

Newscasts



October, 2003 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Motley Crue to Speak On October 14th

They may not be *the* Motley Crue, but this will certainly be a motley crew. Those who have dreamed of trout angling in Patagonia, can come for a taste of what it is like from Steve Born, Jeff Smith, Henry Haugley, and perhaps some of our TU brethren from the *Wild Rivers* chapter (Dick Berge and Bill Hart). These guys spent about two weeks in Argentina exploring the trout fishing, rivers, culture, and wines in early 2003.

Guaranteed to be visually exciting (well, as good as you can make Born, Smith, and Haugley look), and perhaps give you some ideas for your own fishing dream-trip. This should be an entertaining evening that goes beyond fishing --- bring your spouse, friends, and anybody who might want to dream about places other than Wisconsin in January! Patagonia today is what Montana was like in the 1950s. This team of self described *ner-do-wells* is looking forward to sharing their adventure with the entire chapter.

Though the Argentinean lies will begin at 7:00 the local lies will begin as soon as we begin to gather for dinner. So please come early, and have dinner with us. It's a great way to meet fellow chapter members. We will meet at the *Maple Tree Restaurant* located just 2 miles south of the Beltline on Highway 51 in the heart of the charming village of McFarland.

You Must Be Present Raffle

Mike Papenfus won the *You Must Be Present to Win Drawing* at our September chapter meeting. Mr. Papenfus took home a \$100 gift certificate to *Fontana Sports Specialties*, just for being present at the meeting. Though he claims that he "never wins anything" (they all say that) he was a lucky winner this time. Please come to the October 14th meeting and you could win a \$20 gift certificate to *Madison Outfitters* just for being there.

Ice Breaker Donations Needed

It is never too soon to start making personal plans for the *Ice Breaker*. Our reputation for giving away a lot of fine door prizes draws people to our fundraiser. Most of these door prizes are donated by our members. Some donors keep their eyes peeled for end-of-the-season sale items that might make good door prizes. Flies are an incredibly important part of the door prize repertoire; Please, please consider tying and donating flies.

We are still in need of as many 5-quart ice cream buckets as we can muster. Please consider purchasing a bucket of ice cream on your next trip to the grocery store. Once the ice cream is gone, rinse out the bucket and bring it to the next chapter meeting. Larry Meicher will gladly take them off your hands.

Farming With the Wild

The *Aldo Leopold Foundation* will sponsor a presentation of the recently published book *Farming with the Wild* by Dan Imhoff. Mr. Imhoff, is a co-founder of the *Wild Farm Alliance*, He will be speaking in Madison on Thursday, October 9 at 7 p.m. at the Pyle Center on the University of Wisconsin Campus. This should be an interesting discussion of an emerging conservation-based agriculture movement.

In addition to promoting his visually stunning and ideologically important book, Imhoff hopes his Madison appearance will serve as an opportunity for local conservation and sustainable agriculture groups, to celebrate farming with (rather than against) nature. Representatives from the *Aldo Leopold Foundation* and the *Farming and Conservation Together* (FACT) initiative will be in attendance to share the work they are doing on these issues. For more information, contact Michelle Miller, UW-Extension, 608-262-7135.

Restoring Trout Creek by Tom Thrall

When I first came to Wisconsin in 1981 as the new young Soil Conservation Service (SCS) biologist, Cliff Brynildson, the DNR Fish Manager (now retired), was taking me around showing me some watershed projects that he and my predecessor had worked on. One of the projects he took me to was Trout Creek in Iowa County, just north of the village of Barneveld. Two dams had been constructed on this stream in 1964 as part of the federal Public Law (PL) - 566 flood control program. The dams were installed by SCS (now the Natural Resources Conservation Service or NRCS). Cliff filled me in on the background and the controversy of the project as well as what was done to try and minimize negative impacts of the dams on fish movement and water temperature.

We had our fly rods along and it so happened that it was the end of the day and there was a nice hatch going on. I still remember that day vividly. Trout Creek was the first stream I fished in Wisconsin and it became my favorite stream. (I can't speak for Cliff but I think it is his also). Over time however, I we have seen the stream habitat and the fishery deteriorate. The negative impacts of the dams were beginning to show. Although the dams were controlling floods, they were having a negative effect on water quality and normal sediment movements. The lower dam - a "dry" dam (has no water pool), did a great job of holding back water during floods, but, as the water behind the dam slowed, it dumped its sediment load in the stream channel and flood plain. Below the dam, restricted stream velocities did not allow for normal flushing of sediment so the stream below the dam was also impacted. An outlet pipe was designed so that fish could move through it, but according to Gene Van Dyke, DNR Fish Manager, young fish are not strong enough to move through.

The upper dam has a pool and is referred to as Birch Lake. Over time this pool has filled with sediment which has had a negative impact on the warm water fishery as well as the downstream cold water fishery. The silt carries high nutrient loads which create

heavy algal growth, low oxygen levels and high temperatures. Streambank erosion has also become a major problem and a source of stream sediment.

People have long been concerned about the situation but previous solutions would have been complicated and expensive. Some new developments have recently occurred, however. The NRCS has a new program to rehabilitate PL-566 dams to ensure they are safe and effective. Iowa County (the sponsor of the project) has taken a new look at Trout Creek in light of the fact that nearly all the land protected from flooding by the dam is now under the control of the DNR and flood damage is not the issue that it once was. Some initial economic studies have shown that increased use of the stream by fishers will help boost the local economy in the area including Barneveld. Also, the county is concerned about future liability issues as the dams continue to age. Consequently the county has requested that NRCS look at Trout Creek to see what might be done through the dam rehabilitation program. Although the dams are structurally sound, the sediment buildup and the ineffective nature of the fish passage has made a rehabilitation project eligible for NRCS funds. Several meetings have already occurred with the stakeholders including Barneveld officials and concerned residents to get input on potential alternatives. Very soon NRCS and Iowa County will be sending out for review a Supplemental Watershed Plan/Environmental Assessment document which will summarize all the issues, potential impacts and alternatives. Dam removal is an alternative seriously being considered.

