

Newscaats

September, 2001 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Time to Think about Steelhead Fishing

Our September chapter meetings are always pretty interesting. Folks haven't seen each other since the July meeting and there are generally lots of summer fishing stories to trade. At the September 11 meeting, we'll also be looking ahead....to steelhead fishing. Our speaker this month is **Lou Jirikowic**, an expert steelhead angler and guide. Lou's also a Sage certified casting instructor and has taught numerous courses. His topic will be: "Flyfishing for Steelhead and other Trout" and he'll cover tactics, patterns and casting techniques.

As usual, we'll be meeting at the fabulous Mapletree Restaurant on Highway 51 in McFarland, five minutes south of the beltline. Come out at 5:30 or 6:00 for dinner.

Industrial Park on Black Earth Creek?

Recently, the Cross Plains Economic Development Committee proposed placing a business/industrial park in and along the Black Earth Creek corridor. Portions of this development would be within the Black Earth Creek Valley Natural Resource Site, recently added to the Dane County Parks and Open Space Plan.

A public information meeting to present the proposed development is scheduled for Tuesday, September 18 at 7 p.m. at the Glacier Creek Middle School, 2800 Military Rd., Cross Plains (north of Hwy. 14, off of County Rd. P).

This proposal includes the location of the proposed Sunny Industry plant which we opposed several years ago. If you attend this meeting, you might ask questions about why this site was chosen, what alternate sites have been considered, and whether the people representing the Village of Cross Plains have any interest in preserving the quality and character of Black Earth Creek. For more information, contact **Dennis Franke** at (608) 798-3423.

Help Needed to Build Fish Ladder

Trout stamp money is funding a habitat improvement project on Lodi's Spring Creek. Already, Spring Creek has a naturally reproducing population of brown trout, but lacks the hiding places fingerlings need to survive their first year. Riprap will be placed along several sections of stream in the City of Lodi to provide the habitat the fingerlings need.

Most of the habitat work will be done by the Lodi Canning Company, contributing both equipment and personnel for the job. However, volunteers are needed to construct one of two riffle-type fish ladders below two log dams in downtown Lodi. At the same time, you can pick up some tips how to fish this stream, which is only 30 minutes from Madison's east or west side.

WHAT: Volunteers are needed to move 6" to 10" rip-rap to the stream, then to place it in the stream below a 20 foot wide log dam. The riprap will be piled to the top of the log, and tapered downstream about 15 feet. A shallow depression will be created at the center of construction to create a channel for the water, and a place for fish to move upstream.

Volunteers should bring sturdy gloves, either leather or cloth. People will be needed both in the stream and on shore to move the material about 100 feet to the work site. Those working in the stream may want to wear hip boots or waders, depending on the temperature.

WHEN: Saturday, September 22, and Saturday September 29, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Tips on fishing the stream will be offered both days. DNR personnel also will shock portions of the stream following work on Sept. 29 to show what the stream holds for anglers looking for new places to fish.

WHERE: Downtown Lodi, one half block north of the intersection of Hwy. 60 and Hwy. 113. From the east side, take 90/94 north to Hwy. 60, west to Lodi. From the west side, take Hwy. 12 north to Lodi-Springfield Rd., turn right. Cross Hwy. 19, then turn right on Hwy. P. At Hwy. 113, turn left and follow into Lodi. Parking is available along the stream, accessed from Hwy. 113 two blocks south of Hwy. 60 (look for the TU signs).

For more information, contact **John Serunian** at 277-9295.

Youth Committee Being Organized

Chapter members are being recruited to take part in a new effort to teach young people how to fly cast, read water, maybe tie a few flies! TU National has a new program called First Cast, which provides a curriculum, teaching tips, and equipment. Our chapter is looking for volunteers to join several members who have already stepped forward to be involved in this effort. For more information or to volunteer, call **Bill Pielsticker** at 592-4718.

From the President....

Summer's over, and I hope most of you got in more fishing than I did. With less than a month left in the season, there's still time to wet a fly. While Black Earth Creek is a shadow of its past following June's fish kill, you may want to try some other area streams. Two just to the north are Spring Creek at Lodi, and Rowan Creek at Poynette. In fact, you can come out and learn about how and where to fish Spring Creek on Sept. 22 and 29, and help construct a fish ladder at the same time (see accompanying article).

It is now clear there will be no definitive answer as to what killed thousands of trout in Black Earth Creek this June. The DNR is currently studying the data from stream monitors used this summer to obtain information on the health of the stream. We will report their findings and what actions they can take to prevent future fish kills as soon as we learn of them. By the way, the impact of the 9+ inch deluge in early August is not expected to have a long-term impact on the stream. Some young fish were probably lost, but the large fish generally find places to hunker down and ride out the flood.

