



Rip Rap

September Meeting

When: Wednesday, Sept. 3
Where: JR Ranch, Hudson
Dinner: 6:30
Program: 8:00 Tim Popple

Tim Popple is director of the Priority Watershed Program for the Kinnickinnick valley (See pg. 2)

President's Lines:

It's hard to accept, but another fishing season will soon be drawing to a close. In partial compensation, we'll be holding chapter meetings at the JR Ranch all Winter. Please join us in addressing the issues that potentially impact the quality of our local cold water resources, or perhaps just come to rekindle some old friendships. Priority Watershed Program Manager, Tim Popple, will be joining us at the September meeting to discuss what has been done to insure the water quality of the Kinni, some potential threats, and his prognosis for the future of the watershed.

The biggest immediate challenge for the chapter will be the production of a video graphically showing the impact of storm run-off from urban areas. The film will be produced by KICA's News Night host, Cathy Wurzer. (see pg. 3) A preliminary outline will be used to as the main tool for raising the funds to support the completion of the project.

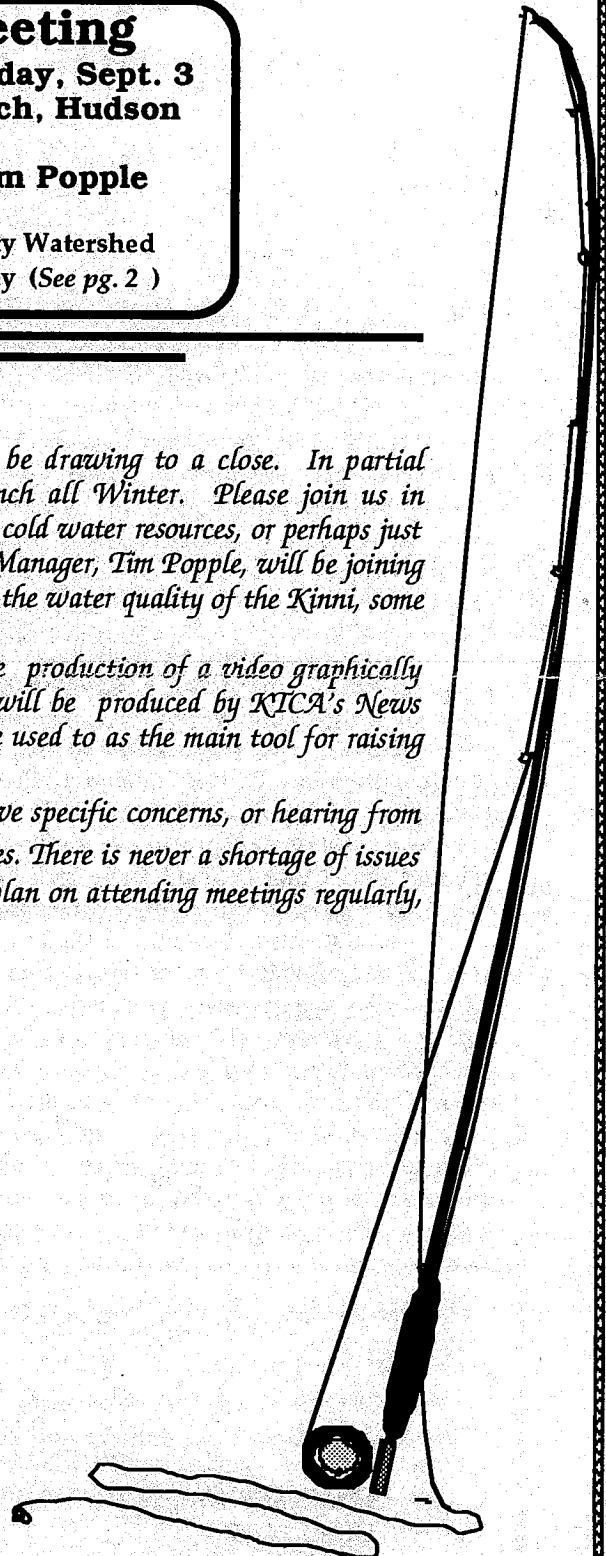
I am especially interested in feedback from members who have specific concerns, or hearing from members who would like to become more involved in chapter activities. There is never a shortage of issues or projects requiring the attention of a dedicated person. So please, plan on attending meetings regularly, and join us for dinner when you can. See you at the ranch..

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Sincerely,

Tony Stifter, President



Priority Watershed Director, Tim Popple, to speak at September Meeting...

