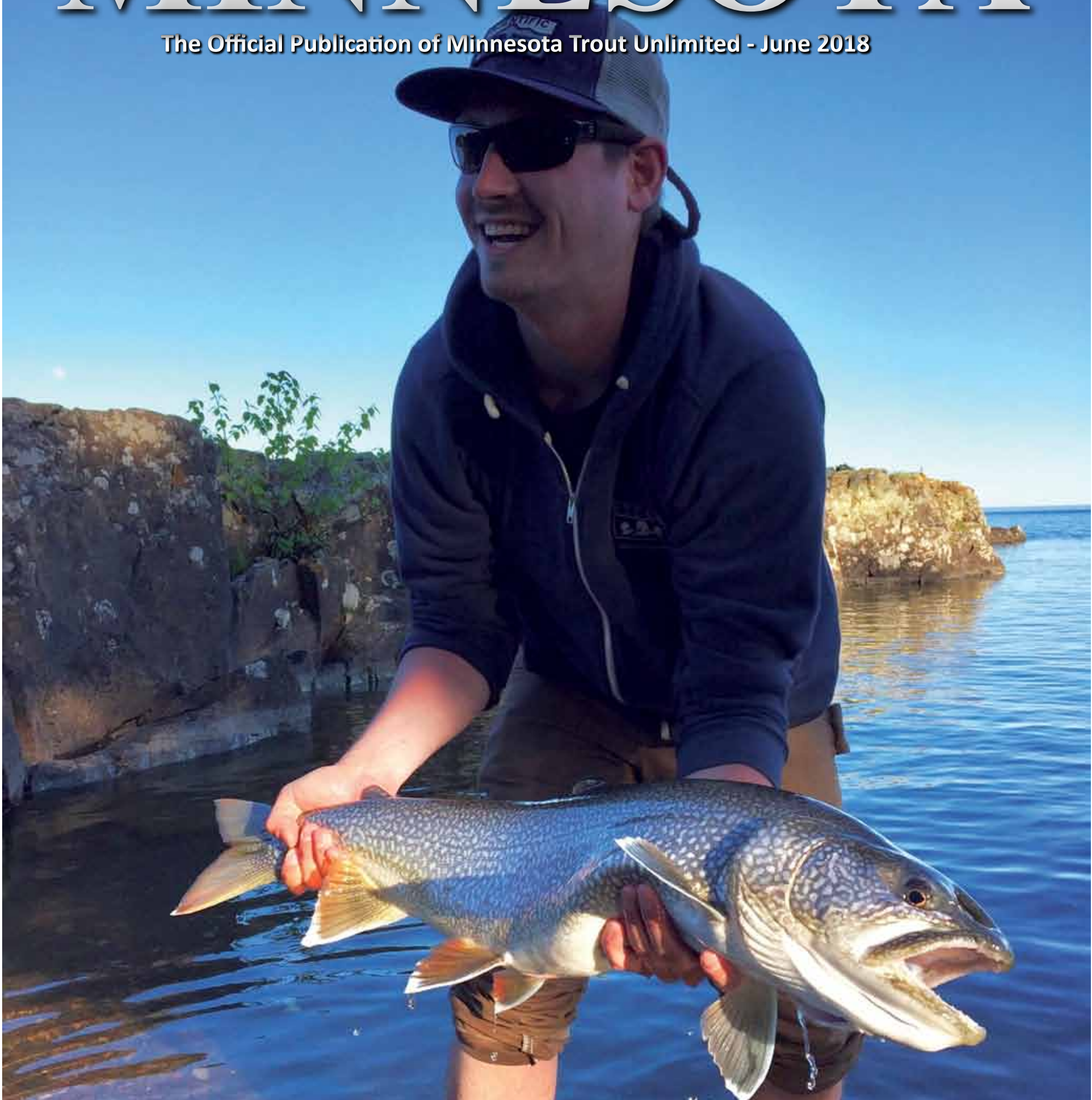


TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - June 2018



- 2018 Photo Contest Winners**
- Boundary Waters Lake Trout
 - Starting Fly Fishing - A Perspective
 - Eagle Creek 25th Anniversary
 - Tying the Shop Vac
 - Anglers Afield - Bahamas

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Chanhassen, MN 55317-0845

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ON THE COVER

A large lake trout caught by angler William Dayton on the shore of Lake Superior near the Encampment River in Lake County, MN. This photo is the overall winner of the 2018 MNTU photo contest. Read more about catching MN lake trout on pages 4 and 5. Check out other winners of our annual photo contest on page 8 of this issue. Photo by Beth Dayton.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Lake Trout in the BWCAW
- Photo Contest Results
- Perspectives on Fly Fishing
- Trout in the Classroom Updates
- New Mapping on mntu.org

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MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

Fishing & Involvement

By Steve Carlton, Minnesota Council Chair

I cheated. That’s right, I cheated today. I went smallmouth bass fishing on the Mississippi. It was chilly and very windy, but we landed a bunch of smallies and I got a northern. I’ve had a decent year so far: bonefishing, trout fishing and now I finally dragged my drift boat out to chase some bass. I am an equal opportunity fisherman...I just don’t get invited to go walleye fishing anymore. I think my family thinks that I only fish for trout now.

Welcome to another wonderful edition of *Trout Unlimited Minnesota*. MNTU continues to stay very active protecting our rivers and streams. I hope you all

were able to attend the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo in March. Carl and Jade put on another great show that continues to grow year after year. This edition of the newsletter is loaded with everything you need to know about trout in Minnesota and what we are doing to protect them and their watersheds. You will also find stories on TU partnerships, youth education, fly tying tips, and ways for you, YES, YOU to get involved in Trout Unlimited. Be sure to take a look at the new project mapping on the website too.

Thank you to all of those who volunteer. Protecting our resources takes an active group.



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A BIG CROWD CAME OUT TO WORK ON EAGLE CREEK EARLY THIS APRIL AND REMOVE INVASIVE BUCKTHORN. THANKS TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS THAT WORKED HARD TO IMPROVE THIS TWIN CITIES METRO TROUT STREAM!

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Legislative Outcomes

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

This year's state legislative session was as unpredictable as any in the past decade. It did not help that rather than one omnibus bill per each subject matter area (agriculture, environment, etc.) Legislative leaders created an "omnibus-omnibus" bill that was jammed with policy changes. Then things moved very slowly in the last weeks, only to have unrelated, unvetted amendments added at the last minute. All this made it difficult to identify a clear target and messaging for members to make directed calls.

Most of the policies harmful to watersheds, groundwater and coldwater fisheries were tucked into this mega bill. Working with partners, we got the groundwater pumping and other provisions removed. However, enough bad policy remained in the 900+ page bill that we believed Governor Dayton would veto it. He did. In the end, conservationists and environmentalists settled for some delays in supplemental

agency funding in return for blocking very destructive policy changes.

Another large bill containing both traditional bonding appropriations and appropriations from the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF) was a mixed bag. It funds some DNR projects and MNTU's new outdoor education program grant, but it also raids funds constitutionally dedicated for environmental projects and uses them to pay the debt service on wastewater infrastructure projects. We and many partners called for line item vetoes of those appropriations which ransack the ENRTF funds. The Governor kept us guessing until May 27th, when he signed the bill without the requested vetoes.

One unmitigated success was the passage of the Legacy funding bill. This bill contains the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council's recommended funding to enable MNTU and its chapters to restore habitat on another dozen project



sites around the state!

I am looking forward to trading slacks and jacket for work gloves and waders. I hope to see you on a habitat project site this summer, whether along the Vermillion, Hay, Kadunce, Garvin, or any number of other streams.



SOME FRESH BOUNDARY WATERS LAKE TROUT ON ICE. READ ABOUT HOW TO CATCH LAKERS IN ALL SEASONS AND SOME OF THE CONSERVATION ISSUES GOING ON AT THE EDGE OF THE WILDERNESS BEGINNING ON PAGE 4.

EDITOR'S ANGLE

Planting Trees to Keep Our Fishing Great

By Carl Haensel, Editor

As much as spring means fishing time to me, it means tree planting time as well. Here in the north woods of Minnesota, ensuring that our trout streams are in good shape and carry lots of cold water is just as much about having quality forests as it is about habitat in the stream.

To keep our stream-side riparian forests healthy we often need to plant trees. Over 100 years ago, logging in the north woods took many of our long-lived pines and cedars. A burgeoning population of white-tailed deer has prevented their natural recovery for most of the rest of the time since then. To help bring back our forests, Minnesota Trout Unlimited has worked for years to plant many thousands of trees along streams throughout northeast Minnesota. This spring is no

different, and we've already got many trees in the ground. More are coming however, and the ones that have been planted need maintenance and occasional help. If you're interested in playing a role, we need summertime volunteers in the north, as well as throughout the state on projects around Minnesota. Check out the chapter news for more details in the back of this issue, and feel free to contact your local chapter president in the column at the right, or our state executive director John Lenczewski to get on our habitat volunteer list.

I hope that you get a chance to lend a hand this year as well as spend plenty of time out on Minnesota's streams, rivers and lakes throughout the summer.



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LAKE TROUT IN THE BOUNDARY WATERS

Catching Lake Trout, Appreciating the Wilderness & Conservation Issues

By Lukas Leaf

There was barely time to start setting camp when we heard the classic “fish on!” from across the point that was to be our home for the first two days in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area & Wilderness. I immediately smiled to myself. My friends and I have been taking annual trips for Minnesota spring fishing opener ritually for the last fifteen years and I knew when I heard those words that we were home. As I made my way with excitement to the palisade where Lee was fishing, I couldn’t help but feel a sense of contentment and gratification. I grabbed the net and with one fell swoop our crew had a lake trout for dinner ready for the stringer. It’s moments like these that can be described but only truly understood in that precious moment.

