

Newscasts

May 2025 serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited



Presentations, Elections and Auctions ... So Much Happening at Our WEDNESDAY, May 14 Chapter Gathering

We will gather on **WEDNESDAY, May 14** (as opposed to our usual Tuesday due to some scheduling with Schwoegler's).

We'll elect officers at this meeting, raffle an array of incredible flies and hear from an extremely special and welcome guest: **Kyle Oliverncia – the new DNR fish biologist for Dane, Green, and Rock Counties**. He is our point person for all of SWTU's stream conservation work in our area. Kyle will introduce himself and discuss stream sampling plans for the year and provide an overview of the Garfoot Creek project planned for 2026/27. And don't you want to hear about this fish picture?

Some of us have worked with Kyle on our Sawmill Creek workday and met with him and the other fish biologists in this part of the Driftless Area. He's a great guy – knowledgeable, communicative and approachable. We and the trout are lucky to have him caring for our streams.



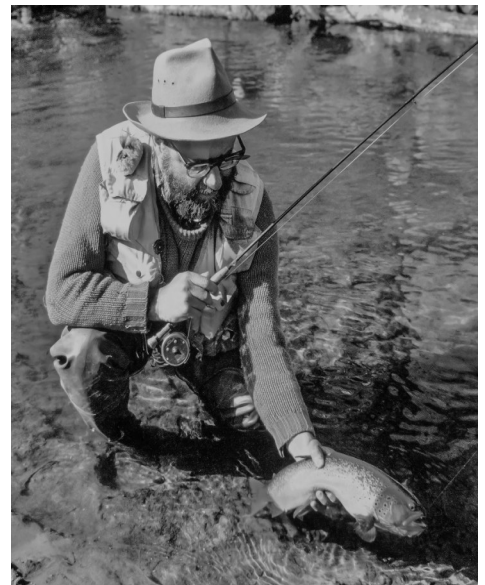
Special Auction of Tom Wendelburg Flies on Wednesday, May 14

The late Tom Wendelburg was Wisconsin's most prolific fly-fishing writer. In a 35 year career Tom wrote over 200 articles in all the nation's outdoor magazines, from Sports Afield and Field-Astream, to the Flyfisher and Fly Fisherman. His 2001 book, *Catching Big Fish with Light Tackle*, was published actually by our prestigious University of Wisconsin Press. (Check for copies on eBay - it's filled with hard-core fly fishing strategies. for trout, bass, panfish, steelhead and salmon.)

The setting for almost all of Tom's writing was Wisconsin waters, especially our Driftless spring-creek trout streams. Having lived on Black Earth Creek, early-on sometimes actually out of his Ford Pinto station-wagon!, Tom was likely America's first "Trout Bum", long before John Gierach coined a book with that title, living the trout-life for over 55 years until his death in 2020.

A long-time member of the chapter, following his death the Wendelburg estate asked fishing friends and SWTU to sell his equipment and flies with the proceeds to fund restoration projects on his beloved Black Earth Creek, including its Garfoot Creek and Vermont Creek tributaries.

The May 14th WEDNESDAY meeting offers a special opportunity to win some of Tom's very best flies: 3 sets of his Wisconsin spring creek flies, each with about 70 flies – mayfly and caddis dries, hopper and cricket terrestrials, hair's ear scuds, marabou leeches and streamers. Tom was also an accomplished fly fisher for panfish and bass, and so we'll also offer 2 sets of Tom's bass bugs and 2 of bluegill poppers. Bass blasting a bug or bluegills sipping a popper are about as much fun as fly fishing gets, and the bass and bluegills are getting ready to put on a show.



Raffle tickets will be \$10; the more tickets the better your chances for once-in-a-lifetime flies.

