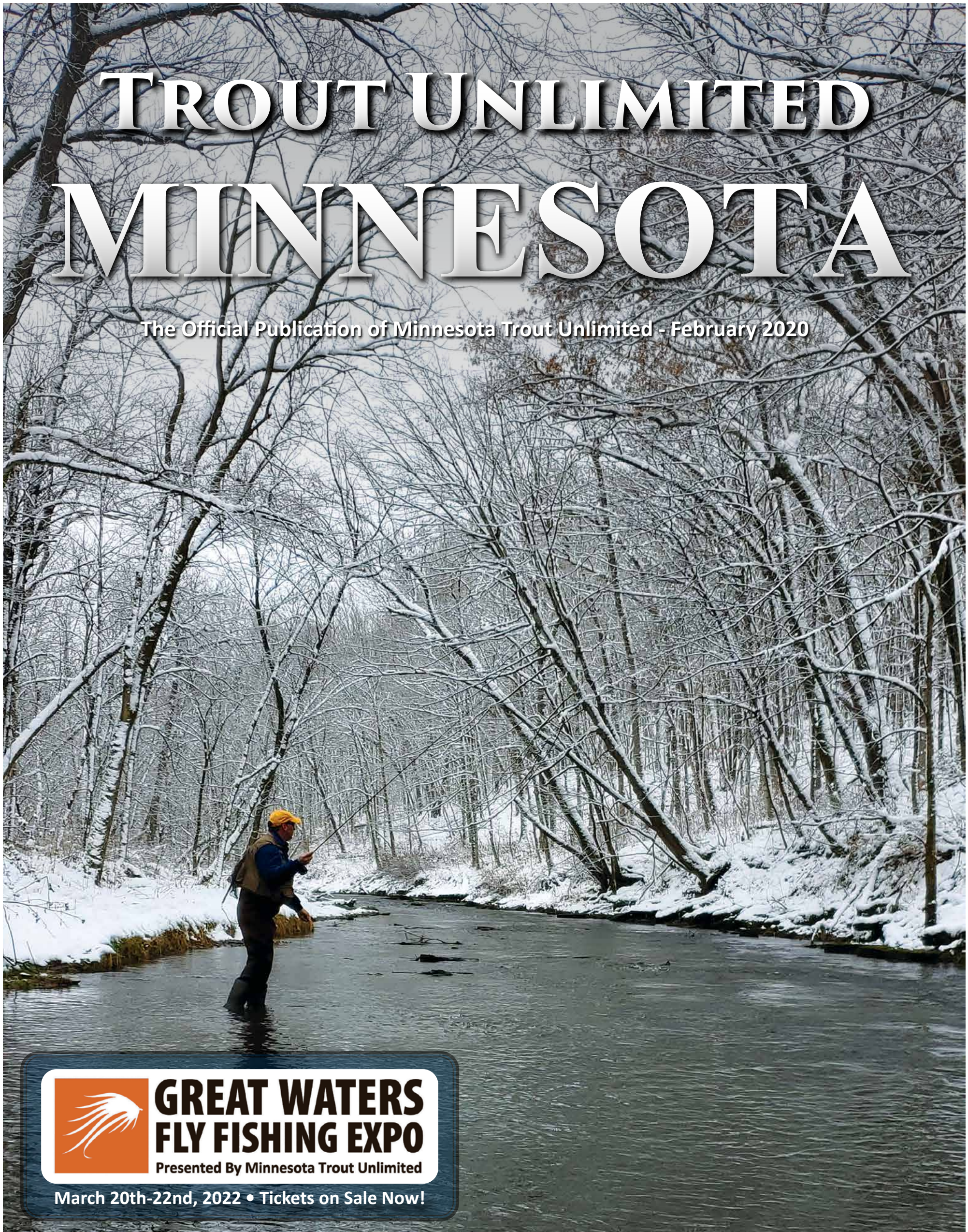


TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - February 2020



**GREAT WATERS
FLY FISHING EXPO**
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Youth Series: Fixing Our Trout Streams

Anglers Afield: French Polynesia

New AMA Timber Harvest Proposals

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ON THE COVER

MNTU Executive Director John Lenczewski fishes Canfield Creek in Forestville State Park during the 2019 “Town and Park Season.” Photo by Carl Haensel.

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- Rainbow Trout
- MNTU Education Update
- Youth Series: How to Fix a Trout Stream
- TU Teens Summit
- Resolution Month

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MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

GARAGE SALE SUCCESS

By Steve Carlton, Minnesota Council of TU Chair

I am writing this with a heavy heart. A few weeks ago, Brenda Callahan, wife of MNTU Board member Dan Callahan, had a sudden heart attack and passed away. Many of you saw Brenda at TCTU events and fundraisers and she always lent a helping hand. Dan and I were to lead the MNTU Trout on Tap Garage Sale on January 25, until Dan needed ankle surgery three days before the event. Brenda stepped up and offered to take Dan’s place. Brenda passed the day before the event. Rest in peace, Brenda. My heart goes out to the Callahan Family.

The fundraising Garage Sale at ABLE was a strong success for the individual vendors and we raised important funds for MNTU and the MNTU Education Program. It was great to see so many of

you show up and support this organization. I like to start thinking about trout fishing in January anyway. I look forward to another TU event at ABLE again next winter.

One of the topics of conversation at the Garage Sale was something that happened earlier in the week. No, not the impeachment trial, but this administration’s gutting of the Clean Water Act. As TU members, we need to contact our legislators and let them know that this is not OK! Please keep an eye on www.tu.org for more details.

On a better note, we have a lot to look forward to in the next few months. The weather has cooperated for good winter fishing so far. I’ve seen a bunch of your posts of successes on our local streams.



We also have the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo coming up in March, MNTU’s Fly Fishing Film Showcase, and other local TU chapter events and meetings. I am looking forward to fly fishing in the lagoons of Cancun in early March and off the tip of Cabo San Lucas in late March for roosterfish and jacks—hopefully a dorado on the fly too!

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TROUT RUN CREEK FLOWS THROUGH A NEW HABITAT PROJECT COMPLETED IN 2019 DOWNSTREAM OF HWY 43 IN WINONA COUNTY. LEARN MORE ABOUT FISHING TROUT RUN AND THIS 5,900-FOOT HABITAT PROJECT IN THE ARTICLE ON PAGE 8.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GROWING OUR IMPACT

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

In the past 10 years, Minnesota Trout Unlimited has dramatically increased its watershed protection and restoration work around the state. We have increased our advocacy work, undertaken more than 80 habitat projects, created and expanded a youth education program, launched this amazing newsletter, taken over and grown the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo, added a mentoring program and much more.

We have done all this with a single “staff” person and an army of dedicated volunteers. However, our program successes have been stretching our capacity to continue do all these things well, even while the threats to coldwater resources are growing. Just the impacts of our already warming climate--loss of water storage in northern forests due to mid-winter snowmelt, increasing tree pests and diseases, and increasing frequency and severity of rainfall and flooding statewide--will require that we redouble

our efforts. To meet the challenge and increase our effectiveness we need more tools and resources.

Last fall the MNTU Board began the process of planning steps to increase our capacity to more effectively advocate, communicate, and educate. This newsletter is a stellar communication vehicle, but we need more regular and varied communications. We are examining the best options for increasing our communications capacity and developing a fundraising plan to ensure financial self-sustainability of MNTU’s robust programs.

A community of dedicated volunteers, both members and nonmembers, will always provide the horsepower for our conservation work. But adding capacity now is essential to help this community share more information, organize more opportunities to volunteer with habitat and youth education events, and build



a stronger, more diverse community of active conservationists. Undoubtedly some of you have expertise in helping nonprofits increase their capacity and impact. Please consider sharing some of your expertise with us.

A heartfelt “thank you” to the hundreds of volunteers who do the numerous little and large things that collectively protect, restore and sustain our treasured fisheries and nurture the next generation of conservationists.



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THE SNOW DID NOT SLOW DOWN THESE YOUNG ANGLERS DURING THEIR FIRST TROUT CLUB CASTING LESSON. PARTICIPANTS ARE PREPARING FOR FISHING TRIPS AS A GROUP THIS SPRING. PHOTO BY HERDER PHOTOGRAPHY.

EDITOR’S ANGLE

FIGHTING TO PRESERVE MINNESOTA’S COLDWATER RESOURCES

By Jade Thomason, Editor

In the past few years, the political and environmental battles have grown at an alarming and relentless rate. It is easy to become complacent with the battery of bad news to be consumed. Minnesota Trout Unlimited works tirelessly behind the scenes to protect our coldwater natural resources around the state and is a steady voice in these challenging times. Learn about some of these ongoing efforts in Executive Director John Lenczewski’s article on WMA and AMA timber harvest issues. It is imperative that lands purchased with angling and hunting dollars or lands purchased for recreation and habitat be managed with those uses at the top of the priority list. Take the time not only to explore the issue, but to voice your concerns.

Another key environmental concern that threatens our coldwater resources in Minnesota is the proposed Twin Metals mine. The area under consideration for mining is located at the edge of the

Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and any pollution produced would drain directly into these protected lands. The path of pollution would flow through the pristine, preserved waters, through some of the most cherished fisheries in the state. To combat this dire threat, US Representative Betty McCollum has introduced H.R. 5598, the Boundary Waters Wilderness Protection and Pollution Prevention Act. This bill proposes to remove federal lands draining into the BWCAW from the potential of sulfide mining. MNTU has formally signed on in support of this commonsense bill. Contacting your US representative is an easily actionable step to take to protect the most visited wilderness in the country.

Living on the North Shore, the BWCAW is in my figurative backyard. But the problem is that there is a threat such as this in nearly everyone’s backyard. I encourage all Minnesotans to exercise



our rights as public land owners and step up this season. Make a few calls, write a letter, and volunteer your time in any way you can for the issues that matter most to you. We are always looking for new writers for this publication, and producing an article about an environmental concern could be a good way to get started.

RAINBOW TROUT

AN EXCERPT FROM A MARK OF PERMANENCE

By Justin Watkins

Around camp Bass and his partners had established themselves as sticks and they were treated accordingly by the guides. No one talked to them about gear or technique or how to fish the rivers or how to fight salmon or rainbows or char. Mostly the guides just defined the general approach for each day and then navigated to the good water. On this morning though, one of the guides asked Bass for his reel. Bass gave it over and the guide set the drag with great attention and iterative test strippings. “Now don’t touch it,” he warned as Bass screwed the reel tight to the rod. The guide went further and told the anglers that they should do just as he would indicate. When fighting fish, the rod tip should be kept up high at all times. Bass and Cloutier nodded through this series of preparations and headed for the dock.

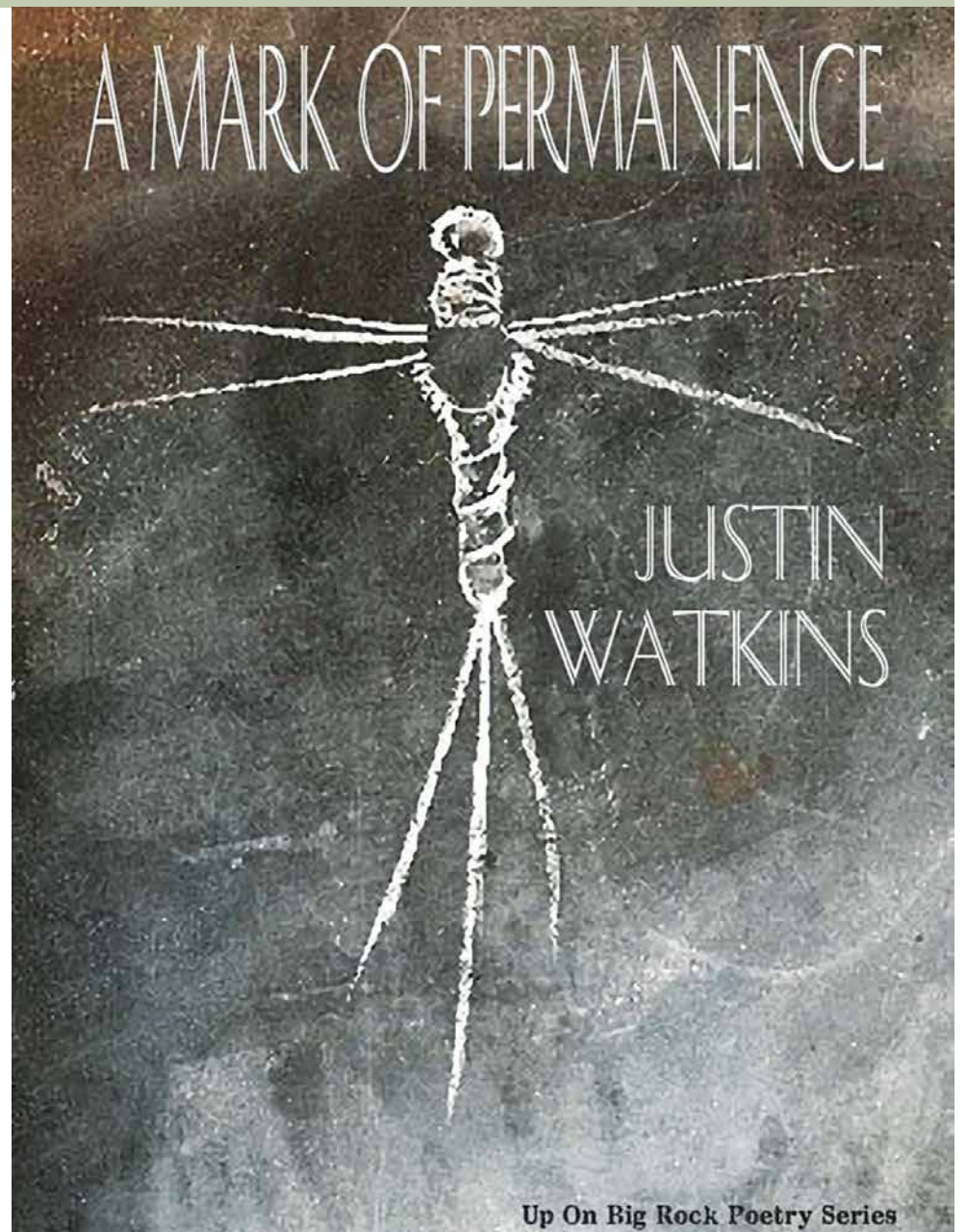
There were a handful of fly patterns around the boat but they used only one: a flesh colored rabbit strip with the hook set well back toward the tail. The approach was to haul line and make big casts at approximately 45-degree angles to the boat, then swing the fly down with the current. The guide kept to the oars and studied very carefully all of their actions. He watched the rod tips for any indication of a strike.

Bass usually had the look of a silent killer. He had even been so-named by some of the guides. When he felt the first fish strike, he kept his cool as if he had expected it all along. The guide had been watching the rod tip and the line. He yelled at Bass to set the hook even as the angler came clear with a tight line and a bowed rod. Bass instinctively reached to palm the reel but the guide yelled very sharply at him, “Don’t touch the reel.” The drag had been set to do the work and the whole business of current and fragile mouths, strong fish and pointed runs meant that the task of optimizing resistance during the fight should be left to the reel.

The fight did not last long. The fish leapt clear of the water. When the anglers exclaimed at the sight, the guide turned in his seat to see for himself. The rainbow appeared as a giant bright football rising from the river. It seemed to peak at no less than six feet above the water. The trout reflected the sun, shining chrome, its great head shaking. Wide, long and very heavy, it fell back to the river in a spectacle, leaving the line slack. The men discussed possible errors or misplays but all agreed Bass had made none. The guide confirmed that the fish was probably the Lone Pine Bow: a trout well-known around camp. Sometimes fish beat you. They can beat fisherman with long histories on rivers and streams and waters of the world. That the fish should win sometimes was just. This was not something the anglers said to comfort one another. It was truth to them. Without that truth the entire affair, and thus their lives and relationships, would be greatly reduced.

Bass hooked the next fish in a similar manner with the guide scolding him to keep the rod tip up. It was more of a reminder than a correction. Bass was very focused and the rod tip was high. Within seconds, the fly line was gone and backing burned off the reel. The boat was near a falls, the roaring edge of their immediate world. The current in the slick felt very heavy. The outlook was not good. Bass said as much, studying the line going out and away from the boat. “There’s so much line out,” he muttered. Bass had fought many big fish of various species but he’d never had a trout take his fly line and half of his backing. “It looks like he’s headed for the falls,” he said, and indeed the fish carried on downstream. The line seemed to go into the water at the top of the falls. Bass lost heart at this development. He was sure the fish was gone: No chance now. “Don’t worry,” the guide reassured him, “That fish doesn’t want to be caught up in those falls any more than we do.”

