't want to be the guy who spreads gill lice to our North Shore Streams.

*Editor's Note: John Sorensen is the Vice President and Stream Coordinator for Minnesota's Headwaters Chapter of TU.*

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# TROLLING THE WEB

By Dan Callahan

Winter trout fishing is the subject of the latest video from a Minnesota fishing show on YouTube.

“Another fishing show?” Yes, another fishing show. “What’s it called?” Another Fishing Show. “Yeah, you said that. But what’s it called?”

Insert here, your chosen reference:

1. The movie, “Dude, Where’s My Car?” (Dude! Sweet!)
2. Abbott and Costello, “Who’s on First.”

The title of this YouTube channel is: “Another Fishing Show.”

Greg Underdahl and Pete Wagner create some entertaining videos--sometimes more about the characters they meet, or about their own goofiness, than about the fishing—that are worth watching. They are prolific piscatorial pix producers, pounding out Episode #1 - #4 shows that are professionally voiced and



highly produced, between 2015-2017. That level of production is unsustainable though, for regular mortals. Their other videos drop back to more realistically-produced, solo, here’s-my-fishing-trip videos, with good editing.

Greg tried an experiment in December, uploading what looks like the darn-near complete raw video of his successful solo smallmouth trip on the Mississippi River, from his own point of view. He caught some really nice fish, and gives

detailed commentary that will help you catch fish. At a total running time of 2 hours, 39 minutes and 6 seconds, I can’t watch all of it. Better though, is Jim’s edited story from December, on winter fishing for trout in Beaver Valley State Park. It’s mostly solid work from good fishers.

Their website [www.anotherfishingshow.com](http://www.anotherfishingshow.com) and social media channels serve as other outlets for their zaniness.

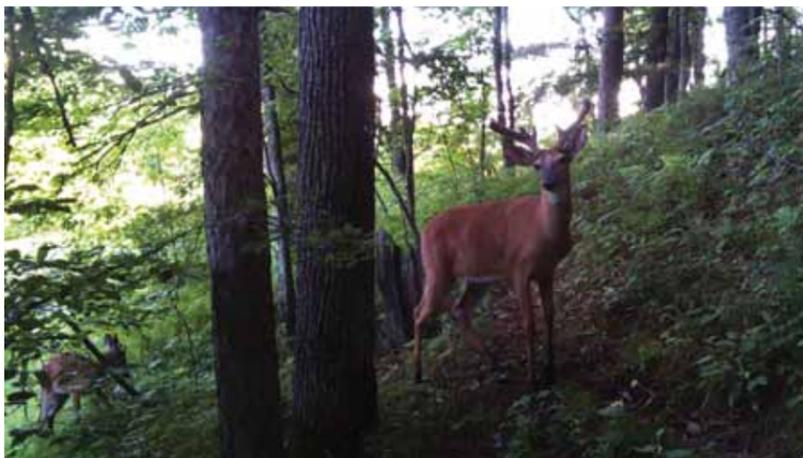


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# 2018 MNTU PHOTO CONTEST

This is the official announcement of the 5th season of the MNTU photo contest. Send in your entries early and prepare to use your new flies this season!

### Rules of the Contest:

- Photos must be shot in Minnesota
- Photos should fall into a category: Minnesota Waters Trout, Salmon & Steelhead Family Fishing
- Photos must include a trout, salmon or steelhead, **OR** a water body that they inhabit.
- Photos must be submitted by May 15th, 2018. Top entries in each category will be published in the June issue of the MNTU Newsletter.
- All photos submitted must be sent in \*.jpg format at their original resolution to the Editor at: [mntueditor@gmail.com](mailto:mntueditor@gmail.com)
- There is a entry limit of three photos per individual. Please include in the submission the name of the photographer and the location the photo was taken in the submission.
- Submission of photos gives MNTU the right to publish photos in the MNTU newsletter and in online media.

