

TROUT UNLIMITED MINNESOTA

The Official Publication of Minnesota Trout Unlimited - November 2017



Creatures of the Night
Volunteering on the Vermillion
Stream Habitat Improvement in MN
Dakota County's Trout Brook
2018 Fly Fishing Film Showcase Details
Fear of Change

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P.O. Box 845
Chanassen, MN 55317-0845

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U.S. POSTAGE
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PERMIT NO. 281
ROCHESTER, MN

ON THE COVER

Twin Cities Chapter Member Micah Crider with a huge nighttime brown trout. Hear about his adventures in the dark and how to set out on your own mission to find giant brown trout in the night on page 8. Photo by Abigail Crider.

IN THIS ISSUE

- Habitat Improvement in MN
- Brook Trout in Dakota County
- Mentorship Update
- 2018 Expo Speakers
- And much more!

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MINNESOTA COUNCIL UPDATE

Time on the Water

By Steve Carlton, Minnesota Council Chair

Hello my angler friends and conservation aficionados, welcome to another wonderful edition of the Trout Unlimited Newsletter. MNTU Continues to stay very active. This edition is loaded with everything you need to know about trout in Minnesota and what we are doing to protect them and their watersheds. You will also find stories on TU partnerships, youth education, fly tying tips, places to fish and ways for you to get involved in Trout Unlimited.

Personally, I have been able to get out much more this year than the last few years. I started the year with a few trips over to the Rush River in western Wisconsin with my buddies. In May, I was able to fish in Ireland for a few hours on a trip I did with my wife, Amy. There is nothing like catching native brown trout in some of the most scenic places in that beautiful country. During the summer, I guided five different parties that were

high bidders on donations I gave to a few fundraisers. The Trico hatch in September was off the hook, so that got me out four weekends in a row...once with my family! Watching my nine year old daughter catch a brown trout made a father proud. Recently, I got up to the Bois Brule to hook a steelhead. Yes, hook one - not land one. Though it was fun while it lasted.

Also in September, MNTU Executive Director, John Lenczewski and I attended the Trout Unlimited National Meeting in Roanoke, Virginia. I have been attending these meetings since 2005, with a short break in 2015 and 2016. This meeting wasn't as spirited as some of the others. The Annual Meeting celebrates the accomplishments of TU Councils and TU Chapters all over the country and one of the main topics was the re-immersion of the pebble mine threat in the headwaters of Bristol Bay in Alaska. That area provides the world's largest supply of



salmon. Other issues that worry us are the selling of public lands and reducing the places we like to fish, and, as always, climate change is something we need to address.

If you have an interest in volunteering with Trout Unlimited on the state level or in your local chapter, we'd love to have you. There is always room for you and you no doubt have something to add to make MNTU better.

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LOOKING AT PLANS FOR OUR RECENTLY COMPLETED HABITAT WORK ALONG THE SOUTH BRANCH OF THE ROOT RIVER IN PRESTON, MINNESOTA. READ ABOUT HOW WE DESIGN OUR HABITAT WORK ON PAGE 10. HAL TEARSE PHOTO

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Habitat Volunteers Needed More Than Ever

By John Lenczewski, MNTU Executive Director

By putting Outdoor Heritage Funds to work restoring and enhancing trout and steelhead habitat around the state, every year we are improving vastly more degraded habitat than we did a decade ago. At the same time the science of stream habitat restoration is progressing, adding improved techniques and new tools to our toolbox. Older approaches and tools are not being thrown out, rather we are taking a hard look at each individual site and asking whether another approach might work better there, or at least as well while providing variety for 110,000+ diverse trout and steelhead anglers. One size does not fit all project sites, nor all anglers' preferences.

Recent conversations with TU members touring southeast habitat projects confirmed that most members and anglers are unfamiliar with the factors considered when designing effective, durable fish habitat. This newsletter begins a series of articles intended to provide a basic framework for understanding why each habitat project uses certain methods

and not others. We'll also explain why newly "completed" projects typically need another year or two for vegetation establishment and floods to sort sediments. Presentations are also planned for upcoming chapter meetings.

As project designs continue to evolve to incorporate lessons learned and the miles of restored habitat grows, the role of volunteers is evolving too. Some projects may incorporate fewer man-made "lunker structures," but we need at least as many volunteers to help install erosion control blankets, seed, plant and protect trees, control invasives, trim/tweak installed wood features, remove trees deposited by floods, perform inspections and make small repairs.

We also need many more volunteers directly engaged in our habitat work as monitors of completed projects. A few individuals have been covering an ever increasing number of miles of restored habitat. This is rewarding, essential work, but time consuming. Sign up to visiting one site in 2018, and learn



some new water in the process. Or volunteer to visit a couple. Or become a River Steward for one stream and check it each spring and after floods. By February we'll have a smart phone app to quickly fill out a basic inspection report, attach a photo and submit, as well as a template for email reporting. Volunteer, or get more details, by sending an e mail to monitor@mntu.org

See details in the "Habitat Helpers Needed" box on page 19.

Thank you for helping!



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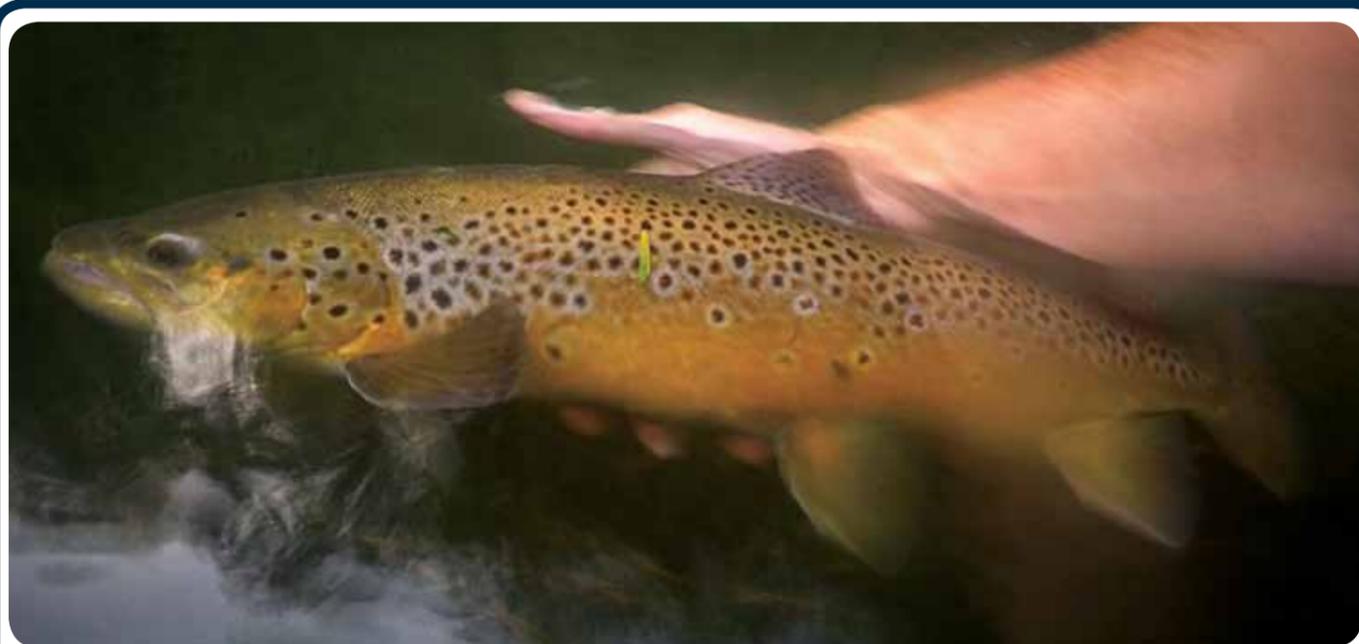
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A DRIFTLESS BROWN FROM EARLIER THIS FALL. READ "FEAR OF CHANGE" TO LEARN MORE ON PAGE 4
HANSI JOHNSON PHOTO

EDITOR'S ANGLE

Sharing Trout Unlimited

By Carl Haensel, Editor

High up above Lake Superior in the northland, it looks like winter has arrived early this year. Snow is on the ground and a stiff wind has started biting in the mornings as I get ready to head fishing for steelhead. It's this time of the year, when the days shorten and the nights grow cold that we have the opportunity to work on growing our TU chapters and planning both events for the winter and habitat improvement for the summer. As you read this issue and look at photos of giant trout, restored streams and beautiful scenery, consider sharing your copy of TUMN with a friend, family member or coworker. Spread the word about TU broadly, along with the opportunities contained in here to get together throughout the colder months in Minnesota.

If you're interested in playing a larger role, we invite you to get in touch and talk about being involved with the Expo, writing for TUMN, or playing one of the many "behind the scenes" roles that make TU chapters and the state board hum as we go about conserving, protecting, restoring and enhancing our streams and rivers around Minnesota. There are plenty of threats on the horizon for us to be aware of, and we need all hands on deck to play a role as we move forward. Read in the following pages about some of the volunteer opportunities that members have found, as well as ones that they've went out and sought, some local and some far and wide, spreading the word about Minnesota Trout Unlimited.

I hope to get to see many of you at events throughout the winter,



FEAR OF CHANGE

Trout, Habitat and Growing Up in the Driftless

By Hansi Johnson



ANOTHER NICE DRIFTLESS MINNESOTA BROWN TROUT

As a kid, I was extremely lucky to have lived literally on a great spring creek trout stream in southeastern Minnesota. As a family we moved into our home in 1980. At that time, the stream was in a really serious state of affairs. We lived on a bluff above an old stone mill with an amazing mill pond and this pond was covered in watercress and was teeming with fat brown trout. A year after we moved in, a massive flood destroyed a large chunk of the village, killed the mill pond and also damaged the mill itself. The pond never recovered to the state it had been. It was re-established eventually, but the watercress never returned and now the pond is just a large shallow body of water that is warm and mostly holds sunfish, of all things. The stream itself was totally blown out. Downstream of the village, I remember vividly fishing through debris that were pushed down by the destruction of the flood. A lot of personal belongings and other effects that, in some

cases, myself or my friends actually returned to the folks whom we knew had lost them. Fishing in the stream at that point was full combat. There was a lot of wood in the water, many cutbacks and also plenty of sandy shallows. We were kids, we loved it and we caught some decent fish. But I also remember walking long stretches of that stream and passing them up because they clearly did not hold fish.

