



RipRap

A Publication of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited

DECEMBER, 2012 VOLUME 6, ISSUE 4

Brook Trout **Restoration, Improvements and Preservation through Research and Projects** *Klamath Trout*

DECEMBER PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY KYLE AMUNDSON

Chapter news

I am looking forward to the banquet as it is a great time to visit old friends and talk about summer fishing outings. The banquet is our number one fundraiser and I hope you will consider giving generously so as to help sustain our stream restoration projects.

Speaking of stream restoration projects, we have had several offers recently from landowners on the Trimbelle and Little Trimbelle rivers to look at stream improvement projects and obtain easements. These offers could really build upon and enhance our already existing plans and the project committee will be investigating each opportunity. Hans Jung is our stream project leader and he has done a great job in tracking these offers with the DNR and with partners such as the Western Wisconsin Land Trust.

State Banquet

The state banquet will be held the first weekend of February. I have received tickets from the State Council and they are \$35.00 apiece. Please contact me if you are interested in a ticket. The site is the same as last year, in Rothschild, a suburb of Wausau.

National Banquet

The national banquet will be held in Madison next year (September) and the state council is looking for volunteers, mainly for folks to set up auction items and collect money. If you are interested you can contact me for more information.

Welcome New Member: Anthony Randazzo (Minneapolis)

The Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Banquet is coming soon!
Thursday, December at 6:00 PM at the Lake Elmo Inn Event Center.
Check out Mike Alwin's article on page 2 for more info.
See you there!



BANQUET DEADLINE LOOMS

BY MICHAEL ALWIN

NEW LOCATION PROMISES TO ENHANCE BANQUET ACTIVITIES

The reservation deadline for the KIAP-TU WISH HOLIDAY CONSERVATION BANQUET is fast approaching. Guests at this year's event will enjoy dinner served at their tables, a splendid array of merchandise for the silent auction, significant raffle opportunities, the possibility of winning a door prize, the benefits of an on-site ATM and the evening's program, headlined by Angie Hong, Washington County Education Specialist.

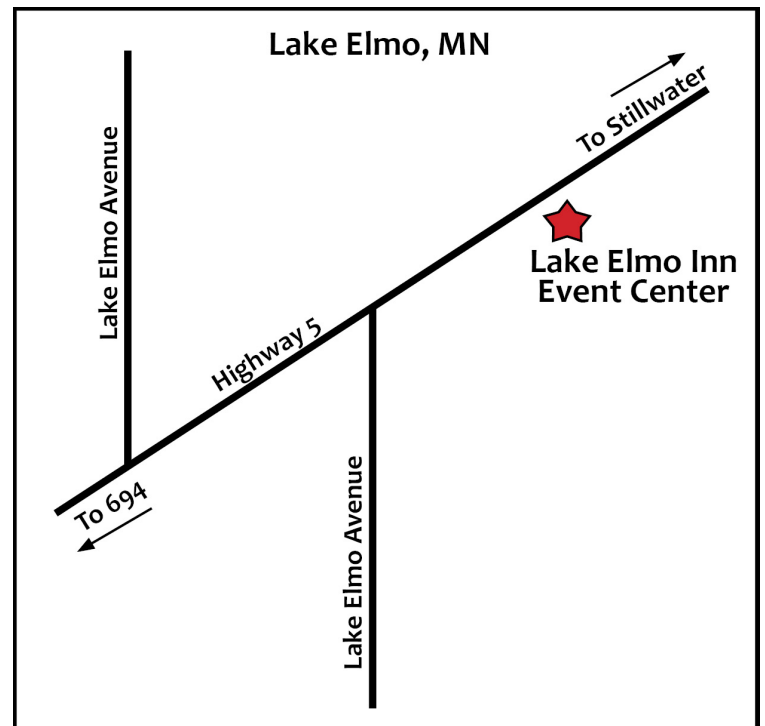
The date of this year's gala event is Thursday, December 6th. The venue for this year's event is the Lake Elmo Inn Event Center on MN Hwy 5, two blocks east of Lake Elmo Ave. Don't go to the Lake Elmo Inn! The cost is \$45 per person when you make your reservation and the reservation deadline is noon on December 3rd. Miss the deadline or show up at the door unannounced and your ticket is \$60. Reservations will be taken at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop by phone (651.770.5854) or email (mikealwin@gmail.com).

Our social hour begins at 6:00, dinner will be served at 7:30 and the evening's program will begin at 8:30. When you make your reservation please specify your choice of entrée. Your choices are Lemoncello Chicken, Top Sirloin Steak or Salmon Rivida. Your dinner will include a first course dinner salad, rosemary roasted baby red potatoes, fresh vegetable medley, dinner rolls and coffee or tea. The cash bar will be open all evening.