The Boundary Waters is a special place, filled with the wonders of the Northwoods and an awe-inspiring landscape shaped by glacial movements millennia ago. At nearly 1.1 million acres, the Boundary Waters spreads across the northeastern tip of Minnesota. It is a vast boreal forest consisting of interconnected lakes, streams, wetlands and aquifers that provide some of the best fishing the world has to offer. These glacial movements bored out over a thousand lakes. More than a hundred of those lakes are deep, clear, cold, well-oxygenated and hold our native species of lake trout. Anglers from far and wide come to northern Minnesota for a chance to battle one of the most exciting pound-for-pound fish to hit their lure. Although the average size is around 2-3 pounds, there are absolute monsters to be found. A member of our crew on a trip last spring landed a 37-inch, 17lb laker that made the rest of the fish from our trip look like minnows. It is a matter of time of year, strategy and technique. All of which, with a little experience, are quite easy to master.

I absolutely love the Boundary Waters in the spring. Nature is awakening from its winter slumber, the loons have returned to nest, the ice has had its last days on the lake, there are no bugs, and, most importantly, the lake trout are in the shallows. This time of year presents an amazing opportunity for targeting lakers. The water temperature is still low enough that these amazing fish are venturing into shallower waters that would not otherwise hold them throughout the rest of the year. During the spring, anglers even



A WILD 37-INCH BWCAW LAKE TROUT CAUGHT IN THE SPRING

have the luxury of fishing from shore. With a simple setup of a water filled slip bobber, bullet weights, attractors and salted shiners, one can bask in the sun at camp and enjoy catching lake trout all day long. For us, this is a tried and true technique. That’s not to say that it is the only or the best technique, however.

The strategy for targeting lake trout changes with the seasons and the angler’s preference. In the spring, lake trout are hunting in the shallows next to steep drop-offs, flowages off of land points, and round rocky reefs. Find these areas and you will find trout. Trolling and casting during the spring in these areas in water depths of 25-30ft or shallower are your best bet. Our greatest success has come from the bobber setup I previously mentioned and casting crank baits and lures that mimic the forage in the lake you are fishing. Most often that is a golden or silver shiner color. Do not discount a jig tipped with a minnow either.

During the summer months, lake trout move to deeper depths as the water temperature increases. These coldwater fish prefer temperatures in the 40 to 50 degree range. The glaciated bowl lakes of the BWCA create a perfect habitat for lake trout. It’s at this point that shore fishing is no longer possible. During the high points of summer make sure to target deeper areas of the lake where lakers have found the colder water and similar structure to what they prefer in the spring. Make sure to use heavier weights and lures to reach the proper depths. Trolling in the canoe and jigging in the summer months are your best bets. Take your time, move slowly and allow the lure to get into the target zone. Give it some action and if you get a hit, work over the area again. More than likely that trout wasn’t alone.

Fall in the BWCA for lake trout is a unique experience. The season for lakers closes this year on September 30th. The reasoning behind this is that late trout begin spawning late September into October. If the conditions are right, trout will be in the shallows similar to spring time. Although fishing can be great, I truly recommend practicing catch and release during this time of year. There are plenty of other species to catch in the fall. Try taking a trip at the end of September after grouse hunting season has opened in Minnesota. There’s nothing like a fresh walleye in the pan with a ruffed grouse roasting over the fire. You will not be disappointed.

Ice fishing for lake trout in the cold, majestic winter months of the Northwoods may actually be my favorite time to hunt for these amazing fish. There is a level

of control with ice fishing in the BWCA that I feel doesn’t exist during the rest of the year. First, you have to get to the lake that you want to fish, whether it is by cross-country skiing, snowshoeing or simply walking. This involves pulling pulk sleds loaded with the gear you need to withstand the harsh conditions that Lake Superior and the Northwoods will bring. Overnight trips in the BWCA are no joke and you absolutely have to be prepared.

My lure of choice over the last few years has been a ¾ ounce gold Kastmaster tipped with half of a salted shiner. Having a sonar is also a life saver. During the winter months, lake trout can appear out of nowhere throughout the water column. Having a way to locate and target them makes a world of difference. Pay attention to the bite. It can change from aggressive to extremely subtle in a heartbeat. Every hole drilled in the Boundary Waters is sacred. The BWCA allows no motorized assistance so every hole must be hand drilled. This is no simple task as I experienced on a trip in March with Outdoor Life. The ice was nearly 36 inches thick with 16 inches of snow and hard crust on top. Every hole finished was a reward in and of itself, and the wind was howling.

Our goal for this winter trip was to catch lake trout, and also to show how amazing the Boundary Waters is in the winter. It was a profound experience. Over four days we endured brutal winds blowing off of Lake Superior that created tough fishing conditions. Despite Mother Nature’s best attempts to keep us at bay, we prevailed. After a slow couple of days the trout turned on. For the next day and half we had a blast moving from hole



to hole, laughing out loud as the lakers slammed our lures. In the end, all four of us were able to head home with a couple fillets. This was a nice reward for our hard work. I generally don't take fish home from the Boundary Waters, but this seemed like a special occasion. My wife and I enjoyed a dinner of fresh lake trout the very night that I got home. A reminder of the trip I had just taken and a small way to share the amazing experience with her.

Conservation Issues and Current Mining Threats

The Boundary Waters was first designated as a wilderness under the Wilderness Act of 1964. In 1978, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area & Wilderness Act expanded the wilderness area to the nearly 1.1 million acres that it is today. The 1978 Act also established a Boundary Waters Canoe Area Mining Protection Area along the access corridors into the wilderness and banned mineral development within the Wilderness and the Mining Protection Area. Today, the Boundary Waters is the most visited wilderness in our nation with over 150,000 annual



FRIENDS AND ANGLERS ON THE WATER IN THE SPRING IN SEARCH OF LAKERS



SOME EATING-SIZED BOUNDARY WATERS LAKE TROUT CAUGHT THROUGH THE ICE IN THE WINTER (LEFT) AND DESTINED FOR THE FRYING PAN (RIGHT)

visitors seeking the amazing backcountry experience that it has to offer. The three million-acre Superior National Forest, which includes the Boundary Waters, contains 20% of all the freshwater in the 193 million-acre National Forest System. Downstream from the Boundary Waters are Voyageurs National Park, Rainy Lake, and Lake of the Woods, which provide some of Minnesota's best hunting and fishing experiences. The Boundary Waters truly is a public lands and waters success story.

The Boundary Waters is currently under threat from proposed sulfide-ore copper mining at its headwaters by the

Chilean mining company Antofagasta, which owns Twin Metals MN. This type of mining has a terrible track record of polluting, especially in such water-rich environments as the Boundary Waters. Sulfide-ore copper mining on the edge of the Boundary Waters would cause irreparable damage to the very quality that makes these public lands and waters so unique. Acid mine drainage caused by this type of mining would be particularly damaging to the Boundary Waters because of the interconnected lakes, streams, wetlands, and aquifers downstream of the proposed mine sites. This habitat supports world-class recreational fisheries that are sensitive to small changes in the ecosystem. Acid mine

drainage lowers pH and exposes fish and other aquatic organisms to heavy metals, like copper, lead, mercury, and nickel.

Recently, the Department of the Interior reinstated two expired mineral leases to Twin Metals MN right near the edge of the Boundary Waters. A few weeks later, Twin Metals released a plan to move its proposed mining operations even closer to the Boundary Waters, locating a proposed industrial concentration facility on the banks of Birch Lake. The Forest Service is currently conducting an Environmental Assessment to determine the impacts that copper-nickel mining, including acid mine drainage, would have

ing sent a letter to Secretaries Sonny Perdue and Ryan Zinke calling on them to immediately suspend all mineral development approvals on public lands in the Rainy River Watershed during the Forest Service's ongoing study of a mineral withdrawal. Our nation's hunting and fishing economy, our sporting traditions, and healthy fish and wildlife populations depend on places like the Boundary Waters.

The Boundary Waters is an amazing place. For my friends and me it is a place for reflection and a way to get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. These are the true backcountry ex-



on the public lands, fish, and wildlife of the Boundary Waters and downstream lands and waters. The reinstatement of the leases to Twin Metals MN ignores the Forest Service's decision in 2016 to withhold renewal of these leases and its application for a 20 year mineral withdrawal of lands surrounding the Boundary Waters.

Hunters, anglers and recreational users alike support the study. On May 31st, a coalition of sporting groups and businesses including Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, American Fly Fishing Trade Association, First Lite and Simms Fish-

periences that we all seek as hunters and anglers. Nature has a special way of recharging you and the Boundary Waters is no exception. The Boundary Waters and its watershed must be protected. It is up to us to defend our public lands, waters and sporting heritage.

Editor's Note: Lukas Leaf is the National Sporting Director for Sportsmen for the Boundary Waters, a non-profit group working on conservation issues in and around the BWCAW. For more information, visit www.sportsmenfortheboundarywaters.org or contact Lukas Leaf at lukas@sportsmenfortheboundarywaters.org

BEGINNING FLY FISHING

A Perspective

By Abigail Crider

I'm going to take a break, so you can cast now," I said, "And yes, I know you'll probably catch a big one." This had happened so often when my husband and I fished together that it had become a running joke—every time I decided to take a break, he ended up hooking into a big fish and I was left empty-handed.

We were currently wading upstream taking turns casting a river that was known for holding large brown trout. Sure enough, a couple casts in he hooked into a fat, colorful 18" brown trout. In the Driftless region, this was a nice fish. "Shoot, I'm sorry!" He laughed. "I guess it's your turn again." We continued upstream and reached a deep, slow corner. I began casting and drifting my articulated streamer along the edge, and after a few minutes, I felt a light tap. A couple casts later I felt another hit again—it was taunting me. I threw my streamer in again, felt a third hit, and set the hook—my line took off fast and hard. The fish boiled up to the top of the water and we got our first glimpse. My husband made the universal grunting sound that means "this is a big fish" and grabbed for the net...