I think I was 13 or 14 when Trout Unlimited and the MN DNR started doing stream work in the valley. My grandfather on my mother's side had been good friends with several members of the TU chapter and Izaak Walton League in town. My grandfather died too early, and as a result was not the guy who was able to show me the ropes when it came to trout fishing. His buddies did however, and they took the initiative when they saw my interest to get me involved and, between them and my mother and father encouraging me to check it out, I

became involved with TU as a kid.

That summer, the Hiawatha Chapter of TU and the MN DNR started working on two streams in the valley where I lived and did some great volunteer days of which I attended. I remember two things vividly. One was the MN DNR inviting us all to witness an electro-shocking study. That blew me away as I was able to see the fish in the stream for the first time. I saw where they were hiding, how big and how small they were, and how many resided in each hole. I saw fish I had only dreamed about and realized I had been fishing past and missing many of them all along. I also saw how some of the grown-up TU members were concerned with some of the methods used by TU and the DNR on some streams. They felt it was going to be too invasive and not be good for the fish, and thus the fishing. It was an open question as to the future results of the work. To say the least, people were concerned, but also many of the local fisherman, who were not involved with TU, were simply

pissed off. I was 13. I did not give a damn, as long as I could catch fish!

That all mentioned, I recently spent a solid four-day stint in the Driftless Area this fall, 30-some years later. So much has changed since I was a child. First, the fishing seasons themselves have changed. There were no catch and release or special regulations when I was a kid. Now there is a fall season, a winter season and some of the streams are open darn near year round. That is so awesome!

You can almost be a year-round trout angler in SE Minnesota these days. What a dream. I still mourn every season closure up here in the NE along the North Shore and near Duluth where I live. The other thing that has totally changed is the number of trout stream easements that TU and the MN DNR have worked with landowners to add, both in mileage and in numbers of streams. This is massive. There are so many accessible stretches of river now it almost makes you dizzy. That was not the case as a kid. I needed to know a guy, who knew a guy. Which as a local was easy, but as an outsider was impossible.

Lastly of course is the that the early work that TU and the MN DNR have done both around Aquatic Management Areas and also stream restoration are fully paying off. Not only are there more fish in the region then when I was a kid, there are much, much larger fish in the region. An 18 plus inch fish in the 1980's was like a unicorn. If somebody caught one, the whole town was a buzz. This trip down I tricked two fish over 20 inches and saw at least two more that were in that class. More importantly, the other fish I caught averaged a stout 16 to 17 inches. That is solid, solid fishing my friends and that is the pay-off that those habitat improvement projects are reaping. All that griping, all that bellyaching, all that BS I was hearing from the locals



A NORMAL MORNING IN SE MN



SUNRISE IN THE DRIFTLESS

back in my youth has been clearly put in its place. That fear of change was a waste of energy. I don't think a serious fisherman on the Minnesota side of the Driftless can seriously doubt that the work the MN DNR and TU have done has not been anything but spectacular in its results.

My whole professional career has been built on helping areas establish themselves as great places to live and recreate, but I have to admit, if you're a fly fisherman and, better yet, a trout fisherman, the quality of life in SE Minnesota is damn near heaven on earth at this time.

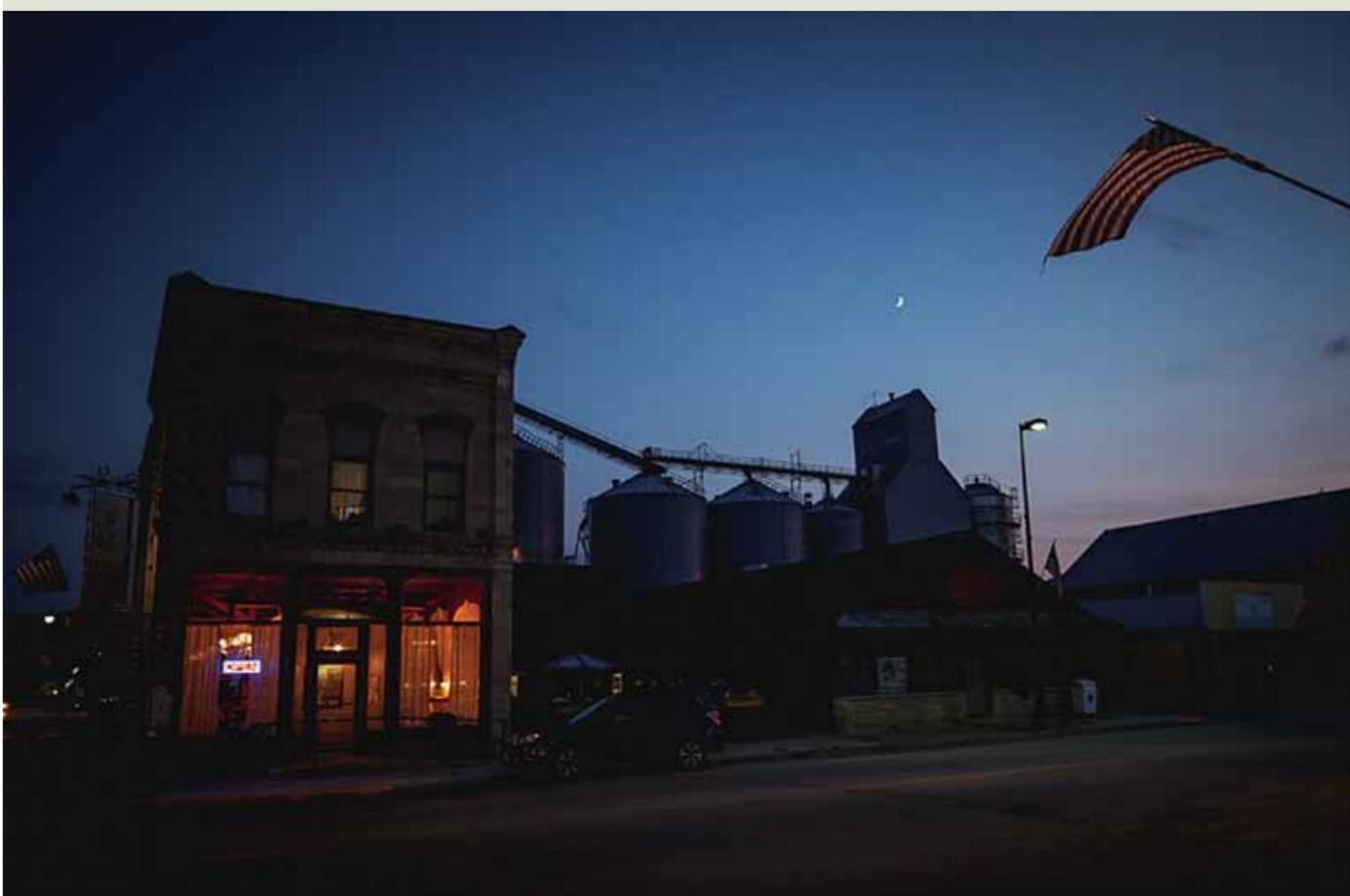
Case in point, I spent a solid Sunday fishing on three different streams, all within a 15 minute drive of each other. All of these offered easy access and amazing fishing. Fish were gulping hoppers and slamming streamers in the early morning and late evening. I had my biggest fish of the day come zinging out of brush pile from three feet away to fully engulf a large streamer I was tossing just for that purpose. It was so fast and so violent, I actually jumped from surprise and yet I somehow still managed to strip-set and make it happen.

That night I drove over to Rushford and met my parents for a really fun dinner at Il Luigi, a family style Italian Cafe.

The food was awesome, the cost is reasonable, and the place was not crowded. I thought to myself how I had seen only ONE person fishing the entire day, caught some truly nice fish, and then was eating food and drinking a cold beer in a nice place for very little money. Those experiences belong to the Midwest, and SE Minnesota has created a really amazing and unique version of it. This version is based around trout fishing and that is due to many things, but absolutely the TU and MN DNR early work has made the fishing part of this experience world-class. Hats off to them.

I lived it and I can attest to the fact that your work has made an impact.

Editor's Note: Hansi Johnson is the Director of Recreational Lands for the Minnesota Land Trust in the City of Duluth. His work focuses on assisting the City of Duluth in identifying, securing and promoting its nature-based recreational assets. Prior to joining the Land Trust, Hansi was the Regional Director for the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). He also spent 12 years in sales and marketing for such companies as Patagonia, Wenonah Canoe and Garmont USA.



IL LUIGI, RUSHFORD MINNESOTA. TREAT YOURSELF. IT'S SO WORTH IT.



JOE'S HOPPER

EXPLORING OUR HABITAT WORK: TROUT BROOK

Restoring a Wild Brook Trout Stream Near the Twin Cities

By Tony Nelson



A NEWLY RESTORED REACH OF TROUT BROOK IN DAKOTA COUNTY, HOME TO WILD BROOK TROUT. PLAN TO STOP BY AND VISIT THIS NEXT TROUT SEASON.

The Twin Cities Chapter of Trout Unlimited and MNTU have been working with Dakota County's Park Department for several years to restore part of Trout Brook. Trout Brook is a native brook trout stream that runs through the 1600-acre park reserve in southern Dakota County near Miesville, Minnesota. In fact, the park is essentially the valley that was formed by the creek. This was considered un-farmable due to the valley's narrowness. It is surrounded by tall bluffs and is very slender at the top of the park and widens out at the bottom where Trout Brook runs into the Cannon River. The result is a landscape that has been virtually unchanged since the coming of settlers in the 1800's. It was never logged or tilled. The lower part of the park was used as pasture in the 1970's. It is surrounded by farmland and has a history of intense flooding due to the runoff coming from the surrounding fields. This has caused many delays in starting our restoration efforts. Trout Brook is a small, cold, and extremely clear spring-fed creek that has a good population of brook trout (3500 per mile, according to the DNR) and some brown trout that run up the creek from the Cannon River. Average water temperatures in the summer are in the mid 50's.