After some time the rainbow began

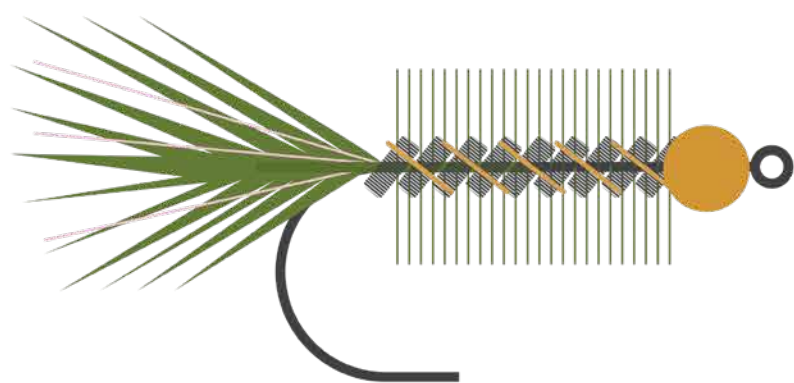


swimming back upstream. Bass didn’t know if it was because of the pressure of the heavy bowing line pulling on the lodged hook or the distress of holding in the rapids at the head of the falls. Maybe the combined forces were too much. Bass took in line as he was able and soon he had his fly line back. He had come out of it okay. He was starting to think he would land the fish.

During the course of the fight the guide maneuvered the boat to shore where Bass, standing firm in calf-deep water, brought the fish to hand. The trout’s back was gray-green, the bottom half of its body white, run through by a swath

of pink that intensified toward the tail. It was uniformly flecked with black, the tail nearly covered in spots aligned along the fin rays. Its eyes showed golden rings inset with large black pupils. A beauty inimitable. When Bass released the trout the anglers stood in admiration. Cloutier remarked on the width of its shoulders. “It’s not the Lone Pine Bow but it’s a good one,” said the guide. Let’s go hook another.

Editor’s Note: Buy Justin Watkin’s book on Amazon, or from Shipwreckt Books Publishing Company. Justin has donated a copy to Hiawatha TU, keep an eye out for it at future chapter fundraisers.



GREAT WATERS FLY TYING CONTEST

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SATURDAY 3/21 3:45-5:30PM
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Advanced sign up required

- 4 rounds, 4 people per round
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- 10 minute timed rounds
- Judging based on creativity, fishability, and use of mystery materials

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FLY TYING

WITH LAUGHING TROUT FLY FISHING

By Paul Johnson



The BWO Special

If you have followed any of my previous articles here in *Trout Unlimited Minnesota*, you may have read that this pattern or that pattern was one of my favorite flies. Of course, I only put my favorite flies in my articles, but that is beside the point.

For the record, the BWO Special is my number one favorite fly. Others do come close, but this is my number one.

Early spring through late fall, this fly will work. Quite often, it works best when the weather is not that nice. Think cold, damp and dreary days. I tie this pattern mostly on a size 18 hook, but also on a size 20 as well.

Tie some up and give them a try this spring.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Paul Johnson

Laughing Trout Fly Fishing
Paulwaconia@gmail.com
952-334-4688

Materials List

Hook:	Dry Fly Hook Size 18-20
Thread:	UTC Ultra 70 - Olive
Shuck:	Mayfly Brown Zelon
Abdomen:	Tying Thread or BWO Superfine Dubbing
Wing:	Deer Hair, Elk Hair or CDC Feathers (Dun)
Collar:	Dun Rooster Hackle



Step 1.
Start your tying thread at the 2/3 mark and lay a base of thread back to the bend of the hook.



Step 2.
Tie in a length of Zelon at the bend of the hook and tie down on top of the hook shank. Trim the tail end of the Zelon to a length similar to the gap of the hook.



Step 3.
Spin your bobbin counter-clockwise to uncord (flatten) your tying thread. Form a tapered thread body. On a size 18 hook you can use dubbing to form the abdomen.



Step 4.
Clean and stack a small clump of fine deer hair. Tie the deer hair in on top of the hook at the 2/3 mark. Start by making two loose wraps, then pull tight. Make six or seven additional wraps to secure the deer hair.



Step 5.
Lift the butt ends of the deer hair and clip off excess, leaving just a short stub of the butt ends.



Step 6.
Advance your tying in front of the clump of deer hair. With your tying thread, form a dam in front of the deer hair to get the hair to stand up.



Step 7.
Return your thread to the back of the deer hair clump. Prepare a rooster hackle feather by closely trimming the barbs off the stem (1/4" or so). Tie in the feather at the point where you originally tied in the deer hair.



Step 8.
Advance your thread to the front of the deer hair clump. Palmer the hackle with two turns at the back of the deer hair and one turn in front. Secure the hackle with your thread. Clip the excess. Whip finish or half-hitch to tie off your thread.



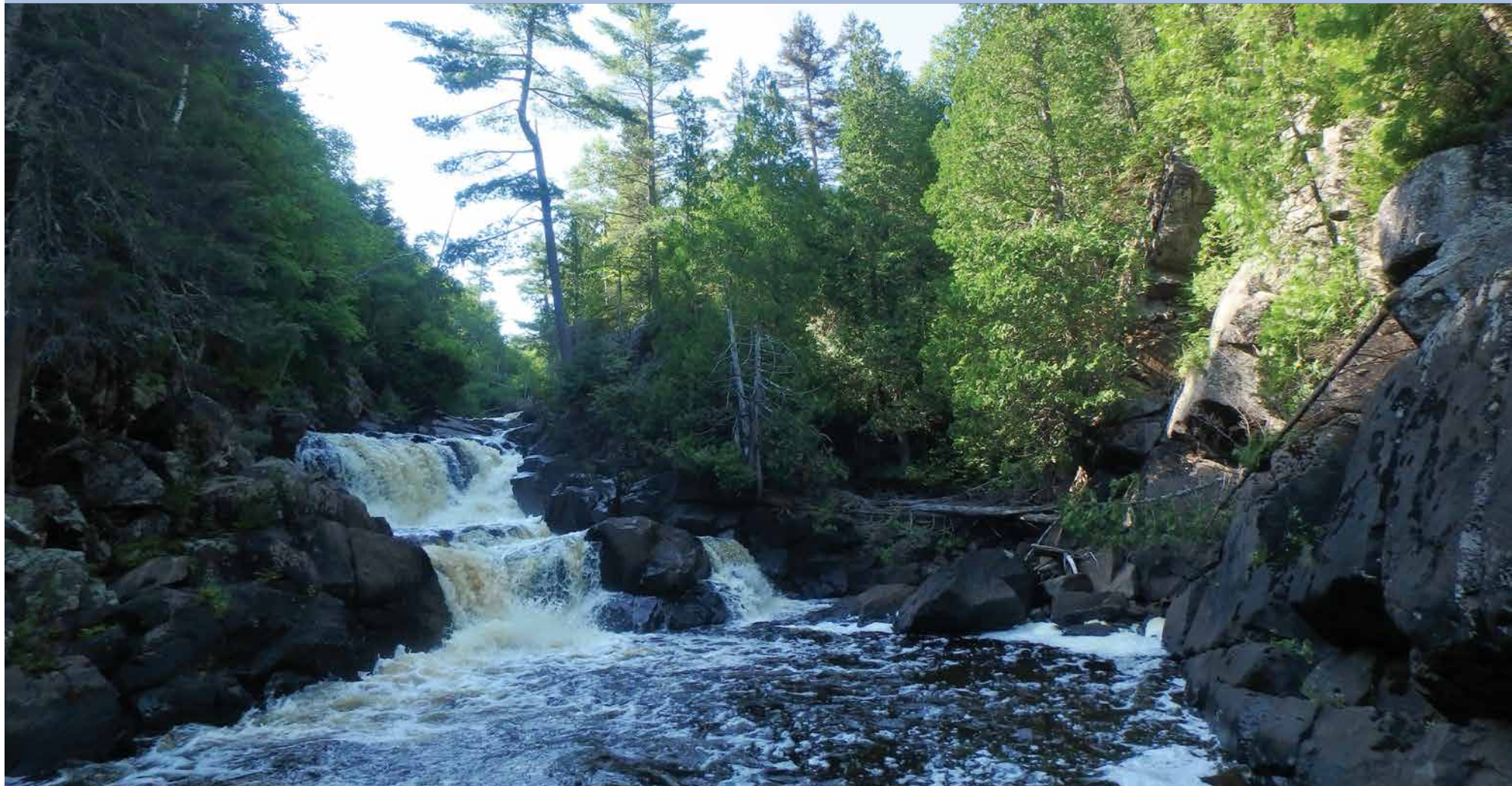
HABITAT HELPERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to assist with maintenance inspections of completed projects, as well as numerous hands-on tasks on 2020 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 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.

TIMBER HARVEST ON AQUATIC MANAGEMENT LANDS

DNR TO CUT 90% OF AMAS ON NORTH SHORE

By John Lenczewski



A FALLS ON THE MANITOU RIVER NEAR FINLAND. PROPOSED CUTTING WOULD IMPACT THIS WATERSHED AS WELL AS MANY OTHER TREASURED NORTH SHORE RIVERS.

Under the DNR’s proposed “Sustainable Timber Harvest Analysis” plan, the DNR intends to harvest trees from 90% of the land the Fisheries Section owns along trout and steelhead rivers in Lake County. This includes riparian forests along premier rivers such as the Split Rock, Beaver, Baptism and Manitou. By state law, these Aquatic Management Areas (AMAs) can and should only be managed for the purpose of protecting trout and steelhead fisheries, habitat and water quality. How is it that this overzealous cutting of Fisheries lands is even being considered? What can you do to stop this bad idea in its tracks?

How We Got Here: the Sustainable Timber Harvest Analysis

The Minnesota DNR manages approximately 5.4 million acres of land statewide. This includes large amounts of non-forested land (31%), “non-manageable” forested land (12%), and forested lands with trees the DNR considers not “merchantable.” The remaining 2.75 million acres of DNR lands (50% of the total) is managed by DNR largely for timber production, although this total also includes land managed by the DNR’s Wildlife and Fisheries Sections. The DNR develops forest management plans approximately every 10 years. For the past 15 years, the DNR’s “sustainable harvest” target has been 800,000 cords annually. While the history is a little murky, it appears that in 2016 members of the forest products industry opined that these harvest levels were too low and that one million cords should be cut annually.

In November 2016, Governor Mark Dayton directed the DNR to conduct an analysis to determine whether harvesting one million cords of timber per year from DNR forest lands is sustainable and, if it is not, to identify an alternate sustainable harvest number. The DNR was directed to use an independent third party to conduct this analysis and identify the sustainable timber harvest level by March 1, 2018.

est management consulting firm based in Portland, Oregon, Mason, Bruce & Girard, to perform this analysis. This is called the “Sustainable Timber Harvest Analysis” and is referred to by the acronym “STHA.” In addition to reviewing wood and fiber supply, the analysis considered biodiversity, wildlife habitat, water quality, tree productivity and invasive species. The analysis used lots of data, created a statistical model and performed in-depth modeling. Stakeholders representing timber, conservation, environmental, and public landowner interests provided input, but the process was primarily driven by DNR staff.

The STHA was released in February 2018. The lengthy report and explanation of the model can easily be found on the DNR website by searching “sustainable timber harvest.” The study concluded that while an annual harvest of 880,000 to 910,000 cords might be possible in the short term, the sustainable harvest level, which gives greater consideration of wildlife values, is 600,000 to 800,000 cords per year. In March 2018 the DNR set a new 10-year timber target of 870,000 cords offered for sale annually from DNR-managed forest lands.

Improper Inclusion of AMAs in Harvest Pool

In addition to numerous trout stream easements, the Fisheries Section owns outright many sensitive parcels of land surrounding some of Minnesota’s best trout and steelhead rivers. These parcels are designated “Aquatic Management Areas” under state statute, and management, including tree cutting, may only be performed for the purpose of protecting fisheries, fisheries habitat, water quality and intrinsic biological values. For reasons that are not clear, but which appear to be vestiges of a hand-shake political deal more than a decade ago, the DNR included all 8,017 acres of AMAs in Lake County in the STHA. And although Lake County AMAs account for 0.3% of the 2.75 million acre harvest pool statewide, somehow the DNR model has decided that 7,260 of these 8,017 acres will be harvested over the next 10 years! This is 90% of the AMAs along popular Lake County trout and steelhead rivers.

Changing Forest Conditions Require Active Management

It is important to point out that sometimes northern forests need tree harvest and planting to produce conditions most favorable for long term health of coldwater fisheries. In the northern two-thirds of the state, trout and steelhead fisheries are products of the forests in their watersheds. How well the forests within a given watershed have been managed in the past and how well they are managed in the future determine to what degree the coldwater fisheries in streams flowing through them will be productive, or whether the fisheries will vanish entirely. A healthy forest is essentially a sponge, which holds precipitation, both snowmelt and rainfall, and slowly releases it over time. A healthy forest reduces destructive peak flows and increases base flows, especially in warm summer months.

Fisheries biologists and foresters know that trout and steelhead fisheries benefit most from older forests with long-lived species capable of providing greater water storage, mature canopy, a supply of future large wood (as old trees fall into the floodplain), and riparian tree species not attractive to beavers. However, given the hodgepodge of past activities, tree diseases and pests, many forest stands lack these conditions and cannot reach or maintain these desirable conditions without tree harvest and tree planting. MNTU recognizes that northern Minnesota’s forests, including in AMAs, often need active management in order to achieve a healthy, mature forest that will store water and slowly release it into trout streams. Need for active management is increasing given the warming climate and the waves of tree pests and diseases it will bring. Indeed, without intervention, many forests will degenerate into brushland.

For these reasons MNTU is not opposed to tree harvest. Far from it. We are working with land managers along the North Shore to increase tree harvest in many areas in order to convert the forests back to long-lived species capable of providing greater water storage and canopy. Foresters, land managers and loggers are our partners. We look forward to increasing our involvement in tree harvest and tree planting activities. How-

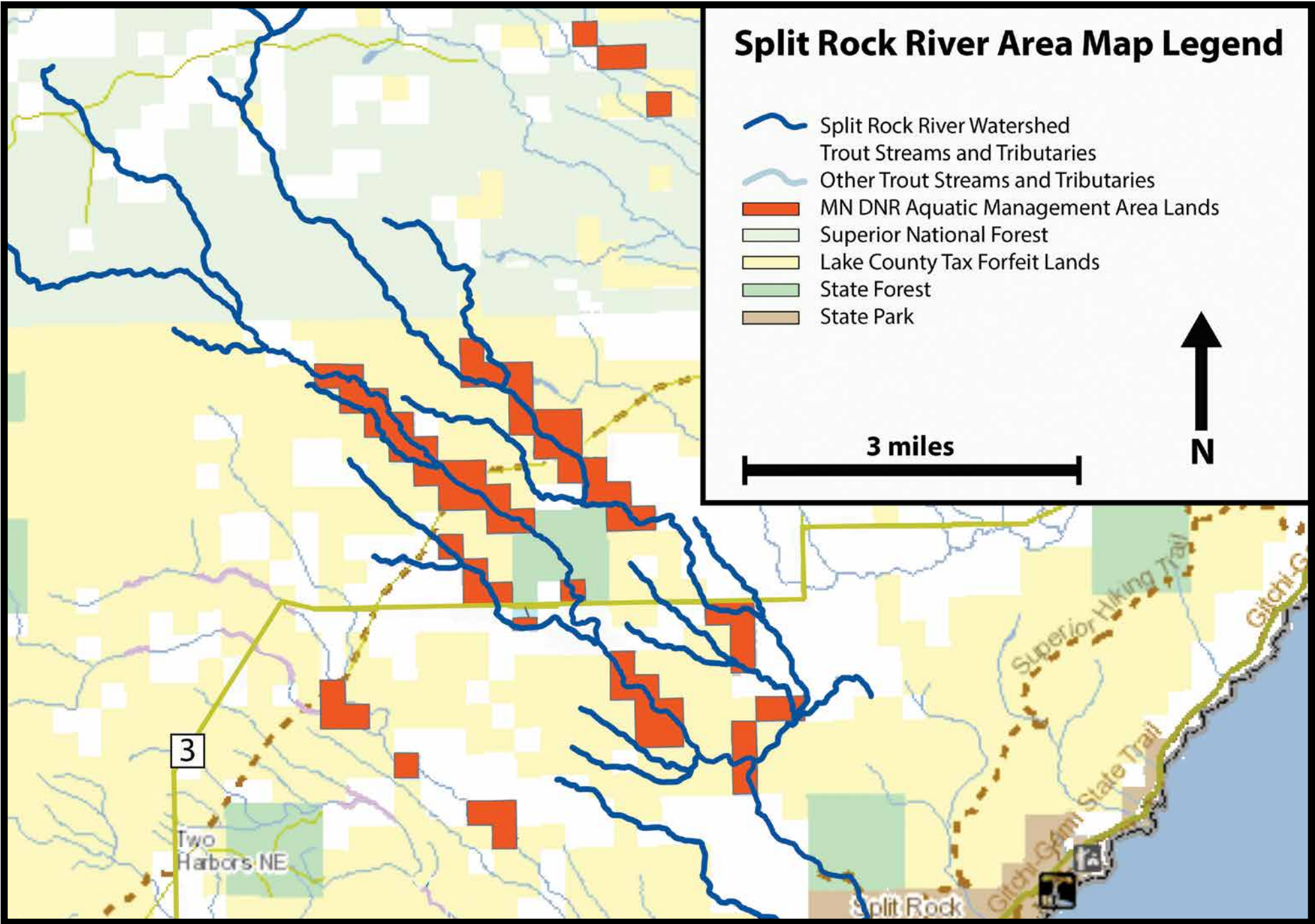
ever, flaws in the DNR’s Sustainable Timber Harvest Analysis, described in the preceding section, will impose wood harvest targets on sensitive Fisheries lands that are too high. Unless corrected, these timber volume quotas will replace fisheries management goals and will lead to excessive or premature tree harvest to the detriment of prized trout and steelhead fisheries.