But First, Let's Rewind a Few Years

I vividly remember the day I officially switched to the fly rod for two reasons. My husband started fly fishing a year before me, but we only had one rod, so I was still using spinning gear. On this particular day, we were on the river and came across two other fly anglers. At some point while chatting, one of them turned to me and asked "Why aren't you fly fishing?" I don't think he meant it in a rude way—honestly, he was probably just encouraging me to give it a try—but it was burned in my mind. Why wasn't I fly fishing?

The second reason I remember the day I officially switched to the fly rod is a little ironic. We were wading back at the end of a day of fishing, and I happened to look down in the water at the branches of a fallen tree and noticed one of the "sticks" was bright yellow. I reached down and pulled out an old Eagle Claw fiberglass rod with an old plastic reel. We asked around to see if anyone had lost the rod, but never



found the owner. I started using that rod every time we went out fishing, until finally, I caught my first little brown trout on a dry fly—the fish was hooked, and so was I. My husband quickly realized I had every intention of sticking to fly fishing and purchased a decent setup for me. (Also, if you're the owner of that missing Eagle Claw and can tell me where you lost it, I'm happy to return it!).

Fly Fishing Really is a Community

It was also around this time that we began to get more involved in the community of fly anglers—both locally and online. In the local Driftless and Twin Cities area, we attended numerous events to learn more and started to connect with other fly anglers. While the majority of the them were male, they were always encouraging towards me and never cared when I would tag along with the group on fishing excursions.

Online, we also started to meet like-minded people, both in the further regions of the Midwest and across the country. One of the coolest aspects of social media has been the ability to connect and interact with other like-minded individuals fishing different regions.

There's Never Been a Better Time for Women

Recently Orvis, one of the largest leaders in the fly fishing retail industry, launched an initiative called 50/50 On the Water. This program was created to encourage more women to the join the sport and to promote the women who have already paved the way.

In December 2017, the New York Times wrote a trending article highlighting the fact that women are the fastest growing demographic in fly fishing, a previously male-dominated sport. Women now make up about 31 percent of the 6.5 million Americans who fly-fish, according to the article.

We're getting close and momentum is gaining—the industry is more open than ever before towards women and from my personal experience, the fly fishing community throughout Minnesota and Wisconsin has been very welcoming and encouraging towards me.

I have recently been able to meet, and fish with, several other ladies in the area who share my passion for fly fishing and want to help grow the community of women anglers throughout the region. Some have been inspired and taught by the men in their lives, while others have taught themselves. It's encouraging to see other women who are also passionate about fly fishing, and I look forward to continuing to get to know them and hope to meet many more!

I will continue to encourage any women out there who are interested, to give it a shot! It can be intimidating, but in my experience, people are more than happy to share their knowledge, offer tips and tricks or take you out on the water with them. Nobody has this sport completely figured out—there's always more to learn—this is both the challenge and draw that comes with fly fishing.

What Draws Me To The Water

Over the course of the next few years, fly fishing began to consume the majority of our lives that was not spent at the office working. It is a delicate and intricate sport that requires patience and attention to detail.

I'm drawn to the water because there is always a new technique to learn, a different species of fish to catch, and more beautiful places to explore. In addition, fly fishing has given me a new appreciation for the environment. I realized I am lucky to have the Driftless and beyond as my playground—it was only fair that I helped maintain them.

I've been fortunate to be a part of a very welcoming community of fly anglers, and a supportive husband who is thrilled that I enjoy fishing. Our quality time together is spent on the water, and "date nights" in the summer usually mean taking turns casting a new stretch of a stream after we get off work.

Fast Forward to the Big One

... My husband made the universal grunting sound that means "this is a big fish" and grabbed for the net.

He scooped up the hefty, colored-up male brown trout and gave me an aggressive fist pump. This was officially the largest and most rewarding fish I had caught on the fly to date.

I lifted the fish out of the water long enough for a few photos, then released him back into the dark hole he came from. This was just a couple weeks ago, and I'm still riding the high from that fish (see photo above).

It's rewarding to see the personal growth I've made fly fishing and how much I've learned, and I'm looking forward to continuing the journey.



IN APRIL, A SMALL GROUP OF US WHO CONNECTED OVER SOCIAL MEDIA MET UP FOR THE FIRST TIME TO FISH THE KINNICKINNIC RIVER TOGETHER. I WOULD LOVE TO ORGANIZE MORE MEETINGS LIKE THIS IN THE FUTURE AND INCLUDE MORE WOMEN!

MNTU'S STREAM HABITAT WORK

Part 3 - Bank Stabilization Using Toe Wood and Other Methods

By John Lenczewski

In Part 1 we explained that every stream is a balance of stream flow (energy), sediment transport, stream slope and sediment size. To maintain good in-stream habitat we need to design projects to handle the energy of stream flow. A primary step on every project is to lower and slope back stream banks to allow high flows quicker access to the stream's floodplain and reduce water's erosive stress (erosive energy) on the outer bends.

Altering a bank's shape is the first step to reduce the erosive force of water acting on the bank. But with this alone we cannot eliminate all erosive forces on stream banks, only reduce them. Instead we take additional steps to further reduce erosive energy on outer bends. Methods and materials are tailored to each site based on a hydraulic assessment of energy levels. Streams or stream segments with higher energy levels, notably those with steeper slopes or very high flows, may require that we secure the bottom or "toe" the bank slopes with rock and other techniques.

Why toe wood?

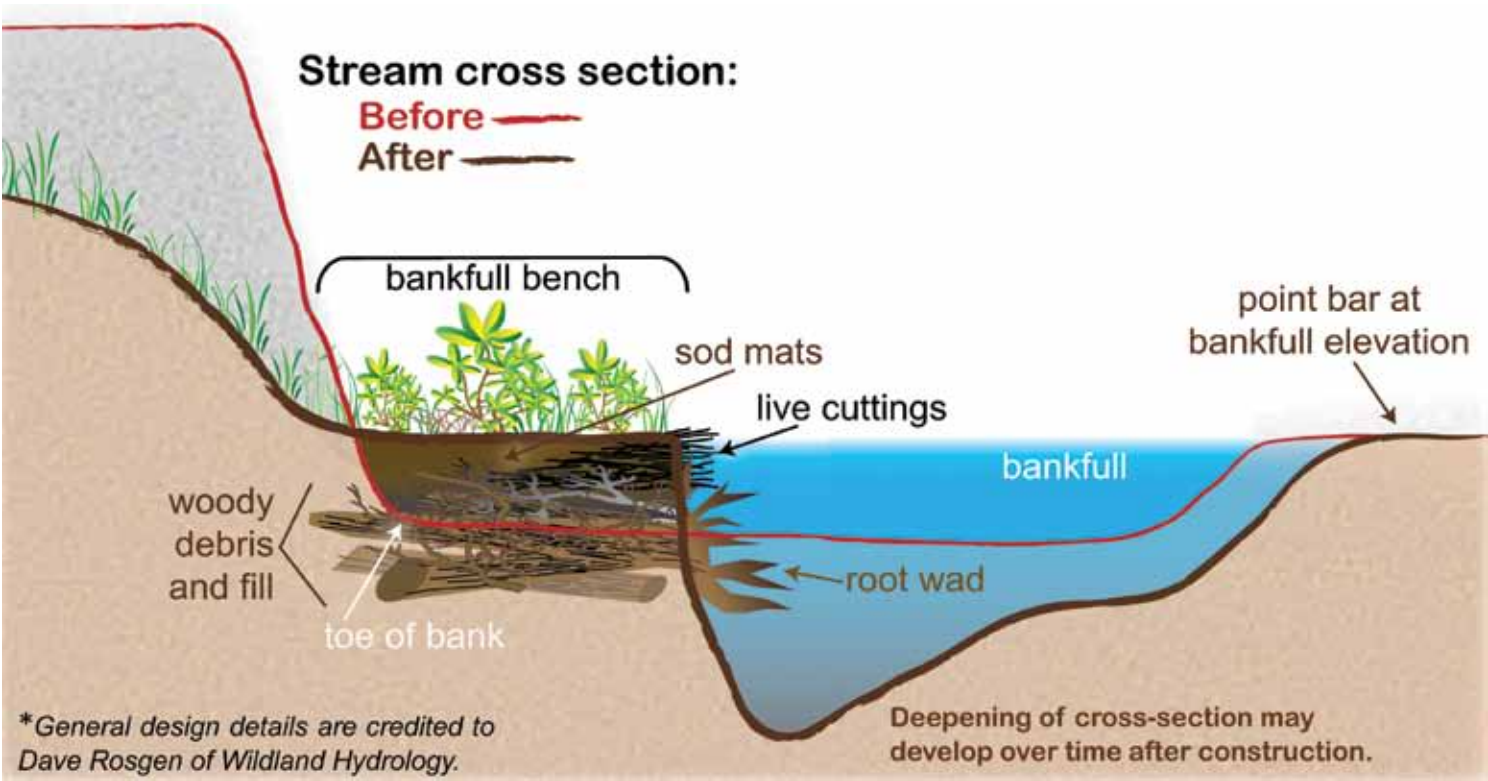
In many locations bank shaping reduces shear stress (ability to erode soil) to levels where the bank can be held in place by the root systems of live vegetation. Vegetation is Nature's erosion control, to dissipate the energy of water and reduce its ability to erode soil. To accomplish this, we often need to use woody material and/or biodegradable erosion control netting to hold banks and soils in place for 3 to 5 years until the root systems of live vegetation become well established and can continually secure the bank into the future.

What is toe wood?

Toe wood is a collection of woody material placed at the bottom or "toe" of a stream bank to both resist and dissipate the erosive energy of water hitting the bank. Often times we create a terrace or "bench" in front of what was a vertical cutbank. The bench consists of a bottom layer of logs, branches, brush, roots and soil as fill. Root wads placed below the water line are sometimes incorporated to provide large trout habitat and additional roughness (to dissipate more energy).