In the fall of 2016, we did our initial stream walks with staff members from the County Parks Department and the DNR on about 4000 feet of Trout Brook at the top of the park. Due to the intense flooding events, we felt it would be easier to start at the top where the stream is smaller and we could create an environment that would soften the effects of a large rain event as it raced through the park. Once the actual stretch of stream was chosen, we hired an engineering firm to assist us on creat-

ing a plan for the physical work to be done. These plans went through a number of refinements and in the late spring of 2017, the plans were finalized. Due to a wet spring we started in June and completed our project in late July. Most of the work done involved taking down high banks, installing some woody habitat and creating a number of pools with large rocks for scouring and providing trout the hiding places they needed. Before our work, the creek was extremely shallow and wide with a few pools that were usually packed with small brookies. We narrowed the stream width by 2/3 and the fish now have plenty of habitat to grow to a larger size. Rocky cobble was also added for improved reproduction.

Another issue that the stream currently has is a filamentous algae bloom in the late winter and late summer. We are continuing to do research on the cause of these blooms. Early findings are showing the cause could be large amounts of nitrates coming out of the many springs that run into the creek. Trout brook and its springs have the highest concentrations of nitrates in all of Dakota County. TCTU plans to continue restoring the remainder of the creek in the park over the next few years.

One note to anyone who would like to fish the creek is that Dakota County is not part of the southeast Minnesota group of counties that have the extended seasons and also has no winter season. Check state regulations for proper fishing dates.

Editors Note: Looking to get involved in this project moving forward and others around the state? Sign up via email today. Look on page 19 for more details.



WILD BROOK TROUT WITH BRILLIANT COLORS ABOUND IN TROUT BROOK



SURVEY WORK PRIOR TO RESTORATION ON TROUT BROOK. NOTE THE SHALLOW WATER, EVEN AFTER A RAIN EVENT DISCOLORED THE STREAM.

MNTU EDUCATION UPDATE

A Full Summer and Fall of Education Programming Around the State

By Benji Kohn

MNTU's education program "Connecting Students with their Watersheds through Hands-on Learning" had a busy summer and a great start to the new school year. We finished up last year with 16 schools, over 4,000 students and some 2,300 trout released!

Over the summer months, we held 25 events with 1,300 people joining us out on Twin Cities area lakes and streams to learn about fishing, casting, and macro invertebrates. On August 14th and 15th, we held our annual teacher training at Dodge Nature Center, with a record 26 teachers in attendance!

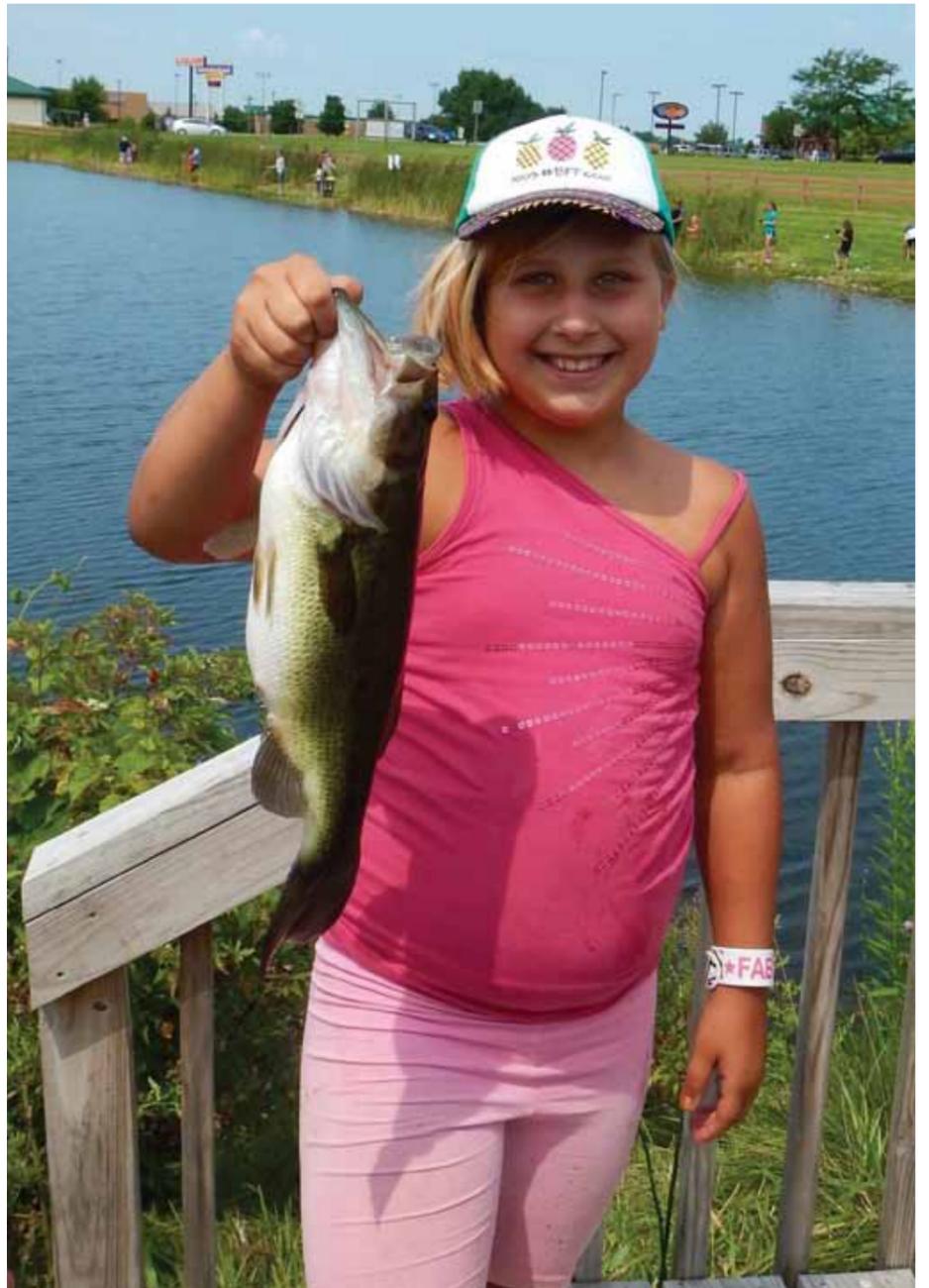
Currently, for the 2017/18 school year, we have 23 schools participating (16 in the metro area) and two nature centers (Dodge Nature Center and Belwin Conservancy). Already this fall, we've held 16 field events teaching over 4,100 students about their watersheds, fishing, fly fishing, macro-invertebrates and groundwater. One thing the education program is really working on this year is developing mentors. Two of our high school teachers, Bruce Frutiger at Century in Rochester and Jon Gilmer at Lakeville South have done a great job educating their students about trout and empower-

ing them to be guides and mentors for some of our elementary school participants in the program. I think both the high school and the elementary school students are getting more out of this relationship than anyone thought!

In the coming weeks, 8,700 trout eggs will be shipped out to schools across the state giving thousands of students the opportunity to see, first-hand, the miracle of trout life. They will learn how to care for them, what they need in the wild to survive, what they eat, how groundwater plays an important role in their critical habitat, and how they can affect their fishes' future chances of survival by actions in their watersheds today.

The success and growth of this program has been tremendous and we couldn't do it without the support of the LCCMR and a state ENRTF grant, the MNDNR and amazing partners and volunteers across the state. Keep your fingers crossed for another round of ENRTF grant funding next year so we can keep this great program going for another three years.

Here's to a successful 2018, educating students, connecting communities, and changing lives!



A NICE LARGEMOUTH BASS CAUGHT AT A FISHING PROGRAM IN OWATONNA



A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT MENTORS AN ELEMENTARY STUDENT IN THE ART OF FLY TYING.



A HIGH SCHOOL MENTOR TEACHING THE FINER POINTS OF FLY CASTING



TUNE CAMP PARTICIPANTS ON THE SOUTH BRANCH OF THE ROOT RIVER



AN ENTHUSED GROUP PLANTING NATIVE PLANTS TO HELP KEEP RUN-OFF IN CHECK BY INSTALLING A RAIN GARDEN IN ST. LOUIS PARK

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

Finding and Catching Giant Brown Trout After Dark

By Micah Crider



It's a cool September night. Dark, with the exception of the light provided by the nearly full moon. All is quiet except for the occasional pestering mosquito and the pack of coyotes across the creek celebrating a fresh kill. We don't talk much, instead we focus on the task at hand: trying to limit the noise we add to our surroundings. Concentration is crucial in these circumstances; it can happen at any point and when it does, you better be ready. You see, we don't do this because it's comfortable or enjoyable, we do it for the potential reward and the chance to witness something not commonly seen, especially in our area.

We move up the stream, and the casting becomes repetitive. We are entering what I like to call "robot mode." Many of my big fish-chasing friends know this point, where you've made so many casts with no result that you start to lose focus. We've been at it for hours and are approaching the end of the stretch. Then... it happens.

"Fish on," he yells with a sort of excitement, yet anxiousness, "Big fish!" The focus that was waning is now locked in as he battles the creature at the end of his line. We haven't seen it yet, but we know it is what we came here for. As I flip my headlamp on, I immediately become anxious myself, knowing that I need to ensure this beast successfully makes it into my net. You see, netting a trophy fish for someone is a lot of pressure, because you don't want to be responsible for losing a fish like this. I'm patient, making sure to move in at just the right moment and successfully land the fish. We interrupt the coyotes with audible cheers and high fives, snap a few photos and release her back into the dark water from which she came. Just like that, the night resumes to its homeostasis and we begin the trek back to the truck. It was a good night.

This story recaps just one of my many night fishing experiences this past season. Night fishing is not new, but is a technique that many of my friends, my wife and I have adopted in recent years. It isn't comfortable or relaxing like most daytime outings tend to

be, instead it's tense and often spooky. Raging mosquitoes, angry beavers, dangling spiders, mud and the unknown around you are all realities when you're night fishing. Many people ask why I do it, and I've often asked myself that question as well. The same thing that hinders many people from going out after dark is the same thing that keeps me out past dark—the unknown. I am by no means an expert on targeting trout after dark, but I have done it enough to observe a few tips to share with those who might be considering night fishing:

Rod and Leader

I prefer to use a rod in the 6-8wt range. I've found that the trout I've caught at night are not leader shy. They see the fly and attack. In most cases I use a leader in the 5ft range ending with straight 10lb Maxima leader material.