Inclusion of AMAs Violates Law and Betrays Anglers

As noted above, the Fisheries Section owns many lands along important trout streams and lakes for the purpose of protecting and managing the land for fish. These lands, designated as “aquatic management areas” (AMAs) under Minnesota Statute 86A.05, Subdivision 14, are subject to limitations on how they can be managed:

"Aquatic management areas. (a) Aquatic management areas may be established to protect, develop, and manage lakes, rivers, streams, and adjacent wetlands and lands that are critical for fish and other aquatic life, for water quality, and for their intrinsic biological value, public fishing, or other compatible outdoor recreational uses... (d) Aquatic management areas must be administered by the commissioner of natural resources in a manner consistent with the purposes of this subdivision to perpetuate and, if necessary, reestablish high quality aquatic habitat for production of fish, wildlife, and other aquatic species. Public fishing and other uses shall be consistent with the limitations of the resource, including the need to preserve adequate populations and prevent long-term habitat injury or excessive fish population reduction or increase."

We have no objection to tree harvest being undertaken on AMAs, but only if it is being done for the purpose of improving the fishery. In such cases, the management for fisheries purposes has a side benefit for the timber industry. However, by including AMA lands in the pool of lands subject to harvest, the DNR has impermissibly made fisheries protection subservient to purposes not allowed by state law (such as timber production) even where timber harvest on the AMAs may be harmful to the fishery. Timber production is not one of the allowable



A MAP SHOWING THE LARGE AMOUNT OF THE SPLIT ROCK RIVER WATERSHED UNDER THREAT FROM NEW LOGGING PROPOSALS.

purposes of Minnesota Statute 86A.05, Subdivision 14, and including AMA lands in the pool of lands for timber harvest is a violation of state law.

90% of AMA Lands on Trout and Steelhead Rivers Will be Harvested

The 10-year timber harvest pool generated by the STHA model reveals it has fundamental flaws. When MNTU raised concerns about the STHA and its inclusion of AMAs in the potential harvest pool, DNR managers pointed out that AMAs account for just 0.3% of the harvest pool statewide, and 1.3% of the harvest pool in the North Shore forest planning area. But this theoretical 1.3 % of the harvest pool in the North Shore forest planning area amounts to 7,260 acres of the 8,017 acres of Lake County AMAs, which is 90% of the AMA parcels along premier trout and steelhead rivers in Lake County, including the Split Rock, Beaver, Baptism and Manitou.

The map above provides a graphic example of the alarming cut list being generated by the DNR model. Notice how in the past the DNR Fisheries Section had the foresight to protect the land surrounding long sections of the Split Rock River. The Fisheries-owned lands which other parts of the agency insist be offered for harvest in the next 10 years are shown in red. Can harvesting all these parcels within such a short timespan be anything but disastrous for these streams and fisheries?

Dispute Resolution Process Lacks Any Criteria

The DNR has suggested that the area fisheries supervisor can prevent this misguided harvest of AMAs through the DNR’s “dispute resolution process,” titled “Interdisciplinary Forest Management Coordination Framework.” This policy describes a process of discussion up the DNR chain of command from area level to the commissioner’s office, but offers no criteria or standards by which agency officials will weigh the competing positions. It seems to invite polit-

ically-based decision making, rather than science-based decision making.

Sacrifice of Other AMA Land Required to Protect Targeted One

Even if an area fisheries supervisor succeeds in convincing his or her counterpart in the Forestry Division that a particular AMA in the harvest pool should not be cut, internal DNR policies nonetheless require that another AMA parcel in the area be substituted in. This is outrageous. If the best outcome for the fisheries is to not harvest the trees on a targeted AMA, the manager and trout and steelhead anglers should not be penalized. In the case of Lake County AMAs, no matter how compelling the reasons are not to cut stands, nor even the agreement of local foresters, 7,260 acres or 90% of Lake County AMAs will be cut over in the next 10 years. This policy of mandatory substitution and sacrifice must stop.

Refusal to Plant Trees Guarantees Conversion to Brushland

Currently the Forestry Division can offer up AMAs for timber harvest auction over the

reasonable objections of Fisheries Section managers. It even charges the Fisheries Section for time spent preparing timber sales on AMAs which the Fisheries manager believes will harm fisheries. This is bad enough. But what is worse is that the Forestry Division refuses to follow best management practices and plant long-lived tree species needed to produce the healthy older forests desirable for fisheries protection. Instead of active intervention to prevent degeneration to brushland, AMAs are receiving unwanted and untimely harvests with no plantings. This all but guarantees a slow conversion to brush rather than mature forest. This problem preceded the STHA, but accelerated harvest under the STHA quotas will exacerbate the problem. No timber harvest should occur on AMAs unless adequate funding is available and earmarked to immediately plant the parcel with long-lived tree species capable of producing a mature forest resilient to climate change and tree pests.

What’s Next?

Earlier this month, MNTU brought these concerns to the attention of top management

within the DNR. We expressed our belief that: (1) AMAs should be managed for fisheries purposes only, with timber production only an incidental side benefit, (2) AMAs should not be included in the STHA or harvest pool generated by it, (3) the DNR should eliminate from forest management planning processes the requirement that another AMA must be substituted in order for an AMA to be removed from the harvest pool, and (4) no AMA in the northern forested region should be harvested unless funding is available and earmarked for concurrent tree planting pursuant to a plan designed to achieve and maintain healthy, mature forest conditions which maximum coldwater fisheries outcomes.

At the time this newsletter goes to press, the DNR has not released the final 10-year stand list, nor have we heard how or whether the DNR would be addressing our concerns. The point person representing the interests of anglers and hunters in intra-agency negotiations and implementation of the STHA is Dave Olfelt, Director of the Division of Fish and Wildlife. He can be reached at: dave.olfelt@state.mn.us



A WILD NORTH SHORE STEELHEAD, A PRODUCT OF THE FOREST.

FISHING OUR HABITAT IMPROVEMENT

TROUT RUN CREEK

By Carl Haensel



BOB TREVIS FISHES TROUT RUN BELOW THE SLAB BRIDGE IN AN OLDER SECTION OF HABITAT IMPROVEMENT. PHOTO BY GAYLE FLEMING.

Few trout streams in southeast Minnesota are as storied and have received so much attention as Trout Run Creek. Rising in springs east of Chatfield and south of Interstate 90, Trout Run flows slowly south until it meets the North Branch of the Root River. In the 13 miles of its course, it passes many anglers' favorite locations. The classic book, *Wisconsin and Minnesota Trout Streams* used a photo of the historic round barn that formerly sat along the river on Nichols Spring Drive on the cover of its first edition. Anglers from further afield visit, as it has been featured in many other publications, and is listed as one of the top 100 trout streams in Trout Unlimited National's book. All of this notoriety is due to quality fishing for brown trout that number in the thousands per mile. With excellent cold water and strong natural reproduction, the stream has been able to provide a fishery that stands out among the thousands of miles of trout water in the region.

Habitat Improvement Success

With more than a dozen projects in multiple locations over the last few decades on Trout Run, there are plenty of success stories to tell and locations to fish. One of my personal favorites is the reach that is located just downstream of the village of Troy, where Minnesota Highway 74 and County Rd 6 meet. This section was improved with funding secured in 2010 by Minnesota Trout Unlimited in cooperation with the Prigge family and others. Plenty of bank work highlights the reach, with excellent undercuts, beautiful plunge pools and willing trout holding in the depths. The reach provides easy casting and fishing due to the success of managed grazing. Adaptive farming practices rotate cattle into the stream corridor to take advantage of the long, luscious grass, and then move them out before they damage the stream banks. According to the landowner, not only has the practice

allowed the stream to flourish, but it has also allowed the land to support a greater number of cattle as well.

A new reach of habitat work was completed by MNTU in 2019 on Trout Run that promises to provide excellent fishing in the coming years. Over a mile of the stream below the Hwy 43 bridge has been transformed and should offer good casting and fishing throughout. The project starts below the first pasture downstream of the bridge, so put on your walking boots and start exploring this next season.

Older habitat downstream of the Slab Bridge on Hardwood Road is a classic reach of Trout Run to visit. Hard work and fundraising by the members of Hiawatha TU over the years are responsible for plenty of habitat projects in the Minnesota Driftless, and this spot is a fine one to visit. More than ten years old, it still provides pleasant and easy access to good fishing. Walk along the banks there on a humid May evening to take advantage of the good hatches that can proliferate in this reach. I like to tie on an Elk Hair Caddis dry, trailed by an emerger pattern to catch opportunistic fish that are aggressive and will chase emerging insects at dusk.

Further downstream on Trout Run, I love walking the reach upstream from Hot Iron Drive where sinuous curves meander through the deep valley. The reach fishes well in the spring, when vegetation is low. It also can be excellent in the fall, when large browns can make their way upstream from the North Branch of the Root River. Try throwing big streamers in this long reach of habitat work to see what trout might be lurking in the lower end of the stream. Most don't end up making their way past the Bucksnot Dam, located just upstream of the bridge on Highway 30 in a small park. Stop by after a high water event on

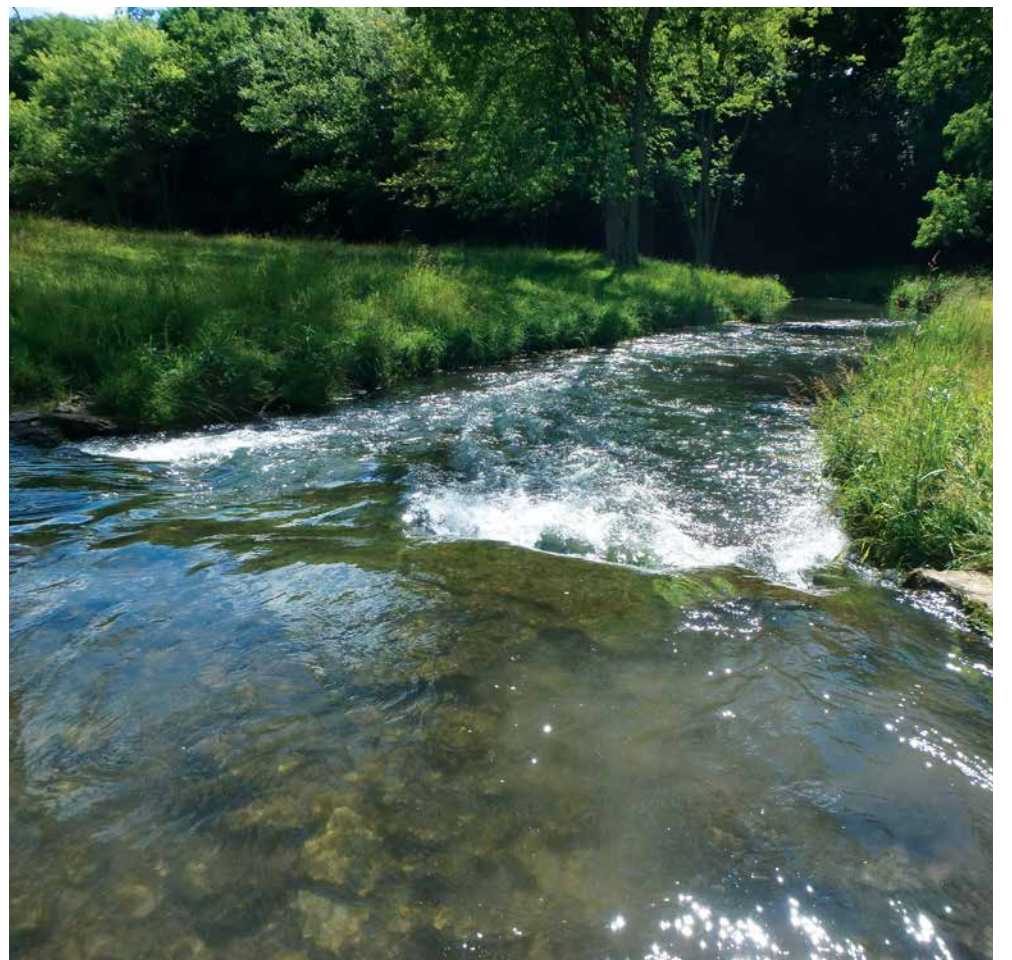
the stream and you might just see some trout trying to make their way upstream.

All of the habitat work that has been accomplished on Trout Run has been made possible by the many miles of fishing easements available on the stream. As you can see on the map, the majority of the stream from Saratoga downstream is accessible in perpetuity by fishing easements. Many of these have some variety of habitat work that has been done by Minnesota Trout Unlimited, Hiawatha Trout Unlimited, and the Minnesota DNR. Note that fishing easements are for fishing only. They don't allow camping, campfires, or even bringing your dog along. Most are marked by small tan signs installed by the Minnesota DNR. Signs occasionally vanish, so re-

fer to maps if you're in doubt. Please respect private property when you're fishing on Trout Run. You'll find few sections posted against trespass, please respect the wishes of these landowners as well.

Nymphing on Trout Run

Plenty of classic habitat work on Trout Run makes for excellent nymphing opportunities on the stream. I like to get my flies deep in the stream, dredging the holes for large trout that are not willing to leave the protection of overhead cover to take a fly. Make sure to run your nymph drifts tight to the bank in areas with this type of habitat work. Cover extends feet underneath the margins of the stream, and this is often where the largest fish hold. I like to use a two fly



TROUT RUN FLOWS THROUGH A ROCK VEIN IN THE IMPROVED REACH OF THE STREAM JUST SOUTH OF HWY 74.

rig, with the first nymph a beadhead, followed by a trailing nymph of a smaller, more natural pattern. In the early spring, tie on a size 12 Beadhead Hare's Ear, or a Pink Squirrel if you're inspired. A Soft Hackle Olive or a Pheasant Tail in size 16 are good options to use as trailing patterns. I regularly use 5x tippet to tie on the lead fly, and then tie an 18-inch length of 6x tippet to attach the trailing fly. Personally, I'm a fan of fluorocarbon tippet, especially if the water is clear. Place a split shot ten to 12 inches above the lead fly and vary the weight based on how deep the water is. You'll also need to vary the distance between the first fly and your strike indicator. Achieving this balance can be challenging, but you'll want to make sure you're getting deep enough in the stream to touch bottom occasionally, without breaking off too many times or losing too many flies.