It's a lot going on in this last gathering until September, so we hope to see you on WEDNESDAY, May 14. (We're repeating the WEDNESDAY as much as we can!) We'll gather, as always, at Schwoeglers on Grand Canyon Drive on Madison's West Side. Dinner and drinks will be available starting at 5:30 p.m. with the election, presentation and raffle following some brief updates at 7.

Schwoegler's Lanes, 444 Grand Canyon Dr., Madison, WI 53719

2025 Chapter Elections

Another reason the WEDNESDAY, May 14, gathering is really important

SWTU needs to elect new Officers and Board Members.

The slate:

President: Tof Wells
Vice President: Dyan Lesnik
Secretary: Josh Reilly
Treasurer: Michael Westbury
Board Member: Don Golembiewski (incumbent)
Board Member: Gabe Park
Board Member: Henry Haugley
Board Member: Mark Maffit
Board Member: Open (1-year term)
State Council Rep: Michael Williamson (incumbent)

We'll also happily accept nominations for any office from the floor.

Here's a bit more on the non-incumbent candidates:

Topf Wells: I've been a member of SWTU for over 40 years and the Vice President for the last 4. I'm grateful for SWTU's wide range of activities and the friendliness I've always encountered at SWTU events. I especially enjoy our conservation activities. Among my goals is to keep SWTU as friendly and welcoming as possible.

Dyan Lesnik: I've been a member of SWTU since 2018, first becoming involved through the SWTU Veterans on the Fly program with my husband. After we both retired from the military, we had the chance to move back to my home state of Wisconsin, now both working for the VA. While my husband is the fly fisherman and fly tier, my interest lies more with supporting SWTU's conservation and education mission. My love of the outdoors and education in plant ecology, as well as being a Master Gardener drives my interest in wanting to do more within TU. Every workday I've participated in has been educational and a lot of hard work, but I've enjoyed every wet and muddy day!

Josh Reilly: I'm Josh Reilly, I've been a member of SWTU for a little more than 3 years and have been on the Board as a director for the past year. I grew up on a small game farm with my grandparents outside of Edgerton. My grandpa was an avid fisherman and I was often with him as his sidekick. He instilled a conservation point of view as he raised me. I look forward to being your Board Secretary and hope to keep Henry's great work going into the future.

Michael Westbury: Raised in Oregon, WI, I have lived in the area my whole life. I hold a Bachelor and Master of Business Administration from Edgewood College and have worked at TDS in IT for 25 years. Passionate about conservation, I look forward to contributing to the Board of Directors and the Trout Unlimited Southern Wisconsin Chapter.

Gabe Park: I was born and Raised in Neenah, WI and got my Bachelors in Environmental Ethics at UW-Stevens Point. After graduation, I moved out west to manage a Fly Shop in Fort Collins, CO and learn everything I possibly could about Trout and the cold water they call home. Now, I'm thrilled to be back in Wisconsin where I am continuing that path as the manager of Musky Fool Fly Fishing Co, Madison's only full service fly shop. As a long time member of TU I look forward to contributing to the SWTU Board in a more meaningful way. It's time to give back to these resources that fuel my passion and allow me to be employed doing what I love. Can't wait to meet you all!

Henry Haugley: I got into SWTU in the mid-70s. Was VP, then president for 2 years. Was fly tying instructor for about 25 years. Worked stream days for about 20 years. I have always been a contributor to all fundraising with art work and flies. Looking forward to working with the TU board.

Mark Maffit: I was a board member in the 1990s and served a stint as Vice President. I also served as the newsletter editor from about 1999 until 2007. I served as the Ice Breaker chair for a couple of years in there somewhere. I then took a break for a few years but returned to the board in 2015 and served as secretary in 2016. After a second break, I served a term as chapter president in 2022 and 2023. I am seeking another term on the board because I would like to see the return of a number of social activities to the chapter's annual agenda. I would specifically like to reintroduce organized fishing outings and our summer picnics.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to Steve Musser (President), Marty Chiaro (Treasurer), Henry Nehls-Lowe (Secretary), Riley Bellin (Board Member) and Jim Beecher (Board Member) for their service. All were dedicated to SWTU and took their responsibilities most seriously. Steve, Marty, and Henry improved many of our administrative functions – not fun but vital to a healthy SWTU – and addressed some key issues for our future. SWTU is better off because of the service of all these folks. Thank you to each.