Bugs Can be Awful

Some of the worst mosquitoes I have experienced have been during night fishing. I would highly recommend wearing a buff over your face, as well as long sleeves. I also wear casting gloves because any exposed skin will be found.

Fish Familiar Water

I always recommend people fish water that they are familiar with at night. When it's dark, it's hard to tell what you are wading into. You won't necessarily know if there is a deep hole ahead, or an unseen stump or rock that will trip you. Familiar water also helps reduce much of that anxiety that naturally comes from being out in the dark.

Obey Your Local Fishing Regulations

Different states have different curfews for trout fishing. Do your research and make sure that you are fishing during legal hours.

Fish Flies That Move Water

I've been most successful when I use bigger flies that cause a commotion when fished. When night fishing, the goal is to target large trout. Most of these fish are not out looking for a small bug, they're looking for meat. I like to use flies such as mice or large streamers that push water and draw the attention of these predators. Don't be afraid to fish these flies with some aggression, but be open to changing your retrieve based on what you find is working.

Plan Your Casting Lanes

If you think getting your fly caught in a tree or on the bank is frustrating in the



DREW WITH THE GIANT BROWN TROUT LANDED AT THE BEGINNING OF THE ARTICLE

day, it's worse at night. Pay attention to your surroundings and make sure you have a casting lane before throwing your fly. Limit your false casts as much as possible. The less time your fly spends in the air, the less the chance you will end up in a tree. Remember, the cover of darkness will often allow you to get closer to these fish at night than you would during the day without spooking them. You don't need to worry about making extremely long casts, most of my casts at night range from 10–20 feet.

Don't Get Trigger Happy

It isn't uncommon for a trout to swipe at your fly, but not fully commit. When this happens, don't get trigger happy. If you hear a strike, but don't feel any tension, keep stripping, often the fish will return for another attempt. If you rip your fly out of the water after hearing the first swipe, you may spook the fish or your fly may end up in the tree behind you. A good way to prevent this is to always strip-set.

Pay Attention to Your Fly

I often see people starting to lose concentration as their fly is approaching them. I can't tell you how many times a trout has followed my fly all the way to where I am standing and strikes at

the last second. If your fly is in the water, don't lose focus, because a strike can come at any moment.

Fish With a Partner

I always try to go with someone if I'm out after dark. You never know what may happen, so it's always smart to have someone else with you in case of emergency. If nothing else, having a partner will keep the nerves down and your mind at ease. They also come in handy as a photographer when you land your monster.

Light

You'll want to make sure you have a working headlamp, I don't think this needs much more explanation. We use the light when walking to and from the stream, but fish with the light off. You'll also want to make sure you have a camera with a flash to take a picture of your catch!

Night fishing is a unique experience that heightens your senses and allows you to notice little sounds and details that you may not catch during a day trip. If you're looking for a relaxing and peaceful outing, it may not be for you, but if you're looking for an adrenaline fix, it may be just what you need. Who knows, maybe our headlamps will cross paths someday.



ABIGAIL CRIDER WITH A GREAT NIGHTTIME BROWN TROUT

PROMOTING TU FAR AND WIDE

Reaching Out with the Headwaters Chapter

By Bob Wagner

The connection between the North Cascades of Washington, a Fly Shop by Lake Superior, a man from International Falls, and Fly Shop in Perham, Minnesota is a story worth telling. In 24 years, Headwaters Chapter 642 has never witnessed such a unique outreach of TU promotion that over a dozen volunteers accomplished this year.

This cadre of enthusiastic volunteers includes Jim McCracken. Eight months ago, Jim found out that he and his wife were accepted to serve a one-year residency at Holden Village high up in the Cascade Mountains of Washington state. Jim requested assistance from our TU Board in teaching fly tying to residents and visitors at Holden Village. Our Board agreed to loan out 13 fly tying kits along with a supply of tying materials. Thanks to the support of our state TU Board, all chapters had the option to receive additional fly tying kits which made the loan decision easy. Jim also needed tying materials, which brings in a major contribution from a shop north of Duluth called "Fisherman's Corner." Tom, a well-known and gracious fly tyer, works at Fisherman's Corner and donated tying materials to both our youth and adult fly tying programs. Part of this donation was given to Jim to be used 1700 miles to the west at Holden Village. Jim's thank you letter to our board included a participation record of 209 youth and adults. Thanks to Tom, Fisherman's Corner, our State TU Board, Chapter 642 and Holden Village, we are able to promote TU far and wide.

TU National's Women's Initiative and

Diversity Program is aimed at increasing membership and acknowledging that we need to be more open, inclusive and welcoming. This has spurred our board to support a Women's Fly Fishing Weekend. We hosted two workshops in June, 2016 and two more this summer, drawing participants far and wide. Forty participants benefited from both fly tying kits and fly rod kits obtained via our State Council. This equipment, especially those sweet TFO rods, greatly enhanced the quality of the ladies' learning experience. Without Val Wagner, chair of our chapter's Diversity Committee, this program would never have been implemented.

Fitting our story theme of "far and wide," this spring at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo, Cottonwood Camp on the Bighorn met Val and heard about our own "Almost Gourmet Women's Fly Fishing Weekend" events and wanted to see these replicated at Cottonwood. This was organized and in August another fun, successful workshop was concluded with camp owners Amy and Phil wanting Val back in Montana on the Bighorn next summer. Stay tuned ladies, Minnesota and Montana dates for 2018 will be announced in the New Year.

One of the exciting and dynamic aspects of fly tying is that an enthusiastic beginner can learn the basics and, within a few months, can be teaching new beginners. Don Graves from International Falls is a perfect example of an enthusiastic beginner. Don started fly tying at our Thursday tying nights and three months later he volunteered to work at our booth

at Great Waters. Great Waters was such a rewarding and positive experience that Don volunteered again to do another show in International Falls. At the show he promoted TU, signed up new members and taught 30 eager beginners to tie their first fly. Don Graves is an enthusiastic new member spreading the TU mission far and wide.

Three hundred miles south, Doug Harthan is another TU member and a guide, instructor, and fly shop owner in Perham, MN. He is a great advocate for warm and cold water species while supporting TU goals. Doug has been a speaker at a chapter meeting promoting exciting new fly fishing opportunities for smallmouth bass, carp and pike. Our chapter will be sponsoring special fly fishing and tying events with Doug on the Ottetail River.

Thinking through all these accomplishments of our members in the last nine months I realized that there is a significant common denominator. All of these volunteers attended Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo. In addition, this spring co-chairs John Lueth and Kris Williams, along with six other chapter volunteers, designed, constructed and effectively managed our first booth at the expo which taught 90+ participants to tie their first fly. All eight volunteers had a fabulous time and want to return. The Great Waters Expo has been a positive motivator for volunteer involvement, provides skill development, hands-on learning and is a dynamic state signature piece for all TU members. The Expo's importance and reach is monumental to all state chapters in promoting TU far and wide.



CHAPTER MEMBER JOHN LUETH TEACHING FLY TYING AT THE EXPO

MNTU'S STREAM HABITAT WORK IN MINNESOTA

How We Design Effective, Durable Habitat Improvement - Part 1

By John Lenczewski



FISHING ON A FULLY RESTORED REACH OF PINE CREEK IN SE MN. NOTE THE PHOTO OF THE ORIGINAL STREAM IN THE SAME LOCATION ON THE OPPOSITE PAGE.

This is the first in a series of articles exploring how MNTU and its chapters go about designing and implementing trout and steelhead habitat projects around the state. We'll begin by broadly examining our approach to design and the importance of flood flows, floodplains and accounting for each stream's need to transport its sediments. Later articles will examine the many constraints we work under (legal, land use, infrastructure, watershed conditions, site conditions, etc.), the different methods we use tailored to each project site, challenges of working in flood prone areas, efforts to provide diverse anglers with a mix of different styles of finishing touches and more. A key reality to keep in mind is that no single method or material is suitable for every project site. Rather we need to select "different tools from the toolbox" to

use at each site.

A Key Relationship Exists Between Stream Flow, Sediment and Channel Dimensions

At the risk of oversimplifying complex and dynamic systems, the channel dimensions of a healthy stream are able to accommodate the regular flood flows and efficiently transport the sediment load moving in the stream channel in such a way that it does not significantly build up sediment (aggradation) nor significantly erode down into the stream bed and banks (degradation). A balance exists between sediment transport, stream flow, stream slope and the size of sediments. However, historic changes in peak stream flows and sediment loads (due to clear cut logging, land clearing, farming on highly erodible hillsides,

etc.) have degraded most of our trout streams across the state and upset this balance. As a result, many stream channels are overly wide and contain excessive amounts of fine sediments such as sand and silt. To make matters worse, many stream channels no longer have good access to their floodplain and instead are confined between deep deposits of soils for the uplands, which continually erode and are redeposited a short distance downstream.

Consequently, a common approach on our habitat projects is to narrow the stream channel so sediment is transported through the project reach, while simultaneously lowering and sloping back streambanks to allow the stream to quickly access its floodplain in rising flows and reduce erosive stress on the outer bends. Of course securing soils

with vegetation to reduce sediment loads is a key objective on every project.

Accounting For Sediment Loads

Erosion is inevitable. Even the most pristine streams and rivers erode some material from their banks and beds. All streams and rivers must transport this erosional material from their headwaters downstream. Trout have evolved to take advantage of stream conditions shaped by moderate rates of erosion and sedimentation. The problem for trout, as well as water quality, is when degradation of a watershed leads to much higher flows (stream discharge), rates of erosion and sedimentation. Every watershed in which MNTU works to restore and improve, habitat has been degraded. In many cases historical land-use practices led to much greater flood volumes than



HAY CREEK PRE-PROJECT: AN OVERLY WIDE CHANNEL HAS FILLED WITH SAND, MAKING THE STREAM SHALLOW.



HAY CREEK POST-PROJECT: THE SAME LOCATION OF HAY CREEK, NARROWED AND REVEGETATED, NOW A DEEP RUN WITH A GRAVEL/COBBLE BOTTOM

stream channels could accommodate. Stream beds eroded, cutting down into the landscape as seen in the Pine Creek photo opposite, leaving steep eroding banks. In southeast Minnesota, huge volumes of fine sediment were deposited in valley bottoms, further trapping stream channels in tight, trough-like stream banks. These legacy sediments are continually re-eroding and covering habitat downstream.

