



RipRap

A Publication of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited
MAY, 2010 VOLUME 3, ISSUE 9

MAY MEETING INFORMATION

BY KYLE AMUNDSON

We will once again be welcoming DNR Fisheries Manager Marty Engle to our May meeting. Marty will be speaking on the impact of the drought and how it is affecting our lakes and streams. He will also address the short and long term implications of having depleted water tables, and try to answer any and all questions. Come early, as annually this is our best attended meeting.

***Bob Smith's Sports Club, downtown Hudson,
Wednesday May 5th, 6 PM for dinner, 7 PM for
meeting and presentation.***



Marty Engle

KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER



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**Check out all the good
things inside this issue of
RipRap!**



PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY KYLE AMUNDSON

Introduction

Hello! My name is Kyle Amundson and let me say it is an honor to be the new President of Kiap-TU-Wish. We had four excellent years of leadership under Greg Dietl, so please thank him profusely when you get a chance. Greg has been a tremendous help and I have a lot to learn but I will do my best to follow in his footsteps in caring for this state's wonderful cold water resources.

Just a bit about myself, I was born and raised in Hudson (still live here) and I started trout fishing on the Willow River in 1971.... that's right, I can't remember much of anything nowadays but I can remember the year I started trout fishing. I have been a member of the chapter since 1987, and I am an avid outdoorsman. For all of you I have not been acquainted with, please make it a point of stopping by and introducing yourselves

Flybox Raffle

We are still waiting to be contacted by the flybox raffle winner, so please check the "news and events" page on the website for the winning number. The winner of the door prize was Andrew Chaffe of St. Paul, congratulations Andy

May Chapter Meeting

DNR Fisheries Resource Manager Marty Engle will be presenting at our May chapter meeting. He will be discussing water tables and what the current drought cycle could do to our cold water resources if it persists.

Midwest Flyfishing Expo

Once again the flyfishing expo was a big success. I want to thank everyone who helped and/or volunteered, but I would like to give a special thanks to Greg Meyer for all he has done: especially for his work in redesigning the web site, but also for creating the new booth display for the Expo, which helped to expose more people to what our chapter is all about. Thanks Greg!

Welcome new member Robert Ringgenberg.

Hope to see everyone at the Rush River cleanup.

A MESSAGE FROM THE V.P.

BY GREG DIETL

Chapter volunteers have been very active working on the Parker Creek project since February 27th. We have had an outstanding run of weather to work on this project. Work has been primarily upstream of the County J bridge. More box elders have bit the dust on that section than you can believe. The area resembled the BWCA blow down. However, because of steady volunteer efforts, the stream banks are being cleared of brush and felled trees. Work will continue on Saturdays, 9 – noon, until further notice. Watch the website and your email for work announcements. I want to thank all the volunteers so far that have worked on this project. We've averaged 10 to 12 workers per work day and have made excellent progress. Thank you to the following for your hard work and my apologies if I missed your name.

Randy Arnold	Dale Fretland	Bob Lorenzen	John Rock	John Sours
John Phillipps	Kevin Pankow	Hans Jung	Charles Conlon	Tom Schnadt
Chuck Goosen	Tom Henderson	Gary Horvath	Greg Dietl	Bob Bradham
Greg Gerard	Sam Somerville	Dan Colligan	Dennis Schwartzbauer	Mike Colling
Sarah Sanford	Chris Evans	John Carr	Loren Carver	John Carver
Paul Wright	Matt Valitchka	Andy Valitchka	Jonathan Jacobs	

Directions: Highway 65 to County J; County J east to the bridge, just east of Pleasant Avenue



SCOTT'S SCOOP

BY SCOTT HANSON, EDITOR

Hey, it's the very last RipRap of the season. Thanks to everyone who has contributed articles, flies, or photos during the past year. I really appreciate it! I know how slowly the summer months can go by up here in the northland, so if you need to find something to do this summer, you could always sit down and write out an article for next fall. What could be a better way to fill up a boring summer evening? OK, I know that summer actually flies by up here, and most of you already have half, or more, of your summer filled up with plans, but if you do happen to have some free time, and you want to spend that free time writing something for RipRap, I would love to get it! Send any articles, photos, or ideas to me at scott@yes-tech.com. Thanks!