Later on in the season as hatches fade and summer takes hold, you can have better nymphing success by shifting to smaller patterns. I regularly like to fish particularly small nymphs on Trout Run, and find good success casting Pheasant Tails, caddis larva and midge patterns in sizes 18 and 20. Picky fish, especially ones that have seen a lot of flies through the earlier parts of the fishing season, can be tempted by these small patterns fished on a dead drift through a deep lie. You'll also find trout in faster water, where available, as the season progresses and summertime temps warm.

Dry Fly Options

Plenty of mayfly hatches can be found on Trout Run, and there are a handful of caddis hatches as well. Bring full fly boxes when you hit the stream, and be prepared to try a few different flies be-

fore you find the perfect option, especially in May and early June. The upper reaches of the river regularly feature blue wing olive hatches, and the gentle, smooth waters of Trout Run are a great playground to practice your dry fly cast to plenty of willing trout. Don't expect too many sizable browns to find the fly, but there are enough fish over 12 inches in the mix to keep you searching for the next big one. Hendrickson hatches can show up on Trout Run if you're lucky, though more than once I've planned to meet the hatch and have been disappointed when it didn't materialize. Other hatches often show up when your planned hatch does not, so it is rare that you won't have at least a few rising trout in the springtime to cast to.

Summertime on Trout Run brings plenty of terrestrial action. Ants, beetles, crickets and grasshoppers are all common inhabitants of the many meadow reaches along the stream. Try walking along an open reach of Trout Run and working the banks, plopping a fat dry fly in along the edges. Modern foam hopper patterns work well, and hold up impressively when fish smack them. Try smaller patterns in sizes 10 and 12 if you get refusals when you're out on the water. I like to mix in some classic hopper and ant patterns, like Dave's Hopper, an effective deer hair hopper, and fur ants as well. The smaller fur ants are hard to keep on the surface, but will fool more fish, especially in still water. Foam ant and beetle patterns tend to be more useful in faster, riffled waters.

Special Regulations and Harvest

Trout Run is unique among a handful of trout streams in the Minnesota Driftless with a specific special regulation pro-



ABOVE: TROUT RUN IS FILLED WITH THOUSANDS OF BROWN TROUT PER MILE. **BELOW:** FISHING MAP OF TROUT RUN. BASE MAP DATA COURTESY MN DNR.

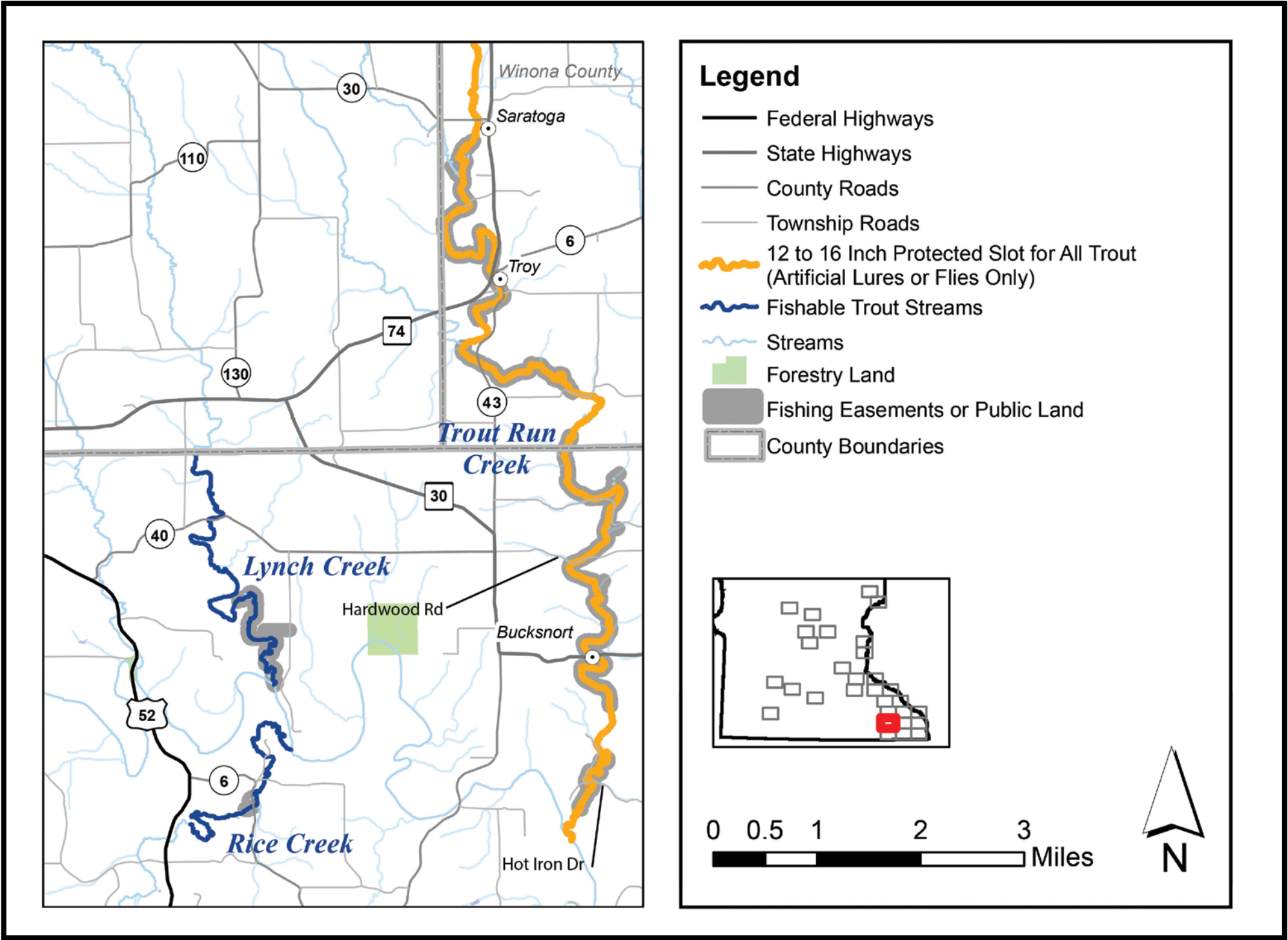
tecting trout from 12 to 16 inches. Only one trout over 16 can be harvested, and a total of five can be kept. Only artificial lures and flies may be used. While catch and release is the best option for most of our streams in the Driftless, and I firmly believe that large trout should always be released to fight another day, Trout Run offers a good opportunity for harvest. DNR biologists have long contended that if some of the smaller trout in the stream were harvested, particularly further upstream in the watershed, there would be more room for growth of the remaining trout. If you're inspired to keep fish for the pan, this is one stream that can support providing a fish dinner

from time to time.

Finding Habitat Work

Check out Minnesota Trout Unlimited's website at www.mntu.org and head to the "Projects" tab for mapping that shows two of the projects on Trout Run Creek that have been installed in the last ten years. Plenty of habitat installations on surrounding streams can be found there as well.

Editor's Note: Carl Haensel is the Northern MN Vice Chair for MNTU and on the Gitche Gumee Chapter board. He is a fly fishing guide, writer and photographer based in Duluth.



A LEGACY OF GIVING

REMEMBERING BRIAN SCHUMACHER AND JANET VEIT

By Chuck Shepard



BRIAN SCHUMACHER AND JANET VEIT TRAGICALLY PASSED AWAY IN MAY OF 2018. HERE THEY ARE PICTURED ALONG THE ICONIC SWINGING BRIDGE ON THE BOIS BRULE RIVER IN WISCONSIN.

This is a story of great tragedy, but also of great generosity.

Brian Schumacher was a dedicated outdoorsman: hunter, dog trainer, outdoor writer, and fisherman. Particularly a trout fisherman, an active TU supporter and Win-Cres board member.

Mel Hayner, owner of the Driftless Fly Fishing Company in Preston, and friend, remembers Brian as a “fly fishing savant.” Brian applied the scientific approach required in his job as a histology technician to fishing. It didn’t take long for Brian to graduate from a rookie to a skilled angler who caught big fish nearly every month of the year. Brian helped Mel set up his shop and

worked as Mel’s first guide, passing on his skills at family clinics and stream outings, and developing friendships with many of his clients. Mel describes Brian as “an exceptional angler, and a fine individual who shared what he had.”

Brian’s wife, Dr. Janet Veit, a veterinarian, also developed an interest in fly fishing. When Brian realized that teaching fly casting to his wife wasn’t going well, he enlisted Mel’s help. Janet’s skills developed quickly and she was soon accompanying him on fishing outings all over North America.

In May of 2018, Brian and Janet made a long anticipated trip to Iceland. Their fishing took them to a location where a

tributary entered Lake Pingvallavata, Iceland’s largest lake. When Brian lost his footing in the current, Janet and Brian reached out for each other. Tragically, both were swept to their deaths in the icy waters of Lake Pingvallavata.

Brian’s family asked that memorials be directed to the Win-Cres Chapter. Win-Cres received over \$3,000 from friends and family members. The Win-Cres Board decided to honor Brian and Janet with a bench overlooking the South Branch of the Root River in Preston, one of Brian’s favorite fishing spots. Donations are also being used to purchase fly tying vises and materials to engage the next generation of fishermen and women.

Much larger gifts came from their estates. Having no children, both Brian and Janet left most of their estates to groups, schools, and agencies that represented the things they valued most. Brian and Janet each left 25% of their estates to MNTU. Brian left another 25% to the Minnesota DNR for trail maintenance, and a smaller percentage to Ducks Unlimited. The impact of these gifts will be felt for years to come.

May they rest in peace.

Editor’s Note: Dr. Chuck Shepard is the president of the Win-Cres Chapter of MNTU.



LEFT: THE MEMORIAL BENCH INSTALLED FOR BRIAN SCHUMACHER AND JANET VEIT. THE BENCH OVERLOOKS THE SOUTH BRANCH OF THE ROOT RIVER IN PRESTON, AT ONE OF BRIAN’S FAVORITE FISHING SPOTS.



RIGHT: JOE LEPLEY OF THE WIN-CRES CHAPTER DEDICATED THE MEMORIAL BENCH FOR BRIAN AND JANET. AROUND 30 ATTENDED THE GATHERING AND CEREMONY.

RESOLUTION MONTH

FISHING WITH PURPOSE

By Mike “Kid” Riemer

It's February, and for trout fisherpeople of Minnesota and the upper Midwest, that's still a very suitable month for making resolutions that pertain to beautiful creatures and the habitat in which we find them.

I offer for your consideration a short list of potential resolutions which I'm happy to share with you. Find one you like, perhaps you'll give it a go. Heck, maybe you'll find a few that seem worthy of entertaining.

Fish Barbless Hooks, Most Of The Time

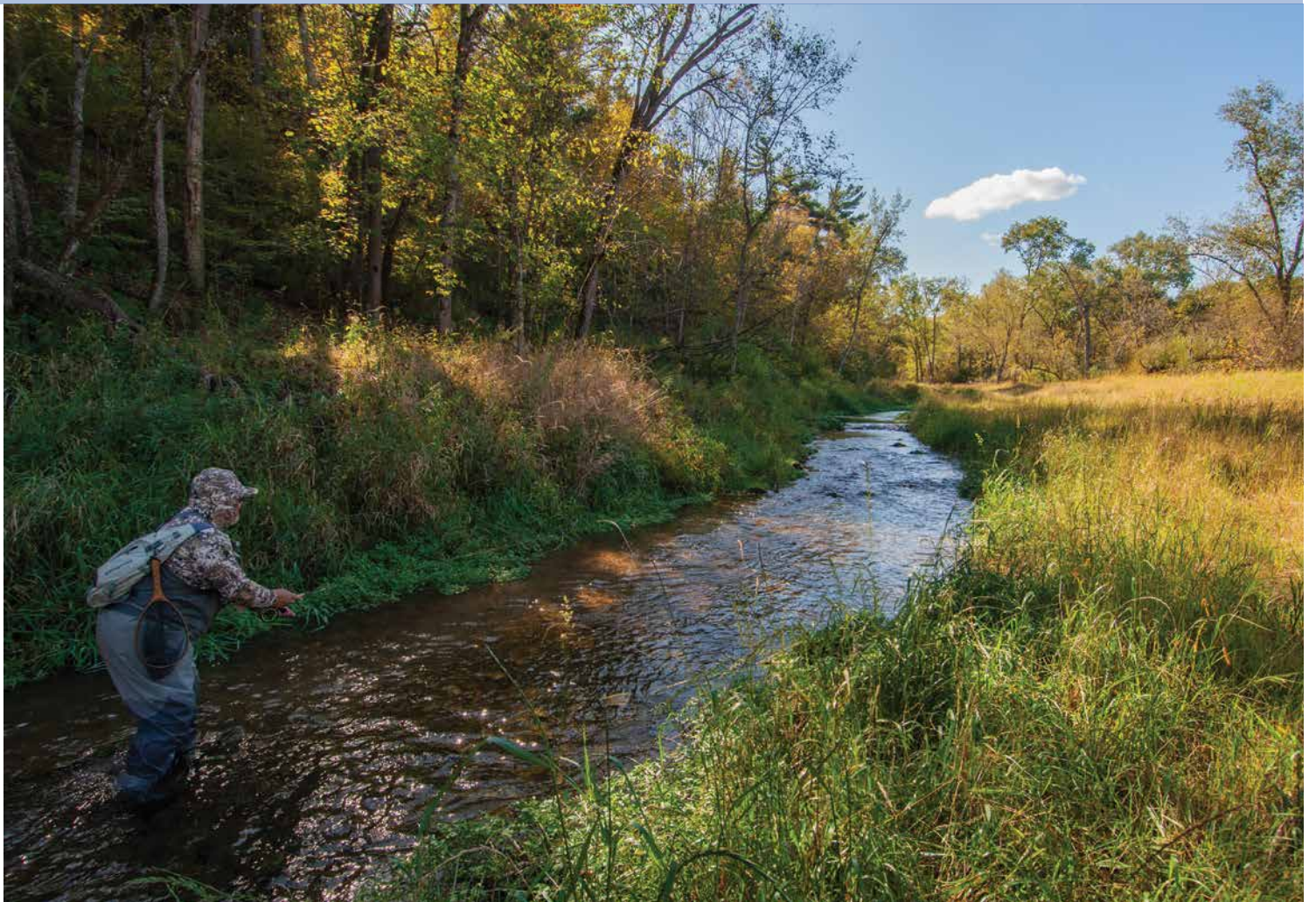
Notice how I added “most of the time?” That's because I'll admit to sometimes leaving the barb on the hook, mainly when I'm trying to break out of a slump or have seen a nice fish that I'm really hoping to hook and land. But let's cut to the chase; if we care about these fish (whether thought of as creatures or resource) fishing barbless hooks is without a doubt better for our prey. Barbless hooks do less damage to the fish, especially when releasing them. Time spent handling a trout is minimized (sometimes even completely negated), their slime is preserved, and our impact reduced.

Stop Telling Other Fisherman What Flies Are Working, Unless They Ask

Now, we may disagree on this, but part of what I enjoy about fly fishing is the puzzle we are presented with each time we are on the water. Among the many puzzle pieces that must be solved is: What are the fish eating? On more than a few occasions as I've approached the water, an exiting angler has blurted out their solution to the puzzle. “Size 16 Elk Hair Caddis Bead Head Brassie with an orange hot spot on a 16-inch dropper.” Or “Size 24 Blue Wing Olive.” The problem is that I never asked, as I was hoping to solve the puzzle for myself. I fully realize they are likely very excited about the fact that they solved the puzzle and want you to celebrate with them, but please try a different approach. Perhaps a greeting of, “They are really biting today if you've got the right flies.” And remember, I did include that “unless they ask” line in the resolution. If someone asks, and you feel like sharing, go nuts!

Stop Counting How Many Fish You Caught

When I first started fly fishing—or really when I first started catching fish—I would often keep track of my catches throughout the day. I'd unknowingly created a gauge by which I was judging the success of my outing. Now, further down the road in my fly fishing journey, I realize how keeping count was actually detracting from my experience. I believe I've read somewhere that when people start fishing it's to catch fish, but later they realize that they're not really fishing to catch fish at all, (my apologies for not knowing who first offered that wisdom). That's the point of the journey that I'm on now, and I encourage others to proceed past the counting phase as quickly as possible. Trust me. You'll be glad you did.



THE AUTHOR FISHES A HABITAT-IMPROVED SECTION OF TROUT BROOK IN DAKOTA COUNTY.