Project designs must take into account the amount of sediment being transported into the project area from upstream (the “sediment load”) and be able to move this amount of sediment through the project reach. If stream channel dimensions are too wide, substantial amounts of sediment will be deposited in the project area, essentially filling in the channel and making it shallow. In some cases so much material is deposited that it raises the stream bed and creates a wide debris field through which low flows are spread out into shallow trickles. Large floods (“100 year events”, etc.) produce the most dramatic examples, but even the

the valley was narrow and then deposited the material downstream in pile of rubble as soon as the valley bottom widened out. (see the photo below)

Designing For Flood Level Flows

When anglers think of trout habitat, they typically are thinking about moderate and low flow habitat, rather than stream conditions during flood stage. But effective, durable in-stream habitat also requires designing for high flood flows. This is because it is the high flows which scour holes, move sediment and shape a stream’s channel. For this reason, the high flow at the point when the stream is just about to overflow its banks is referred to by scientists as the “channel forming flow.” MNTU and the stream design professionals we work with design habitat projects with flood flows in mind and we design to work with floods. We design the entire reach from the top down, not isolated banks, always mindful that flood energy must go somewhere downstream. We actually anticipate, harness and direct the power of periodic



PINE CREEK PRE-PROJECT: A DOWNCUT STREAM CHANNEL IS TRAPPED BETWEEN TOWERING ERODING SOIL BANKS OVER 10 FEET HIGH.



For example, the rock and log cross vane structures in the photograph below extend well into the banks and are designed to roll high flows into the center of the stream. This takes stress off the stream banks, but also scours deep pools for trout and steelhead. We also utilize them at the tops and bottoms of project sites for their added benefit as grade control structures preventing the down-cutting action of severe floods from working upstream into a project reach.

The Importance of Restoring Floodplains to Reduce Destructive Energy

The key to maintaining a stream channel that will both provide good habitat and effectively transport sediment through a project reach is ensuring that a rising stream can quickly get out of its banks and utilize its floodplain to release flood energy (and fine sediment) there, rather than tearing apart stream banks. The erosive stress of water against stream

low note that a floodplain was recreated which permits high flows to quickly get outside the channel and dissipate energy across the floodplain.

On Pine Creek severe flooding had caused the stream bed to cut more than 10 feet down into the landscape so that flows from even major flood events could no longer release their energy onto the former floodplain. Here large amounts of streamside soil were removed and low floodplain terraces created so that high flows can quickly spread onto this new floodplain and protect the in-stream habitat from being blown out. Note the low banks on either side of the angler on the photo on the opposite page.

You should now have a basic understanding of why we must design habitat projects to efficiently move sediments through a project reach, the role channel width and flood flows plays in this, how

routine floods which occur every two or three years will deposit significant amounts of sediment if the channel is too wide to transport the stream’s sediment load.

In sandy soils or where there is a large bed load of sand (see opposite page photos of Hay Creek), overly wide stream channels are incapable of transporting the sand and fill quickly, becoming increasingly wide and shallow. For this reason, MNTU has professionals perform detailed surveys of each project reach to determine the stream’s slope, the composition of its sediments and whether the channel’s dimensions are appropriate to prevent excessive sedimentation by fine material such as sand and silt. Narrowing channels to the appropriate dimensions can quickly flush fine sediments and create deep pools with gravel and cobble bottoms, as it did on Hay Creek.

Channel Down Cutting

On the flip side, if the stream channel is too narrow to accommodate high flows, the force of flood flows will cut down into the bottom of the stream bed (bed erosion) and carry the large sediment load downstream to be deposited as soon as the channel widens out. This pattern was dramatically displayed on the Little Stewart River project site where a flood cut down the stream bed 3 to 5 feet to bedrock over several hundred feet where



A SEVERE FLOOD FILLED THE CHANNEL OF THE LITTLE STEWART RIVER WITH ROCK AND DEBRIS IN THE PHOTO TO THE UPPER LEFT. ABOVE, THE SAME REACH IS SHOWN AFTER RESTORATION. THE STREAM HAS ACCESS TO THE NEW FLOODPLAIN IN TIMES OF HIGH WATER. ROCK AND LOG STRUCTURES DIRECT FLOWS TO THE CENTER OF THE STREAM.

flooding to scour out deep pools and sort sediment loads in ways that will be beneficial to trout, aquatic invertebrates and other aquatic life. We also position in-stream habitat features, which provide food production areas and trout cover under moderate and low flows, in such a way that they become better as a result of flood flows, or at least withstand them.

banks increases as the depth of the water increases. Spreading flood waters over a wide floodplain relieves these stresses on stream bends. For this reason restoring ready access to the floodplain through bank sloping and even re-creating floodplain is a top priority on every project.

The Little Stewart project restored a stable channel which has withstood numerous floods. In the photograph be-

we design projects to work with flooding, and the importance of reconnecting streams to their floodplains. In the second part of this series we will examine the many constraints we face working in DNR easement corridors (limited width, existing land use, landowner cooperation, infrastructure, etc.) and turn to the suite of methods we use to create good, durable habitat tailored to site conditions.

DRIFTLESS AREA BORDER BATTLE

Raising Money for Habitat with College Fishing Programs

By Jason Rieke

Although the blackened clouds and torrential rains attempted to keep the event at bay, the first annual Driftless Area Border Battle (D.A.B.B.) not only featured a successful turnout but proceeded to raise over \$700 towards TU-DARE and the Boundary Waters Trust. There was support from local Trout Unlimited Chapters, local fly shops, and a multitude of sponsors for gear as prizes and silent auction items. Winona State On the Fly, Fly Fishers of UW-Platteville, Gustavus Fly Fishing Club, and the Stevens Point Fly Fishing Club brought to life a points-based fly fishing tournament in the surrounding Driftless Area in WI and MN. As part of the TU Costa 5 Rivers program, over 25 individuals were able to fish for the event, as well as connect with others passionate about the sport and the stream conservation associated with it.

Ranging from over 90 to just two fish per team, the fishing was decisively more competitive with the weather conditions, as finding a clear, slower moving headwater was key. This did not prevent

anyone from not having a good time exploring the vast array of Driftless Area streams cascading to and from one valley to the next. Even so, every single one of the 13 teams walked away with prizes thanks to the generosity of the sponsors and individuals devoted to the cause.

All in all, the clubs would like to extend their thanks to anyone and everyone who helped make this event possible. The details are currently being worked of when another Border Battle might be able to occur, whether it be in the springtime of next year or as an annual fall occurrence!

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A NICE BROWN TROUT LANDED DURING THE EVENT



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POSTER FROM THE FIRST D.A.B.B. FISHING CONTEST HELD THIS OCTOBER. WANT TO BE INVOLVED WITH NEXT YEAR'S EVENT? CONTACT THE ORGANIZERS. INTERESTED IN STARTING A COLLEGE FLY FISHING CLUB AT YOUR SCHOOL? CHECK OUT THE INFORMATION AT WWW.TU.ORG/5RIVERS



FLY TYING

With Laughing Trout Fly Fishing

By Paul Johnson



The BWO Klinkhammer

The BWO Klinkhammer will be a fun fly for you to tie this winter, as we think of Spring and the sight of rising fish.

The fly is pretty straight-forward to tie. It is also relatively easy to see on the water with the white parachute post. Other options for the body of the fly include using goose biots, a stretchy floss such as Montana Fly Company Sexi Floss or even just making a thread body with olive tying thread on smaller sized hooks.

Laughing Trout meets every Wednesday night at the American Legion Post in Wayzata. We describe ourselves as an informal gathering of fly fishing and fly tying enthusiasts. At

most of our meetings we have somewhere around 30 people in attendance. We typically have a Fly of the Week pattern that a lot of our members will be working on. Some tie what they need for their fly boxes and others show up, get all their tying stuff out and don't tie any flies. It is all good.

If you ever find yourself in Wayzata on a Wednesday night, feel free to stop by and see what our Laughing Trout club is up to.

Paul Johnson

952-334-4688

Paulwaconia@gmail.com



Materials List

- Hook #16 Dai-Riki 125, Daiichi 1160 or Partridge 15BN
- Post White Widows Web, EP Fibers or Para Post
- Thread 14/0 Gordon Griffith Sheer
- Abdomen BWO Superfine Dubbing
- Thorax Peacock Dubbing
- Wing Rooster Hackle in Dun or Grizzly



Step 1. Start your tying thread right behind the eye of the hook. Wrap a smooth thread base back to the 1/2 mark. Return it to the 2/3 mark on your hook.



Step 2. Wrap in a small clump of Widows Web to form the post. I wrap it in with 3 "x" wraps in each direction.



Step 3. Pull the two ends of Widows Web together and wrap your tying thread up about 1/8" to form the post.



Step 4. Wrap a base about half way down the bend of the hook. Form a very fine dubbing noodle on your thread with the BWO Superfine Dubbing.



Step 5. Wrap the dubbing noodle forward to form a smooth tapered body ending right behind the post.



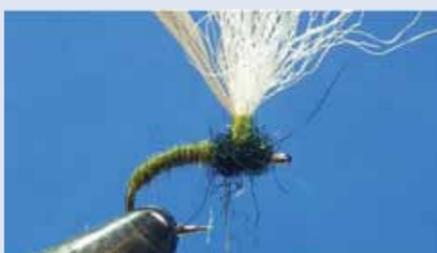
Step 6. Advance your thread to the front of the post and tie in a rooster hackle.



Step 7. Continue to wrap the rooster hackle stem up the post.



Step 8. Form a short dubbing noodle with the Peacock Dubbing.



Step 9. Wrap the dubbing in front and back of the post to form the thorax. Return your thread to directly behind the post.



Step 10. Palmer the hackle around the post, working down to the hook shank. Secure the hackle to the post with your thread. Clip the excess off close to the base. Whip finish and go fish!

2018 IS COMING. SAVE THE DATES!



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FOSTER THE OUTDOORS MENTORSHIP UPDATE

By Tim Hemstad

Kids love to fish. They focus on the take. They set the hook with all their might. They fumble with the line on the retrieve. Touching the fish becomes an absolute obsession and the release of any species from sunnies to trout, will leave them with a toothy smile from ear to ear.