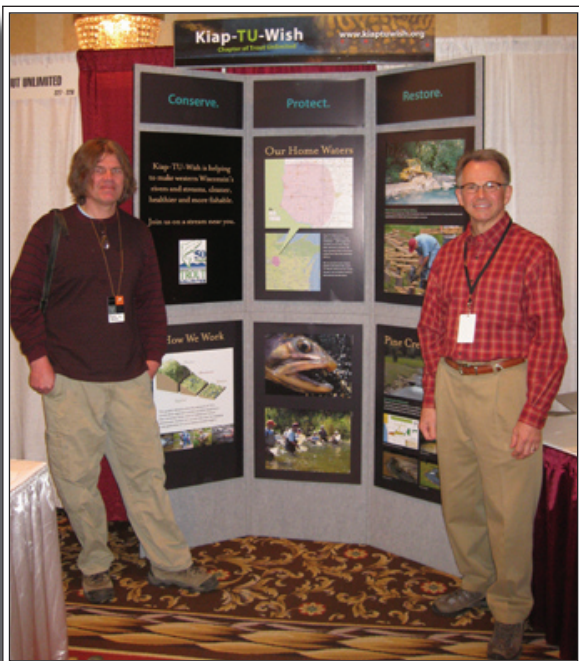
As you know, I like to keep my writing aimed at the trout and conservation issues in our area, and not write about my personal life (HA! that's a good one), but I'd like to put a small plug in here for something I've been working on lately. Aside from trout fishing, I am an avid golfer, and I recently have launched a regional golf magazine titled North Country Golf, which is aimed at helping people find new places to play in WI & MN. If anybody reading this is interested in checking out the Premiere Issue, send me an email and I will get one in the mail for you. OK, that's the end of my shameless self-promotion. For now, at least!

This final issue of RipRap is chock full of interesting stuff, fun photos, and great reading material. Make sure you read it from cover to cover, and then go back to the front and start over again. You won't want to miss anything!

See you next fall when the September issue comes out. Have a great summer!

Right: Kyle Amundson during his first monthly meeting as Chapter President.

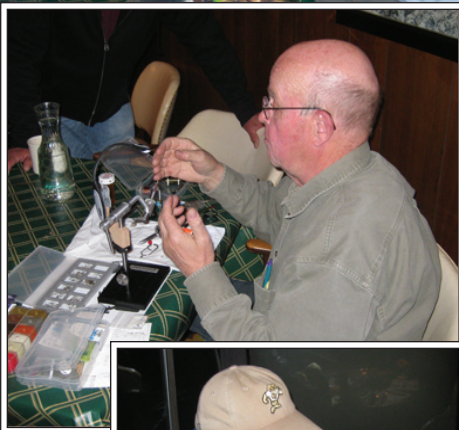
Below: Chapter members working the Kiap-TU-Wish booth at the recent Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo in Minneapolis.



REVISITING THE APRIL MEETING

BY SCOTT HANSON

If you missed the April meeting, you missed out on a lot of great fly tying. It was the Annual Dry Fly Dick Frantes Fly Tying Meeting, and the room was chock full of awesome tyers. And, while there were a good number of trout flies being tied, there were plenty of other things being concocted at peoples' vises, as well. Tom Carlson is going to be working as a guide in Alaska this summer, and he was getting ready by showing his audience how to tie the Morrish Mouse, a deadly mouse pattern. Cole Madden has recently taken to tying elaborate old-style salmon flies, *without a vise*! He demonstrated this classic, and some would say insane, technique, which amazed everyone in the audience. Check out the photos to see what else you might have missed!



Clockwise from Top:
Cole Madden tying without a vise; The beautiful salmon fly Cole tied that night; Randy Arnold at the vise; Greg Meyer tying a plethora of different patterns; Bob Diesch tying stone fly nymphs; Who let that guy tie?; Tom Henderson showing his skills; Tom Carlson wow-ing the masses with his Morrish Mouse.

Fly photo by Scott Hanson; all other photos courtesy of Greg Meyer



THE SPRING APPEAL

BY GARY HORVATH

It has been four years since Hap Lutter initiated the Spring Appeal which supplies nearly 50% of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter's operating budget. As you may know, Hap passed away in the fall of 2009. The Spring Appeal is one of the many legacies of Hap's rich and well-lived life. Hap believed that if our members understood that only a very small amount of the money sent for your national dues comes back to the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter, they would be willing to directly fund the important work the chapter undertakes on their behalf and on behalf of local trout streams. And he was right.

Through his vision, the Chapter has been able to fund habitat projects, monitor stream characteristics and assist in land acquisition on the streams you all enjoy. And there is much work to be done. The Chapter Board of Directors is exploring projects on the Trimble River and the Rocky Branch of the Kinnickinnic. Your continued support is needed. That is why we are asking you to donate generously to this year's appeal which has been renamed in Hap's honor.

Last year a quarter [25%] of the membership of Kiap-TU-Wish responded to the spring appeal with a donation. Our goal this year is to reach a third [33%] of our membership. We are asking you to help us reach this goal.