Some people have questioned why the DNR is not planning to restock Black Earth Creek. The reason is that BEC, like other streams in Wisconsin, is a naturally reproducing fishery. To keep it that way, DNR personnel may move fish from areas with adequate population to those without, known as in-stream transfers. Beyond that, they will rely on natural reproduction to repopulate the affected stretches. The end result is that there will be fewer fish for several years, but a healthier, sustainable population in the long run.

While we can't identify a particular culprit, June's fish kill was clearly the result of polluted run-off. Earlier this year, we asked you to comment on proposed DNR rules setting standards for controlling run-off and minimizing its impact. Those rules are now before the Natural Resources Board, and expected to be sent to the legislature in January.

This summer, another set of rules specifically designed to address the issue of agricultural pollution was proposed by the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). As proposed, the new rules for Wisconsin's soil and water resource management program appear to be seriously flawed. They implicitly reward poor stewards of the land for not taking action to reduce soil loss and run-off. The proposed funding for the new rules also make it likely the program will take generations to fully address the polluted run-off that is now the biggest threat to our cold water fisheries.

(Continued on next page)

From the President *(continued)*

Several TU volunteers at the chapter and the state level are monitoring these developments, and taking action to see that the DATCP rules are substantially revised or completely rewritten. It is over 30 years since the Clean Water Act, and polluted run-off is yet to be effectively addressed. We can't wait another 30 years to bring an end to the annual list of fish kills from pesticides and manure, the over-fertilization of streams and lakes, and the burial of spawning beds by sediment transported by storm run-off. We are acting on your behalf to bring about effective solutions, and we appreciate your support.

Bill Pielsticker

Smallmouth Group Organizing

While trout fishing is a great way to relax, many of us fish for other species as well. If your interests include smallmouth bass, take note. A meeting to form a club dedicated to smallmouth bass fishing in Wisconsin will be held on Tuesday, September 18, at 7 p.m. at Graufogel's Waterfront Dining Room, 740 Water St. Sauk City (1 block north of Hwy. 12). The goal is to form a Wisconsin Chapter of the Smallmouth Alliance. For more information, contact **Adam LaPorte** at (608) 254-8251.

Find a Fly Box?

While fishing at Willow Creek last month, Topf Wells lost a green plastic flybox full of flies, mostly tied by chapter members and purchased (at very generous bids) at our annual auctions. Topf's offering a reward to anyone who finds it. Call him at 231-3037.

Mystery Fly Tier Wanted

Several years ago, **Larry Sauer** donated some pheasant skins to the chapter. He later received a batch of flies from a grateful fly tier. Larry would like that person to give him a call at (608) 897-2547.

State Budget Update *by Jeff Smith*

The 2001-03 budget bill passed and was signed and partially vetoed by the Governor on August 30, 2001. Here are some of the provisions we have been following:

High Capacity Wells: The bill created language that would allow the DNR to deny permits for water bottling operations only. This was a major disappointment to us. We had some solid, broader language in there when the budget was in the Assembly, but lost it somehow in the Conference Committee. Included was a requirement that the Legislative Council (a legislative study group) study the issue. Unfortunately, the governor vetoed this.

DNR Split: The Conference Committee created a new Department of Forestry. Thankfully, the Governor vetoed this provision.

Fish Positions: DNR received 3 additional, permanent fish management positions in the budget. This is good news because it relates to being able to keep Trout Stamp funding working after 3 federally funded project positions expire in October.

Use Value Taxation: Budget language, put in by the Assembly, would have taken care of the major part of the issue--the incentive to put buffer property into agricultural use. However the language was removed by the Conference Committee.

Coaster Brookies: The Governor "wrote down" (vetoed the dollars appropriated and wrote in a smaller number) funding for the coaster brook trout study and restoration project from \$20,000 in 2001-02 and \$150,000 in 2002-03 to \$20,000 each year. These were tribal gaming revenues that were apparently short of the amounts needed to fully fund all of the projects the Legislature wanted.

High Water Mark: The previous budget bill established the ordinary high water mark as the standard to distinguish public from private property. This budget bill changed that to say one can only use the ordinary high water mark land to get around an obstruction. This means we are back to the "keep your feet wet" days.

Other Budget Provisions of Interest:

- * Bans Great Lake oil and gas drilling
- * Stewardship funding increased \$112 million per year--the Governor vetoed many of the legislated purchases, which gives the DNR more discretion.
- * Creates an adopt-a-river program similar to the adopt-a-highway program.
- * Increased funding to address invasive aquatic plants and animals.

Southern Wisconsin Chapter
of Trout Unlimited
Post Office Box 7051
Madison, WI 53707