Learn What Your Board's Been Up To – Including a Yahara River Tour

Minutes from SWTU Board of Director meetings can be viewed [in this Google Drive](#). If you have questions on what you read in them, reach out to one of the Board members listed on the last page of each newsletter. (Note that you may need to click the “Last Modified” header at the top to sort the list with the latest minutes at the top.)

Board Members learned more about the newly trout-designated Yahara River on the northeast side of Madison. Several DeForest officials led an informative and interesting walking tour.

SWTU will continue to learn about this local coldwater resource and look for opportunities to contribute to its success.

See more pictures [in the article on swtu.org](#).



SWTU Workday

Saturday, May 10, 2025 – Pleasant Valley Branch (Dane Cty Rd H)

By Jim Hess

Time: 9am to 12 noon (sawyers that have completed a chainsaw safety course please arrive at 8:30, if needed we can provide a chainsaw and safety equipment).

Where: Pleasant Valley Branch, which feeds into Kittleson Valley Creek, is located Southeast of Daleyville, near the T-intersection of Dane County Roads A and H. Here is a Google Map link for this location – <https://maps.app.goo.gl/u1dwkidAZGGYHFXD6>

A route from Madison:

Take Hwy 69 south to Paoli, at the roundabout turn right onto County Rd PB, go 2 miles to Cty Rd A, turn right on A and go 14 miles to Cty Rd H, turn left on H and the work site is on the left side of the road.

What: We are assisting the Dane County Land and Water Resources Dept in removing a large stand of invasive willows along Pleasant Valley Branch. Katie Nicholas and Shawn Esser with Dane County will be leading this workday.

There are some fairly large willows in clusters of 3 to 5 trunks that for the most part will require the use of chainsaws or our chapter's brush cutter. There is sufficient room for the sawyers to spread out. The landowner will be assisting us with a vehicle to carry the cut limbs to the burn pile locations, which he will be burning at a later date. Volunteers will need to load the limbs onto his truck and may need to help with unloading them.

Be sure to cut the trunks as low as possible to the ground and treat all cut stumps.

Bring: Bring work gloves, sturdy shoes, eye and ear protection – and reusable water bottles that can be re-filled from our 5-gal water jug. Stay hydrated.

Parking: Park on the east side of Cty Rd H. This is a fairly busy county road with heavy farm machinery, so it is important for everyone to park on the same side of the road for traffic flow and safety.

Next Workdays:

May 17 (9am – 12 noon) – Big Spring DNR tree planting. Justin Haglund and his crew will be leading this workday. The DNR will predrill the holes and provide fencing and t-posts. Google link - <https://maps.app.goo.gl/xdrh6SggZJa7xd3RA>

May 24 (9am – 12 noon) – Duerst Property (7309 Riverside Rd), clearing honeysuckles and invasive brush to open the area for the workday next fall with STIHL professional sawyers.

June 7 (9am – 12 noon) – Continue working on the Duerst Property if needed. Otherwise, we will return to Pleasant Valley Branch along Cty Rd H.

Two Great Workdays: Earth Day Planting and Conley Lewis Clearing

By Topf Wells

The first was on Earth Day, 4/22. About a dozen of us joined with Justin Haglund's great DNR crew to help the 4th and 5th graders of Hollandale plant oak trees along Gordon Creek. The 50 students made quick work of the 16 oaks. Thanks to the kids with some assistance from us, the DNR, and some hard working teachers, the trees are planted, watered, mulched and fenced-- off to a great start. Their reward was bags of cookies and, even better, an electro shocking of the stream by the DNR. All the kids got to see brown trout, white suckers, and mottled sculpin. And they got to touch some; the kids were entranced. And heaps of fun to be around; they were engaged, hard working, enthusiastic, attentive and supportive of one another. The parents of Hollandale, Blanchardville, and surrounding environs can be proud of their kids.