Photographing A Fish? Do It Well

As a former professional photographer, I may be overly opinionated on this but here is my encouragement. Stop taking pictures of all your fish. When you do want to take a photo of the fish, follow the #KeepEmWet philosophy in order to take it as easy on that fish as possible, as well as to show it the respect it deserves as a living creature. Please break the old habit of laying the fish down on the grass next to your rod. Instead, start trying to find more interesting ways to capture an image. Whether trying something new or taking a traditional grip and grin, please make it quick and keep the fish in the water as long as possible.

Improve Your Game By Forcing Yourself To Fish Differently

My guess is that most of us have a style of fly fishing we prefer and consider our-

selves good at. Good or not, I'm a dry fly guy (as previously professed in the last issue of this publication). When dries don't work, I go to streamers. I'm not a nymph guy, and part of that is because I'm not good at it. Maybe it is time for me to improve my nymph game. Maybe I need to pick a day when I will only let myself fish nymphs. Or maybe I have to fish nymphs until my last hour, then switch to whatever method I choose.

Maybe you should fish only dries one day? Or maybe you should only swing streamers? Or maybe like me, it's time to focus on some nymph fishing. Doing so will probably only raise your game.

Leave The Stream Cleaner Than When You Arrived

My friend Pete Koski started taking this simple approach last year. Every time he

fished, he would pick up at least three pieces of trash and take them with for disposal. Pretty simple, right? Perhaps Pete found a resolution we can all successfully accomplish—and one that makes things better for each of us, and the trout we so admire.

By now a few of you might be muttering “Who does this guy think he is?” or worse under your breath. It's all good, people, I just want to share a few opportunities that I think we all can possibly benefit from incorporating into our upcoming year of fishing. Best of luck to you regardless.

Mike 'Kid' Riemer is the Content Marketing Manager & Storyteller for Salsa Cycles. He lives in Richfield, Minnesota. Find him on Instagram @RiemDawg_Fly_Factory



THE AUTHOR WORKING A REACH OF THE MIDDLE BRANCH OF THE WHITEWATER RIVER. USE A FISHING METHOD YOU DON'T USUALLY EMPLOY THE NEXT TIME YOU'RE ON THE WATER, ESPECIALLY IN ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE SPOTS.

TU TEENS SUMMIT

GETTING THE NEXT GENERATION INVOLVED

By Jonathan Wilson-Thieroff

This past July, I attended my second annual Trout Unlimited Teen Summit, which was held outside of Anaconda, Montana, where we were surrounded by incredible fishing, scenery and wildlife. The summits are five days long, during which participants work on a conservation project in the area, brainstorm ways of increasing youth participation in Trout Unlimited, and fish the local streams and rivers. After the Summit is over, participants become part of the Youth Leadership Council (YLC), which is TU's youth outreach program. The YLC works to engage young people through activities such as outreach at fly shows and by creating educational materials about TU Teens.

At this most recent summit, we also spent a lot of time touring and learning about mines in the region and how they impact the local fisheries. Due to the highly toxic sediment from these mines, many rivers lost most, if not all, of their fish and other aquatic animal populations. Because of the work that the EPA, TU and other organizations have done, most of these rivers have recovered and are full of wild and native trout.

While learning about the local rivers, we also got to experience the impact that cattle grazing has had on trout habitat. On one particular stream, cattle had eaten all of the grass along the banks, which caused the remaining soil to erode. This widened the stream, making it very shallow and impossible for fish to survive. Led by the Forest Service, summiteers spent an afternoon removing large rocks

from the stream bed, creating a deeper and narrower channel that resembled what the stream used to look like. The goal was to bring fish to this stream and provide a connection to a nearby lake. Several months after the Summit, the Forest Service informed us they had found cutthroat trout in the section of the stream that we had worked on in the summer.

Besides the conservation work, fishing, and brainstorming, one of my favorite parts of the Summit is meeting other young people from around the country who are just as passionate about fishing and coldwater conservation as I am. I don't know many teens who like to fish, and even fewer who are interested in conservation. This alarms me, because Trout Unlimited needs young people to get involved and continue the mission "to conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds." Seeing other young people who care about streams and rivers makes me feel reassured and optimistic about the future of coldwater conservation.

If you have a child or grandchild or know a young person who you think would love fishing or conservation, go explore a river or stream. Take them fishing. Teach them how to tie flies. Things like these can really interest someone in the outdoors, and spark a passion for learning more about fishing and how to protect the waters that we love. If you know a young person who might be interested in attending the Trout Unlimited Teen Summit, they can find more information



TU TEENS AT THE SUMMIT WORK TO MAKE A STREAM HABITABLE FOR TROUT AND OTHER FISH SPECIES. PHOTO BY TARA GRANKE.

at www.tu.org/teensummit. This year's summit will take place in Michigan, and the application deadline is February 28, 2020.

Editor's Note: Jonathan Wilson-Thieroff is a 16 year old Twin Cities Chapter member, and an 11th grader at Great River School in St. Paul.

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 using this process: jlenczewski@comcast.net or at 612-670-1629.



MNTU EDUCATION UPDATE

By Amber Taylor, MNTU Education Program Supervisor



LEFT: CLOQUET MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS MEET THEIR NEW TINY TROUT WHILE MONITORING EGGS THROUGH THE TEMPERING PROCESS.
RIGHT: LAUREN REUSS AND ONE OF HER STUDENTS PAUSE FOR A PHOTO AS THEY WORK TO REMOVE FISH THAT HAVE DIED, AN IMPORTANT TASK IN KEEPING THEIR TANK HEALTHY. PHOTO BY HERDER PHOTOGRAPHY.

We're over halfway through another school year, which means thousands of tiny rainbow trout are busily eating, swimming, and growing strong in 44 Trout in the Classroom tanks throughout Minnesota. As the stars of this full year, multidisciplinary, and hands-on education program, these little fish provide a wide variety of learning opportunities for the students and teachers engaging with them each day. Through simple word of mouth excitement, an updated website, and increasing our social media presence, this unique program has gotten the attention of an additional 30 teachers from Birchdale to La Crescent, looking to participate.

In November, students and teachers began to prepare their tanks for the arrival of 300 rainbow trout eggs. Most teachers start this at least a month before the egg delivery date to ensure their tank completes a full nitrogen cycle. This not only establishes a healthy ecosystem in which to welcome their eggs, but also kicks off the training of their new student trout technicians that will be caring for the

fish and maintaining the tank throughout the year.

Setting up the tank is an experiential process that many teachers do with their students as an introduction to trout ecology, coldwater habitat, and the nitrogen cycle. Each piece of equipment represents an essential component trout need in their environment in order to survive: a chiller for cold water, a filtration system to move water and filter debris, an aerator for high levels of dissolved oxygen, and insulation to provide shade for the eggs and alevin. Students test water chemistry to track the initial nitrogen cycle of the tank each day leading up to the arrival of their eggs. They will continue to test water chemistry, perform water changes, and clean the tank until their trout are released in the spring.

Egg delivery day was another success this year and close to 14,000 were delivered to the classrooms of some very excited students and teachers around Minnesota. Once received, students acclimated the eggs and placed them into the breeder net, where their develop-

ment each day from eggs, to alevin, and into little fingerlings could easily be observed. A special shout out and thank you to some fantastic MNTU volunteers and DNR fisheries staff for spending their day helping to sort, package, and transport this special cargo!

This winter, MNTU educators and volunteers will visit over 30 classrooms, leading students and teachers in a variety of TIC related lessons. These will include fly tying, fish adaptations and identification activities, designing trout habitat, and fish dissections. In addition to classroom visits, we are working with teachers to test pilot a Trout Club at three of the metro area schools. The club would meet one to two times a month after school to do additional TIC activities. It is a chance for students and teachers to further their involvement with the program through fly tying, casting, fishing, hiking local streams and watersheds, engaging in environmental stewardship projects, and more.

MNTU has again partnered with various parks and recreation departments in

order to lead over 35 fishing skills programs throughout the metro area this summer. We narrowed our list of partners based on success of 2019 programs, and added more fly fishing and pop up programs to the calendar. New partners for these programs include Three Rivers Park District, L.L. Bean, and the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Refer to the list of public programs on page 12 for details and how to register.

Want to join a fun and growing group of volunteers? Are you passionate about conservation, fishing, environmental education, the outdoors, or any combination of these things? There are many ways to get involved! Opportunities include assisting with winter classroom activities (February-March), spring release field days (April-May), and summer fishing skills programs (June-August). Volunteer descriptions can be found on our Trout in the Classroom website: www.mntu.org/trout-in-the-classroom

Amber Taylor
MNTU Education Program Supervisor
education@mntu.org



LEFT: STUDENTS WORK TOGETHER ADDING BUCKETS OF WATER TO THEIR TANK IN ORDER TO PREPARE FOR EGG DELIVERY DAY.
RIGHT: EIGHTH GRADE TROUT TECHNICIANS AT BENILDE ST. MARGARET TAKE WATER SAMPLES FROM THEIR TANK TO TEST THE LEVELS OF AMMONIA, NITRITES, NITRATES, AND PH PRESENT. PHOTO BY HERDER PHOTOGRAPHY.

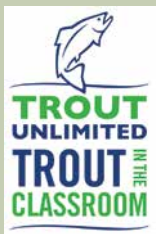
YOUTH AND FAMILY FISHING PROGRAMS

2020 TWIN CITIES METRO OPPORTUNITIES

Minnesota Trout Unlimited is excited to offer Youth and Family Fishing Programs in partnership with parks and recreation departments throughout the Twin Cities metro area again this summer. We would like to invite MNTU members, Trout in the Classroom teachers and students, and their families to join us for a few hours of fun, learning, and meeting other anglers. Both spin and fly fishing programs will be open to the public and will cover all the basics: how to set up a rod, cast like a pro, and take fish off your hook. All equipment is provided. Guardians and youth over 16 years old will need to buy a MN fishing license. See below for program details and check the MNTU website for links to register: www.mntu.org

Date	Time	Location	Program	Registration Partner
Saturday, June 6	10:00am – 12:00pm 1:00pm – 3:00pm	Big Marine Park Reserve “Explore Your Parks”	Family - Spin	Washington County Parks
Sunday, June 7	11:00am – 3:00pm	Thompson Lake Reg Park “Take-a-Kid Fishing”	Family - Fly	Dakota County Parks
Tuesday, June 9	10:00am – 12:00pm	Crystal Beach Park	Youth - Spin	Burnsville Parks and Rec
Thursday, June 11	10:00am – 12:00pm	Crystal Beach Park	Youth - Spin	Burnsville Parks and Rec
Saturday, June 13	10:00am – 12:00pm	Shady Oak Beach Park	Family - Spin	Minnetonka Parks and Rec
Saturday, June 13	2:00pm – 4:00pm	Lebanon Hills Reg Park @ Holland Lake	Family - Spin	Dakota County Parks
Saturday, June 20	10:00am – 12:00pm	Cottage Grove Ravine Park	Family - Fly	Washington County Parks
Thursday, June 25	6:00pm – 8:00pm	Thompson Lake Reg Park	Family - Spin	Dakota County Parks
Saturday, June 27	10:00am – 12:00pm	Bertram Chain of Lakes Park	Youth - Spin	Wright County Parks and Rec
Tuesday, July 7	10:00am – 12:00pm	Lake Elmo Park Reserve	Youth - Spin	Washington County Parks
Saturday, July 11	10:00am – 12:00pm	Shady Oak Beach Park	Family - Spin	Minnetonka Parks and Rec
Saturday, July 11	2:00pm – 4:00pm	Thompson Lake Reg Park	Family - Spin	Dakota County Parks
Thursday, July 16	6:00pm – 8:00pm	Lebanon Hills Reg Park @ Holland Lake	Family - Spin	Dakota County Parks
Saturday, July 18	10:00am – 12:00pm	Bertram Chain of Lakes Park	Family - Spin	Wright County Parks and Rec
Tuesday, July 21	10:00am – 12:00pm	Sunset Pond Park	Youth - Spin	Burnsville Parks and Rec
Thursday, July 23	10:00am – 12:00pm	Sunset Pond Park	Youth - Spin	Burnsville Parks and Rec
Saturday, July 25	6:00pm – 8:00pm	Square Lake Park	Family - Spin	Washington County Parks
Saturday, August 1	10:00am – 12:00pm	Miesville Ravine Park Reserve “Explore a Trout Stream”	Family - Fly	Dakota County Parks
Saturday, August 8	7:00pm – 8:00pm	St Croix Bluffs Regional Park	Family - Fly	Washington County Parks
Thursday, August 13	6:00pm – 8:00pm	Cottage Grove Ravine Park	Family - Fly	Washington County Parks
Saturday, August 15	10:00am – 12:00pm	Shady Oak Beach Park	Family - Spin	Minnetonka Parks and Rec





HOW TO FIX A TROUT STREAM

YOUTH SERIES

By Evan Griggs, MNTU Environmental Education Specialist



CHECK OUT THE DRAMATIC BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS OF TROUT BROOK IN DAKOTA COUNTY. THE SHALLOW, DEGRADED STREAM WAS TRANSFORMED INTO A CLEAN, NARROW STREAM WITH GOOD TROUT HABITAT.

Did you know that Minnesota has 3,800 miles of streams that trout can survive in? That's a lot of water! Minnesota Trout Unlimited (MNTU) works hard to make sure these streams stay cold, clean, and fishable. But what happens if a stream becomes unhealthy for trout to live in? Sometimes, we can fix unhealthy streams by fixing the ecosystem around them. An ecosystem is a community of plants and animals living together in a certain area. Trout, aquatic macroinvertebrates (aka macros), and their streams are indicators of how healthy an ecosystem is over all. We know trout and certain macros (like stoneflies, mayflies, and caddis) need cold, clean, and oxygenated water to survive. If we investigate the stream and find trout or those types of macros, it means the stream and ecosystem are healthy. If we don't find a lot, or any, trout or macros, it means it is not healthy. Though it is important to remember that not all streams can be livable for trout. Trout need cold and clean water all the time, and most of the streams they live in are fed by underground water from aquifers. Streams that aren't fed from aquifers tend to become too hot in summer for trout to survive. So of ALL the lakes and streams in Minnesota, it is actually pretty special to find a stream that meets all the needs for trout to survive.

What are the three most important things trout need to survive?

1) Cold, Clean, Oxygenated Water

Aquifers provide cold and clean water from underground year round. No matter how cold or hot it gets outside, this water will always flow, and be around 52 degrees F. Oxygen is added to the water from aquatic plants and when it splashes over objects, like rocks in rapids.

2) Places to Spawn, Hunt, and Hide

These places in streams are called riffles, runs, and pools. A meandering stream channel will create these places as it snakes across the land. Riffles are shallow, rocky, and fast flowing areas where trout spawn. Runs are slower flowing and slightly deeper with some boulders or logs for trout to hunt for food. Pools, are slow flowing and very deep with rocks and logs for trout to hide from predators.

3) Lots of Food

Trout need to constantly eat in a stream. They primarily eat macros, so it's important that there is a large and diverse population of macros for trout to eat year round. If a trout grows large enough, they will also eat minnows, mice, and even other trout!

One of the most common things that makes a trout stream unhealthy is

when the stream is channelized. This is when people make the stream flow in nearly a straight line. The reason why people channelize streams is to help rain water drain faster from the land, and to open up more land for farming or building. This creates many issues for trout streams and their surrounding ecosystems. Channelized streams have inconsistent water flow and can become too shallow and hot in the summer. More chemicals and soil (silt) runoff into the stream after rainstorms. Riffles, runs, and pools are removed or filled-in, limiting the number of places trout can spawn, hunt, and hide. With more chemicals and silt in the water, it also can harm the macro populations, lowering the amount of food that is available for trout.

MNTU has fixed many miles of trout streams all over the state. The best way to fix a trout stream is to bring back the natural ecosystem around the stream and to add the three things trout need most. We will use big tractors and machinery to remove silt and rebuild riffles, runs, pools, and river bends. We also strategically place rocks and logs in the water to move it in different directions and speeds. This will prevent silt from collecting in certain areas and provide places

for trout to spawn, hunt, and hide. After the stream channel is remade into its natural-state, we start fixing the land around the stream. If banks are too steep, rain water will runoff quickly and add silt into the stream. Machines are also used to make the banks less steep. If there's a thick forest with lots of invasive plants near the water, like buckthorn, it will be removed and replanted. We will plant native trees, bushes, and prairie grasses because their roots grow deep and strong. Their roots will help hold the shoreline together during floods and filter out chemicals.