We have some great incentives to encourage you to contribute. If you are a first time donor you will receive a half dozen nymphs, tested and proven to work on the Rush and Kinni. If you contribute \$100 or more, a half dozen specially tied Blue Wing Olive dry flies and a specialized leader will come your way.

To donate or learn more about the Spring Appeal, please visit the chapter's website, www.kiaptuwish.org, and click on the "Hap Lutter Memorial Spring Appeal" tab. Thank you!



ANOTHER MESSAGE FROM THE V.P.

BY GREG DIETL

Editor's Note: I am thinking that retiring from his real job AND giving up his Kiap-TU-Wish Presidency has made Greg a little bored. He keeps sending me more things to put in RipRap. Will somebody please call him up and offer to take him fishing, PLEASE?!?!

The chapter booth at the Great Waters Expo was fully staffed all three days. We have an excellent new booth and graphics thanks to Greg Meyer, chapter board member and webmaster. We had many visitors and I know I went home tired on Saturday. Thanks to all the Expo volunteers who did a fine job of promoting the chapter and our mission of protecting cold water resources in western Wisconsin:

Randy Arnold
Jonathan Jacobs
Kyle Amundson
Roy Erickson

Bob Lorenzen
Bob Diesch
Greg Gerard
John Kaplan

Greg Meyer
DuWayne Richert
Greg Dietl

Tom Henderson
Gary Richardson
Ken Hanson



STURGEON OF A LESSER GOD

By DAVE GILBRAITH

“I believe in God, only I spell it Nature.” -Frank Lloyd Wright, 1869-1959

The 1986 movie *Children of a Lesser God* introduced audiences to James Leeds, a speech teacher at a school for deaf students who falls in love with a deaf female employee, Sarah Norman. As years passed, I forgot the details of the plot, and my crush on Marlee Matlin—the deaf woman who played the part of Sarah and won the Academy Award for Best Actress in her debut role, was never consummated. I never forgot the title of that movie, though. It asked me the question, “how can God allow some human beings to be born with a disability like deafness while others are spared?” From a fisheries perspective, I asked “was there a Supreme Being, Creator and Sovereign of the Universe, who created perfect jewels like the wild brook trout we love to catch in coldwater streams while some lesser deity, perhaps called Walmart god, created the homely sturgeon; more specifically, the pallid sturgeon?”

You may be wondering, what is a pallid sturgeon and what does this have to do with Trout Unlimited? Please bear with me. The pallid sturgeon is known to science as *Scaphirhynchus albus*. It means “spade snout” and “white”, and is derived from Greek and Latin. It is among the rarest of North America’s nine species of sturgeon. Pallid sturgeon swam 100 million years ago with dinosaurs, marine reptiles, bees, and flowering plants. Then a catastrophic event killed 75 percent of the earth’s species. Marine omnivores that fed on detritus were apparently suited for survival—and the pallid sturgeon did survive (Bryan, Eddies: Reflections of Fisheries Conservation 2009). They survived to reach weights in excess of 100 pounds in a river settlers called “too thick to drink, too thin to plow”; the Missouri. They survived with a body armored in bony plates instead of scales, sensory organs in the form of barbels which located food, and a mouth that protruded like a vacuum cleaner to suck up prey. Fish biologists working in the Missouri River basin expressed concern that the pallid sturgeon was in trouble. Preferred sturgeon habitat lay flooded by large impoundments or degraded by human activity. Adult fish were occasionally taken while sampling for game species, but there had been no natural reproduction documented for decades. With no reproduction, extinction was certain.

In 1986, I was a financially-challenged graduate student in fisheries biology at South Dakota State University in Brookings, writing my Master’s thesis. Dr. Charles Berry, head of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Cooperative Research Unit,

hired me to write a preliminary report on fishes of the Missouri River, specifically the pallid sturgeon. I reasoned I could channel some of the passion required to write my thesis into this added sturgeon research. I soon discovered it would take a lot of passion to write this report. There was almost no peer-reviewed literature about the fish. There was scattered anecdotal evidence from reservoir and river biologists that the species was on the decline. My job was to find enough pieces of the puzzle to begin constructing a document called the status survey. The status survey is the first step prior to petitioning an animal species for protection under the Endangered Species Act. For the next nine months, I was a fish detective, using personal communication from biologists, gathering small bits of data from Missouri River Reservoir reports, archiving specimens donated by government agencies, creating a reference library, and conducting sampling in the Missouri River.