“Now your turn...” I love to fish. I focus with intensity on the take. Admittedly, sometimes I set the hook with a bit more force than required. I am giddy and fumble with the line on the retrieve (only on the big ones, of course). Touching the fish has become an addiction. The release of a wild caught trout clears my mind and calms my soul.

If the 2nd version brings you back to a favorite fishing memory, you are ready to mentor the next generation of fly anglers. Save your modesty for the stream, you don't need to be a pro. Everyone snags the bushes once in a while and it's the patience you have attained in becoming an angler that suites you quite well as a mentor.

This summer we paired up youth and their guardians with volunteer fly fishing mentors. We worked with students from Trout in the Classroom (thanks to Benji!) as well as Big/Little pairs from the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities (thanks Grant!). It was simple and effective and you are officially invited to join us for the summer of 2018.

How it Works

We provide each mentor with two rod and reel combos for the youth/adult pair to borrow and hand tied locally donated flies. Once I have a solid volunteer roster, I coordinate mentor match-up events which are 2 hour meet and greet sessions introducing mentors to their mentees. We cover gear 101, technique 101 and practice casting together for 30-40 minutes. You swap phone numbers, pick out flies from the donation box and go fishing together as your personal schedules allow. Mentors retain the rods for the summer and bring along to each outing. There is no minimum or maximum number of outings but 2-4 is average for a season. All

participants are required to have applicable fishing licenses and stamps. Rivers, creeks, lakes and backwater ponds are all great destinations as long as mentees are exposed to the outdoors with an emphasis on the basics of fly fishing. Fly rods are fun to catch every species of fish, not just stream trout.

Why Teach Kids to Fish?

Trout Unlimited's mission is to conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. For our mission to succeed beyond our current generation, we must reach out now to children and youth to teach them to fish, how to be conservationists, and to encourage them to become future leaders in our organization. Today's children and youth are the ones who must take over from us in caring deeply for the fish that we love and the places where they live. It's equivalently important to mentor the guardians so the pair of them can continue to explore the outdoors beyond the mentorship experience. Towards the end of summer, invite them to a local TU Chapter meeting, show them around a fly shop or invite them to a local fly tying club. Recommend start up rods and gear so they are ready to take that next step together.

Sign Up Now (Before You Forget!)

Please text, email or call me with your name, phone number, email address and town you live in so I can add your name to the roster of mentors for 2018. Later in the spring we'll cover more details, mentor match-up dates and any questions you may have about the program. Donated flies and gear are always appreciated. In closing, I wanted to share a favorite quote which I feel summarizes the unprecedented value of mentorship.

Tell me, I forget Show me, I remember Involve me, I understand

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

ANGLING AGAINST THE GRAIN: BASS

By John Fehnel



THE AUTHOR ON THE WATER WITH HIS QUARRY

Yeah, it's not fancy stuff, delicate presentations, or 15' leaders, but what it lacks in finesse, it makes up in fierce attacks and torn up gear. There are no words in ancient fly fishing books or star-studded movies that spell out what's awaiting those who take up fly fishing for smallmouth and largemouth bass. Heavy, stiff 8wts (those that survive), burned finger digits and humiliating refusals make up fly fishing for bass! Green trout, bronzebacks, bodacious warriors, and bucket mouths, call them what you want, they are the rebels of the freshwater world. They hide in knotted up weed jungles, lie beside rocks in tumbling rivers and are ready to pounce on top water poppers or devour leech-looking streamers. They will almost jolt the rod out of your hands. We tack on Dahlberg divers, strip leeches, foam concoctions, and streamers resembling anything from baitfish to crayfish. When pursuing these beasts, stout leaders and bass taper fly lines are the weapons of choice for launching these insane hunks of fur and deer hair. Mostly to keep the runner in the game, these lines can launch in a moment's notice. Get in quick, short strips and pick up and try another spot.

Sounds easy? It's not! Be prepared to pursue them in all different kinds of habitat. We are blessed here in Minnesota to have these fish in so many different places. With six fish being the keep limit in some waters and most areas becoming catch and release, it shows that this state cares about our up-and-coming bass fishery. I just hope that the same attitude shifts for some of our fishing people who tend to think of our bass as trash fish. You can't tell me that when you lay a perfect cast under a low hanging tree, pop the fly once and all heck breaks loose that you don't get all crazy like a kid again. The traditional flies you cast are ridiculous like the stories that come with them: Spider Grubs, Fat Mamas, Bad Ass Frogs, Lip Rippers, Dr. Tattoos,

or The Ear Piercer. Beauty of course is in the eyes of the beholder, or the tyer. Some of the flies look like the local cat got hold of them, others are works of art that you don't want to use due to a fear of losing it on a log or worst yet: Mr. Northern!

Minnesota has put into law many river and lake management regulations that allow us that are crazy about bass to continue reaping the benefits and pursuing these beautiful fish. There are some lakes and rivers out there where catching a 5-6lb and, in some places, a 7-8lb fish makes it worth getting into that canoe, kayak or drift boat and continuing after them way after dark. This is fueled by a passion for that elusive "tank" or "hog" that got away. "Reckless and crazy" are the best words to describe the fight of the bass! They don't stop. Trout and steelhead prefer to run away from you, bass come at you and force you to strip line in and get that familiar index finger burn.

All said and done, after a long float on the river or kickin' around a lake all day, nothing beats getting back to the launch and cracking a cold one with good friends and talking crap about the one that kicked your butt. This is what makes the day so much fun. The added benefit is no pressure from other anglers, most lakes and rivers that have bass are pretty much devoid of other people. Tim Holschlag writes in his book Smallmouth Fly Fishing: "Barreling downstream, then just as quickly upriver, staging a spectacular leap, then another, followed by more finger burning runs back and forth across the flow." I could not describe it any better!

Editor's Note: John runs the Great Lakes Fly Shop in Duluth, MN, and is a long time TU supporter, steelhead angler and fishing fanatic. Find the ad for his shop on page 12.



BIG SISTER STACY IS IMPRESSED AND LITTLE SISTER NAOMI WITH HER GAME FACE ON AFTER PULLING IN A RESPECTABLE LARGE MOUTH BASS! THEY HAD A BLAST CATCHING SUNNIES AND BASS WITH THEIR MENTOR MARK NEMETH.

VOLUNTEERING ON THE VERMILLION

The Wonders of Handling Our Wild Brown Trout

By Larry R. Olson



Holding wild, living animals in my hands still energizes me. I'm not talking puppies and kittens, wild is the key word here. They don't want to be held, let's make that perfectly clear. Close to thirty years ago, at Carpenter Nature Center, I held a five year old bald eagle. I was cradling it in my arms like a baby and with very thick and very long leather gloves I secured its feet. The talons were impressive. The most surprising thing was its weight, or specifically the lack there of. The eagle did not move at all. It just stared at me. This bald eagle had been rehabilitated at the Raptor Center at the University of Minnesota and was ready to return to the wild. Only right at the instant of release did I feel it tense just a little. It was an amazing experience. I felt the beauty and power of nature in my whole body through my hands.

The contrast could not have been greater. At the end of September, I tried to hold a beautiful 18" brown trout on a wooden scale to measure it and eventually weigh it. It never stopped moving. This trout did not have the time, or the talons, to stare me down. It was in survival mode. The beauty of the fish we seek never ceases to overwhelm me and I could have held it and looked at it for a long time.

The South Branch of the Vermillion River Aquatic Management Area is a section of stream that the DNR and TU volunteers have put a lot of work into improving the fish habitat. As a Management Area it was created in 2013 and is roughly 62 acres in size with over 7000



THE TCTU CREW THIS FALL ALONG THE GRASSY BANKS OF THE VERMILLION

feet of river. As many of you in local TU chapters know, the streamside forest is dominated by box elders and buckthorn. The shallow rooted buckthorn shade

out the deep-rooted grasses and leave the sandy loam soil exposed to erosion. Many of TU's volunteer work days have been centered around removing buckthorn. Fish sampling is done in this area by DNR personnel and TU Volunteers to collect data on the brown trout and other species to gauge the health of the stream. A fish sampling was done in the fall of 2014 and another just was completed in the fall of 2017. I had the opportunity to participate in the one this last fall. Samplings are done over a couple of days in two sections of the river each about 900' in length. The DNR calls this electro-fishing. Basically here is what happens:

Two people wear big backpacks hooked up to large circular wands that zap the water. Depending on water conditions, this is usually about 2 AMPs worth of shock that stun the fish for less than a minute. Another person with a long-handled net then stands as close to the person waving the big electrified wand as is willing to do. We are all wearing long rubber gloves and waders but it is strongly suggested to not fall in the water, especially close to the guy with the wand. Anyway, as the fish are momentarily stunned the

As anglers, we all know there are some big fish out there. That is part of the mystery, challenge and dream that your fly and that big fish will connect in an epic battle. When you participate in these samplings you see the fish that are possible and the places they hide in. I know I will be strategizing all winter now. You can read all kinds of really good books on reading the water, but actually standing in the river you will fish and seeing it live makes us all better anglers. Over the two days of work this year, 310 brown trout were sampled ranging from 3.4" to over 18". The population estimate for both areas, about 1800 feet of stream, was 667 trout. In 2014, the number of brown trout sampled was 49. That is a huge increase. There are, of course, many factors to these numbers. In 2012 and 2013 there were very warm summers and high spring water flows. In 2015, 2016 and 2017 the spring flows were much more moderate and spawning areas were not blown away. The South Branch of the Vermillion is colder than the Vermillion River and provides critical refuge habitat, and that is what is truly important. Our work as TU volunteers in collaboration with the DNR folks helps to create diverse and deep habitat for future generations.

Let me point out two more important partners and stream stewards on the South Branch. Cornerstone on the Vermillion and the Hmong American Farmers Association show what is possible when we all work together to protect our watersheds. They both support stream access, believe in stream buffers and deeply care about the land around them. In a world full of really disturbing news, spending time wading in rivers and holding wild, living things is the perfect antidote.



ANOTHER GREAT BROWN TROUT ON A BEAUTIFUL DAY TO BE ON THE RIVER



MEASURING A BROWN TROUT BEFORE RETURNING IT TO THE WATER

first netter scoops them up and passes them on to a second net person behind them. This second netter then releases them into water-filled buckets for collection. These buckets are on a river barge, imagine a small winter sled. This barge is pulled along in the back and at various intervals the buckets of fish are brought to shore and, under DNR instruction, measured and weighed. Tallies are made and the fish are returned to the water.