### NEW 2018 Prizes!

The winner in each category will receive a box of a dozen flies ready to catch trout this season. The overall winner will receive a new 2018 Minnesota TU T-shirt and an official MNTU hat. Check out the prize shirts and hats at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo this March and look for them on social media as well. They will be featuring our official “sticker” logo. Share this announcement with your



friends near and wide, we welcome submissions from MNTU members and non-members alike. Photos from the contest will be used in the upcoming June 2018 issue of *Trout Unlimited Minnesota* and will be highlighted on the MNTU website and Facebook page and in promotion for next season’s Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo.

Questions? Contact the newsletter editor at: [mntueditor@gmail.com](mailto:mntueditor@gmail.com).

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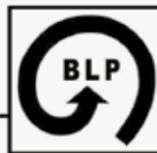
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Photo Credit Brian Schumacher

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# TALES OF A CLASSROOM TROUT

By Benji Kohn

Well, the great Minnesota winter has finally settled in! Over 9,000 trout eggs were safely delivered to all of our school aquariums before the cold arrived and students are now busy watching the eggs turn to alevin and then into fry. Feeding and tracking water quality are currently top priorities and the students are finding out that the more you feed, the more issues you have with waste and water quality!

MNTU's Outdoor Education Program had over 800 students out on field days this past fall to learn about watersheds, habitat, macro-invertebrates and how to fish. Now that things have frozen over, classroom visits are underway and students are learning about our all-important groundwater. They are discovering how groundwater plays a role in each of our lives and why trout rely so heavily upon it. In addition, myself and my team

of teachers have been covering topics such as fish biology, life cycles, macro-invertebrates, and watershed related activities/lessons from Project WET. This winter we have been working to get more students outside on area lakes to learn about winter lake ecology and ice fishing. So far, over 70 students have been out on the ice as we cover topics like lake turnover, how to read lake maps, find fishing, ice safety and electronics for ice fishing. Students are taking water samples from different depths to compare temperature and dissolved oxygen content. This helps make the connection of oxygen production in lakes (mainly in summer) to oxygen depletion through the winter months. Oxygen depletion can result in winter kill. Depending on the lake, decomposing matter at the bottom can result in low oxygen levels and cause fish to rise in the water column.



STUDENTS INVOLVED IN MNTU'S WATERSHED EDUCATION PROGRAM OUT IN THE FIELD IN THE FALL OF 2017 ON A METRO TROUT STREAM.



STUDENTS DRILLING A HOLE ON A METRO AREA LAKE TO GO ICE FISHING AS A PART OF A MNTU EDUCATION PROGRAM THIS WINTER.

The annual Youth Summit is coming up on March 9th at Inver Hills Community College in Inver Grove Heights. This event brings together over 600 students to learn about Minnesota's natural resources and the many careers associated with the outdoors. Starting in mid-April, the schools will begin to release the trout from their classrooms. These field days are so exciting as they are finally ready to release their fish into the wild! At the spring release days, several hands-on ac-

tivities are provided to raise the students' awareness of their local watersheds and coldwater habitats. Of course, we are always looking for volunteers to help out, so if you would like to share your passion for casting, insects or an outdoor career, please get in touch with Benji Kohn. Give him a call at 715-781-0651, stop by the booth at the Expo and say hi, or email him: TICMinn@gmail.com. You can learn more about MNTU's education programs at [www.mntu.org](http://www.mntu.org).