The DNR and SWTU folks who arrived early knew the shocking would go well. We were treated to a 15 minute, intense caddis hatch. Bugs popping and trout rocking and rolling.

The trees should help keep the stream cool and the trout healthy.

One of the kids told one of our members: "I thought this day was going to suck but it was fun." High praise from a 5th grader.

Thanks to Jim Hess for organizing the day and writing the grant that funded the trees, fencing, etc. and to Justin and crew for auguring the holes and surveying the stream. Chris Rogers, the principal, gave us permission and arranged many key details (like the bus). Bill Smith, the landowner helped with the kids and had repaired a footbridge so the kids did not have to use the highway bridge to cross the creek.



The Pecatonica Leader covered the day with a great story worth checking out.

Most of us finished Earth Day by helping Jim plant seven more oak trees along Kittleson, another stream that needs cooling shade.

The following Saturday ended our work week with Conley Lewis Creek receiving a serious box elder trim. Twenty members of SWTU and the Nohr Chapter were joined by Lloyd and Jared of the DNR to cut and haul dozens of small to medium size box elders. Many were destined to fall into the creek, and the grass that the landowner has planted in a large portion of the easement will grow much better. This is not a well-known creek, in part because the box elder jungle made access and fishing difficult, and it's small, but we were impressed by its appearance, especially in the top part of the easement. (We were also impressed by the 5 Black Angus bulls on the Dodge Branch below the confluence with Conley Lewis – we're not recommending you fish that stretch.)

Lloyd and Jared of the DNR were a big help and impressed with our work, in particular our brush piles. The latter might seem trivial but Lloyd commented that well stacked and tight brushpiles save DNR crews lots of time in burning season.

We had a great ratio of sawyers and haulers. The sawyers included some of the TU all stars: Steve Fabos, Mike Meyer, Jim Hess and Gordon Grieshaber. But rookies are needed, too, and Josh Reilly completed his training and did a great job. He wiped out a row of teenage box elders perched precariously on a stream bank. Josh's great work and Grace's at the Sugar River a couple of weeks ago are reminders that we always need and welcome new sawyers. And they always do a great job.

BTW, the weather was perfect: mild temps, sunshine, light winds. Maybe spring has arrived.



BTW2, the Nohr Chapter always donates a great box of flies for each of their workdays; one of the volunteers is a lucky winner. My number was drawn but since I had already won two sets of Nohr flies I felt honor-bound to have another winner selected. Honor is really overrated.

This work day reflects the wonderful cooperation we have with the DNR and the Nohr Chapter. Lots of folks are responsible but special thanks to Carol Murphy, the recently re-elected Nohr President. She's encourages, helps plan and attends the joint work days. Secondly, thanks to Jim Hess. We're in the midst of one of our busiest, most complex and most fun set of spring work days. Jim has spent many hours planning and coordinating them.

Earth Day photos courtesy Jim Hess. Workday photos courtesy Dyan Lesnik. [See more in the article on swtu.org](https://www.swtu.org).

Fun and Learning at the Riversmith Casting Clinic #1

By Mark Maffit

The first of the two Riversmith Casting Clinics for 2025 was held on Saturday May 3rd at Zander Park. Since the clinic was held in conjunction with the Cross Plains Trout Days, we were able to reach a lot of people that we would not have contacted ordinarily. Thanks to our many volunteers we were able to offer basic fly fishing instruction to a lot of passersby. We owe many thanks to the following volunteers who were on hand to make the event a success.