There are two functions for having this little fete, the first of which is to get everybody together to have a good time. That's been the purpose since the chapter was founded forty years ago. The second function is to raise some money for our various stream conservation projects and to do it in the small, unobtrusive Kiap-TU-Wish way. Being a small chapter we can't possibly raise the kind of money it takes to do the extensive projects we've undertaken on Pine, Cady, the Rush, Eau Galle or the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic. But members like Greg Dietl and Greg Meyer can leverage the proceeds from this banquet to obtain grants totaling thousands of dollars that we can spend on these vital cold water conservation projects.

And what of the auction, you say? Just a few of the items already procured are fish art, jewelry, a wine tasting event from the Lake Elmo Wine Company, a gourmet lunch and access to private water on the lower Kinni, a guided smallmouth trip courtesy of Hayward Fly Fishing Company, plus rods, reels, fly assortments, vests and other assorted tackle. Did I mention books? Lordy, have we got books, including collectables, out of print and historically significant and never-out-of-date titles. Bid them up Children, it's for a worthy cause. And as always, your donations to this cause are appreciated. That vintage Airstream, 1938 Martin herringbone D-28 or that near-useless 2nd generation iPad could all find a new owner at the silent auction; you'd be ridding yourselves of so much geegaw and doing your bit for cold water conservation. Try hard to get it to Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop by Saturday, December 2nd.

You may also donate your time to this event. The members of the banquet committee, Tom Henderson, Greg Dietl, Allison Jacobs, Tom Schnadt, Mike Alwin and Temporary Chair Deb Alwin welcome your help. We need volunteers for set-up and break-down, folks to serve as floor captains to keep the auction running smoothly, citizens to hawk raffle tickets and a few people with rudimentary math skills to help with checkout at the end of the event.



SAND EXPLORATION, DONE IMPROPERLY, THREATENS GROUNDWATER

FROM THE WISCONSIN DNR

MADISON – The boom in Wisconsin frac sand mining is driving additional demand for exploratory drilling around the state, and this is elevating the potential for serious groundwater contamination.

Groundwater and enforcement specialists with the state Department of Natural Resources are aware of several cases in which boreholes drilled by landowners and others have not been sealed or sealed properly. This creates a direct pathway for potential contaminants to reach groundwater resources.

“There are landowners and drillers out there who take the time to understand state law and do the work properly,” said DNR Secretary Cathy Stepp. “Our concern is with a smaller number of irresponsible parties who threaten our groundwater resources. We need individuals searching for sand deposits to do it responsibly.”

If a landowner authorizes drilling, Stepp said, the landowner should ask the driller to properly seal the bore hole.

The DNR is reminding individuals involved in sand drilling that state law requires the proper abandonment of all boreholes or drill holes exceeding 10 feet in depth or any borehole that intersects groundwater.

This message is affirmed by the newly formed Wisconsin Industrial Sand Association – whose members include U.S. Silica, Unimin, the Wisconsin Industrial Sand Company, a subsidiary of Fairmount Minerals, and Badger Mining Corporation. WISA promotes safe and environmentally responsible mining and has established a code of conduct for members to follow.

“The members of the Wisconsin Industrial Sand Association adhere to very high environmental and safety standards, and we applaud the DNR’s efforts to ensure all operators do, as well,” said Rich Budinger, president of WISA. “Sand mining offers significant economic benefits for Wisconsin when done responsibly. We support this effort by the DNR.”

State law requires drillers to file a report upon abandonment. Improper abandonment could result in enforcement action.

While the code specifies that a bore hole be properly abandoned within three days of its use being discontinued, DNR encourages drillers to close exploration boreholes immediately to avoid the potential for soils collapse and bridging to occur in the hole.

“Most drinking water wells, with very few exceptions, are recharged locally,” said DNR drinking and groundwater supervisor Mike Blodgett. “Failure to fill these boreholes properly can have a very direct impact on local drinking water supplies.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Woletz, DNR natural resources manager, 715-839-3756; Ed Culhane, DNR communications, Eau Claire, 715-781-1683; Andrew Savagian, DNR communications, Madison 608-261-6422



EVOLUTION OF A STEELHEAD FISHERMAN

BY GREG OLSON

I am writing these words on November 15. The sadness has sunk in; steelhead fishing on the Brule is over for another year. Last fall, there wasn't as much sadness as there was frustration. I had fished the Brule for a couple of steelhead seasons, without catching what others would consider a "real" steelhead, just a few skipjacks; steelhead that were only a couple years old.