TOE WOOD ON THE STEWART RIVER WILL DISSIPATE ENERGY OF HIGHER FLOW, KEEPING BANK FROM ERODING. BROOK TROUT TAKE UP FEEDING LINES UNDER FOAM LINE IN PICTURE, ADJACENT TO COVER PROVIDED BY SUBMERGED WOODY HABITAT.



The fill can be covered with a layer of live cuttings (in forested areas such as the Stewart River above) or sod mats and transplants. Since most southeast MN sites lack existing prairie grasses for sod mats, biodegradable fabric netting and cover crops are used to secure soils until these grasses become established.



THIS BANK ON LEFT SIDE OF HAY CREEK HAS A BANKFULL BENCH BUILT OUT 20 FEET FROM A TALL, VERTICAL ERODING BANK. THE FORMER BANK EDGE WAS WHERE THE NEW GRASSY SLOPE MEETS THE TREE LINE.



A VERTICAL CUT BANK WAS REPLACED WITH AN UNDERWATER WOOD "CRIB WALL" AND THE BANK SLOPED BACK TO DISSIPATE FLOOD ENERGY. THIS ANGLER CAUGHT PLENTY OF BROOK TROUT FROM THIS DEEP HOLE ON EAST INDIAN CREEK.

2018 PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Congratulations to the Winners!

This season was the fifth year for the MNTU Newsletter photo contest. We continue to get many entries, and with the advent of better and better smart phones and mobile devices, lots of you are shooting. Keep it up! Thanks to the great contestants that sent a wide variety of photos from around the state. A selection of winning photos are presented on this page. If your photo was not used here, keep an eye for it in future newsletters, on the website, our Facebook page or at the Expo in 2019.

The Rules of the 2018 Contest Were:

- 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.

- All photos submitted must be sent in *.jpg format at their original resolution to the Editor at: mntueditor@gmail.com
- There is a entry limit of three photos per individual. Please include the name of the photographer and the location the photo was taken in the submission.
- Submission of photos gives MNTU the right to publish photos in the MNTU newsletter and in online media.

The winner in each category will receive a box of a dozen flies ready to catch trout this season. The overall winner will receive an official Minnesota Trout Unlimited T-shirt with the 2018 design and an official MNTU hat.

OVERALL WINNER FAMILY FISHING

DREAM CATCH
LAKE SUPERIOR- LAKE COUNTY
PHOTO BY BETH DAYTON
SEE PAGE 2 & COVER FOR INFO

2018 Prizes



FIRST PLACE - TROUT, SALMON & STEELHEAD

NORTH SHORE STEELHEAD DETAILS
STEWART RIVER, LAKE COUNTY
PHOTO BY JASON SWINGEN



THIRD PLACE - TROUT, SALMON & STEELHEAD

AN INTRODUCTION
TROUT BROOK, DAKOTA COUNTY
PHOTO BY TIM HEMSTAD



THIRD PLACE - MN WATERS

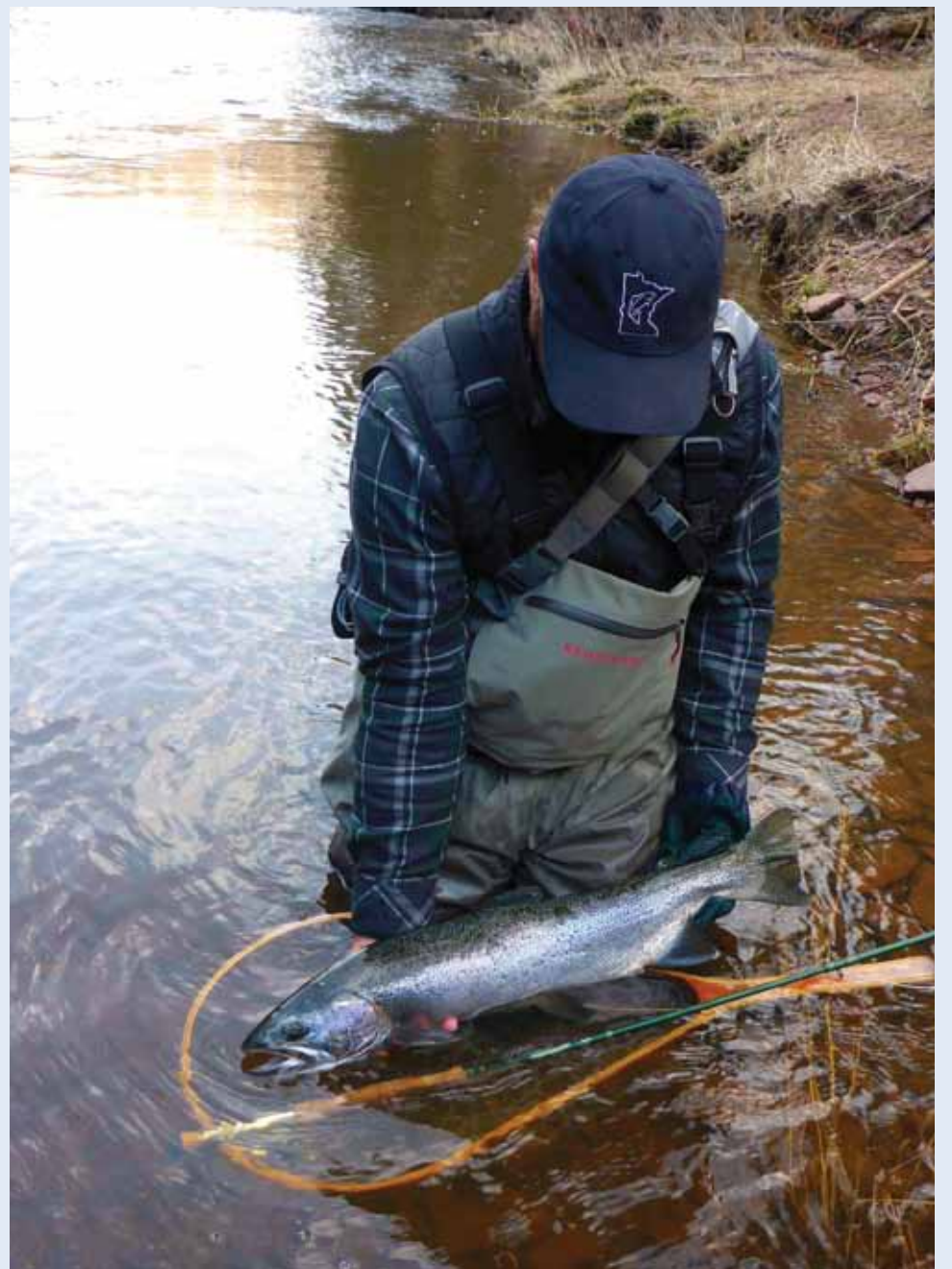
OPENING DAY
EAGLE CREEK, SCOTT COUNTY
PHOTO BY DAN CALLAHAN



FIRST PLACE - MN WATERS
FISH ON
SOUTH BRANCH OF THE ROOT RIVER - FILLMORE COUNTY
PHOTO BY MARTY JOHNSON



SECOND PLACE - MN WATERS
SOUTH BRANCH WHITEWATER RIVER, WINONA COUNTY
PHOTO BY CRAIG PASSOW



SECOND PLACE - TROUT, SALMON & STEELHEAD
29 INCH HEN
BAPTISM RIVER, LAKE COUNTY
PHOTO BY CHERI HENDERSON



FLY TYING

With Laughing Trout Fly Fishing

By Paul Johnson



Shop Vac

In the last edition of *Trout Unlimited Minnesota*, there was an article on fishing Garvin Brook. The article also highlighted some of the great work that the Win-Cres Chapter is doing to continue to improve our trout habitat. In the article, Win-Cres mentioned that the Shop Vac has been a great fly pattern on Garvin Brook. With that, I thought maybe you would enjoy a step-by-step tying instruction for the fly.

From my understanding, the Shop Vac was created by Craig Matthews at

Blue Ribbon Flies in West Yellowstone. I do like to add a collar of either peacock herl or peacock dubbing to the fly. I think it cleans it up a little. I wonder if the fish care? This pattern has proven to be pretty effective this spring for several members of Laughing Trout. Tie some up and give it a try. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Paul Johnson
Laughing Trout Fly Fishing
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Step 1.
Put the bead on the hook and insert the hook into your vise.



Step 2.
Start your tying thread at the 3/4 mark and lay a thread base down the bend of the hook.



Step 3.
At the back of the hook, tie in a length of wire.



Step 4.
At the back of the hook, tie in your pheasant tail fibers.



Step 5.
Secure the pheasant tail with your tying thread and advance your thread to the 3/4 mark.



Step 6.
Wrap the pheasant tail forward to the 3/4 mark on your hook. Secure with your tying thread and clip the excess.



Step 7.
Counter wrap the wire forward, with even-spaced wraps to form the rib of the fly. Secure with your tying thread and clip the excess.



Step 8.
At the 3/4 mark on your hook, tie in a length of white zelon to form the wing.



Step 9.
Clip the wing to about 1/2 the length of the hook shank.



Step 10.
At the 3/4 mark on your hook, tie in several peacock herl fibers.



Step 11.
Make several wraps of the peacock to form the collar on the fly. Secure with your tying thread and clip the excess. Whip finish & go fish!

Materials List

Hook:	Scud, 14 -18
Bead:	Gold Tungsten or Brass
Thread:	Uni 8/0 Dark Brown
Abdomen:	Pheasant Tail
Ribbing:	Gold Wire, Brassie
Wing:	White Zelon
Thorax:	Peacock Herl or Peacock Dubbing



A WILD MINNESOTA BROWN TROUT READY FOR RELEASE

ANGLERS AFIELD

From Fresh to Salt: Stripping in the Bahamas

By Suzanne Herrick • Photos by Josh Gallivan

It's nerve-racking: two days of work and nothing to show for it. What was I doing, or not doing? Frustrations were mounting and it was time to change my routine. As I would find out, it all came down to my long strip.