- James Beecher
- Mark Berggren
- Riley Bellin
- David Fowler
- Don Golembiewski
- Henry Haugley
- Jim Hess
- Kalyn Hoggard
- Jim J O'Brien
- Josh Reilly
- Michael Westbury
- Michael Williamson



Clinic #2: June 14 at Salmo Pond ... Fishing Included!

Our next Riversmith casting clinic is scheduled for June 14th at Salmo Pond. This clinic will come with a new twist in 2025. As usual, it will feature stations for casting instruction, reading the water, insect identification, and tackle overview. What is new, is that we will also be offering students the opportunity to actually go fishing with a mentor immediately following the clinic. Consequently, we are currently seeking volunteers to serve as mentors. So, please consider volunteering for the next clinic and please consider coming prepared to take someone fishing following the clinic.



Participants are encouraged to contact Mark Maffitt to let him know of your interest. Volunteers are also encouraged to contact Mark to let him know of your availability. This is a big twist on an old idea, but it seems like a step in the right direction. Mark can be contacted at either Mark.Maffitt@Gmail.com, or at (608)513-009four.

Photos courtesy Jim Beecher. [See more in the article on swtu.org](#).

A Light, Interesting and Important Volunteer Opportunity

By Topf Wells

The Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC) is the regional planning commission for Dane County. Part of its mission is to share in the study and care of water quality in Dane County. Following the severe floods of the last few years in the Black Earth Creek watershed, CARPC convened a committee of local, state, and federal officials and concerned citizens to explore whether green infrastructure could mitigate floods and improve water quality in the watershed. SWTU participates in the study and its implementation.

With gobs (to use the approved bureaucratic word) of technical analysis and citizen input, the study concluded that green infrastructure could do both. Green infrastructure is an approach to stormwater management that seeks to more closely mimic natural hydrologic functions by using soil and plants to treat, infiltrate, and evapotranspire rainwater near where it falls – in contrast to traditional grey infrastructure using concrete and pipes to remove stormwater quickly from its source. A restored wetland could be an example of green infrastructure. The plan has not sat on a shelf but has been used to plan and obtain grants for some great projects.

A great example will soon occur on Brewery Creek in Cross Plains. Brewery is an important tributary to Black Earth Creek and a surprisingly good trout stream in its own right. It's also a source of sediment to BEC and a flood risk to Cross Plains. The Village will restore the creek, its floodplain, and some wetlands where it flows through part of the Village. The stream will be re-meandered as part of the work. The creek will become much more of a boost to BEC, an asset to Village residents (and less of a threat), and a healthier home for trout.

Topf Wells has served for several years as the SWTU rep on the Green Infrastructure Committee. We need someone from SWTU to take his place. The meetings are quarterly, attendable via Zoom, and are well organized. Please contact Topf (topfwells@gmail.com) if you will consider serving.

Vets on the Fly Activities

By Dyan Lesnik

Vets on the Fly activities are free for all Vets and their family members. All equipment is provided so just show up for their events for socialization and fishing fun. [Learn more at their Facebook page](#).

Gilda's Club + Lineworkers Could Use Your Help

By Katherine Ford, Lineworkers Facilitator

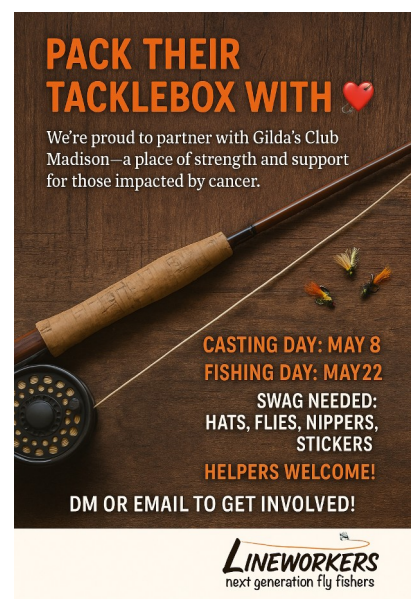
The Lineworkers are partnering with Gilda's Club Madison to offer a small group of participants a first fly fishing experience — a gentle introduction to a couple of simple casts, a few weeks of practice with loaner rods, and a chance to feel that first unforgettable tug when we take them out to fish for panfish.