Tim Popple, the beleaguered manager of the Kinnickinnic Priority Watershed may be looking for a new job if his salary, funded through the DNR, is eliminated because of budget cuts. Although the state of Wisconsin has funded the Priority Watershed program through the DNR since the 70's, recent reductions in DNR funding threaten to scuttle or pare back new programs. Kiap-TU-Wish's recent efforts to include the Kinni in the program may be for naught unless enough pressure is brought to bear on decision makers: Representative Sheila Harsdorf, DNR executives, and the governor. At the time of this writing, August 21, the regional DNR office has been given three weeks to comment on the priority of programs under its jurisdiction. The choice seems to be an across the board cut of 25%, or elimination of recently started projects. In spite of that, Popple's Priority Watershed program for the Kinni has already been used as the model for several similar programs throughout the state.



TIM POPPLE

Over the past year, Popple has put together a citizen group to oversee the future of the river. After months of discussion, a mission statement was promulgated, and factions that historically mistrusted each other shook hands and agreed that preserving the river and its ecosystem was viable and worthwhile. Popple started with small groups: farmers in one group, developers in another, environmental interest groups (including TU) in a third, a university group, a government group, a staff of experts. Once each group had defined its own interests in the future of the Kinni, they met together, debated and compromised their individual positions until they all agreed on a mission statement affirming the value of preserving the resource.

As the county wrestles with its new land use plan, Popple sees his Priority Watershed group as a tool in the fight to impress upon planners the importance of preserving the Kinni for the foreseeable future as an eco-preserve, as a recreational resource, and as an indispensable gauge of ground water quality. Right now, 80% of the land in St. Croix County is agricultural, but in the next generation, that figure should drop to less than 50%, with new homes being developed on former farms. Some of the most desirable land for this purpose is in the Kinnickinnick valley. Impacts on the river will be tremendous.

Popple, 30, grew up in Osseo, went to school at River Falls, (degree in Conservation Management), and presently lives with his wife and five-year-old son in Menominee. His talk about the future of the river, the future of his job, and the Kinni's place in the Priority Watershed program should be informative, timely, and perhaps a little scary. All members should attend.

Help Defend the Kinnickinnick Priority Watershed Project...

Letters of support are urgently needed. Send your comments to the Land and Water Conservation Board at the following address:

Mary Anne Lowndes
DNR, WT/2
P.O. Box 7921
Madison, WI 53707

Fax: (608) 267-2800

E-mail: LOWNDM@DNR.STATE.WI.US

Kiap-TU-Wish Bulletin Board...

Rip Rap and Lunker Structures installed...

At little cost to the chapter, the great piles of boulders poised on the sand bank of the Kinni just above the Rocky Branch bend have been installed to prevent further erosion. Underneath them, lunker structures have been installed, which have already become the home of large brown trout. One July evening as I stepped into the water at the upstream end of the newly riprapped section, a huge fish swam lazily from underneath the bank and drifted off downstream. I thought it was a large sucker or carp until I noticed the black and red spots on its flanks. That trout was at least two feet long!

Stream monitors installed by Kiap-TU-Wish all along the Kinni continue to provide useful information.

Cathy Wurzer to write script.....

At it's June meeting, the Board of Directors voted to proceed with plans for the production of a educational video on the effects of thermal pollution on trout streams. Adverse effects on ground water caused by urban sprawl and development will also be dealt with, using the Kinni as a model. **Cathy Wurzer**, KTCA news anchor and trout angler, will write the script in consultation with **Kent Johnson**. The Kinnickinnick River Land Trust may be a co-sponsor. One donation has been received toward the \$2000 scripting fee, and when that phase is complete, the script will be used as a tool to secure grant money to complete the video project.

The film will then be made available to other Trout Unlimited chapters and environmental groups. Perhaps, like *The Way of a Trout*, sales of the video will repay its cost many times over.

River Falls dam Discussed...

Meetings were held in early summer between FERC, TU, KRLT, the DNR and the River Falls Utility Co. to discuss options to allow "run of the river" flow when the turbines in the generating plant are down for repair and modification. **Gary Horvath**, **Ted Mackmiller** and **Rob Chambers** offered the suggestion that if the necessary work to bring the dam up to current standards makes future electrical generation unprofitable, why not simply remove the dam.

Editor's Note: Perhaps we 'll see the 'falls' put back in River Falls again!

Some members upset with website 'hits'...

Andy Lamberson reports that our website is getting frequent visits, with anglers posting and reading fishing reports for the local streams. He said that at least one member complained that the chapter is "advertising" the rivers too much, that the website leads to both increases in fishing pressure and diminishes the quality of the angling experience. The words used were "ratting on the river."