The learning curve is huge in the transition from trout streams to salt flats. A few days in salt water is worth ten practicing in any park. Beyond the double haul, there are so many basics to learn: the environment, fish behavior and of course, just exactly how to bring one of these beauties up close to admire.

Marls Mindset

We arrive and I begin asking, What is this place? Miles of shallow clear water, spider-like mangrove roots, muddy bottom in places, sand in others. It's navigable by flats boat with a small engine and pole in those really shallow spots. Wade-able by bare feet at times, lightweight wading boots in others. Worn coral shores demand shoes with tough bottoms or salt boots. The wind affects water levels much more so than tide. When it blows from the east, it can mean skinny water and exposed mangrove roots with fish evicted from their homes. This is Abaco in early November, 2017 and these are The Marls.

Then, what are these fish? Permit, bonefish, barracuda are just some of the sought-after sport fish that inhabit these waters. This trip the target is bonefish that, according to Guide Paul, are the seventh fastest fish in the world and pound-for-pound the fastest. They're mentioned in the same breath as the mighty deep water sailfish, tuna and sword. The ghost of the flats, their silvery skin cleverly reflects the bottom while their backs don a greenish and dark grey livery that camouflages them among the sea-life laden bottom.

The Shift to Salt Eyes

Now, where are these fish? How do I see them? My trout-trained eyes learn to focus on different movement, subtle color



change on the bottom, then sprinter-like dashes as bonefish dart from feeding place to feeding place, rooting up tasty crustaceans. After feeding, they leave behind a faint light grey slick from where they had plucked a shrimp, worm or crab from the bottom. While this slick might be a giveaway to a school's location, it certainly doesn't promise fish. According to Guide Travis, the murk can linger in the water for hours.

Then, there's tailing. This is the stuff of legends. Bonefish in skinny water slithering along the bottom while their blackish tails wiggling above the surface. This gets your heart pounding as it's a sure sign that the ghosts are here.

"Ten Things Have to Go Right"

We see them, now what? As my friend Chip explained, bonefishing is almost harder than bow hunting – ten things have to go right before you find the fish, and then ten more things have to go right after you find them. At least when you bow hunt, you reach a point where you just release the arrow.

Standing on the boat with my virgin eight-weight Sage HD Salt and Hatch reel, my Rio fly line is pooled on a mat with foamy spikes below my feet to keep the gusts from blowing it all over the place. I've false casted enough line to strip back in and puddle for quick cast-

ing. I hold a shrimp pattern in my left hand, scanning for bonefish, picturing a clock in front of me.

My ears are as open as my eyes, listening for noise of tailing, ready to cast in the direction and distance that the guide directs. My body is feeling the wind, trying to recount the muscle-memory for the perfect cast. I am just slightly on edge, feeling a bit like a bird dog, looking for the fallen pheasant, but not yet commanded to retrieve.

A Little Mercy, Please

The winds are ripping. They were a good 20 plus knots on the best day of this five-day hunt. For this beginner with the double haul, it seemed I had been thrown into the frying pan. While the winds play heavily into casting technique, they also determine fishing locations. Poling upwind is quite exhausting, so on most days, I found myself with the wind to my right while casting to nine, ten, eleven o'clock. Yes, I needed every advantage.

Then I hear the magic words: "Ten o'clock, 30 feet." An inner voice screams, "Let's do this this time." I drop the fly, get some line out there then land a decent cast. Too short. I pick it up with a bit of finesse so as not to spook these three ghosts. I recast to 11 o'clock and hear "strip, strip, strip, wait ... LONG STRIP." This time, I made sure that barbless hook wasn't going anywhere in those gummy lips. I lift the fly rod and guide the line with my left hand to get the beast on the reel. Success – no tangles. She's zipping out there, looking for some way to rid herself of her captor. The reel is just singing. The fly rod butt firmly against my forearm while I search for the crank with my left.

The tension lightens a bit and I test this fish's interest in coming for a visit. I find out she's ready to play. So the game begins. Reel, reel, reel...tension again and the bonefish takes off back toward the mangroves, then tires again. I coax her back to less tangled waters and the fish comes closer, closer and sees the boat. My reel sings again and the fish seems to rocket even farther than its jaunt to the mangroves.

Finally, after another round of hide and seek, I sense we're ready to have a

quick look at this beauty. I begin reeling again until my hand is on the leader and my first bonefish is landed. Big smiles quickly follow from the guide, my flats partner and of course the angler. I finally get to see this ghost and admire my playmate.

Beyond silvery sides and a camo back, traces of iridescent burgundy and purple decorate its tail. Caught in the light, the bonefish shimmers in a suit of baby blue and light pink. While these colors might be soft, this fish is no soft fighter. I sense it's ready to fight another day and I release this fish of the flats back to its hunting grounds.

Fist pounds, high fives and then the adrenaline rush begins to subside. The reality of what just happens settles in. I thank the guide for putting me on my first bonefish and my flats boat partner for the nudge to keep reeling. Then I hear, "Maybe next time, don't long strip so hard." An inner voices chuckles.

The Best Fish May Be The One Not Caught

The first two days on the water resulted in a huge learning curve. No matter how much I practiced casting or pretended I was on the bow of a flats boat, there's nothing like life as the greatest teacher. The two days prior, I had multiple fish on. One broke off, the rest quickly shook the hook. The end of day two arrived with a bruised ego. After I embarrassingly explained my experiences to the seasoned anglers at the lodge, Patrick offered to help me practice the hook set. A resounding "yes" poured out of my mouth. It was crystal clear I needed to get this right.

By the lights of the porch and the crackle of a campfire, I pretended to catch fish after fish with my eyes closed. I tested the hearty line strength. I learned that I needed to really set the hook with a good strong strip. Putting my ego in check and a little self-compassion for this novice turned my game around.

As much as I'd like to have been a natural at fly fishing, it just hasn't happened that way for me. Work and life limits my time on the water. I've been told a million ways how to catch a fish, cast a fly rod. Each of those million ways is valid and helpful – no matter how much I wanted the coaching or not.

Fly fishing is the epitome of the pursuit of excellence – operative word being "pursuit." It doesn't ensure you're always going to see what's at the end of the hook, or even get one on the line. Each fish is different and requires a unique set of skills that seem to arise with experience and eventually, like second-nature in the moment. And, who says that the best fish is the one caught? Perhaps those that broke off or shook the hook are even greater, challenging us to learn more, reminding us of the value of humility and the joy of pursuit.



AT THE DOCK ON THE ABACO FLATS

CELEBRATING EAGLE CREEK

The 25th Anniversary of Our Eagle Creek Adventure

by Dan Callahan



The sun was out, but a face-biting north wind was chewing on my cheeks. I shoved my hands in my pockets and hunched my shoulders against the cold as I walked across the parking lot to a few men standing by an enclosed trailer. The trailer is stuffed with equipment for our Twin Cities Trout Unlimited (TCTU) chapter stream restoration projects.

It was 16 degrees F; stupidly cold for the metro area on Saturday, April 7, 2018. Snow still covered the ground. “Man, it’s cold. Do you think anybody is going to show up?” I asked Tony Nelson and Fred Bertschinger, the volunteers leading our “spring” work day on Eagle Creek, in the south metro city of Savage. “They always do,” Tony laughed, “We’ve never had to cancel a work day.” 55 enthusiastic people arrived to prove him right, and to prove the passion TCTU members have for our mission. The national TU organization chartered our chapter to carry out the mission:

“To conserve, protect and restore North America’s coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.”

On Eagle Creek that Saturday, we volunteers worked in teams of chain sawyers, brush draggers and stump sprayers, clearing invasive, non-native brush.

It was so cold, I was concerned the liquid herbicide in the backpack tanks would freeze before we sprayed the buckthorn stumps, to keep them from growing back. I thought, “The weather could not be more ridiculous for this time of year.” Mother Nature laughed and said, “Here, hold my beer.”

She hit us with the record-breaking Trout Opener Blizzard of 2018 the next Saturday: White-out conditions, a foot of blowing and drifting snow, and no travel advised.

A text showed up on my phone early that morning. “Alright, dude. Are we seriously doing this thing?” asked Martin Ludden. He and another TCTU member, Kevin Weir, were supposed to fish the

opener with me on Eagle Creek. “Highways in your neck of the woods look treacherous.”

I checked the Google Maps app. It was a web of red; all roads choked with traffic. Little car accident icons decorated the 22-mile-route Martin would have to drive from St. Paul to Eagle Creek. I called and cajoled him, “C’mon, it’ll be an adventure!”

Two hours later, I pulled in behind their four-wheel-drives and parked in a snow-drift by the creek. Both lift gates were up, shielding Kevin and Martin from the blasts of snow and ice pellets as they geared up for the worst trout fishing opener weather, ever.

I joked that it was TCTU’s fault. Our winter fundraising banquet had been scheduled for February 24th, but we had rescheduled it for April 14th. Old Man Winter had decided to follow us. We split up and fished.

The only thing we caught was media coverage. Three local TV station stories documented the freaks--err, the hardy

Trout Unlimited members-- who didn’t let the weather stop them from celebrating the fishing opener.

Their stories also mentioned how our volunteers are celebrating the 25th anniversary of our fight to save Eagle Creek, the last trout stream in Scott County.

In 1993, urban development was encroaching on the stream. Plans for Eagle Creek had been given preliminary approval without an environmental review. We alerted the state which stopped development until a review could be completed.

The City of Savage was put in charge of doing the review of its own plans and approved them. The DNR criticized the plan in its comments, but did not use its power to object to the adequacy of the environmental review, or call for a more complete Environmental Impact Statement.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is a state agency. It has many divisions, both literally and figuratively. According to several DNR employees at

the time, who asked me not to use their names for fear of retribution, there were deep divisions about what to do about Eagle Creek.

Staff in the Ecological Services Division saw value in protecting and restoring the native prairie, woods, wetlands, and wildlife habitat as an asset for the metro area. Fisheries staff believed the creek was worth saving, since we had lost so many metro trout streams already to urban development.