Writer Thomas MacGuane once said the key to steelhead fishing was a "strong casting arm and a weak mind." Already possessing one of these attributes, and knowing that I could always strengthen my arm over time, I thought I would be a natural. After a couple of years fly fishing on the Brule for steelhead I wasn't sure I was cut out for the task. Don't get me wrong, I loved the fishing ("fishing", not being the same as "catching") and being out on the Brule, especially in the fall. The Brule has to be one of the most beautiful rivers in the country, and when the fall colors are on the trees, an argument could be made that it is the most beautiful river. Its beauty is downright distracting and herein lies part of my problem. I'm too easily distracted for steelhead fishing. I think one needs extreme focus. A strike could occur on your first cast or 500th cast or anywhere in between and you have to be ready. One also needs dedication. Success demands some long hours in chilly water and weather that is less than ideal. I have been fishing the Brule when it has been snowing so hard that I had trouble seeing the opposite bank. Concentrating on my indicator was making me sick. There was something about the falling snowflakes dissolving into the water and my not being able to make out the riverbanks clearly... I was getting the sensation of vertigo. Undaunted, I switched to swinging flies. I have also fished in cold, pouring rain, which rendered my hands useless. No, I can fish in uncomfortable conditions all day. In some ways I think the fish gods look favorably on one's suffering, and I caught some really nice fish in those conditions. Dedication I can handle; I needed to work on focus.

I have fished the Kinni and Rush enough to know where the fish are likely to be and what they might take. I usually have some success. Fishing the Brule in cold water and waiting for that one big event and not knowing when it might occur is hard. It is kind of like deer hunting for me. There have been more than a few times I have spotted a big buck sauntering by too late and out of range, as I was distracted by watching a chickadee on my boot, squirrels fighting in my tree, and grouse courtship dances. Lord knows how many times my hunting partners have found me fallen asleep in my stand (if one plays cards until 2 am, gets up at 4 am to eat breakfast, and is toasty warm, how are they supposed to stay awake?), listening to the Packer game with headphones on, or worse yet, they've caught me sneaking out of the woods to a local watering hole to catch the Packer game. I often think I would do better at Western big game hunting. If I could spy an elk on the far side of the valley, I think I would have no trouble stalking it for a day, with my eyes on the prize. It is the waiting for that one moment that I have trouble with. Unfortunately, I have not had the opportunity to sight fish for steelhead.

The first fall I was steelhead fishing on the Brule, I was with a couple of friends. One friend brought along an experienced steelhead angler that I had never met. We got to the river early, and this guy staked out a large bend pool. I went further downstream and as can often happen during the Brule steelhead season, every promising pool had an angler already in it. I headed back to look upstream of where we had parked, when I stopped to talk to this new acquaintance. He was a serious, successful steelhead fisherman, so I was delighted when he said that this pool was large enough for us both to fish. He took the tailout and I fished the head. At some point, I noticed a 10 inch steelhead smolt rising to midges, right in front of me. I ignored the fish. I was here to fish for mighty steelhead! Not some baby! Yet it continued to rise, the rings drifting right by my waders. Ever go to bed exhausted, only to hear the bathroom shower dripping? It isn't that loud, and you are tired; you can just ignore it, right? Wrong. The smolt was like a siren, it would not quit rising. Before I knew it, I was fishing a #16 Adams to this fish. At this early juncture as a fly fisherman, I had few flies and nothing that imitated a midge. After trying a few general attractors, a #14 Royal Wulff did the trick. I shouted to my acquaintance, "Hey, I got one! It took a Royal Wulff!" as I held up my prize. I will never forget the look on his face. It started off in utter disbelief



and morphed into disgust and loathing. In reply, I heard, “Yeah.... nice fish. If you are done fishing, mind if I fish the head of the pool?”

The fall before this one, I vowed to be a serious steelhead fisherman. Not to be tempted by small, rising fish. No sir, not me. That fall was very warm and the water, low and clear. Steelhead fishing, never easy, got a lot harder. It was so warm out that some massive midge hatches were going on. I was fishing with my best friend Mike, and Mike seems to be able to conjure up midge hatches no matter the river or the season. I think it might have something to do with the stench of his waders. Anyway, fish were rising everywhere, not steelhead of course, but some nice browns and rainbows. A serious steelhead fisherman should never bring a 5 wt in the truck, just in case, when you are steelheading. However, in no time, we had returned from the truck, having swapped out 8 wts for 5 wts and catching fish after fish on Griffith's Gnats.