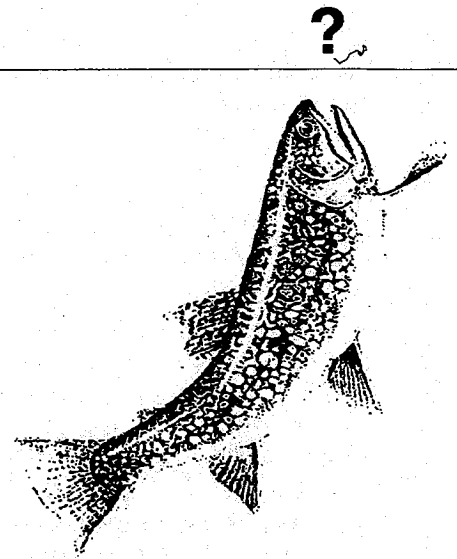
Editor's Note:

Although it is possible that more people fish our local streams because of the website, it is likely that they will share our concern for the welfare of those resources, be available to work on them, become Kiap-TU-Wish members, and vote for stricter water quality laws. The website "advertises" a group of people who care for rivers. In my mind, the more friends these streams have, the longer they will be preserved as viable trout habitat, particularly amid the pressures of urban sprawl and development.

New Booklet on Land Use Decisions....

The League of Women Voters of Pierce-St. Croix Counties has published a twenty-page booklet entitled: "*Beyond Your Back Yard: A Citizen's Guide to Development and Participation in Land-Use Decisions.*" The booklet helps residents understand issues, contains an explanation of property rights both private and public, and a list of those agencies that make policy decisions. "Fast-paced population growth in the two counties has caused many issues involving new housing developments and industrial areas" said League President Barbara Averill. Financed by Erickson Diversified Corp. and Pierce-Pepin Electric Cooperative, in addition to the League, the booklet will be distributed to libraries and government offices, and copies can be obtained by sending \$2 to:

League of Women Voters
c/o Odegard
316 North Cove Rd
Hudson, WI 54016



Skip's Loose Threads...

How exact an imitation is really necessary?

I ask myself this question every time I run across a hatch I can't match, or catch selectively feeding fish on a #14 Adams. On the one hand, I carry at least four different Baetis imitations, because on various occasions, one will work and the others seem to be useless. But I have only one yellow-bodied dry fly that I use for Sulphurs here and in Pennsylvania as well as PMD's out West. Nymph patterns have proliferated exponentially over the past ten years, yet most folk I talk to still catch most of their fish on PT's and GRHE's. Bead heads seem to be a helpful addition to many deep Caddis patterns, and parachute dry flies have replaced Catskill ties in many fly boxes. Sure, this is wonderful fun, but with all the new patterns, is anybody truly catching more fish?

I subscribe to the premise that trout will eat almost anything that looks like food. I also feel that it's more important to present the fly as close as possible to the trout's mouth than to have the precise imitation of whatever natural is present. Lastly, I believe that what Atherton called the 'suggestion of life,' using materials that move in the water, is more important than exact imitation.

Maybe we need a new book (another one?) called *Where The Trout Are* that analyzes different kinds of trout lies: deep in fast water, shallow near undercut banks, shallow in a riffle, deep in a pool, etc., with suggestions for using flies that would reach the trout in those areas most effectively. Kind of the mirror opposite to Schwiebert's *Matching the Hatch*. You first determine the fish's location, and then present something that looks like food. All I know is that I've done pretty well for the past three seasons, from Montana to New York, on one eighteen-compartment box of flies held in a small chest pack. Sure is easier on the back, too!

RifRaf.....Fiction, Poetry, Reviews, Humor

"A Fable"

by Skip James

Once, in a land where long months of dark and cold yielded only grudgingly to a few short months of warmth and light, there lived a fisherman. He had angled for trout since boyhood, but his delight in the sport had faded away along with his youth. His life had taken some wrong turns he thought, and he saw himself as the victim of circumstances beyond his control.

Bitter about his lack of success in business, he was often short with his co-workers. He took his wife for granted. His children had stopped sharing their thoughts with him years before. He was oblivious to both the infirmities and the solicitations of his friends. If he went to church it was simply out of habit, because he saw there only hypocrisy and self-righteousness. He felt a certain tightness in his chest, and was positive that stress caused his chronic heartburn.

His fishing gear reflected his sorry condition. His waders leaked. His hat band held an array of colorful flies, blue and silver, violet and orange. Under it, his brain conjured up wildly improbable schemes to get rich. His reel, neglected for many seasons, was caked with dirt. It made a noise like a peppermill when he turned the crank. The grimy silk line on the wobbly spool was rotten in many places, like the highly questionable episodes in the fishing stories he made up. He dressed that line just enough to keep it from sinking. He hoped the whoppers he told might keep his reputation afloat, too.

The late season sun lent just a little warmth to the air. Monarch butterflies rested on tall, dry streamside stalks, before resuming their migration to Mexico. The current pressed cool against his legs, the sky was azure, the trees red and gold, and fallen leaves drifted on the skin of water. All this escaped his notice. But in a small eddy behind a rock, shaded by a willow branch, he spied the dimple of a rising fish.