But others in the agency said it was too late. Had the DNR acted earlier, and bought land from the original farm families, it would have been much cheaper than now, when a developer owned the west branch and had platted houses. The DNR decision makers deemed buying land there as a waste of money. The same money could be used to buy more land, on better trout streams, in southeastern Minnesota.

It was a lost cause, and not worth fighting anymore. I was one of the volunteers on the TCTU board at the time. Our next meeting was contentious. Chapter president Elliott Olson said, “We haven’t lost, until we quit.”

Up until this point we had always been DNR cheerleaders, not overseers. Some longtime board members said we should agree with the DNR, and stop fighting. If we came out publicly against the city’s plan and said the DNR was wrong about the value of Eagle Creek, they worried it would antagonize people and hurt our relationship with the agency. Nonetheless, on a split vote, the majority agreed to keep fighting. We decided it was time for TCTU to start acting like the citizen-led, independent, watch-dog, environmental protection organization that we really were if we wanted to accomplish our mission.

We accepted that the developer’s land on the west branch of Eagle Creek was already platted for houses and that, at best, we could hope to buy more land from



RIGGING UP DURING THE OPENING DAY SNOWSTORM AT EAGLE CREEK IN SCOTT COUNTY



AN EAGLE CREEK BROWN FROM AN ELECTROFISHING SURVEY.

them to widen the protective corridor. The east branch was a different story. It was surrounded by a 160-acre, idled farm, which had been in Katherine McCune's family since they homesteaded in the 1850s. McCune told me that she had turned down repeated offers from developers to buy her land. She also knew the city's development plan showed an industrial/office/business park on her property. "I don't want to sell my land for a business park," she told me on the phone in 1993, "I want to sell my farm for a state park." She had to sell her farm to somebody.

City tax assessments against her land were more than \$100,000. Interest was piling up every year she couldn't pay them off. She was an unfortunate victim of leapfrog development. The city had installed sewer and water services along Highway 13 past her farm to serve urban development popping up farther away. Whether she wanted to develop her farm or not, she now had access to city services, and her land could be rezoned for urban development.

Urban development destroyed trout fisheries in Nine Mile Creek in Bloomington, Purgatory Creek in Eden Prairie, and small streams in Burnsville and Eagan in the decade before.

We decided to draw the line at Eagle Creek. TCTU created a coalition of 14 environmental groups to back a bonding bill at the state capitol that would give the DNR \$5 million to buy land on Eagle Creek for a park.

Republican State Senator Terry Johnston authored the bill. Johnston's district in-

cluded Eagle Creek. We took lawmakers on tours of the area. They were wowed by what they saw. Some DNR employees still fought against the bill, saying it still was a waste of money. If lawmakers wanted to give them money, they wanted to spend it in outstate Minnesota.

In committee hearings, some senators criticized that philosophy, and said the DNR was at fault for not acting sooner to protect threatened natural resources in the metro area, where they would be enjoyed by the most people. Many people never get to travel to the North Shore or southeastern Minnesota.

The Senate approved the \$5 million, led by Gene Merriam and Steve Morse, two senators who each later served as head of the DNR. The city fought hard against the bill in the State House of Representatives, seeing it as a threat to their plan for much-needed tax base. Records show Savage paid \$27,000 for a lobbyist's help.

Eventually a compromise was reached. Lawmakers gave the DNR \$1.5 million in the bonding bill to buy land along Eagle Creek.

However, Savage won too. The legislation said the DNR could buy only a corridor of Katherine McCune's farm, 400' wide along the creek, leaving the rest of her farm available for development.

We hoped the corridor was wide enough to allow rain and snow to soak into the ground, refreshing the dozens of springs that made Eagle Creek cold enough for trout to survive. Urban stormwater also would be routed away from the creek. 25 years later, we know the experiment

worked. Wild brown trout still swim in Eagle Creek.

Not the Only Victory

During our Eagle Creek Adventure (the one in the 1990s, not during the 2018 blizzard), when we dragged the DNR doubters into saving Eagle Creek, we also had empowered trout stream supporters in the agency.

They started the DNR's Metro Trout Streams Initiative. The agency surveyed the few remaining Twin Cities designated trout streams, and created plans to conserve, protect and restore them.

The DNR and city also bought more land to complete the corridor on the main stem of Eagle Creek. The first state Aquatic Management Area (AMA) in the state was established there. Now, AMA's dot Minnesota, protecting large areas of land around high-value waters, including the Vermillion River.

DNR scientists and other staff are highly-dedicated, well-educated, professional people who have made it their life's work to manage and protect Minnesota's natural resources. We can't thank them enough for all they do for us. We are happy we have their expertise to rely on, and happy that many volunteer with us as TCTU members.

One example is Mark Nemeth. He is a DNR trout habitat specialist. He's the one leading our restoration work on Eagle Creek, the Vermillion, Trout Brook, and elsewhere. He's the one who helped gather the hard data that we needed to convince a different faction of the DNR that it was a bad idea to strip protections from the Naas Creek, a trout stream in Burnsville.

The DNR also is a state government agency subject to political pressure at all levels. We can't know what pressures are placed on employees, or how they might act if they think it's what upper management or a powerful special interest might want.

Many DNR employees were happy the agency lost a court battle with TCTU and the Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA) in the 1990s. The court ruled the DNR must protect trout stream tributaries the same as they do trout streams themselves.

More recently, there was a lot of pressure to keep stocking Kamloops rainbow trout in Lake Superior. We applauded the DNR when they finally agreed with us that Kamloops were diminishing the genetic vigor of wild steelhead. Stocking stopped.

Trout Unlimited members serve on state citizen committees, providing public oversight and input on state agency policy and spending.

Make no mistake: The good times far outweigh the few instances where we have had to clash with the DNR to carry out our mission. We always hope the DNR will protect our natural resources without fear or favor.

But the 25th anniversary of a historic vote—our "Independence Day"—is worth celebrating. It set TCTU on its present course.

Many of the original TCTU troublemakers are still supporting the organization. Elliott Olson, J. P. Little, John Hunt, Tony Nelson, John Bathke, Brad Gustafson, others, and I have volunteered, at one time or another, on the statewide coordinating board, called Minnesota Trout Unlimited (MNTU).

The 15 member board includes members from the six chapters, and their presidents. The volunteer board hires and manages our executive director, oversees the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo, provides direction on our statewide activities, and handles other statewide business. Since MNTU receives no funding from TU National, it asks each chapter to contribute a fair share of statewide costs.

Together in recent years, we've restored more than 60 miles of streams. We've reached more than 15,000 students and their families in three years of our education program.

And we've won many political battles:

- Getting new regulations to protect trout streams from silica sand mining damage.
- Getting the state's buffer law enforced, leaving a protective strip of vegetation between plowed fields and streams.
- Stopping a plan that would have let special interests take up to 20% of the water from our streams and lakes, before the DNR could take any action.

We'll continue taking on battles where we see hope. You don't lose, until you quit.

You can watch video of our dedicated volunteers working on Eagle Creek, and video of fishing in the blizzard, on the TCTU YouTube channel. Search for: Twin Cities Trout Unlimited YouTube.

This year is also the 10th anniversary of the TCTU board voting to charter the first Project Healing Waters program in the Twin Cities. Our volunteers help injured veterans recover by teaching them how to tie their own fishing flies, and taking them on fishing outings. If you'd like to volunteer, email the local leader of the group, TCTU board member Rob Noirjean: rob@twincitiestu.org.



A SCENIC SUMMERTIME REACH OF THE MAIN STEM OF EAGLE CREEK



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Tim Hemstad
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REMEMBERING BRIAN SCHUMACHER AND JANET VEIT

A True Minnesota Outdoors Couple

By Mel Hayner

Trount Unlimited, many friends, family and the fly fishing community lost two incredible friends recently. Brian Schumacher and Janet Veit lost their lives while fly fishing in Iceland together on May 20, 2018.

Among his many passions, Brian was a writer, photographer and fly fishing guide who was a member, and on the board, of the Win-Cres Chapter of TU in SE MN. He shared his joy for fly fishing, volunteered and contributed time and money to help improve and preserve the cold-water fisheries of The Driftless area he grew up in. He also worked in the Gunderson Health System in Lacrosse for 25 years as a histologist helping others to battle cancer. He was a friend to all who met him and mentor to many anglers and hunters.

Janet was a TU member, passionate conservationist and animal advocate and lover. She was on track to become the first female fly fishing guide for The Driftless Fly Fishing Co. in Pres-

ton, MN. She taught others and shared her passion for fly fishing at Becoming an Outdoors Woman Fly Fishing classes at Whitewater State Park. Janet mentored other women and was a member of The Fly Fishing Women of Minnesota. Janet was a loved veterinarian at Hillside Animal Hospital in La Crosse, WI and gave loving care to many pets and their owners over her career. They loved their own family of pets including two dogs, Angus and Dora, and two cats, Nigel and Cassie. Their pets have been adopted by loving homes.

These incredible people will always be remembered by those who knew them, and their legacy will be carried forever by those who loved them, along the cold, clear streams of Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Editors Note: Strong supporters of MNTU, both Brian and Janet provided photos to this publication over the last few years, just one among the many ways they worked to benefit the conservation world.



YOU CAN HELP MNTU!

Want to Get Involved? Here are some ideas!

By Dan Callahan

You're talented, right? At something? Or, maybe you want to get better at something, and would appreciate a chance to try your skills in a low-risk situation.

Welcome to Trout Unlimited, your personal-growth playground. The people involved with the six Minnesota chapters are volunteers. That means you can't get fired, and we're excited to have you around.

I wanted to get more experience doing social media. So I volunteered to help with communications in the TCTU chapter. Our communications committee has plenty of seating available, including for writers who'd like to contribute to this newsletter. Or maybe you like to shoot photos and video and tell stories. We'd also love to have web developers and IT gurus and SEO specialists and digital marketers join in.