## 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-

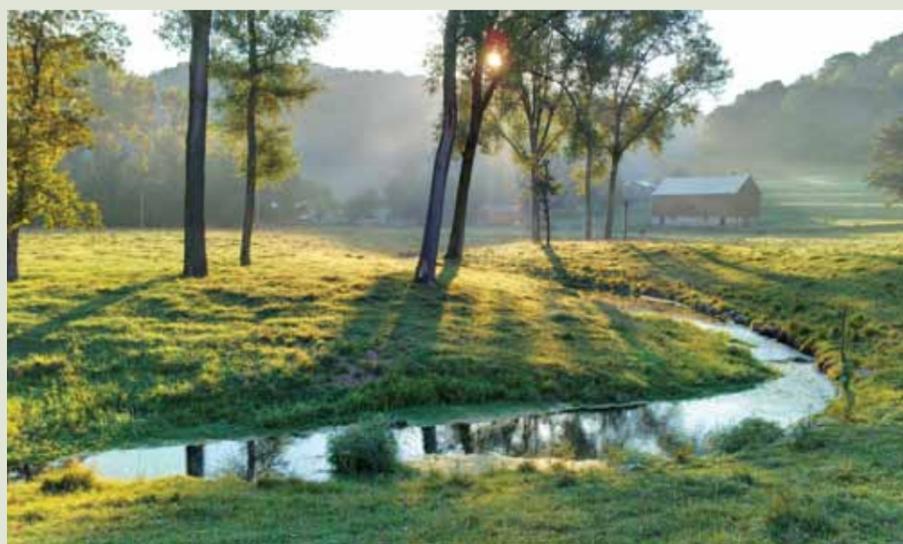
ently at 7201 West 78th Street, Suite 207 Bloomington, MN 55439, my (specific personal property item(s) and/or real property located at \_\_\_\_\_) to be used at the discretion of its governing board."

### 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](mailto:jlenczewski@comcast.net) or at 612-670-1629





# MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

## Gitche Gumee Chapter

The fly tying and adventure planning season is upon us in the frozen North Country. On Sunday 1/28 the Gitche Gumee chapter co-hosted with Arrowhead Fly Fishers a fundraiser screening of the F3T - Fly Fishing Film Tour. We had well over 250 attendees for the event and folks went away inspired by so many great films to get out and do some fishing. All are welcome to join us for these upcoming events:

### February 20

Fisheries Management Issues with MN and WI DNR. (Combined meeting with the Arrowhead Fly Fishers). Social begins at 6 p.m., program at 7 p.m. Clyde Iron Works, 2/20 at 7 p.m.

### March 8

Stream Restoration 101 with John Lenczewski  
Hartley Nature Center, 3/8 at 7 p.m.

### April 12

Annual State of the Steelhead Meeting and Chapter Elections  
Hartley Nature Center, 4/12 at 7 p.m.



THE SECOND ANNUAL SHOWING OF THE F3T IN DULUTH WAS A GREAT SUCCESS!

### May 19

Designated Trout Lake Access Clean Up Sponsored by the Fly Box & Co. Meet at the shop in Grand Marais, MN for a access clean-up and fishing day. Plan to bring your float tube or canoe and do some fishing after the work. Owner Scott Sorensen will have extra tools and float tubes for interested volunteers. Contact Scott to sign up at: (218) 370-9659

### Dates to be Determined

Chester Creek Tree Planting - May  
Sucker River Tree Maintenance - May  
Stewart River Tree Planting - May  
Kadunce River Tree Planting - June  
Fly Fishing Clinic - July

Get on volunteer list for details by emailing [jlenczewski@comcast.net](mailto:jlenczewski@comcast.net)

Brent Notbohm

## Hiawatha Chapter

Calendar of Events for Hiawatha Trout Unlimited (HTU) for March and April.

March 5th Vaughn Snook will be talking about the health of the trout in Southeast Minnesota. Vaughn is the Assistant Manager of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fisheries Office in Lanesboro. Come listen to a great Power Point presentation by Vaughn and find out how the trout are doing in southeast Minnesota.

April 7th will be the annual HTU spring fundraiser. We will once again be showing the IF4 Fly Fishing Films. They are fantastic. We will have raffle items and lots of fun. More information about ticket sales will be available soon at [www.hiawathatu.org](http://www.hiawathatu.org) and on the Hiawatha TU Facebook page. Keep checking and "like" us on Facebook to stay in touch with stream work and special events HTU will have coming up this spring and summer.