As a side note to the DNR, the Guarayo people of the Amazon River had this all figured out years ago. The Guarayo would crush a native plant with a stone and let the juice spill out into the river. There it formed a milky cloud and shortly thereafter fish came to the surface, swam in a circle and then floated around on their backs. Although incapacitated, they were not dead. The Guarayo then waded out picked out a fat one or two to eat. This poison only stunned them and the fish soon returned to life and swam away.

Editor's Note: Want to get involved in sampling our streams and rivers around the state? Contact your local TU chapter and make plans to participate this next season. To connect with the Twin Cities Chapter of Trout Unlimited, check out the Chapter News section on pages 18 & 19.

2018 GREAT WATERS EXPO

We Need Your Help for a Successful 2018 Event

By Jade Thomason

Last March Minnesota Trout Unlimited presented another successful Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo, and now we are working on planning a robust and even larger 2018 program. As always, we need your help as volunteers to set up, staff rooms, sell tickets and much more. If you're interested in playing a role this season, please get in touch so we can get you on the list.

We're excited to announce a couple of our headliners for 2017, including author and fly tier Skip Morris from Washington State. Skip is among the most prolific fly fishing and fly tying authors in existence and has written 18 books as well as over 250 articles (along with a smaller number on jazz guitar). His articles have appeared in Fly Rod & Reel, Fly Tyer, and American Angler, along with many others. Among his books are "Fly Tying Made Clear and Simple," "The Art of Tying the Bass Fly," and "Survival Guide for Beginning Fly Anglers." Skip's original fly patterns are sold and distributed by multiple fly companies and he is the instructor on six videos. He has worked in radio and television as both a fly fishing host and celebrity guest.



LONDON MAYER, LEFT, AND SKIP MORRIS, RIGHT, TWO OF OUR 2018 HEADLINING SPEAKERS

Also on board for this season is Landon Mayer from Colorado. Landon's angling success is fueled by an addiction to pursuing large trout with small flies and lightweight fly fishing equipment. He shares these tips and secrets in his books "101 Trout Tips: A Guide's Secrets, Tactics and Techniques," "Colorado's Best Fly Fishing," "Sight Fishing for Trout," and "How to Catch the Biggest Trout of Your Life." Landon's passion for fly fishing has allowed him

to make several noteworthy contributions to the sport on and off the water. This has included travels to fly fishing related organizations of the Mid-Atlantic, West, Pacific Northwest, Southwest, and southern states, as well as teaching through guided trips, fly fishing classes, presentations, and demonstrations of his unique techniques. Mayer has been guiding in Colorado full time on the South Platte River for the last 20 years and currently resides in Florissant, Colorado.

Expo Questions?

Start planning your Expo visit for Friday, Saturday and Sunday March 16th-18th, 2018. If you're interested in exhibiting or being involved as a volunteer, get in touch with us on the website at:

www.greatwatersflyexpo.com

Email us at gwflyfishing@gmail.com or call the Expo at 612-562-9242.

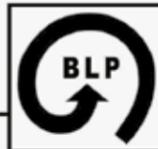


TALKING SHOP WITH BOB MITCHELL'S FLY SHOP AT THE 2017 EXPO



ARTIST TED HANSEN AT WORK ON A NEW PIECE AT THE 2017 EXPO

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INCLUDING MNTU IN YOUR ESTATE PLANNING

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

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

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

Bequest Language

The official bequest language for Minnesota Trout Unlimited is:

Unrestricted General Legacy:

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

Specific:

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

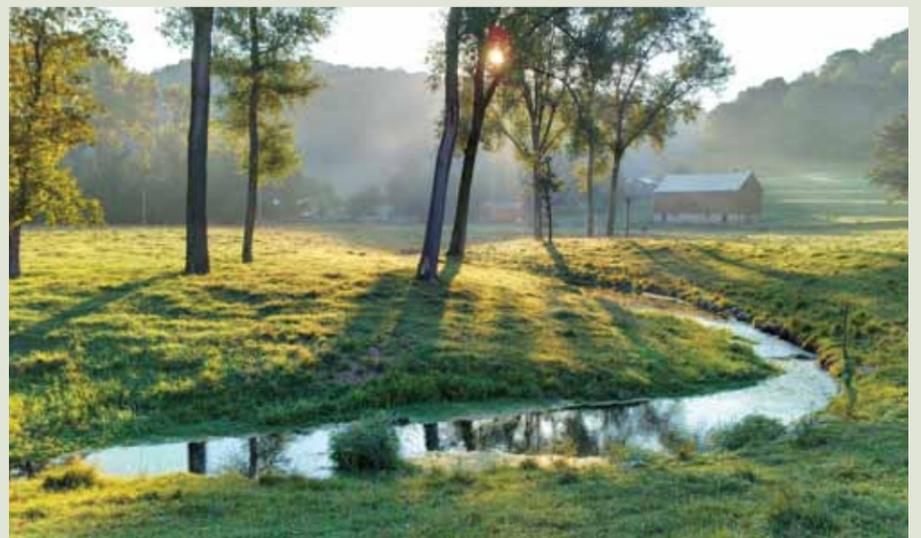
ently at 7201 West 78th Street, Suite 207 Bloomington, MN 55439, my (specific personal property item(s) and/or real property located at _____) to be used at the discretion of its governing board."

Gift of Residuary Estate:

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

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

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





MNTU CHAPTER NEWS

Gitche Gumee Chapter

Steelhead season has been great and we had a awesome October meeting. After learning about how and where to catch fish, some anglers were able to go out and land steelhead the next week. We've got a full schedule of programs coming up for the winter. Make your plans to spend some evenings in Duluth and get together with chapter members from around the area.

Fly Tying and Holiday Social

Learn how to tie flies from one of the best. John Fehnel of the Great Lakes fly shop will be teaching us some of his favorite patterns. No vice or materials are needed. All are welcome from beginners to advanced!

When: December 7th, at 7 p.m.

Where: The Great Lakes Fly Shop

Hiawatha Chapter

The summer of 2017 was a busy season with lots of work on streams throughout Southeast Minnesota, including big work on the South Branch of the Root River in Preston, Minnesota. Stop by to check out the reach when it opens back up for fishing on January 1st!

Hiawatha Trout Unlimited (HTU) has also been busy this year with Trout in the Classroom (TIC) programs, casting instruction, TUNE camp and much more. HTU has upcoming events starting with our annual Christmas Party on Monday December 4th. We will be having our party at the History Center of Rochester. Fun, food, and prizes will be on the menu.

December will also start our annual open fly tying every Saturday morning in Rochester. Look for location details to come soon.

socials at local taprooms. In the spirit of "Trout on Tap" events that TU has done elsewhere in the state, these will offer the chance to talk trout, drink some good local beer and plan your fishing adventures for the next sesason. Events are currently being planned and the details will be posted on an updated HTU Facebook page by mid-December.

Phil Pankow

Headwaters Chapter

Our board and all our volunteers have produced a stellar year for projects and increased participation and community involvement. Every month this year has been filled with TU volunteer success stories accomplished by enthusiastic and hardworking 642 members.

Fly Tying Nights:

January and February fly tying at the Garden Grill and Pub finished with 20 new participants in 2017. All enjoyed learning new skills. We have eight pre-set new dates for fly tying, Nov. 30, Dec. 14 & 28, Jan. 11 & 25, Feb. 8 & 22 and ending March 8. Open and welcome to all from beginners to advanced. Plus - it's free!

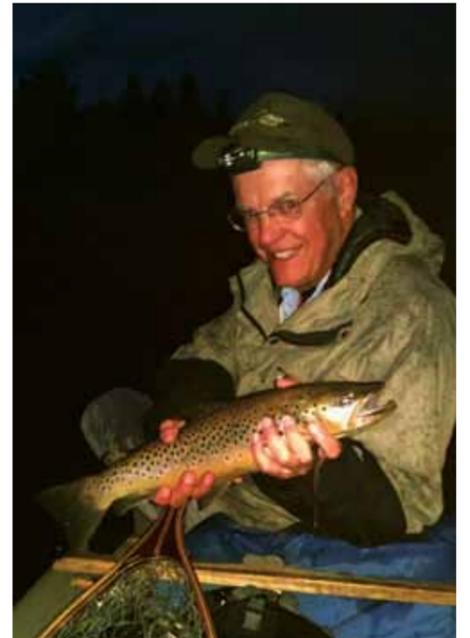
The March 2017 Great Waters Expo was a huge success for our first chapter booth. Eight members planned, constructed, and delivered a hands-on educational experience which included 90 participants tying their first fly. We're excited to do our booth again next spring, sign up!

Helicopter Tree Drop: May and June were spent planning and preparing for John Sorenson, our restoration coordinator, and for the fifth and final tree drop. Several members experienced the real fruit of all the hard work this year by catching browns in the 20"-25" class.

Women's Fly Fishing Workshops were held June 2 & 3 and 23 & 24. Both classes were filled and all evaluations were overly positive. There was also a similar workshop held on the Big Horn River in Montana, July 28 & 29, as requested by Amy and Phil, owners of Cottonwood Camp. Watch for more 2018 workshops.

The Clearwater River had expansion of the handicap-accessible fishing dock by adding another pier. It is placed in a perfect spot and produced a nice brown on the last day of the season! Congrats to Tony Standera, DNR Fisheries.

The annual Pike Hunt was June 9 & 10 and had 19 participants. There was major successes had with 140 pike, 2 walleyes, 2 large bass and 7 jumbo perch caught. These were all caught on a streamer-style pike fly. A seriously fun fresh fish fry concluded the activities. Next year's Pike Hunt will be June 8 & 9, 2018. A plan is in place to replicate this design to a trout day next year.



HEADWATERS CHAPTER MEMBER STEVE YOUNG WITH A GREAT NIGHTTIME BROWN TROUT FROM THE STRAIGHT RIVER, HIGHLIGHTING THE SUCCESS OF LOCAL HABITAT WORK.

The Kabekona River is seeing significant benefits from volunteers cutting alder out of the river channel with DNR staff assistance.