I would rather die than try to do math. However, we need treasurers and people to help with things like check-in and check-out at fundraisers, filling out our annual report to the TU national organization, and keeping tabs on expenses and reimbursements.

Maybe you sell for a living. We could use your amazing skills, because we need to make our case to donors and foundations and our fellow members. The case may be for fundraising, but it might also be your persuasive skills at convincing a state lawmaker that our position on an issue is the right one.

Do you like to read, or research? We have a committee for that. A lot of development proposals affect trout streams, so it's nice to have someone who adopts a stream from the comfort of their chair.

You could sign up to monitor city council and planning commission meetings in various cities, and check their online agendas and meeting minutes to see if anything affecting the Vermillion River, for example, came up.

We also could use your smarts when it comes to environmental issues, because we need to read environmental reviews and submit comments.

Have skills at Customer Relationship Management software or databases? We have about 2,000 members of TCTU, and we'd like to do a better job of learning about their skills and talents, and

telling them about things we do that they might like to do.

We also want to do a better job of keeping track of our stream restoration volunteers to help them grow into greater leadership roles so we can do more habitat projects. We'd like to do more land-owner outreach and recognition.

We could use your help if you're an event planner. Project manager. Fund-raiser. Lawyer. Marketer. Organization-

al manager. Maybe you do something that we haven't even thought of doing, but you think it would be really valuable to move our mission forward. The best way to get involved is to send an email to your local chapter president or the MNTU executive director. They are listed on page 3.

If all else fails, drop me a line and I'll get you connected to someone: dan@twin-citiestu.org.

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TALES OF A CLASSROOM TROUT

By Benji Kohn

Our Minnesota weather has finally made the change from winter to a very brief spring and into summer. MNTU quickly wrapping up its outdoor education program for the 2017-2018 school year.

This winter, we helped start three different outdoor fishing clubs in St. Paul schools working with the St. Paul Police department's PAL. (Police Activities League) program. This has been a great partnership for teaching high school students about ice fishing and the students have been very helpful in passing their knowledge onto others at additional outdoor education and recreational events. Together we have been able to introduce over 1,100 students and families to this great Minnesota winter pastime.

On March 9th, we held our annual Student Summit involving more than 400 students from across the metro area. Thanks are in order to Inver Hills Community College who, once again, donated the space for us to hold this great event and enabled us to introduce the students to over 30 different professionals in the natural resources and outdoor recreation fields. Late spring was focused on final classroom visits where students learned about groundwater using the DNR's new groundwater model. Students were able to see and understand how groundwater moves and affects all of us throughout Minnesota.



STUDENTS RELEASE TROUT AS PART OF THE TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM COMPONENT OF THE PROGRAM THIS MAY.



A RAINBOW TROUT RAISED IN THE TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM PROGRAM READY FOR RELEASE ON THE VERMILLION RIVER.

Of course, the highlight of this trout-raising education program is the release day! This spring we had nearly 700 students out on release days and we were able to add 2,000 rainbow trout to the Vermillion River in Farmington and 630 browns to Miller Creek outside of Lake City, MN. Beside releasing their beloved trout, students learned about stream monitoring, soil science, groundwater, birds of the riparian zones, pollinators, stream habitat and watersheds. All in all, during the 2017-2018 school year we reached more than 7,000 kids with some aspect of the program, teaching them about local waters, fish and the need to protect watersheds.

MNTU's education program has been funded by an Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund grant, which ends on June 30. We would like to thank all of the teachers who have worked to incorporate this wonderful program into their school curriculum and the hundreds of volunteers who have given so much time, energy, and resources to make this program work. Many thanks are also due to the career professionals that helped out on field days and our annual Summit. Without all of them we would not have been able to accomplish so much and introduce the thousands of MN students to natural resource careers, groundwater, healthy water systems, wetland ecology and fish habitat. Over the past three years we've shared our knowledge and passions with more than 16,000 students and parents. We hope to expand upon this during the next three years of MNTU's program.

THE MINNESOTA TROUT UNLIMITED 2019 FLY FISHING FILM AND VIDEO SHOWCASE

SATURDAY, MARCH 16TH, 2019
HAMLINE UNIVERSITY - ST PAUL, MN
DETAILS AT: WWW.GREATWATERSFLYEXPO.COM

TROLLING THE WEB: THE MINNESOTA SPRING INVENTORY

By Dan Callahan

I try to pass along interesting trout fishing related resources I run across in my incessant search of some place to fish that no one else knows about.

The Deep State of Fishing

One of the most useful online resources you might use when trying to find a cold spot on a hot day is the Minnesota Spring Inventory (MSI). It has a really detailed map of springs and seeps all over the state.

In some cases, geologist extraordinaire Greg Brick has stopped by to verify the springs for the DNR, and has uploaded a picture, as well as his estimate of flow from the spring. He talked to a New Ulm newspaper about springs he had discovered recently, coincidentally on the same property as a DNR office.

As far as helping you find fish on marginal trout streams, I'd note where the springs are, and head to a spot just downstream when the water is getting

warmer than trout prefer. What interests me more is when I see a bunch of springs on a stream that isn't a state-designated trout stream.

I imagine I'm standing on such a stream, catching trout and thinking, "Huh, I guess nobody told the trout this wasn't a trout stream." I've used Google Maps to virtually fly over these streams. Then I've used Google Street View to peer over a bridge crossing, to see how big the water is. Then I might have actually

gone there and caught fish.

I won't let you know.

So if you aren't fishing hard, or are, and need a break, find a cool spring, snap a picture, fill out the description on your phone through the DNR's MSI app, and boom: You are a spring source. You can find the website by searching for "Minnesota Spring Inventory." or type in the link at <https://aregis.dnr.state.mn.us/gis/CitizenSprings/>

INCLUDING MNTU IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING

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

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

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

Bequest Language

The official bequest language for Minnesota Trout Unlimited is:

Unrestricted General Legacy:

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

Specific:

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

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

Gift of Residuary Estate:

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

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

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





MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

Gitche Gumee Chapter

The first phase of our habitat restoration project on upper Chester Creek in Duluth was completed this winter when frozen ground allowed us to work with little impact to the otherwise wet site. The project is located downstream from Arrowhead and Rice Lake Road on a reach which decades ago had been ditched, straightened and directed through two 700 foot long culverts, destroying habitat and creating a passage barrier to native brook trout. We took advantage of frozen ground this winter to re-create a new, meandering channel with lots of in-stream habitat. On May 19 we held a volunteer work day planting cedars and dogwoods. Despite the wind and threat of rain we had an enjoyable morning planting more than 300 native trees and shrubs.

In July we will begin the second phase of construction, which includes removing the culverts, extending the creation of a new meandering channel past Madison Avenue, and restoring trout passage. New habitat and cooler water temperatures will be waiting for native brook trout to re-colonize the half mile long

Senior Fishing Day is an event that Hiawatha Trout Unlimited (HTU) has been involved in for nearly 25 years along with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fisheries Division and the Chester (Chet) Daniels family. Al Bierley, his brother and sometimes other members of his family have been very involved as well. My wife Shelly and I have put on a BBQ for all of the volunteers for the last 6 years. It is an event near to our hearts. Several senior homes will bring staff and residents to Sylvan Park in Lanesboro, MN for a day of fishing. It's a magical moment to see this elderly crowd act like kids again even for half of a day. This event will take place on Thursday, June 14th in the morning. It's a great event to be involved in.

There will be several habitat improvement projects going on this summer as well. Our coordinator Paul Krolak will be working with John Lenczewski (MNTU executive director) and contractors to work on existing projects and start new ones.

This summer we will have construction going on Spring Valley Creek and Rush Creek (between the County 25 bridges). The Spring Valley work is a smaller-scale project designed by Melissa Kon-



FRESHLY PLANTED TREES ALONG CHESTER CREEK IN DULUTH

project this September. Look for more opportunities to help with more planting in early fall and buckthorn removal in October.

Tree planting on our Kadunce River habitat project is scheduled for June 23.

Get on volunteer list for details by emailing jlenczewski@mntu.org

Brent Notbohm

Hiawatha Chapter

This summer will be busy as usual. Between monthly member meetings starting in June, and other events including Senior Fishing Day, there will be a lot of activity.

sti, our MNDNR Stream Restoration Specialist. The Rush work will match up with the latest upstream work from the MNDNR, and older work downstream.

Stream project design and permitting is underway for West Indian Creek (mostly above County 4), Wisel Creek (downstream from Chickentown Creek), Trout Run (off Nichol's Spring Rd), and the South Branch of the Whitewater (from the hatchery up to Lloyds).

For more events and goings-on go to www.hiawathatu.org and the HTU Facebook page. Please "like us" on Facebook to keep updated.

Phil Pankow



SOME OF THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE HEADWATERS CHAPTER AT THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY MEETING THIS SPRING.

Headwaters Chapter

Our 25th Anniversary / Spring Membership meeting was a fun and financial success with 43 members attending. We recognized three of our founding fathers (see photo at right). Note the TU member on the left of photo that is Gail Brooks, 93 years young and he is still fly fishing, chopping wood, singing in the choir and an avid gardener. Obviously TU volunteer work is good for your longevity. Actually, psychologists have been telling us for decades that volunteer work or giving back time and resources has positive mental and physical benefits. Therefore, thank you TU.

May 24th was our 11th Trout in the Classroom release event. Approximately 150 5th graders and a classroom of 4th graders participated in the DNR presentation, aquatic insect identification and enjoyed a warm day outdoors.

June 1st & 2nd: Women's Almost Gourmet Fly Fishing retreat hosted by Bob and Val Wagner in Bemidji.

June 8th & 9th: Pike Hunt (also known as the Great Slime event). Starts Friday evening with tying the pike fly. Saturday will be spent fishing and attending a delicious pike fry dinner with all the trimmings. Special Esox slime wear plus two local brews made just for the Pike Hunt. June 29th & 30th: Bighorn River Women's Fly Fishing Retreat. A collaboration between Headwaters Chapter and Cottonwood Camp in Fort Smith, Montana. Val and Bob's second annual Women's only retreat. If interested, call Cottonwood Camp 406-666-2391 or Val Wagner 218-556-7660. The Bighorn River is literally full of trout!