On a more serious note: All TU chapters rely on its membership to step up and support their local chapters. In order to keep active and do habitat work as well

as put on classes and special events, your chapters need your continued support. Join the board or volunteer your time and talents in technical support for Facebook, web help, or teaching a fly tying class or casting clinic. Take your talent for writing and help out with web content or writing articles or editing for the newsletter. Help is always needed and welcomed.

Some chapters like HTU will be having elections in March for board positions. Consider joining and make it a fun experience for all members, especially women and youth.

Thank you

Phil Pankow



WANT TO TIE SOME FLIES THIS WINTER? STOP IN TO THE HEADWATERS CHAPTER FOR GREAT FLY TYING NIGHTS IN BEMIDJI!

## Headwaters Chapter

Spring Membership Meeting – March 27, Tuesday evening at C.K. Dudley's Restaurant starting at 5:30. The program will feature several guest speakers all focused on "Getting ready for Trout fishing."

Fly Tying Nights – Open and welcome to all; free instruction to all. If you are a beginner and need equipment, no problem, call Bob Wagner (218)-586-2798. We start at 5:30 at the Garden Grill and Pub. Remaining Thursday nights are Feb. 22 and March 8

Our 4th Annual Pike Hunt – The great slime festival starts Friday, June 8, 6 p.m. with tying a pike fly. June 9 is all day pike fishing and a fresh pike fry complete dinner. Call Bob at (218)-586-2798 for details and the \$45.00 to register includes a hat, fly, and dinner.

Our 2nd Annual Booth at Great Waters Meeting – We need all volunteers planning on working our booth at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo (March 16-18) to attend an informational meeting February 22 at 8:00 at the Garden Grill and Pub. Call Looper at (218)-209-1595 or Kris Williams at (218)-209-1595.

Trout in the Classroom – Our Trout in the Classroom project is now in its eleventh year at Northern Elementary, with two tanks in 5th grade classes and one in 4th grade. All three classes are raising rainbows this year as part of a cooperative effort with the DNR. They are also trying to try to tease out whether the Clearwater River, where our fingerlings are stocked, is now enjoying natural brown trout reproduction. Fall electrofishing in the Clearwater has turned up YOY browns the past few years, so by raising only rainbows we will be able to see if browns are reproducing naturally. New this year is a fourth tank at Northome elementary in the 4th grade class of Curtis Lundin. Because we plan to re-

lease those fry in the Battle River, where the DNR stocks only yearling rainbows, Curt's kids are raising browns. That way any browns that show up in future years will be from the classroom and their survival in the Battle better understood.

Women's Fly Fishing Workshop – June 1st and 2nd for beginners. Includes 3 meals and 10 hours of instruction. Starts Friday evening with wine, hors d'oeuvres, and pizza. Call Val Wagner (218)-556-7660

Our first Frozen Fly Film Festival featuring MNTU's Film and Video Showcase short films was a great success thanks to all the contributors, volunteers and participants. We will be doing more events at the Bemidji Brewing Company. They were great hosts and supporters.

Our Women's Fly Fishing Workshop on the Big Horn River in Montana at Cotton Wood Camp in still establishing a specific date – Stay Tuned.

Bob Wagner

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# MNTU CHAPTER NEWS



## Mid - Minnesota Chapter

In November the DNR issued a proposed action plan for the sustainable use of groundwater in the Little Rock Creek area. Thanks to the efforts of Ken Noda and other TU members the plan did a good job of identifying the problems, additional data to be gathered, and interim actions to help stream base flows and water temperatures. MNTU's executive director worked with our friends at the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy to develop thoughtful public comments supporting many of the good aspects of the action plan and urging revisions, including additional steps to protect and improve this unique local resource. The chapter and MNTU will be working with DNR Fisheries in 2018 to design, permit and, we hope, construct a good habitat restoration project here. Look for details of a chapter meeting in

the St. Cloud area later this spring.