Film night is planned at Bemidji Brewery on Dec. 9 with exciting films, great brews, good food and a little fundraiser. There will also be a short presentation on catching trout through the ice. Mark your calendars!

T.I.C.: Steve Young, our project coordinator, reports the addition of a fourth site starting in Northhome school district. Also, a special new outdoor activity day is being planned. We thank all our volunteers and members.

Bob Wagner

Twin Cities Chapter

I write this short column on October 14th, just as the general trout fishing season is coming to a close. It's hard to believe summer has come and gone already! Thus far, 2017 has been another great year of habitat restoration and



A BRIGHT KNIFE RIVER STEELHEAD CAUGHT THIS FALL AFTER THE GITCHE GUMEE OCTOBER CHAPTER MEETING BY KYLE HERR.

Future Meetings

F3T – Fly Fishing Film Tour
Clyde Iron Works, Sunday, January 28th
Doors at 3PM, Film at 4PM.

Fisheries Management Issues with MN and WI DNR. (Combined meeting with the Arrowhead Fly Fishers)
Clyde Iron Works, 2-20-17, at 7 p.m.

Trout Stream Restoration 101
with John Lenczewski
Hartley Nature Center, 3-08-18, at 7 p.m.

Annual State of the Steelhead Meeting
Hartley Nature Center, 4-12-18, at 7 p.m.

We hope to see you this winter!

Brent Notbohm

What Brown Trout Eat

January 8th will be our next regular member's meeting with guest speaker Dr. Jennifer Biderman from Winona State University. Learn about what brown trout prefer to eat and get ready to start tying up some new spring creek patterns for the upcoming season.

Stream Restoration in SE Minnesota

February 5th will be our next member's meeting and will feature MNTU's executive director John Lenczewski, highlighting what it takes to make habitat improvement happen in SE MN.

Full dates and times and details will be at the HTU website calendar of events www.hiawathatu.org

Hiawatha is also working on some fun

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MNTU CHAPTER NEWS



growth for the Twin Cities Chapter, as our membership exceeded 2000 members for the first time!

Summer began with our second annual screening of the International Fly Fishing Film Festival (IF4) on May 22 at Surly Brewing Co. About 100 attendees gathered upstairs in Scheid Hall at 6PM for a social hour, door prizes, and silent auction before the scheduled screening at 7PM. The film featured eight separate segments filmed at fishing destinations in North America, the Caribbean, South America, and Iceland. We plan to bring this very fun film event back in 2018! Watch this newsletter and our chapter website (www.twincitiestu.org) for details.

We've made more great progress with our habitat projects this year. We removed invasive buckthorn from the about 4000 feet of the S. Branch Vermillion River and Eagle Creek, and com-

plete habitat restoration techniques employed in our project work.

There will be a Vermillion River work day on Saturday, December 2nd. Work will begin at 9AM and last until around noon. A hearty hot lunch will be provided by our grillmasters.

Do you know someone who wants to learn basics of fly fishing and casting? We've held several "how-to" clinics for beginners this year as a way to get more people interested in our sport, and to inform them about the great work we do. More clinic sessions will follow soon, watch our website for upcoming dates!

Have you thought about becoming more involved in TU? Opportunities abound to have fun while making a difference for the future of the sport we love. Do you like physical, outdoors work? Our habitat projects always need more volunteers. Would you like to help others



RECENTLY IMPROVED REACH OF THE SOUTH BRANCH OF THE ROOT RIVER IN PRESTON, MINNEOSTA THIS SUMMER. SECTIONS LIKE THIS ONE OFFER EASY ACCESS TO THE RIVER AND MODERATELY SLOPED PATHS LEADING TO GREAT WATER.

pleted in-stream work on the about 3000 feet of Trout Brook near Miesville. This cold water gem holds a very healthy population of native brook trout, but it is subject to flash flooding during severe storms. Our work sloped banks to allow flood waters to spread out and slow down in order to dissipate in-stream forces. We also narrowed and deepened the stream bed to provide better overall habitat for fish and aquatic insects.

learn to fish? We always need help with our periodic classes, clinics, and on-stream events. Do you enjoy organizing people or activities? Consider working with our board of directors; there are many ways to get involved. Interested to know more about any of these? Contact Dean Campbell (dean@twincitiestu.org) for more information.

Dean Campbell

Member meetings are normally held on the 4th Tuesday of each month between September and May (except December). Join us on November 28th at the Wood Lake Nature Center to hear MNTU Executive Director John Lenczewski de-

Win-Cres Chapter

Win-Cres TU had a busy spring and summer. We started the year working

HABITAT HELPERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to assist with maintenance inspections of completed projects, as well as numerous hands-on tasks on 2018 projects. To volunteer or receive information on opportunities to help with inspections and/or hands-on work simply send an email to: monitor@mntu.org 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.

TROUT ON TAP

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

Obsess with the obsessives.

Monthly from 6 to 8 pm.

FISHING IS SPOKEN HERE.

Thurs. Nov 16, 2017 - Boom Island Brewing Co.
2014 Washington Ave. N., Mpls

Wed. Dec 13, 2017 - BlackStack Brewing
755 Prior Ave N., St. Paul

Thurs. Jan 11, 2018 - Eastlake Brewery & Tavern
920 E. Lake St. #123 (Midtown Global Market) Mpls

on Garvin Brook on a Saturday morning building skyhooks for the Phase II Habitat Improvement Project. Seventeen structures were built. We returned a few weeks later to build five more and many club members showed up to help build the structures. Our efforts were supported by help from members of the Winona State University fly fishing club.

We used our new brush mower for the first time on Hemmingway Creek. A crew of 12 gathered to use chainsaws and help get the brush mower over the fords and the rough spots. The crew was treated to lunch at Stumpy's in Rushford. Mowing crews were organized for Garvin Brook, Rush Creek, and Diamond Creek throughout the summer.

One weekend, club members sprayed for Japanese knotweed on Garvin. This is the third year we have targeted the knotweed. We feel we have helped control the spread of the weed on Garvin Brook. However, Jaime Edwards, MN DNR Nongame Wildlife Specialist, has said there is a new species of knotweed. The species is Bohemian knotweed and can be spread by seeds. Keep an eye out for this invasive plant.

Several members of the Win-Cres board participated in pre-habitat improvement walks on Garvin Brook, Money Creek, Rush Creek, and Wisel Creek. Habitat improvement projects on these creeks are scheduled to begin in 2018.

Win-Cres also hosted a fly fishing clinic at the lake in Winona. Marlene Huston and Mark Reisetter helped teach fly casting and Mark and Win-Cres members helped students from Pete Weess' TIC class try their hand at fly casting. A few board members also joined Pete's

class for the release of the trout they raised in their classroom at Whitewater State Park. Close to 250 rainbow trout were released into the Middle Branch of the Whitewater River. Pete Weess, WSHS teacher, will continue working in his classroom with Trout in the Classroom. Pete and John Weaver, a Winona Middle School teacher, will be using fly rods donated by MNTU to introduce their students to fly fishing and conservation.

Win-Cres is also supporting the "WSU On The Fly" club. A new generation of trout anglers is out there and needs to be supported. Check out information from their recent inter-collegiate "Driftless Area Border Battle" on page 12.

Joe Lepley

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

Visit www.tu.org today to sign up.

OR SUBSCRIBE!

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

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A RESTORED REACH OF TROUT BROOK IN DAKOTA COUNTY.
READ MORE ABOUT OUR WORK ON THIS WILD BROOK TROUT STREAM ON PG 8

REELING IT IN

Patience and Expectations

By Sam Troutt

The sun was setting on another day of fishing on my favorite steel-head stream. My net was still dry, and there had been nary a whisper of a fish on the end of my line. For some people, that would be a reason not to come back, to stop fishing on the river. But not for me.

People can be magical too. Time on the water with good friends and family is to be relished and remembered. Too quickly they will grow old, move away or move on. A fishless day with my father remains more important to me now than many fish-filled days by myself on the river.

Long ago, my father instilled a sense of wonder, time and place when we explored outdoors. He would pause, and say "This is magical. Right now, where we are. Savor it. Remember it. It will not last forever, but your memories can." That way of living has guided me throughout my time on the water. For me, the end of a fishless day is about savoring the day and remembering the magical parts. Seeing the dawn and eagles building a new nest along the river, or watching fish roll while autumn leaves drifted down into the water. Think about what you remember from your favorite trips long ago. Maybe it will be the one with hundreds of fish. Or maybe it will be a day with a single fish and a glorious sunset over an unbroken forest at the edge of a steep canyon.

Here is my challenge to all of you: Take time to make your next fishing trip not about the fish. For yourself. Think about your trip and the things that have meaning to you as an angler and as a person. Then, set an example. Help set expectations for the next generation of anglers. Too quickly, we tell children that to have a good time on the water, they need to catch fish. It's not true, and it hurts our chances of them having a good time.

In the end, it is simple. Have patience, share your experiences and savor the moments. Take a couple minutes at the end of a day to pause and watch the sun set over the last ridges along the river. As we glide ever so swiftly into winter, our memories will sustain us into spring and beyond.

Donate to MNTU!

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

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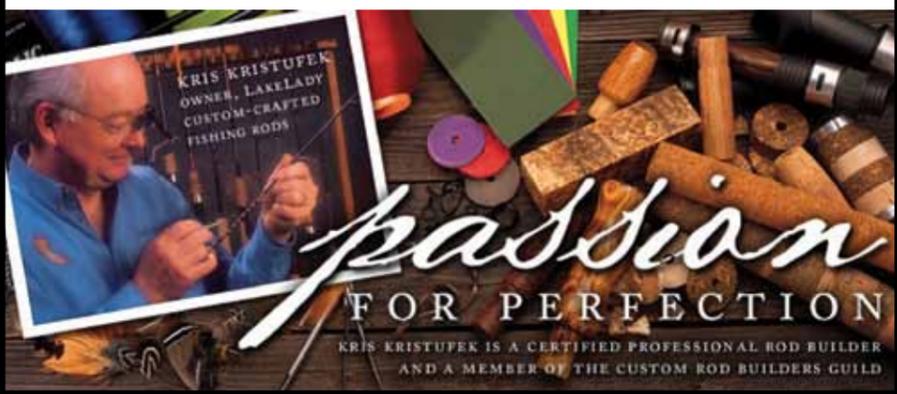
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