It may take a year or two for the plants to grow, but once a project is complete it will look like nothing ever happened. The remade, healthy ecosystem will also create better habitat for many other different animals too. It does take a lot of hard work and resources to fix a trout stream, so it is important to protect the streams before they need to be fixed. You can play an important role in protecting our streams by enjoying them! Once a stream is fixed, go check out the ecosystem's health by going fishing or taking a hike. Notice what other types of animals and plants you see, or how many fish you see and where they are in the stream.



THIS REACH OF THE SUCKER RIVER NEAR DULUTH HAD NO ROOM FOR TROUT TO HIDE BEFORE IT WAS REPAIRED. AFTER HABITAT WORK, DEEP POOLS ARE AVAILABLE FOR TROUT TO LIVE IN YEAR-ROUND.

MAKING AND FISHING BAMBOO RODS

THE ART OF CRAFTING TONKIN CANE

By Steve Sobieniak



STEVE SOBIENIAK PLANES A STRIP OF TONKIN CANE IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING A NEW BAMBOO ROD.

It all started years ago, when my dad showed me a bamboo rod he was refurbishing. He was living in Oregon and I was in Minnesota, and whenever we got together it was all about trout fishing. Sometimes he would share the latest fly patterns that were working for him and then I'd have to try and tie one that I thought would be better. Well, with bamboo I thought I could redo old rods also. After all, I did work as a finish carpenter for most of my adult life. So, I started working over old bamboo flea market rods. One thing led to another, and with the help of a couple books and other media, I started making rods from bamboo. In today's world I had an advantage over my dad because I was able to learn through the internet. I quickly learned the difference between a five-dollar flea market rod and a well-crafted cane rod made by one of the master rod makers of the past 100 or so years. It became an obsession that led me to collecting. If I was going to make a bamboo rod as good as the rods Hoagy Carmichael and Marty Keane praised in their books, I had to get a look at these rods and cast them. So that's just what I did, and I learned. I am a self-taught bamboo rod maker, and it's not that hard with all of the information out there.

Making a bamboo rod is not that tough if you are very patient and have a lot of time. The space needed to work in doesn't have to be big. The lighting might be more important, depending on how good your eyes are. When making a bamboo rod blank, it

starts with a two-and-a-half-foot culm of Tonkin bamboo which gets worked down to precision strips, then glued together. The planing of the individual strips that make up the rod blanks must be very accurate. The blanks narrow with precision to as little as thirty thousandths of an inch at the tip. Accuracy of plus or minus .0001 of an inch is vital if you want a straight and true tapered rod. It's not rocket science, just attention to detail. The craft of bamboo rod making has been going on for over 150 years, and when and how rods were made is pretty well documented. Not much has really changed in that time. Technology today has made planing of the strips automated, with some rod makers developing their own CNC mills in place of hand planing, but the outcome is the same. Rod tapers have not changed much either. There are some 100-year-old cane rods out there, that are still very nice casting rods, reproduced by today's rod makers. Hollow building is a popular trend lately and it results in a lighter and quicker finished rod. Tapers and expert workmanship are what distinguish rod makers, back in the day and now.

Bamboo rod actions can be described in many ways. Fast, medium, slow, progressive, and parabolic are all terms that define the way a bamboo rod loads and casts a fly line. Folks that fish bamboo rods know what all these actions are, and they have their preferences. I can take three cane rods with different actions and have three different fly casters cast them all, and at the end of the day they

report back with very different likes and dislikes of the three rods. I guess what I'm saying is that one taper or action doesn't suit all anglers. Rod makers are in constant search of the perfect taper and it's going to go on forever as tiny tweaks are made. The truth of the matter is that the perfect taper has probably already been made by someone, it just has to be rediscovered. The finish or outward appearance of a rod can be blond or flamed and accented with finishes such as oil or spar varnish.

Fishing bamboo is no different than fishing a graphite or glass fly rod, as long as you have a rod that feels right for you. Overall the rod and reel are going to be a couple ounces more than a modern graphite rod and light weight alloy reel. An 8' 2-piece, 5wt. bamboo rod that I make weighs four ounces. A similar rod in graphite weighs three ounces. Most anglers use a reel on the heavier side to balance their bamboo rod. Hardy reels are always a good choice for balancing a cane rod, especially the classic models like "The Perfect" and the "St. George." The sweet spot in bamboo rods is a 7 1/2' 4wt. This rod has a nice balance between rod weight and length, and always feels comfortable in hand. Casting long or short is no problem with the right line. I have guys come in the shop and we'll go out in the casting ally and throw an entire line out with a bamboo rod. That's not very practical but it says something about bamboo fly rods.

I hear all the time that folks don't want to fish bamboo because they're afraid of breaking the rod. A well-made bamboo is as durable as any graphite or glass rod. Most rods are broken by falling on them, shutting the car door on them, or something other than casting or landing fish. Like any rod, you want to always store them dried off and in their tube. Also important is to keep the ferrules clean without using any abrasive. With long periods of storage cane rods need to be upright in the tube at room temperature. Garages and attics are a no-no. Many fine classic rods have been ruined after finding them stored in a hot attic or a damp basement for years. The back of a closet works well for two reasons: It's the right climate and you can hide your obsession of collecting rods if you need

to. I'm a collector and I have rod tubes stacked upright all over the place. One of these days I'll catalog them and get them all in one place. Maybe not though, I get too much enjoyment of searching for one by looking at all of them.

When you look back at the history and trends of fly fishing, you'll see it started with rods that were designed for wet fly fishing. They were nine to ten feet long and worked fine for swinging flies. Sometime in the early 1900s, dry fly rods started to appear, and of course, two-hand salmon rods. Trout, bass, salmon and dry fly salmon rods have all been around for the past 120 years. The golden years of bamboo rods is considered to be from 1900 to 1955. Glass rods appeared in the 1950s, and graphite in the 1970s. I have a six-foot, light fly rod made in the 1920s that was considered a "women's fly rod" at the time. I do not know of a rod maker today making a women's rod, nor any need to. The biggest change with today's bamboo rod makers is they are making rods as light as possible without compromising strength, through hollowing and modern adhesives. One more interesting fact about bamboo rods is that if something does happen to it, repair is usually an option, this is not necessarily true with modern rods. They often just get replaced.

My father would undoubtedly be impressed with the bamboo rods we are making today. Maybe not so much the 100 or so rod tubes with classic rods I have stashed in the office and around the building here in Lanesboro, MN. They are all for sale though. Fishing bamboo is a thing that gets into your head just like many of the facets of fly fishing. Once you become familiar with the unique slower and deliberate feel of a cane rod, everything else can slow down and become more deliberate. Holding a bamboo rod streamside makes for a nice photo opportunity also, with a big grin, a sense of pride, and, if you're lucky, a nice trout.

Editor's Note: Steve Sobieniak is the owner of Root River Rod Co. in Lanesboro, MN. The shop combines his passion for making bamboo rods, teaching fly fishing and tying flies. Steve makes and donates a custom bamboo fly rod each year to a MN Trout Unlimited chapter.



AN AGATE STRIPPING GUIDE HIGHLIGHTS THE FINISH OF A NEW BAMBOO ROD.

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2020 PROGRAMMING SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, MARCH 20TH 1 PM - 7 PM

Time	Room A – Expo Level	Room B – Lobby Level	Hutton Arena	Fly Casting Area	Casting Pool
1:30pm	Youth Fly Fishing Program Evan Griggs		Techniques for Bass on the Fly Tim Landwehr	FFI Casting Instruction On-Going and Free	Open for Casting when accompanied by an instructor or exhibitor
2:30pm	Break		Break		
2:45pm	Intro to Fly Fishing	Fly Crafting 101 Scott Hanson	Advanced Steelhead Dreaming Matt Supinski		
3:45pm	Break	Break	Break		
4:00pm	Dropper Nymphs: Designing and Fishing the Perfect Dropper Charlie Craven	Fly Fishing for Panfish Matt Lowe	Fishing the Bighorn River: Seasons and Strategies Pete Shanafelt	Casting Program Dave Barron	Spey Casting on the Water Paul Sandstrom
5:00pm	Break	Break	Break	FFI Casting Instruction On-Going and Free	Open for Casting when accompanied by an instructor or exhibitor
5:15pm	Fly Fishing the Vermillion River Matthew Doth	The Ultra Light Pike Fly: The Next Generation Bob Wagner	Euro Style Nymphing Rob Kimm		

SATURDAY, MARCH 21ST 9 AM - 6 PM

Time	Room A – Expo Level	Room B – Lobby Level	Hutton Arena	Fly Casting Area	Casting Pool
9:30am	Intro to Fly Fishing Geri Meyer	Indicator Dries: Buoyant, Visible Dry Flies Charlie Craven	Drifting the Driftless Lance Prado	FFI Casting Instruction On-Going and Free	Open for Casting When Accompanied by an Exhibitor or Instructor
10:30am	Break	Break	Break		Learn to Roll Cast
10:45am	Fly Fishing the BWCA and Quetico Brent Notbohm & Larry Zelenz	Youth Fly Fishing Program Monta Hayner & Peter Garretson	Into the Mind of a Brown Trout Matt Supinski		
11:45am	Break	Break	Break	Break	Break
12:00pm	Smallmouth Bass in Northeast Wisconsin Tim Landwehr	Women’s Fly Fishing and Gear: 4 Seasons Geri Meyer, Kim Ferrie, Corie Kerrigan & More	How to Cast for, Hook and Land Muskies on the Fly Dan Boggs	Fly Casting Program Dave Barron	Spey Casting on the Water Paul Sandstrom
1:00pm	Break	Break	Break	Break	Open for Casting When Accompanied by an Exhibitor or Instructor
1:15pm	Fly Fishing the Wisconsin Driftless Kyle Zempel	Hands-on Fly Fishing Clinic for Women Tina Murray, Donna Smith, & Pam Van Erem	Lake Superior Steelhead on the North and South Shore Carl Haensel	Specialty Casting with Matt Supinski	
2:15pm	Break	Break	Break	FFI Casting Instruction On-Going and Free	Break
2:30pm	Hayward Beyond Muskies: Bass, Trout, Bluegills & More Wendy Williamson	Small Creek Nymphing Techniques Mat Wagner	Modern Streamer Design Charlie Craven		Casting Musky Flies Luke Swanson
3:30pm	Break	Break	Break		Open for Casting When Accompanied by an Exhibitor or Instructor
3:45pm	DIY Fishing the West Heather Hodson	Fly Tying Contest Sponsored by Bob Mitchell’s Register in Advance 651-770-5854	Spring Creek Selectivity Matt Supinski		

SUNDAY, MARCH 22ND 10 AM - 4 PM

Time	Room A – Expo Level	Room B – Lobby Level	Hutton Arena	Fly Casting Area	Casting Pool
10:30am	Introduction to Fly Fishing Evan Griggs	Required Flies for the Driftless, If You Want to Catch Fish! Paul Johnson	Finding and Catching MN Muskies Luke Swanson	FFI Casting Instruction On-Going and Free	Spey Casting on the Water Paul Sandstrom
11:30am	Break	Break	Break		
11:45am	Midwest Carp: How to Catch Them on a Fly Dan Frasier	Tying the Life Cycle of a Mayfly Lindsay Maxfield	Selective Steelheading Matt Supinski	Fly Casting Program Dave Barron	Open for Casting When Accompanied by an Exhibitor or Instructor
12:45pm	Break	Break	Break	FFI Casting Instruction On-Going and Free	
1:00pm	Kayak Fishing the MN and IA Driftless Mel Hayner, Brennen Churchill & Tim Carver	Fishing and Understanding Habitat Improvement in the Driftless John Lenczewski	Tying Better Classic Dry Flies: The Parachute Adams, Humpy and Elk Hair Caddis Charlie Craven		
2:00pm	Break		Break		
2:15pm	Urban Fly Fishing the Twin Cities Evan Griggs		Secrets of Small Stream Big Trout Hunting Matt Supinski		

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HARRY BOYD BAMBOO ROD RAFFLE

SUPPORT MNTU AND BUY A RAFFLE TICKET TODAY!

Win this raffle to take home the perfect small-stream trout rod this spring and benefit MNTU. We're raffling off a Harry Boyd split bamboo fly rod, 2-weight, 7' 6", serial number 3904, 3-piece rod with two tips. Boyd rods are some of the best in the country, and beloved by many. The rod has been professionally refurbished by Steve Sobieniak of the Root River Rod Company. This rod is part of the collection of Earl Stanek that was donated to MNTU a few years ago. Contact your local TU chapter leaders in your area to buy a ticket today!

Contact information is located at the front of this newsletter. Tickets will also be on sale at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo and the drawing will be on Sunday, March 22 at 2 PM. You do not need to be present to win. Can't make it to the Expo or connect with your local leaders? Call the Expo at 612-562-9242 to buy your ticket over the phone!



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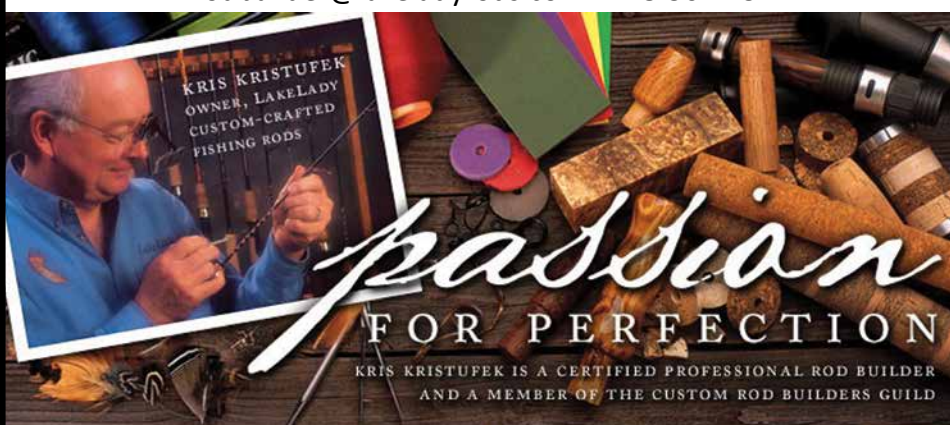
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BICYCLES AND CRANE FLIES

A MENTORSHIP SUCCESS STORY

By Tim Hemstad



LEFT: 2017 — IAN SHOWS OFF HIS VERY FIRST BROWN TROUT CAUGHT ON A FLY ROD.
RIGHT: 2019 — IAN CAUGHT A HAWKFISH OFF THE SHORES OF HAWAII ON A FAMILY VACATION.

It was the summer of 2017. I met Ian and his father Keith under the agreement that I would show them a few things about fly fishing. Simple. I could cast with marginal accuracy and I had landed a handful of trout. But as a volunteer, I honestly didn't think I was bringing much to the table. With some basic rod mechanics and parking lot casting out of the way, we headed for the South Branch of the Root River.

As a self-taught fly angler, I knew I had a lot of informational gaps missing. I had some trial-and-error approaches that sometimes panned out for me. One of which involved biking the trail that parallels the Root River with a fly rod. With or without fishing in mind, this is a beautiful bike ride with around 60 miles to choose from.

I loaded up my bike, along with my wife's and my daughter's (with their permission of course) for my new friends to borrow for the day. Ian could barely get his knees inside the handle bars of my six-year-old daughter's bike, but it's the best that I had to offer. On the ride in, I started second guessing what sort of "mentor" I was, with fully assembled fly rods bouncing dangerously close to spinning bicycle spokes.

Looking back, I'll never forget the look on Ian's face. Clearly uncomfortable on a pink and purple, way too small bike, knees up to his chin as he pedaled. With a stern look on his face, I could tell he would have melted into the woods at the slim chance that a classmate would appear down the same bike path. Fortunately for Ian, we didn't cross paths with

anyone.

As we approached the river, a kingfisher swooped and chattered before it perched on a branch just upstream of us. Size #14 crane flies were hatching everywhere. Ian and I examined a log that was swarming with them. Something clicked in that moment, as he witnessed first-hand the life cycle of a tiny bug that would ultimately help us in our pursuit. Fortunately, I have a killer crane fly pattern and promptly had one tied to everyone's lines. Both Ian and Keith landed their first trout on a fly rod that day.

These moments are the ingredients that create life-long memories for young people and even more so for the young at heart. Maybe you have early memories of learning how to fish with a worm and

bobber. You may have started fly fishing as an adult. Surely you can appreciate being away from the office, surrounded by trees, listening to the sounds of the river, while coaxing beautiful wild trout to eat your fly.