## Twin Cities Chapter

It's hard to believe that we're already well into the New Year, but the Twin Cities chapter has big plans for 2018! We culminated 2017 with our first ever Holiday Fish Camp, which was held December 15-17 at Whitewater State Park. This event was designed for people new to fly fishing who wanted to learn more about casting, fly tying, on-stream techniques, and socializing with like-minded folks with similar interests. Thirty-two people congregated at camp, surpassing our expectations for attendance at this first-year event. Feedback from participants was extremely positive, and plans are set for December 14th - 16th, 2018 for the 2nd Annual event!

### Habitat:

TU's core mission is to protect, reconnect, and restore cold water streams, and more great work was completed during 2017. Phase 1 of our project on the upper section of Trout Brook was completed over the summer, and the positive effects of the work are already evident on this native brook trout stream. For a quick and refreshing look, check out this short video here: <http://bit.ly/2smrdoe> or type "two minutes of trout stream therapy" in your browser search bar. We are working

with MNTU to secure funding to restore another segment of Trout Brook soon. We will also continue our project work on the Vermillion River, where we have removed invasive buckthorn from more than a mile of the South Branch.

### Education & Outreach:

MNTU's education coordinator, Benji Kohn, has been very busy this year with the outdoor education program which includes Trout in the Classroom curriculum. There are 22 schools serving more than 2,500 students, including 16 metro area schools. TCTU volunteers are helping support this work. The program also works with two nature centers to reach several hundred additional students. This spring looks to be quite busy with classroom visits, field days and the Youth Summit. If you are interested in helping out with any of these events, drop Benji a line at: [ticminn@gmail.com](mailto:ticminn@gmail.com).

Also, a big shout out to Rob Noirjean and others for organizing a wide array of education and outreach opportunities for people to learn how to cast. These events were so popular that they filled up quickly. We appreciate our partners from Fly Fishing International, the Fly Fishing Women of MN, Project Healing Waters, TCTU board members and other members who assisted with instruction. Fun times were had by all and we look forward to more events like these in 2018.

### IMPORTANT DATE CHANGE:

We have rescheduled our 2018 "FUNdraiser" from Feb. 23rd to April 21st, still to be held at the Eagan Community Center. Go to [www.twincitiestu.org](http://www.twincitiestu.org) for tickets and event information. See the advertisement on page 19.

Tuesday May 1st: TCTU board meeting 6 p.m. - 7 p.m., annual chapter meeting and social 7-8:30pm at Dodge Nature Center in St. Paul. More meetings and details to come.

### Opportunities to Have Fun While Making a Difference:

- Do you know someone who wants to learn the basics of fly fishing and casting? We hold several "how-to" clinics for beginners each year as a way to get more people interested in fly fishing, and to inform them about the great work we do. Look for details on our chapter website (above).
- Do you like getting outdoors, fish-

## TROUT ON TAP

Talk trout and drink good local microbrews. Join fellow trout and steelhead anglers to swap news of rivers, fish and adventures.

Obsess with the obsessives.

## FISHING IS SPOKEN HERE.

Thurs. March 1, 2018 – 6 to 8 PM – Bad Weather Brewing, 414 7th St. West, St. Paul 55102

Sat. March 17, 2018 – 5:30 to 10PM – With MNTU's Fly Fishing Film & Video Showcase. Sponsored by Bent Paddle Brewing. Free beer sampling! Anne Simley Theatre, Hamline University. 1530 W Taylor Ave, St Paul, MN 55104

Thurs. April 19, 2018 – 6 to 8 PM – Headflyer Brewing, 861 E. Hennepin Ave., Mpls 55414

ing and teaching others, working with youth, engaging in habitat projects or event planning? If so, please consider getting involved with the Twin Cities Chapter this year, we have opportunities abound to engage! Contact us at: [info@twincitiestu.org](mailto:info@twincitiestu.org).