We are keeping the group small (six participants) to ensure everyone has time and attention. Kalyn Hoggard and Seth Steinhauer will be leading the casting instruction and will also be on hand for the on-the-water day.

Event Details:

Casting Introduction: May 8, Noon–2 PM at Gilda's Club Madison (7907 UW Health Court, Middleton)

Fishing Day: May 22, Noon–2 PM at Lakeview Park (6300 Mendota Avenue, Middleton)



PACK THEIR TACKLEBOX WITH ❤️

We're proud to partner with Gilda's Club Madison—a place of strength and support for those impacted by cancer.

CASTING DAY: MAY 8
FISHING DAY: MAY 22

SWAG NEEDED:
HATS, FLIES, NIPPERS,
STICKERS

HELPERS WELCOME!

DM OR EMAIL TO GET INVOLVED!

LINEWORKERS
next generation fly fishers

Our goal is to make this a warm, joyful experience — not just about fishing, but about connection, confidence, and community.

How you could help:

- Donation of small swag items (hats, panfish flies, lead for 5wt rods, nippers, forceps, or stickers)
- Volunteers to help during either day (low-pressure and lots of smiles)
- Helping spread the word within your networks

We have most of the basic equipment covered, but we're hoping to add some small extras that will help the participants feel welcomed into the larger fly fishing community.

If you're interested in helping or know someone who might be, please reach out to lineworkersflyfishers@gmail.com.

Thank you for considering being part of this — it's a small event, but we believe it could make a big impact for the Gilda's Club members who attend.

Welcome New Members

We're pleased to announce the addition of the following new member to our ranks!

William Gorenflo
James Best
John Kalfayan
Matthew Smith

We are honored to have you among us. Please join our next meeting as we'd love to get to know you better. If you will be attending your first meeting, please contact [Topf Wells](#) so we can expect you.

Fountains of Youth

Classic trout flies that have withstood the test of time ... flies that remain "forever young"

by Rusty Dunn

Fly tyers have long been obsessed – some would say excessively so – with matching the color of artificial flies to corresponding naturals. The concept of precisely imitating insect colors dates to the very beginnings of fly angling. In Walton & Cotton's timeless masterpiece *The Compleat Angler* (1676), Piscator instructs Viator on the subtleties of color in fly tying:

Piscator: So, here's your dubbing now.

Viator: This dubbing is very black.

Piscator: It appears so in the hand: but step to the door and hold it up betwixt your eye and the sun and it will appear a shining red. Let me tell you, never a man in England can discern the true color of a dubbing any way but that.

Look closely at natural insects, and you will discover that many are semi-transparent. Hold a black ant against the light *à la* Piscator, and it is completely opaque. But hold a red ant similarly and it glimmers and glows "*as though lighted by some inner fire*" (V. Marinaro in *A Modern Dry Fly Code*). The inner fire of live insects – especially mayflies – is often discussed but not easily imitated. Insect translucency originates from light transmitted *through* the body, as opposed to light reflected *from* the body. Translucency in fly design became especially relevant when the dry fly revolution swept fly angling in the late 1800s. Dry flies drifting atop the surface are viewed by trout from below, against a bright sky. J.W. Dunne brought the importance of matching colors "*against the light*" to the forefront of fly design in his 1924 book *Sunshine and the Dry Fly*, where he described methods for imitating insect translucency. The value of translucent floating flies is quite logical, but similar principles apply also to nymphs, many of which are viewed by trout against a bright background.