They say a picture is worth a thousand words. These four photos highlight how volunteering just a little bit of my time has impacted someone's life. Ian negotiated funding a new saltwater rod with his parents to bring to Hawaii on a family trip. He is about two or three years older, and a hell-of-a-lot taller than me now. Keith on occasion will text me photos from their tying vise while they experiment with YouTube videos on streamers, nymphs and dries. I gotta say, it's cool to see those guys at the Great Water Fly Fishing Expo each year.



LEFT: 2017 — IAN PERFECTING HIS CAST ON A MINNESOTA TROUT STREAM.
RIGHT: 2019 — IAN CASTING LIKE A PRO WITH A SALT WATER ROD. HE'S HOOKED!

FOSTER THE OUTDOORS

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

By Tim Hemstad



MARK NEMETH GIVES CASTING TIPS TO HIS MENTEES STACY AND NAOMI.

What's Mentorship about?

We are creating opportunities for people that wouldn't otherwise have them. Not everyone has a family member or neighbor that could use an excuse to go fishing. Not everyone is going to embrace fly fishing, that's just reality. But everyone benefits from connecting with nature and dragging their fingers through the current of clean moving water. Fish are fun, especially the big ones, but they are not the only reason most of us are out there. It is extremely rewarding to witness a newbie work through the obvious frustrations with fly fishing, and to finally land their first fish.

Why do this now?

This lyric from a Dawes song resonates with me each time I hear it, "Quit wasting my time, because pretty soon you'll find, it's the only thing of value that we own." If you have ever experienced the loss of a loved one or maybe have been troubled with thoughts about aging parents, you know time is an often overlooked form of currency. Choosing to do something meaningful for others is time

well spent.

Without a connection to water, a person cannot connect with life. This is a bold statement, but think about it. In the absence of water, life doesn't have a chance. This defines how fly fishing impacts all of us far beyond catching pretty fish in pretty places. Without clean trout streams, trout don't exist. Without clean drinking water, neither do we.

How does it work?

May 2020 – Mentor-Match-Up

As a volunteer mentor, we pair you up with a local Minnesota youth and a guardian. We meet as a group for introductions and catch a few sunnies on a local lake to break the ice. MNTU provides two fly rods for each mentee pair to use for the year. We also have donated flies for you to use. Panfish poppers are in high demand for this program. Please contact Tim to make any type of fly or gear donation.

Summer 2020 – Go Fishing!

After exchanging contact information,

the fishing schedule is yours to coordinate. Set dates for two to three outings over the course of the summer. Continue the pursuit of sunnies or bass on local lakes, or raise the bar and shoot for a trout stream.

October 2020 – Fly Tying

In October we meet as a group for a fly tying session with the Laughing Trout Fly Fishing group. If you are not already familiar with Laughing Trout, attend one of their weekly Wednesday night gatherings at the American Legion – Post #118 in Wayzata. For more details, contact Paul Johnson 952-334-4688 or email paulwaconia@gmail.com

January 2021 – Shop Tour

After the new year, we get back together for a tour of Bob Mitchell's fly shop. Introducing the newbies to some gear options and a chance to ask shop owner Robert Hawkins a few questions about that Mille Lacs musky.

March 2021 – Great Waters - Fly Fishing Expo

If you have never been to the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo, you need to go! The Expo is the gateway to the Midwest fly fishing community. Participants have free admission for a day.

April 2021 – End of Season

We end the program with a final group outing to a trout stream. Bring your flies and you're A game, we're looking to land a few trout today! We formally thank our mentors and look forward to seeing our mentee pairs at TU meetings, future Expos and as future mentors themselves.

May 2021 – Begin again with new group

DEADLINE – Contact Tim Hemstad by March 30, 2020 to volunteer.

Thanks to those of you already teaching your kids, friends, neighbors and co-workers how to fly fish. I hope to hear from you.

Tim Hemstad
Volunteer Mentor Coordinator
612-247-1536
fostertheoutdoors@hotmail.com



LEFT: JONATHAN WILSON-THEIROFF AND MENTEE JACKSON SUCCESSFULLY LANDED NUMEROUS SPECIES OF FISH AROUND METRO AREA LAKES TOGETHER DURING THE SUMMER OF 2019.



RIGHT: RICH FRICK OF THE LAUGHING TROUT GROUP GIVES POINTERS TO AMANTE AS THEY LEARN HOW TO TIE A PINK SQUIRREL.

ANGLERS AFIELD: A GOOD FIGHT IN FRENCH POLYNESIA

TALES OF THE BATTLE FOR (AND WITH) BONEFISH ON A REMOTE ATOLL

By Suzanne Herrick



MILES OF LAGOON AND SAND FLATS ON ANAA OFFER PRIME BONEFISH AND TREVALLY HABITAT, WITH AN OCCASIONAL GT.

The people of Anaa have a history steeped in warrior culture. Tales of brutal battles with neighboring atolls, javelin hurling hunters and cannibalistic rituals pepper Anaa's storied past.

Now, the people of Anaa are fighting a different battle. This time it's for the survival of their prized bonefish, known locally as Kio Kio. But, ultimately it's a battle for their way of life.

Bring a Stone

Ready to hunt big bonefish, trevally, bohar snapper, Napoleon wrasse and exotic species of triggerfish under sunny skies, I packed my bags and grabbed my weapons to venture to a remote atoll in the Tuamotu Archipelago of French Polynesia. It was late February and the notion of leaving frozen precipitation for salt-water fly fishing was invigorating.

Friend and Wyoming-based guide Josh Gallivan who helped organize the trip, directed me to bring a stone from a place of significance. Luckily, in the midst of frozen-ground February, I had an agate from Lake Superior gathered during my childhood days as a rock collector. It was of big importance, but small enough to fit between my 8 wt., 9 wt. and two 12 wt. rods, reels, extra fly lines, 140-lb. fluorocarbon, shrimp patterns and brush flies. I was ready to battle.

Pêche à la Mouche

Once landed in Tahiti, Anaa is a one-hour flight east. A turquoise-blue lagoon, sugar sands, fingers of reef and coconut palms greeted us, along with welcoming leis and Joëlle of Pension Anaa Toku Kaiga, where our group of six Americans would be staying.

On the flight from Tahiti to Anaa, I learned that "pêche à la mouche" or fly fishing, was relatively new to Anaa and so were fly anglers. In fact, trip organizers estimated that only 80 people had ever fly fished on Anaa and possibly, only five women. A level of uncertainty settled in as I pondered

how our group of interlopers would be received "playing" with the local food source and knowing Anaa's storied past.

Bluefin Trevally Sashimi

We spent the afternoon of our arrival walking off the figurative travel dust in the warm waters of the lagoon. Two bluefin trevally caught and released charmed me in the crystal clear waters. It was then time for dinner, getting to know my fellow anglers and of course, a heavy dose of the regional beer Hinano. On the menu, bluefin trevally sashimi, Kio Kio poisson cru, French bread and deceptively delicious starchy tubers. Eat up—that next day was going to be a big one on Anaa for a ritual that had not been performed in more than 150 years: a Rahui.

Some final words of advice were shared before we made our way to our ocean-front bungalows for the evening: "Wear anything but the color red. Red is the color of war." We asked around in a slight panic to ensure we each had something white to wear.

The Warrior

Stones in hands and all wearing white shirts, our team of anglers took a solemn walk to a sacred part of Anaa where an altar, or marae, had been prepared awaiting a sacrifice. Once invited, we approached the marae. In an honored position, standing in a circle with Anaa elders, chiefs, dignitaries and representatives from Anaa's sister school in Tahiti, we participated in the Rahui ceremony.

We presented our stones along with an explanation of their importance and placed them on the altar. The sun was beating down and the thought of the cool freshwaters of Lake Superior from where my stone had originated, helped calm the heat.

Two children presented the sacrifice: one male and one female bonefish placed in opposite positions in the direction flow of the waters between the lagoon and ocean. Waters from Tahiti and Anaa

were poured over the marae, ancient songs sung and prayers spoken.

A Disciplined Warrior

A Rahui is a cessation. It is a culturally significant and ancient tradition implemented with thought and understanding. It is an act of a warrior to protect by ceasing. In this case, to stop harvesting Kio Kio from ancient fish traps during their prime, three-month spawning season.

Our stones were destined to return to the marae for at least the next four years to mark the beginning of the Rahui, in hopes that the spawning potential ratio would increase to around 40 percent. This Rahui on Anaa hadn't been implemented in more than 150 years and it was due. The bonefish population on Anaa had been overharvested.

That evening back at the pension, we met with PhD candidate from the University of Massachusetts Amherst Alex Filous who had spent three years studying and tagging more than 3,000 bone-

fish on Anaa. We were also joined by Matthew Shilling of St. Paul-based Indifly, Mathew McHugh of Fly Odyssey Australia and Hinano Bagnis of The Island Initiative, each of whom had a hand supporting Anaa's fight for its future.

They spoke my native tongue and so I was able to hear the story of Kio Kio on Anaa. Declining fish populations, the need for a sustainable economy beyond the highly subsidized copra farming (harvesting, drying and exporting coconut) and the desire to create opportunities for future generations topped the list of priorities identified by the people of Anaa.

The Fight

Anaa is one of the few locations in the world where you can take your aim at the fabled Napoleon wrasse and bohar snapper. To prepare your weapon, tie 100-lb. to 150-lb. fluorocarbon leader directly to the fly line of a 12 wt. or heavier fly rod. Tie on a brush fly. I'm not much of one to study flies—I just know "black" seemed



JOSH GALLIVAN WITH AN IMPRESSIVE BOHAR SNAPPER.

to be the fly of choice. Once at the reef’s edge, determine the length of cast, lock down the drag and continue casting.

Sometimes, it’s easy to see the bohar and wrasse swimming between fingers of coral reef. Sometimes, it’s necessary walk the reef edge, blind casting into places where your gut or guide tells you. But when one bites, be prepared to walk backward to bring that bulldog to the shallow inner reef and a well-deserved photo. While a Napoleon wrasse eluded me, I met a beautiful reddish-orange bohar after a bit of coaxing.

If pulling bulldogs out of the reef isn’t your thing, exotic triggerfish dance between coral and rock in the inner reef. Triggerfish have very small mouths, making for a challenging take. Unless you’re a master, expect to see one of these beauties in about one out of every five bites.

Beyond the reefs, miles of lagoon and sand flats offer prime bonefish and trevally habitat, with an occasional GT. This is the stuff of tropical legends and the quintessential picture of paradise. It’s easy to walk for miles each day, hooking into ghosts and jacks.

The Battle

The children of Anaa depart the atoll at about the age of ten to continue their education. They leave their homes, their families and much of their way of life. Few young adults return, finding economic opportunities in other parts of French Polynesia and the world.

With only 500 people living on Anaa—a significant decline from the thousands who lived there centuries ago—a sustainable economy based in rich natural resources offers hope that family members will return and their way of life will continue.

Luckily, the spirit of the warrior is alive and strong in the children of Anaa. The battle cry to create a sustainable Kio Kio population and subsequently, opportunities for future generations was first taken up by the schoolchildren. Before the Kio Kio Rahui would ever be considered, some needed convincing it was time. Schoolkids loaded into a bus and knocked on every door asking the com-

munity to consider its future and sign a petition in favor of a Rahui.

On a personal note, the story of one man in particular drove home the conundrum on the remote atoll. Raphael was my guide for three days. He is a man of few words, and very few in English. As I walked flats and reef edges, I sensed his solid presence, assuredness and an unspoken conviction. Raphael is featured in the film “Kio Kio” which helped me understand his important role. Incidentally, the film premiered on Anaa while we were there and debuted in Minneapolis as part of the 2019 Fly Fishing Film Tour the day I returned to the states.

Raphael’s daughter now lives and works in France. His son Ganaanui, often guides fly anglers. For now, Ganaanui has decided to stay. Money earned from guiding subsidizes copra income. Fly fishing profits are used in part, to support the community and fish conservation. Understanding the need for and benefits of a managed fishery on Anaa, Raphael has supported efforts to revitalize Kio Kio, including scientific studies, limits on fish traps and influence to sway Rahui naysayers.

As fly anglers arrive in managed numbers, a micro-economy has formed to support their stay with items such as handcrafted arts, locally tied flies and cultural tours of the atoll. Today, Anaa hosts non-angling day tourists, guiding them to stunningly beautiful remote parts of the atoll and offering their local handicrafts.

Broken Hook Battles with Kio Kio

Between days of fishing the reef and days walking the lagoon as sharks skirted by, I seemed to be unlucky on the flats. A handful of broken hooks and, eventually, I wised up to the local flies to ensure hidden corrosion wasn’t going to ruin my chance to battle a Kio Kio. It took one more broken hook to drive that home.

Expert angler Mathew McHugh joined my hunt along with guide Ganaanui. Walking the flat, we stopped to watch fellow angler David Moryc about 150 feet away fight a nice bonefish. Then, as if fate forced one on me, a Kio Kio seemed to jump on my line. What a fight! The sound of the reel as the fish



THE AUTHOR HOLDS A LONG-AWAITED BONEFISH, OR KIO KIO, ON ANAA.

came close, then zipped away. But it was the same story: the second time the fish approached and seemed ready to land, a broken hook. Sigh, I was still using an old fly. It was off to another flat and a fresh new fly.

Skies clouded up and visibility dimmed. I cast where my sharp-sighted guide Ganaanui advised. Success. Heart pounding, feeling a bit of pressure and determination, I landed a ghost. There was a sense of relief, adrenaline rush and joy in appreciating this particular Kio Kio.

Battle-scarred from improper wading boots (none existed at the time to fit my small woman’s foot) sunbaked, salt-swollen, blistered and hooked fingers, my week-long adventure plunged me

into discovering the fight, the battle and the warrior not just in me, but by my new friends on Anaa. The battle on Anaa is really a battle we all undertake when we protect our waters, native habitat, fisheries and ultimately, our way of life too.

Anaa remains open to fly anglers. Learn more at www.indifly.org and www.flyodyssey.co.uk.

Suzanne Herrick grew up in Minnesota and has a marketing company based in Minneapolis. She discovered her passion for fishing off the Florida Keys. When time permits, she spends much time in western Wyoming meeting native cutthroat trout. Her pursuits in saltwater have taken her on adventures, including an upcoming journey for Indo-Pacific permit at St. Brandon’s atoll in the spring.



LEFT: TWO CHILDREN PRESENTED THE SACRIFICE: ONE MALE AND ONE FEMALE BONEFISH PLACED IN OPPOSITE POSITIONS IN THE DIRECTION FLOW OF THE WATERS BETWEEN THE LAGOON AND OCEAN.

RIGHT: MULTIPLE SPECIES OF TRIGGERFISH CAN BE FOUND ON ANAA ON THE INNER REEFS. THEY CAN BE CHALLENGING TO HOOK, BUT REWARDING TO LAND.



MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

Gitche Gumee Chapter

GGTU had its annual fundraiser on January 26 with a well-attended screening of the 2020 Midwest Fly Fishing Film Festival. A special thanks to all those who came! It was terrific to see so many friends and families!

An abundance of early snow and moderate temperatures this winter has made for slushy ice fishing throughout the northeast. At least the snow insulated our North Shore rivers from freezing through, which is good for trout and steelhead. GGTU members are beginning the annual guessing game of when the steelhead will start their run. Until then, please join us for one of our awesome programs this winter and spring. GGTU chapter meetings are always open to the public and one need not be a TU member to attend.

Projects and Fisheries Management with the WI and MN DNRs

Once again, our annual joint meeting with the Arrowhead Fly Fishers will feature experts from the Wisconsin and Minnesota DNRs to discuss a variety of topics related to fishing and habitat. When: Tuesday, February 18 at 7 PM. Where: Clyde Iron Works in Duluth.

Habitat Work and Fishing Opportunities on Minnesota's South Shore of Lake Superior

Not familiar with this cold water fishery just south of Duluth? Learn about the Blackhoof River and other trout streams in the Nemadji basin, along with the habitat work MNTU has done to preserve and protect them. When: Thursday, March 5 at 7 PM. Where: Hartley Nature Center in Duluth.

State of the Steelhead

Join us for our annual meeting about the amazing spring run fish and fishing along Minnesota's majestic North Shore. Genetics study updates, North Shore habitat projects, and the latest fishing reports will all be discussed. When: Thursday, April 9 at 7 PM. Where: Hartley Nature Center in Duluth.