I had heard it takes a couple of years to get the hang of steelhead fishing and this past spring, something clicked. I'm not sure what it was, maybe concentrating on one stretch of water, reading the water better, better fly patterns, better depth or line control. Maybe I have caught enough smaller fish to concentrate on steelhead. Whatever it was, I connected, quite a few times, and have never been the same since. I still have a lot to learn, but just one legit steelhead can change your fly angling forever. The strength, speed, and endurance of these fish is unreal. I hooked one fish at the tail of a pool this fall and I swear, before I could swallow, it tore down the rapids and had me spooled. It never broke stride; I could not slow it down. These fish will take your breath away! Having some years of fly-fishing under my belt, I can see why some people become trout bums, drop everything, move out West, and become guides. This year, I now understand steelhead bums, which are a different breed altogether. For most, a job would take too much time away from fishing. Better to live in a van down by the river and live off saltines and peanut butter. Despite low water conditions again this fall, the 5 wts did not make it in the truck. Only once did I consider attaching a Griffith's Gnat to my 2x leader to cast to a steadily rising brown with my 8 wt, and that thought quickly past.

Thanks to Mike I also discovered a very effective tool for steelhead fishing this fall, the switch rod. I have been using a 9' 8 wt rod, and after a couple days of chucking an indicator, shot, and a pair of weighted nymphs or swinging half a chicken, my right shoulder feels like I have pitched back to back to back complete baseball games on consecutive days. With a switch rod, it is effortless to roll cast an indicator setup, the long rod is awesome to keep line off the water and for mending incredibly long drifts. As for swinging flies, shooting line from bank to bank with no back cast is just plain fun.

Consider this as my letter to Santa. Santa, this Christmas I would like a 7 wt switch rod and some higher water on the Brule next fall. Thanks.



KIAP-TU-WISH LAUNCHES “BRING BACK THE NATIVES” BROOK TROUT REINTRODUCTION ON THE TRIMBELLE RIVER

BY GREG MEYER

The Kiap-TU-Wish Board of Directors is pleased to announce the launch of our next stream restoration project on the Trimbelle River. The project site is at the headwaters section below Pierce County Hwy W.

The Goal of this project is the reintroduction of the once-native Eastern Brook Trout to the Trimbelle River, while reducing sedimentation and nonpoint source pollution flow to the Mississippi River.

The Project will enable the reintroduction of Eastern Brook Trout; including the protection, restoration of other threatened aquatic species, improved water quality by reducing stream sedimentation and polluted runoff, and increasing coarse substrate for improved spawning habitat. Completion of this project we will also increase the quantity and quality of angling and other recreational opportunities in the area. Upon completion, this project will restore approximately 4,392 feet of the Trimbelle.

Much of the Trimbelle suffers from excessive sedimentation, bank erosion and elevated water temperature. The site is overgrown with invasive tree species, which have weak root systems that collapse during flood events resulting in a wide, shallow stream. Sedimentation from bank erosion covers desirable coarse substrate reducing stream productivity, aquatic insect life and spawning substrate. In addition, sedimentation fills pool habitat, limiting adult habitat. This sediment severely limits the stream's potential to support fish and other aquatic life. A wide, sluggish, stream channel with slow current causes elevated water temperature. Because of this, Brook Trout have disappeared from the Trimbelle.

There is promising news however. In the upper reach of the project area, cold springs and groundwater swellings keep the water temperature cooler, and with proper habitat restoration will lend itself to Brook Trout survival and reproduction.

The BBN project is part of a longer-term restoration effort of the Trimbelle and its watershed. Our bigger picture restoration strategy is to start at the headwaters and available public land, and over time move our way downstream to the Mississippi, as easements and opportunities on private land become available. We hope to restore habitat, reintroduce Eastern Brook Trout where feasible, eliminate the need for stocking of non-native fish species, also reduce sediment and nutrient load to the Mississippi River.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation has ownership of the land at the project location and there are DNR Easements adjacent to and above the project area. The land is accessible to the public for a variety of recreational uses.

The current project cost estimate is over \$200,000, with completion anticipated by the fall of 2013. We are currently in the grant writing process and have already secured a portion of the funds needed. There will be more info on grant awards forthcoming in future RipRap newsletters and emails.

We Need Your Help! If you are interested in volunteering for upcoming work days on the project, please make sure to contact our Chapter Volunteer Coordinator, Randy Arnold via email at: rarnold@augbiomed.com

We also need folks to help out with monitoring and bug study for the project. This is an interesting and exciting opportunity that requires only 2-3 hours per month. If you are interested contact Chapter Project Leader, Tom Henderson at: tomhenderson136@comcast.net





KIAP-TU-WISH BOARD MEMBERS & CONTACT INFO

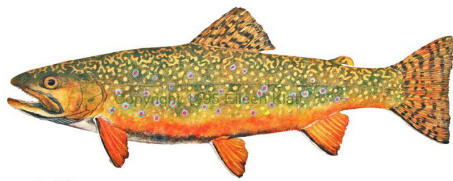
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CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB:

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DON'T MISS THE HOLIDAY BANQUET!!!

Thursday, December 6th at
6PM at the Lake Elmo Inn
Event Center

The deadline to make submissions for the
January issue is Wednesday, December 19th.
Thank you!