How can translucency be imitated when the core of artificial flies is a solid piece of steel wire? The most elaborate – and perhaps most successful – method was that of J.W. Dunne. He tied fly bodies with dyed cellulose acetate floss ("Cellulite", an early synthetic) on hooks whose shanks he had painted with white enamel. When fishing, Dunne coated the Cellulite with a special "Sunshine Oil", which rendered it translucent. Incident light passed through the colored floss, reflected off the white hook shank, and then passed back through the floss, thus yielding an illusion of translucency. F.M. Halford and G.E.M. Skues had described similar tricks earlier by wrapping a single strand of translucent-when-wet horsehair, silk thread, or drawn silkworm gut over bare reflective hook shanks. When nylon was invented in the mid-20th century, George Grant wrapped bodies of nymphs with clear monofilament, through which underlying materials were highly visible.

G.E.M. Skues refined and popularized what is perhaps the simplest and most widely used method to imitate translucency. He dubbed animal fur sparsely over a base of colored silk thread. The silhouette of fur is soft, and light passing through the airy fur dubbing is brilliantly colored by the underlying thread. Skues' method is simple and effective, and he chose silks and furs that imitate the inner fire of desired insects. After experimenting with many different natural furs, Skues settled on seal's fur as being the most sparkling, radiant, and translucent of all.

The Sherry Spinner originated in Britain in the late-1800s. The name refers to its ruddy amber-brown color, like that of sherry wine. The Sherry Spinner was designed to imitate a specific blue-winged olive species (*Serratella ignita*), but it imitates many other BWO species as well, all of which are shades of rusty brown or olive brown. This Sherry Spinner pattern was that of G.E.M. Skues, the author who coined the term "blue-winged olive" in reference to a mayfly.

© Rusty Dunn, 2025

----- Sherry Spinner -----

Natural materials (silk, fur, feather, etc.) often change color when wet. Thus, matching of colors should be done when flies are wet with water and held "*against the light*" as described by J.W. Dunne.

Hook: Dry fly, #14 - #16

Thread: Pearsall's Gossamer silk, hot orange (No.19)

Tail: Honey dun hackle barb

Ribbing: Fine gold wire

Body: Seal's fur, the color of sherry wine (a ruddy amber-brown). Mix various colors of dyed seal's fur and soften with a little hare's poll. Seal's fur can be substituted with translucent synthetics (e.g. Antron).

Hackle: Rusty dun rooster



Stay Connected



Know what's happening by connecting to our [Chapter Calendar](#)!



[SWTU's Instagram account](#) is a great place for interesting news, facts and photos.



Check out [Southern Wisconsin Trout Unlimited on Facebook](#) to connect to activities, discussions and friends. (You should be able to view the page without a Facebook account.)

If you know of a member not receiving emails from SWTU, please have them email madkasel@gmail.com

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited Leadership:

President	Steve Musser
Vice President	Topf Wells
Secretary	Henry Nehls-Lowe
Treasurer	Marty Chiaro
State Council Rep.	Michael Williamson
Board Member	Dyan Lesnik
Board Member	Jim Beecher
Board Member	Riley Bellin
Board Member	John Freeborg
Board Member	Don Golembiewski
Board Member	Joshua Reilly
Past President	Mark Maffitt
Newscasts Editor	Drew Kasel
Conservation Committee Chair	Jim Hess
Women's/ Diversity Initiative Chair	Tina Murray
Youth Education Chair for SWTU	Tina Murray

stevemusser@msn.com
topfwells@gmail.com
henry.nehlslowe@gmail.com
chiaromt@gmail.com
mlwilliamson.53@gmail.com
dmlgriffin@gmail.com
jamesabeecher@gmail.com
rileybellin2814@gmail.com
john-tu@freeborg.com
don.golembiewski@gmail.com
reillyo76@gmail.com
mark.maffitt@gmail.com
madkasel@gmail.com
jimhess5599@gmail.com
swtu.women.diversity@gmail.com
swtu.women.diversity@gmail.com

Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

P.O. Box 45555
Madison, WI 53744-5555