Brent Notbohm

Headwaters Chapter

It is the start of another new year, and with it comes new leadership for TU Headwaters Chapter 642. Hi, my name is Kris Williams, and I am taking over as president of the Headwaters Chapter. I have big shoes to fill as Bob Wagner steps down after over seven years as president. I step into this role with a great deal of help from Bob and other members of the chapter. Over the past year we have continued with existing programs and worked on

some new ones.

Getting Hooked on Fly Fishing: Last May we received a grant from the Minnesota DNR under the Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (R3) Grant. The program we provided was called "Getting Hooked on Fly Fishing," with the intent of getting new people interested in the sport of fly fishing and retaining people who may not be active participants. It was designed as a full day program offering fly tying instruction in the morning, followed by fly casting instruction and lunch. Each day concluded with a fishing outing. The purpose of the program is to dispel some myths of fly fishing, including that it is hard to do and that you can only fly fish for trout. The program focused on panfish, bass, northern pike, and, of course, trout. The weather did not cooperate with us every day, as we were rained out on pike day. The fishing wasn't always the best either, but participants had fun just the same. The grant allowed us to purchase some new equipment including 16 new rotary fly tying vises and 16 new 8wt fly rod and reel combos. Our plan is to offer this program again in the spring with some modifications to the schedule. Look for more information from the Headwaters Chapter on the next installment of this program in the spring.

Trout in the Classroom: On December 5 we had approximately 300 eggs delivered to five classrooms. Three classrooms at Gene Dillon Elementary, Mr. Wade, Ms. Tisdell, and Mr. Adams, and one each at Kelliher (Ms. Thomason) and Northome (Mr. Lundin). Aside from some fungus issues with one tank, most of the tanks had virtually a 100% hatch rate. Unfortunately, during the first week of January, two tanks at Gene Dillon experienced a catastrophic loss of fish. At this point we are not able to pin point a cause, although water contamination is suspected. Thankfully, due to the high hatch rate and number of fish in the remaining tank, we will be able to split the fish between the three tanks at Gene Dillon. A special thanks to Amber Taylor, state TIC Coordinator, and Tony Stander from the Minnesota DNR for their help getting through this unfortunate event. We hope we are back on track for a successful release this spring.

Free Community Fly Tying Nights: Our fly tying nights started in November and will continue through March. Our upcoming dates for 2020 are January 16 and 30, February 13 and 27, and March 12 and 26. These nights are held at The Garden Grill & Pub in Bemidji and start at 5:30 PM. Our sessions so far this season have been full, and we have had several new participants. Again, this year we will have a rotating schedule of instructors teaching flies for several species of fish found in Minnesota. If you are interested in joining and need equipment, please email us at mntu642@gmail.com.

Frozen Fly Film Festival: It's hard to believe that it was two years ago that we had our first Frozen Fly Film Festival. In



THE MIDWEST FLY FISHING FILM FESTIVAL SCREENED THE TOP FILMS FROM THE PAST FOUR YEARS' SUBMISSIONS TO MNTU'S FILM SHOWCASE. THIS WAS A VERY SUCCESSFUL EVENT FOR GITCHE GUMEE TU.

early December we had our second event where we showcased films that were generously provided by MN Trout Unlimited and the Great Waters Fly Fishing Film Showcase. This biennial event is the biggest fundraiser for the Headwaters Chapter. This year we raised over \$3,400 to support our programs, including Trout in the Classroom, Community Fly Tying Nights, Restoration work, and more. A special thanks to our donors and sponsors that help make the evening a big success.

Pike Hunt: Our 6th Annual Pike Hunt is coming up quick. In early June we will have another fun weekend of tying big flies and fishing for big pike. Last year's event was very successful, and we expect the same this year. Find out more information by visiting our booth at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo.

Restoration: Our commitment to restoration work continues for the Kabekona and Necktie Rivers, please call John Sorenson (218-766-8696) if you are interested. John is also discussing additional projects with Park Rapids fisheries staff for the nine and seven mile stretches on the Straight River.

Kris Williams

Hiawatha Chapter

On January 6 we had John Van Vliet speak about the third addition of his book *Trout Fishing in Southeast Minnesota*. John also told some great stories and added great insight. Thanks again John.

February 3, doors open at 6:30 PM and the meeting will start at 7:00 PM. The meeting will be held at the VFW in NW Rochester. Speaker to be announced soon via the Hiawatha TU Facebook page and our members email. If you do not receive our email please let me know and I'll make sure you get on it. Also, remember to like our Facebook page.

March 2 will be our next members meeting. Same location and time. Again, speaker to be announced. Saturday, April 11 will be the HTU annual fundraiser. It

will be at the VFW again as it was last year. Details to follow. I hope all of you can make it.

In the last issue of the MNTU newsletter, I wrote a piece about volunteering your time on the board of directors of the Hiawatha TU board. HTU encourages all of our members to become a part of our great team. We need members at large, officers, and event coordinators as well. We are looking for new people with fresh ideas to help influence HTU. Contact me, Phil Pankow President of HTU. My cell is 507-273-0934 and my email is pankow.phil0615@gmail.com. Make your ideas count and share your enthusiasm for our trout streams with our large membership.

Phil Pankow

Twin Cities Chapter

As 2019 has come to a close and 2020 is upon us, it is rewarding to look back on the accomplishments for the year. The Twin Cities TU chapter has a lot to be proud about. First, we headed into 2019 with strong leadership and some new faces. Our membership broke the 2,000 member threshold and is climbing. This brings us to be one of the largest chapters in the country! It is exciting to see new faces joining our group at every chapter meeting, outreach event, and volunteer habitat day.

As our chapter continues to grow, the Board has realized the importance of creating new paths and formalized ways for getting our goals accomplished. With this in mind, a TCTU Strategic Plan was created and adopted. We took a hard look at our bylaws that needed updating, as well as how to improve our communications to the members. In 2019, the Board spent several hours updating the bylaws, cleaning up membership files, updating the website, organizing our financial reporting, and getting more connected in the social media realm. A special thanks goes out to Bob Luck and Kurt Lach for spearheading this venture. It takes a great deal of time, and thanks to others who have helped us in our efforts. Watch soon for a revitalized web-

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site and continued communications via email and Facebook. We realize that we have a wide range of users, so we want to provide resources for all to find out current information and upcoming calendar events.

Speaking of calendar events, 2019 brought a wide array of great speakers and fun outreach events for our chapter! From renowned artist Bob White, to learning about groundwater impacts to our streams from Minnesota researchers, to DNR biologists—we were able to share current information pertaining to habitat and fishing experiences to our membership. In November, we hosted the 3rd Annual Holiday Fish Camp, which brought a large audience from not only the Twin Cities, but International Falls and surrounding states! It was so fun to meet people from all walks of life and backgrounds interested in learning how to fish. A special thanks goes out to Benji Kohn, our chapter events coordinator, his committee, the speakers and volunteers. It takes a lot of work to organize a three-day event like this, but it is well worth the time and effort.

Notice: The 4th Annual Fish Camp event will be held the first weekend in December 2020, once again at White Water State Park. Mark your calendars! Check our updated calendar for chapter meetings and speakers, fly fishing events, and our summer Family Fish Camp at For-estville State Park!

Our December Holiday Social at Summit Brewing was a huge success! Chapter members gathered to celebrate 2019. Several groups were asked to host a table and share information pertaining to: new technology on maps of fishing streams, veteran volunteer opportunities, the risks of using lead in fishing tackle, habitat work, new initiatives for 2020, and volunteer education opportunities. Many members brought their old fishing equipment to be rehabbed for future veteran fishing programs. Connections were made, information was shared and the TCTU Board was able to share their gratitude. Everyone does such hard work to ensure the protection of coldwater resources and our love of the sport is shared with others.

Hay Creek work planning is underway, as well as buckthorn removal on Eagle Creek. We are always looking for volunteer cooks and certified sawyers to operate the chainsaws. We hope to plant trees and shrubs on the South Branch of the Vermillion this spring and welcome youth and families to take part in the fun! Due to the flooding last spring, many projects were delayed. Even in light of the flooding, 7,200 feet of the South Branch of the Vermillion was restored. By narrowing the creek and through a variety of methods, our habitat work has improved the flow and increased habitat for macroinvertebrates and fish reproduction. It is reported that fish populations have increased and discussions are underway for potential reintroduction of the native brook trout in the creek. Look for details on upcoming habitat events!

On behalf of the TCTU Board, a heartfelt thank you goes out to the dedicated board members: Mark Johnson, Mike Fitzgerald, Rob Noirjean, Josh Mancell and Bob White who will be officially stepping off the board this January. Your hard work, countless volunteer hours and continued support have got this chapter to where it is today. We look forward to your involvement on our committees, seeing you at events and wish you our best.

TCTU is looking forward to seeing our members at the Expo in March. If you are interested in joining our board committees, please contact Janine Kohn at: j9kohn@yahoo.com. Until then, we hope Groundhog Phil gives us the thumbs up for an early spring, less flooding and more fantastic days on the water!

Janine Kohn

Win-Cres Chapter

Our major event for Win-Cres this fall was a November fundraising event. We were successful in raising over \$5,000. About half of that was from a bamboo rod raffle. Steve Sobieniak of the Root River Rod Company in Lanesboro built and donated the rod. Steve is a strong TU supporter and plans to donate one rod per year to area TU chapters. We are grateful to him.

Access to improved areas on local streams continues to be a concern. The amount of money the DNR offers for walk-in easements is modest. A potential easement on Rush Creek would be worth about \$600 to \$700 dollars. This is often not enough to interest landowners. Win-Cres is making an offer, which would more than double the return for one landowner, in hopes of securing a permanent easement. A section has come up for sale on Garvin Brook which could include access to an improved area. We are hopeful that The Nature Conservancy will purchase this plot and secure an easement.

This fall there was a fish kill on Garvin Brook. Every fish in the Farmer's Park section and upstream died. Fortunately, inflow from Peterson Creek diluted the toxins and the fish population below Farmer's Park had little impact. In October and November, over 60 redds were observed in Farmer's Park, making us optimistic for a quick recovery. The fish kill was associated with a big rain event and likely involved the washing of chemicals or manure into the stream. State agencies have not concluded their investigation.

Winter will bring outreach activities, as our members engage the next generation in fly tying, fly casting, and fishing strategies.

Chuck Shepard



THE TCTU CHAPTER'S 3RD ANNUAL FISH CAMP THIS PAST DECEMBER WAS HELD AT WHITEWATER STATE PARK. IT WAS WELL ATTENDED AND FUN WAS HAD BY ALL!

SELECT POETRY

By Larry Gavin

Vespers: Pine Creek

**An eagle circles above the valley
teasing currents, exploring space
and air. Below, I kneel trying
to remove my profile, remove myself,
from the scene, I am small, barely
significant. Last year's mint bruised
beneath my knees, a weaker scent
here in March than summer,
an incense rich and tonal.
There are trout too, going on about their
business, rising, regular as a metronome.**

**My lectionary selected from the great text
of current and light, indeed, lights make their
way down a winding road, too. In the barnyard,
upstream, a gate squeaks, buckets clatter,
a voice talks quietly to the cows lined
at the door to the milking parlor. The fish
take my midge occasionally, rising
to this occasion as if in prayer themselves.**

**The darkness
hints at what's to come. I embrace it,
like a call to return home.**

Larry Gavin is a poet from Faribault, Minnesota. He is the author of five books of poetry. His newest, A Fragile Shelter: New and Selected Poems, is available in 2019 from Red Dragonfly Press. www.redragonflypress.org



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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 to receive the next issue arriving in February!

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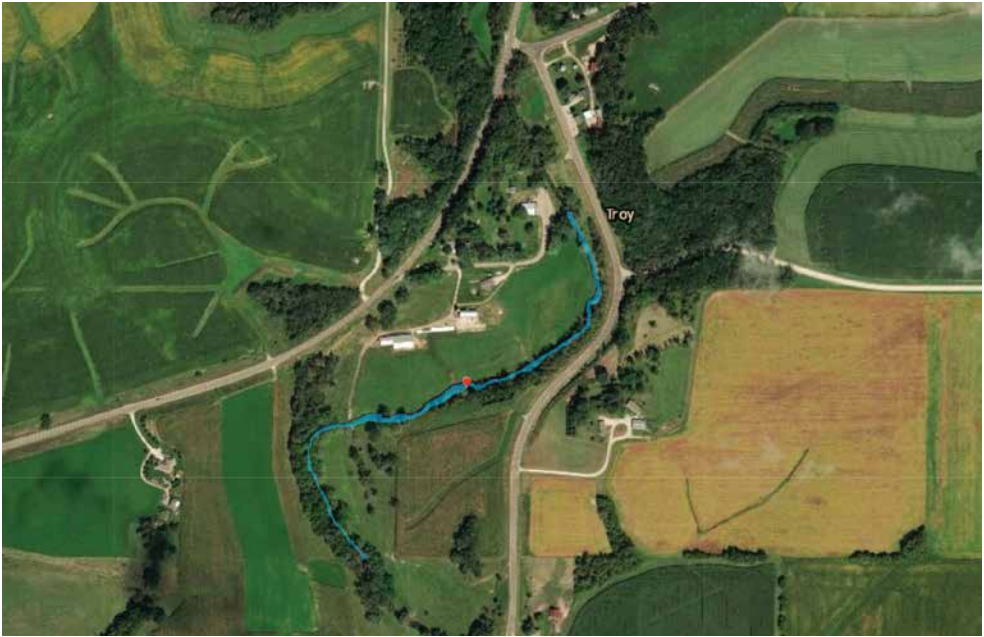
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CHECK OUT THE PROJECT MAP ON MNTU.ORG FOR A LOOK AT HIGHLIGHTED STRETCHES OF HABITAT IMPROVED WATER. THIS PARTICULAR SECTION IS ON TROUT RUN NEAR TROY, MN.

REELING IT IN
LOOKING FOR NEW WATER

By Mike "Kid" Riemer

Like many of you, I do enjoy getting to know a particular stream or river, or certain sections of it, by fishing there often. Fishing the same location throughout a year, or years, can give you special insights as to what works, and when, that you would otherwise be hard pressed to learn.

There are however plenty of times when I want to fish new water. Water that I don't know, that is foreign to me, that offers a surprise riffle or pool when you turn the bend. Moving to new water can also sometimes bring you solitude and less competition from other anglers, but that certainly can't be guaranteed.

This past August I learned of a fine resource for finding new water: the Habitat Improvement Projects by Chapter map on mntu.org. My understanding is that this map was created and developed by none other than the editor of this publication, Jade Thomason.

Now, I'm far from a technical wizard, but even I have figured out some of the exciting features and opportunities it offers. So, keep reading, but also fire up your cellphone or computer, go to mntu.org, and click on "Projects." Scroll down until you see a map of Minnesota, divided into six colored segments, each representing a different chapter's turf.

See all those red dots? Well, zoom in a bit and you'll see there are even more. Pick one and zoom in quite close on it. Click on the red dot and a box will open telling you the name of the project and the year it was started.

Click on the stream or river anywhere relatively near the dot and you will see it now highlights in bright blue. That

highlight reflects the exact habitat area that was worked on in that project. Note how you can really zoom in on this map, enough to identify roads and key features. Using this resource, along with Google Maps, can easily let you plan a trip to a destination that you perhaps have not yet fished, or possibly never even heard of.

This past September I put this map to good use on two visits to a stream I'd previously never heard of: Trout Brook in Dakota County. On my first visit, I didn't look closely at where MNTU had previously done habitat improvement work, and dropped out of cell service, parked the car, spotted a brown immediately and set to fishing. A few hours of fishing overgrown brushy water and some significant bushwhacking later, I was back at my car and wondering what decade this habitat had supposedly been done in.

Back in the world of the internet, I decided to take a closer look, and realized I'd been a few miles from the improved habitat area. That presented me a fresh opportunity for a renewed mission to see that part of the creek, and what a delight it was.

The work done by MNTU was plainly visible and I enjoyed a beautiful fall day trying for small brookies and larger browns. Fishing these improved habitat areas also benefits MNTU. Improving a resource is great, but improving a resource and having people want to use it is even better.

So, this season, as spring eventually rolls around, open up mntu.org and take a good look at that Projects map. You just may find a new piece of water.



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 the work necessary to obtain grants to fund our stream restoration and environmental education programs, **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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