The potential is there for the USDA to pay for 65% of the costs of the selected alternative. Local matching funds will need to be raised for the remaining 35%. NRCS will include cost figures in their report. The cost to restore Trout Creek will not be trivial. If Trout Creek is to be restored to meet its great potential, TU will need to take an active leadership role. For this project to succeed, it is imperative that TU lead the effort to identify, coordinate, and collect, local funds.

From the President... by Bill Pielsticker

We've come to the end of another Wisconsin trout season, ushered out by cold temperatures and windy conditions. I spent a few hours a week earlier fishing on Black Earth Creek with Jon Christiansen, chair of Wisconsin TU. The air was mild, the wind at our backs, and fish were feeding. Of course, they were feeding on tiny midges and generally had little interest in our giant size 24 offerings. Jon eventually landed three fish. I played and lost one. We were humbled, and had a great time!

Jon was in Madison on business that Tuesday, and I suggested we get together to talk. Jon, along with several other TU leaders, had been encouraging me for months to "run" for the position of chair of the Wisconsin TU State Council. Long story short, I was the sole nominee for that position at the State Council meeting in Amherst in mid-September. The election will be at the next State Council meeting in early February. Others are welcome to seek nomination – I've even offered to fund an opponent. So far I've had no takers.

In the meantime, we all need to pay closer attention to what our state lawmakers are doing these days. Majorities in both houses have approved bills that would grant automatic approval to many permit applications if the relevant agency does not act on the application within a narrow window of time. Of course, this follows earlier action that cut 70 full-time administrative staff positions in the DNR – some of which are the same people who help process those permits.

Permits are written, often on a case-by-case basis, to accommodate the specific needs of individual sites. Artificial deadlines are likely to lead to less detailed and less protective permits, or no real protection in the case of the proposed "accidental" permits. Yes, the Clean Water Act will still be in force, but permit restrictions designed to forestall a pollution event will be lacking. Thus while smoothing the way for new permits, this proposal could lead to degraded water quality, fish kills, and more enforcement actions rather than less. This is just one of a

suite of bills labeled as "regulatory reform" which, coincidentally (?), threaten real long-term harm to our state's natural resources.

Then there's the proposal to redefine "navigable waters." According to the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, this legislation would remove "state regulatory protections from thousands of miles of some of the most valuable waterways in Wisconsin." Many headwater streams could be affected, and the fisheries that depend on them imperiled. Other bills likely to be acted on include new proposals to hamstring the Stewardship Fund, and a measure to rescind Smart Growth. I guess they want us to go back to Dumb Growth.

As hunters and anglers, we need to let our legislators know that these measures are wrong. Overturning 130 years of settled law to redefine navigability is wrong. Claiming to improve our business climate while endangering our state's natural resources is wrong. We need sensible measures that will encourage business growth and protect our land, air, and water at the same time. If our lawmakers can't find a way to do that, then we need to find some who can.

High Capacity Well Debate Continues

The Water and Land Use Planning Committee for Langlade County has approved a request to re-zone two acres of property from agricultural to industrial use. The property owner is seeking the re-zoning in order to extract water from the springs underlying his property for the purpose of selling spring water.

This rezoning could damage the coldwater resources in Langlade County. While the proposal calls for the extraction of only 6,000 gallons of water per day, the pump specified in the proposal has a capacity of 500 gallons per minute. Installing a pump capable of extracting the daily water quota in only 12 minutes represents a level of excess that raises concerns that the actual volume of extracted water may soon dwarf the proposed 6,000 gallon per day level.

Under current Wisconsin law, there is little if any authority available to regulate the

volume of water that can be removed after a re-zoning proposal is approved. While the removal of 6,000 gallons per day would likely have a negligible impact on the adjacent surface and groundwater, larger volume extractions would almost certainly have a negative impact on our interests there. The current controversy focuses attention once again on the need for

statewide regulation of high capacity wells in Wisconsin. In fact, the situation in Langlade County has the potential to become the straw that breaks the camels back. If the dispute goes to litigation, it could provide a landmark case. If it moves the legislature to pass meaningful reforms in this area - so much the better. Please stay tuned for further developments on this topic.

Important dates to remember:

October 14	Chapter Meeting Featuring Deadbeats Born, Haugley, and Smith
November 11	Chapter Meeting Featuring Tom Thrall: The Trout Creek Project
December 9	Chapter Meeting Featuring Gerry Campbell <i>et al</i> : Dos and Don'ts of Alaska Fishing
January 13	Chapter Meeting Featuring SWTU Fly Tyers
January 16-17	2004 <i>Ice Breaker</i> Featuring Bob Krumm and Nikki Seger
February 10	Chapter Meeting Featuring an as yet unidentified speaker
March 9	March Madness Auction

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited Leadership:

President	Bill Pielsticker	(608) 592-4718	
Vice President	Susan Fey	(608) 442-5801	
Secretary	John Serunian	(608) 277-4604	
Treasurer	John Schweiger	(608) 238-8062	
Past President	Tom Ehlert	(608) 767-2413	
State Council Rep.	Dave Westlake	(920) 927-3820	
Newscasts Editor	Mark Maffitt	(608) 273-2140	Mark_Maffitt@PanVera.com

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 7051
Madison, WI 53707