We didn’t have cell phones and the Internet in 1986. We had U.S. Postal Service mail and land phone lines. I caused a crisis in the Pierre office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by running up a 200 dollar phone bill while contacting sturgeon experts all over the country. They forgave me when I submitted my status survey. We also attracted criticism from endangered species biologists within the U.S. F&WS who thought we crossed an imaginary jurisdictional line by writing the first survey. My document was distributed for peer review to those experts I had identified in my research and a final draft was published in 1987. In the meantime, I passed my oral examination, sent my thesis to the binder, and began looking for another job. I found an opportunity working for the Colorado River Fisheries Project of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in northeastern Utah, implementing the recovery plan for the endangered Colorado squawfish (now known as Colorado pike minnow), razorback sucker, bony and round tail chubs -- odd-looking fishes living in the Green, the largest tributary of the Colorado River. I returned to the Midwest in early 1988. I didn’t know it then, but my work with the pallid sturgeon was completed. From there, my career and the plight of the pallid took separate paths—though my research for the status survey proved to be a foundation upon which other work would be built. I look back on that project with great professional satisfaction and as a highlight of my career.





Pallid sturgeon

In 1859, Charles Darwin said, “Let it be borne in mind how infinitely complex and close-fitting are the mutual relations of all organic beings to each other and to their physical conditions of life”. It should not surprise the reader that there is a link between the welfare of coldwater fishes and the welfare of these endangered species. As Jonathan Jacobs wrote in the January 2010 issue of *Rip Rap*, the superb trout fishery of the Bighorn River is not natural, it is a product of the outflow from Yellowtail Dam. Other western warm water rivers that now have coldwater tailrace fisheries include the Green below Flaming Gorge Dam, and the Missouri River below a number of dams: Holter, Fort Peck, Garrison, and Oahe. If you have ever seen these dams, you know they are massive feats of human engineering and built to last. For instance, Flaming Gorge Dam is 502 feet high and Yellowtail Dam is 525 feet high. When I peer over the edge of these dams to the river below, I stare into the abyss. The Green River below Flaming Gorge Dam is perhaps the best tail water fishery in the United States, if not the top fishery period (John Ross, *America’s 100 Best Trout Streams—Trout Unlimited*, Falcon Publishing, 2005). These major rivers now flow at 50 degrees F, have clear water because silt loads settle into the reservoirs, low species diversity due to the cold, sterile conditions, stable flows similar to spring creeks (example, the Missouri River below Holter Dam) replacing the high spring flows which triggered spawning of warm water fishes, island-building, and channel meander. Circumstances which have created phenomenal trout fisheries have eliminated many less charismatic native fishes like the pallid sturgeon.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is required by Congress to report annually all state and federal expenditures used in the recovery of federally listed species. In 1990, the year the pallid was listed as an endangered fish species, those expenditures were 268 thousand dollars. In 2004, the most recent year

I could find the annual report online, that total had grown to 13.37 million dollars. In the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service publication “Eddies: Reflections of Fisheries Conservation” (Bryan 2009) Tracy Hill, supervisor of the Columbia, Missouri Fish & Wildlife Conservation Office stated that initial research has blossomed into a massively funded restoration project—“on par with the Everglades, San Francisco Bay, and the Chesapeake Bay”. Since 2005, tens of millions of dollars annually have been appropriated for the Missouri River Recovery Program. If we strictly judge extinction avoidance by money spent, the pallid sturgeon may be of a lesser god, but luckily one with deep pockets.

Those millions of dollars have produced results critical to recovery of the species. The federal hatchery system consistently produces fingerling sturgeon to reestablish populations in rivers with low population densities and buy time while biologists find ways to increase natural reproduction. State and federal biologists log thousands of hours on large river systems, develop innovative sampling techniques to detect larval sturgeon, capture adult fish to supply hatchery stocks, monitor the progress of the stocking program, identify critical habitat, modify degraded habitat and continue to expand the knowledge base of these ancient fish. The odds that you will hook a pallid sturgeon on a tiny blue wing olive are about as good as the odds of me having a chance romantic meeting with Marlee Matlin on a riffle in the Bighorn. But extinction is forever, there are other unique fishes swimming in our streams, and we can all choose to be their guardians as well as guardians for trout.





CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB:

WWW.KIAPTUWISH.ORG



DON'T MISS THE MAY MEETING!!!

Marty Engel from the Wisconsin DNR will be sharing his always-popular presentation on the streams of western Wisconsin. Wednesday May 5th, 2010 at Bob Smith's Sports Club - Dinner starts at 6PM-Meeting begins at 7PM

No more issues of RipRap until fall. The deadline to make submissions for the September issue is Wednesday, August 18th.
Have a great summer!