After maneuvering himself into position, he cast. The trout ignored his offering. He cast again. He changed flies several times, all to no avail. The trout rose rhythmically and confidently to an insect he couldn't see, much less match. With too much muscle, but inadequate finesse, he hung the gaudy fly on the overhanging bough. He pointed his rod tip at the branch and pulled hard. The weakened old line parted, ending his fishing for the season. Muttering under his breath, he left fly, leader and line dangling from the willow. But he took the frustration and anger home with him.

That winter, snow and cold came sooner than expected and lasted longer than usual. Crisis after crisis assailed the man: a death in the family, a divorce, financial trouble, an unexpected job change. As his life fell apart, he was forced to find new sources of strength.

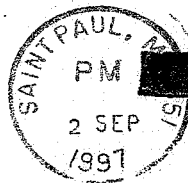
He threw out the leaky waders and began to care for his friends and family. He cleaned and oiled his reel. He began to tie realistic flies and found a job that suited his talents. In church, he began to see acceptance and hope in the faces of parishioners. He enjoyed singing hymns again. Even the chest pains went away. He bought a new line... clean, strong, and supple. He began to learn angling secrets by listening to his friends' stories.

One day in Spring, after the snow had melted and the water had cleared, he assembled his refurbished gear and walked the stream bank, looking for signs of feeding fish. He admired the white Anemones and purple Violets. The air carried the pungent odor of newly turned earth and green buds, full of promise, filtered the light. Yellow Warblers flitted from branch to branch and a determined Muskrat swam upstream with a mouthful of Willow shoots.

A trout was rising rhythmically in the eddy behind the rock. After watching awhile, the man pinched one of the small, smoky-winged Mayflies from the film and tied a fair imitation to his tippet. His cast smoothly unfurled over the water, extending a greeting and a challenge. The fly floated gracefully by the rock as if unattached. The trout rose, took the fly, was briefly played and released. After rinsing his hands, the angler glanced up, remembering, and searched the willow branch for the remnant of amber fly line. There it was, a talisman of his former life, or what remained of it. Woven together with twigs and grass, it had been transformed. As he watched, the Warbler returned with another meal for the three tiny hatchlings in her nest.



**KIAP-TU-WISH
TROUT UNLIMITED
P.O. BOX 483
HUDSON, WI 54016**



KIAP-TU-WISH OFFICERS:

President: Tony Stifter 715-549-5708
Vice President: Ross Nelson 715-386-9752
Treasurer: Chuck Goossen 715-386-5137
Secretary: Richard Lindholm 715-386-5394

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ellen Clark 612-426-0147
Chuck Goossen 715-386-5137
Skip James 612-436-1565
Kent Johnson 715-386-5299
Andy Lamberson 715-386-7568
Brent Sittlow 715-386-0820

RIP-RAP EDITOR

Skip James
16323 St. Mary's Drive
Lakeland, MN 55043
612-436-1565

DEADLINES

Oct. 9/15/97
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Dec. 11/15/97

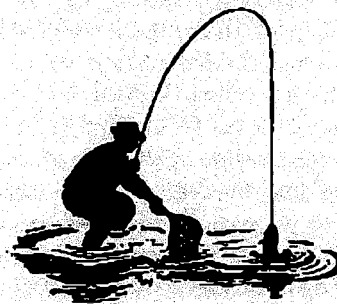
Now on the Internet at:

<http://www.spacestar.com/users/lambcom/kiap.html>

Visit our expanded and enhanced website

“Here, try this one...”

Herb Becker, fly angler, story teller, and cane rod maker extraordinary, died May 29th. He is survived by his wife Norma and three daughters. Herb could often be found near the Wonderland bridge over the Rush River, one of his powerful cane rods in his hand. Oblivious to a gathering crowd of cows, he would launch long casts, trying to reach the trout in the quiet water along the opposite bank. He always wanted others to try his rods out and tell him what they thought of it. Like Bob Mitchell, Herb had served in the Air Force in WWII, a bombardier in B-17's. Shot down over enemy territory, he became a prisoner of war, interned in Germany 1944-45. He was a carpenter and contractor, a man who knew how to work with his hands. The pride of craftsmanship was evident in the homes he built, in his Woodduck houses, and of course in his fly rods. I'm sure St. Peter, along with Andrew and John, like fellow anglers everywhere, are welcoming Herb into their heavenly fishing club and showing him all the productive riffles and pools in the River of Life. I can see Herb standing there, flexing one of his bamboo masterpieces, eagerly offering it to the others: "Here, try this one, what do you think?..."



*God grant that I may fish
until my dying day
And when it comes to my last cast
I then most humbly pray
When in the Lord's safe landing net
I'm peacefully asleep
That in His mercy I be judged
Good enough to keep.*