June-August: River Restoration. There are work opportunities on the Kabekona and Necktie rivers. Call Headwaters Restoration Coordinator, John Sorensen 218-766-4341. We need your help.

Oct 30th: Tuesday Fall Membership meeting at CK Dudley's Barbecue Restaurant in Bemidji. 5-5:30pm happy hour, social, and fish tales. 5:30-7pm order off menu and eat, 7-7:20pm short business meeting, 7:30-8:30pm program (TBA). Bring a friend, relative, or neighbor. It is always a fun, informative and worth-while event.

Bob Wagner

Twin Cities Chapter

Hello Spring, what spring? This beautiful season came and went in the blink of an eye, and now we find ourselves caught up in the warm days of summer! That's not entirely bad, because it finds many of us out fishing our Minnesota waters and enjoying time with friends and family as we appreciate this wonderful sport.

Spring Events

The March Expo was great fun and our TCTU Chapter Board enjoyed meeting so many new faces and connecting with familiar friends at the TU booth. Welcome to all our new chapter members we signed up at the event! Special thanks goes out to our TCTU Board members that worked the event along with MNTU's education program coordinator. We look forward to connecting with many of you this year and seeing you at our several upcoming events.

In April, our chapter hosted a successful fundraiser in Eagan. Over 140 were in attendance. It was a wonderful event because of the dedicated and amazing banquet team, attendees, volunteers and chapter members who helped make it a special night. Margaret LeBien was honored with the Duke Hust Lifetime Achievement Award for her contributions to the world of fly fishing. Over the years, Margaret has taught hundreds of youth and adults how to fish. Her kind heart, amazing talent and passion to enhance the sport, along with her drive to

MNTU CHAPTER NEWS



get more women involved, has been an honor to observe. So, please pass along your congratulations and thanks to Margaret. For those who know her, consider yourself blessed, for she is a true Minnesota treasure and dear friend of TU.

Habitat

As you know, keeping trout streams in good shape requires some elbow grease from time to time. On June 8, our chapter volunteers gathered to help spread seed along the S. Branch of the Vermillion River. On June 16, our chapter plans to clear fallen trees from Hay Creek in Redwing, MN. This is a pretty big job, so please consider coming down to help out in the fun and by all means, bring a friend! Visit our TCTU website for further details.

Education & Outreach

TCTU helped MNTU's Trout in the Classroom program have an epic year, including 679 students from the Twin Cities chapter area who released 1,194 rainbows on the Vermillion! In addition, Stillwater students released 630 brown trout on Miller Creek this spring. A big thanks goes out to all the chapter members that assisted with the various TIC events this past year. It is a true partnership with many organizations, agency staff, volunteers and schools. A big thank you to MNTU and its education program coordinator. Our chapter has been proud to be a part of this unique learning experience and we look forward to working with this program next year.

TCTU kicked off our 2018 Spring/Summer Fly Fishing Excursions with 18 people one evening on the Rush River this spring. A great time was had by all, teaching and catching fish were all part of the fun and the response to this outing was so positive! We plan to hold a few more throughout the summer, so stay tuned and check out our website and Facebook page for further dates and details.

TCTU was invited to take part in the Woodbury Cabela's Go Outdoors Family Event Weekends in May. We assisted with fly casting and shared information about our chapter and its upcoming opportunities for getting involved in the sport this summer.

Chapter Meetings

A huge thanks goes out to Bob Mitchell's Fly shop and Mend Provisions Fly shop for hosting our March & April chapter meetings. We had record attendance this spring and hope to offer fun and educational meetings in a variety of locations to enhance the social-type gatherings. In addition, thanks to Dodge Nature Center for hosting our monthly chapter Board meetings. Look for a calendar of fall meetings on our website this summer.

TCTU Board News

A warm welcome goes out to our newest chapter Board members appointed in early March:

Chris O'Brien has joined the team as our Communications Coordinator. Chris

comes with a great deal of background in this arena and many of you met him at our spring banquet, as he presented on some legislative highlights. Chris is working on our website, emails to our chapter members and our Facebook page. He has also agreed to head up our Strategic Planning Group for the chapter.

We also welcomed Kelly Kallok to our TCTU team. Kelly is an avid angler who has volunteered to head up our Diversity and Inclusion initiative for the chapter. Kelly has been working with several groups locally and nationally to help involve more youth, families and women to the sport.

Lastly, we welcome Chad Dayton to the board. We are excited that Chad will be assisting on our education team. Chad has a wide array of experiences that will be very helpful to our chapter. Chad has developed educational outreach events throughout the country, as well as some amazing opportunities for MN residents to enjoy the great outdoors! We look forward to working with these talented individuals and please welcome them if your paths cross this summer.

At our Chapter Annual Meeting in May, the TCTU Board decided to postpone our annual elections until later in 2018. The reasoning behind this decision was to take a pause to look toward the future. TCTU has changed over the years and our chapter needs have changed as well. Our hope in doing this is to create a community who understands our mission, wants to get new people involved with the sport. Our chapter has done so many extraordinary things over the years and we look to build upon this foundation to open our organization to new talents, ideas and opportunities. Our chapter board is very excited about this new initiative. In the coming month, we are creating a Strategic Planning Committee, a By-laws Committee, and Nominations Committee. If you have thoughts, suggestions or may want to get involved, please contact the following Committee Team Leaders:
Josh Mancell-By-laws Chair- joshmancell@hotmail.com
Chris O'Brien-Strategic Planning Chair- twinstatesfly@gmail.com
Mark Johnson-Nominations Chair- mjohanson@engagestar.com

Finally, a very special thank-you goes out to The Norling Family for their continued support of our chapter over the years for their generous donations of hand-made, one of a kind, bamboo fly rods. The beauty and artistic quality is like no other. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts and appreciate our unique partnership.

TCTU Summer Dates to Put on Your Calendar:

July Summer Fish Camp at Whitewater State Park-July 15-17th

Please contact: Rob Noirjean, TCTU Special Events Coordinator, rpnorjean@comcast.net or Benji Kohn, committee member, benjikohn@hotmail.com

TCTU First Annual Paddle on the St. Croix-Date and Details-TBA
TCTU & Kiap-Tu-Wish TU-Summer Picnic-Date and WI Location-TBA

Here's to an exciting summer filled with adventure, lots of fish, new events, networking opportunities, community building and just some plain old fashioned fun. Hope to see you soon!

Janine Kohn

Win-Cres Chapter

The Win-Cres Chapter has been busy this spring and we look forward to being active during the summer. Two work days were held on Garvin Brook cutting brush and trees to prepare the upper section for habitat improvement (HI) work this summer. The HI work will connect our Phase I project to Farmer's Park. This work will begin when HI work on Cedar Valley Creek is completed. We will have two skyhooks to build and assist in seeding when the work is completed. Outdoor Heritage Fund dollars have funded three projects in the past few years on Garvin. This stream will be a very good example of what cooperation between groups can accomplish. After the work on Garvin is completed, HI work will continue on

Rush Creek.

A former Rushford student (who was introduced to trout fishing by Mike Jeresek) now teaches in Goodhue. Robbie Ebner brought 25 Goodhue High School fishing club students to Rushford for morning classes on spin fishing, fly casting, fly tying and trout life in a stream. Instruction was provided by Win-Cres members. After morning instruction and a picnic lunch, the students spent a few hours in the afternoon with Win-Cres mentors fishing for trout on local streams.

John Weaver, Winona Middle-School teacher, has used fly rods from the MNTU grant that John Lenczewski obtained to introduce students to the use of a fly rod. He works with students who normally would not have an opportunity to fish. Marlene Huston uses some of the fly rods to teach fly casting at several sites in southeastern MN. The fly rods will be used for casting in the park and fishing Lake Winona this summer.

Work days are also being scheduled to once again mow access trails along Rush Creek, Garvin Brook, Hemmingway Creek, and others, using the chapter's brush mower.

Chuck Shepard

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Visit www.tu.org today to sign up.

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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 SPRING-RUN NORTH SHORE STEELHEAD CAUGHT BY JASON SWINGEN. READ THE CHAPTER NEWS FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO HELP RESTORE OUR LAKE SUPERIOR

REELING IT IN
Finding Minnesota Waters

By Sam Troutt

With leaves on the trees and plenty of fishing opportunities available, a lot of you will be hitting the water throughout what Minnesotans like to call the "Road Construction Season." The few months that allow for maintenance of our highways, and along with warm weather, offer a good shot at fishing our trout streams, rivers and lakes around the state. Good luck to all of you that get out there. With over 60 miles of trout streams that TU has improved in just the past 10 years, there is now more habitat-improved water than most people can fish in a summer, or maybe a few summers. The trick is, how to find this water. Well, for those of you in the know and taking the time to read this, you're in luck.

New MNTU Mapping

MNTU has been hard at work creating a new map, available online at www.mntu.org, that highlights all of our recent work around the state. From big trout rivers to tiny trickles through pastures, they're on line, and you can zoom in all the way

until you can see the cows in the pastures in SE MN, and get a good look at some of the water. You can follow links on the map pins back to pages that describe some of the individual projects, what went on, and when it all took place. Note that all habitat improvement is not equal, and some projects, like the flood debris and log jam projects on the Blackhoof River in Carlton County, may have addressed miles of river, but are not "classic" habitat work. Look for improvements, modifications, more photos and more streams to be added as we move forward with website additions in the future. We hope this information helps you expand your trout fishing options.

If you've figured out where you want to head, and you'd like some "in the field" help, remember to check out TroutSpotr, a computer and smartphone web application that provides great access to where publicly fishable land exists throughout the region. 2017.troutspotr.com will take you there, and keep your eyes open for updates as well.

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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