### Praise For Our Outgoing President:

In January Dean Campbell stepped back from his role as TCTU President. The Twin Cities chapter and board wish to thank him for all his hard work and dedication to the TCTU mission. Dean's friendship and leadership were invaluable and we look forward to working with him in other capacities in the future!

We wish everyone a great start to the New Year and we will see you at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo in March!

Janine Kohn

## Win-Cres Chapter

Win-Cres has enjoyed a quiet fall. We put the brush mower into the garage for the winter. If anyone has some suggestions for paths along streams in southeast MN they would like to see taken care of, let us know. We are using the rods from the MNTU donation to teach a fly rod casting class through Winona Community Education. We are casting in the commons at Winona Senior High School. At our first session, led by Marlene Huston, we had fifteen participants attend. We have three more sessions remaining in February and March: 2/13, 2/20 and 3/13. Time: 7 p.m. – 8 p.m.

The cost is \$5 for all sessions. Contact Joe Lepley at [jlepley@riverland.org](mailto:jlepley@riverland.org) to sign up. Learn how to fly cast or improve upon your casting skills! Whether you are a novice fly caster, or whether you are an experienced fly caster, join us!

We are looking forward to stream improvement projects on Garvin Brook, Money Creek and Rush Creek when the weather warms up in the spring.

Joe Lepley



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## HABITAT HELPERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to assist with maintenance inspections of completed projects, as well as numerous hands-on tasks on 2018 projects. To volunteer or receive information on opportunities to help with inspections and/or hands-on work simply send an email to: [monitor@mntu.org](mailto:monitor@mntu.org) List "inspection," "habitat help" or both in the subject line and tell us what type of things or specific streams you might want to help with. Please provide a phone number; we will not use your information for other purposes. You can unsubscribe at any time.

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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](http://www.tu.org) today to sign up.

## OR SUBSCRIBE!

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

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A BEAUTIFULLY RESTORED REACH OF LYNCH CREEK IN FILLMORE COUNTY. READ MORE ABOUT OUR WORK IN 2017 ON THIS AND OTHER STREAMS ON PG 14

## REELING IT IN

### Fishing Gear and Waiting for Springtime

By Sam Troutt

Winter is a time of preparation, and for me, a time of excitement. There is anticipation of the trout season ahead of us, with seemingly limitless hatches, streams to explore and the ever-lengthening days beckoning us forward toward springtime.

As I sort through all of the gear in the garage, preparing it for warmer days - or maybe a trip to the open trout waters of the Driftless - I realize often that I have a lot of things that I don't use as much as I once thought I would. Somehow, I've accumulated about eight nets, though I'm excited about getting a new one, and there's a pile of waders of different vintages. Some decaying rubber ones that leak for sure, and then some neoprene ones that might leak, or they could still be ok. The hip waders have stayed in their plastic tub for a number of years now, but I might pull them out and use them if it's a summer day and it's just too hot outside. Overall, I think about the adventures that this gear has taken me on, and maybe that's why it is so hard to part with it, even when it is not getting used as often as it should. Each item has

a story, a tale to tell of where it has been and where it has taken me.

The old pair of felt wading boots, long since replaced with new studded rubber models, last hit the water on a rough reach of the Henry's Fork in Idaho. The short, 8-foot 5-weight rod saw action landing pink salmon on the Minnesota North Shore. Somewhere, buried in a box is an automatic fly reel that I learned to cast with, plying the waters of a local lake for sunfish, perch and small bass.

Soon, I'll be over at the Expo in March, picking up new items that might make my cast better, or that help me wade across a deep river. I'm not entirely sure what I'll come home with from there or from my local fly shop this season, but that's part of the fun of fishing.

I'm still not sure if I can let some of my old things go, but if you can part with some of your gear, reach out to your local TU chapter this season. There are lots of efforts afoot to get new anglers out on our local waters, and they can use your gear - as long as it still has a chance of helping bring in another fish or two!

## Donate to MNTU!

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 your donation will be used here in Minnesota.

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