



Pigeon River Dam to be Removed!

Bryan Burroughs

Michigan Trout Unlimited is proud to announce a successful conclusion to the litigation we undertook in regards to the sediment discharge and fish kill on the Pigeon River. Shortly after our last issue of this magazine your mailboxes, the news became official. You likely heard the news from us via email (if we have your email address – if not go to www.michigantu.org to sign up to receive news from us electronically), or via numerous press from around the state. If not, this article will provide you with some background on the litigation, the terms of the settlement agreement/interim order, and discuss the future of the dam removal.

On June 22, 2008 a sediment discharge (fine organic sediment) was released into the Pigeon River from the Golden Lotus Dam on the Song of the Morning Ranch near Vanderbilt, MI. This incident, and related flow fluctuations created conditions in the Pigeon River which caused the death of resident trout in the river. The MDNRE investigation report predicted nearly 400,000 trout of all sized to have

Continued on page 4

2010 Custom Rod Raffle

It is that time of year to get the 2010 Custom Rod raffle off the ground. As most of you know, this raffle has been an ongoing event for many years, and has proved to be a very successful fund raiser for the chapter. Our winner from last year, Don Jackson, brought the custom fly rod he had built to his specification to our annual picnic in July. Here a very nice picture that Dave Dornblazer took of the builder, Clyde Alho, and the winner, Don Jackson holding the winning custom fly rod.

For this year everybody will receive, by mail, 2 books of tickets to sell for the custom rod raffle. We will draw the winning ticket again this year at the December dinner meeting. The lucky winner gets to have a custom made fly rod built to his/her specifications by custom builder Clyde Alho. So, when you receive your ticket books put your sales hat on and start selling tickets to family friends, co-workers, fishing buddies etc. so we can have another successful year.

Thanks for all your support in this event in past years,

Clyde Alho

Future Meetings and Events

Go to your 2010 calendar and mark down the following meeting and event dates:

September 11

Boy Scout Merit Badge Program. Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, Elgin, IL

September 14

TUNA training: Western water Law

September 15

Membership Mtg at OBPD Rec Ctr. Ken Voight and David Dornblaser present restoration project possibilities in the Driftless Area.

September 15-19

TU National Annual Meeting, Waterville Valley, NH

September 18

ScoutFest 100: Help celebrate Scouting's 100th Anniversary by teaching the Scouts Fly Tying and fly fishing on Northerly Island (formerly Meigs Field).

September 24-26

Beaver dam removal project and fly fishing in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Contact Doug Vanerka.

October 13

Directors' Meeting

October 20

Membership Mtg at OBPD Rec ctr. Speaker TBA.

November 3

Directors' Meeting

December 8

Annual Holiday Dinner. Harry Caray's Italian Steakhouse & Bar, Lombard, IL.



Letter from the President

Dear Fellow TU Members,

We are approaching the close of our fiscal year and the traditional end of trout season, but there is still time to feel cold autumnal mists touch the cheek and the cold swirl of moving water press against the waders. It is somehow fitting that our Trout Unlimited business year coincides with the notion of the close of the fishing season for we have truly experienced a very full season of work. Some may think that our programs were overly ambitious, but in retrospect, all who gave of their time and effort can look back with a deep sense of satisfaction.

The Boy Scout Merit Badge programs at the McGraw Foundation in July and August were well attended by the Scouts all of whom received great mentoring thanks to Frank Zbylski, Keith Bielat, Rick Ralph, David Dornblaser, Ron Kurasz, Ron Abrant, Jeff Kroger, Ted Bernhard, Mitch Schwarz, Joe Vitti, Arnie Leder, Fred Hodge and Marvin Strauch and Stan Zarnowiecki, who organized the day's activities. Special thanks are in order to Phil Young for overall coordination and moving the mountain of paperwork involved in organizing and mounting the entire summer's youth program.



OBTU partnered with Orvis at Yorktown for Trout 101, a program on four Saturdays in July, wherein participants were treated to a fly casting lesson and an introduction to fly fishing by Orvis Staff and OBTU members. The participants also received a \$15 gift certificate for Orvis merchandise and a free one year membership to

TU. Thanks to Orvis and Jason Hearle, the Yorktown fishing manager, we picked up some new members, including kids for our youth programs. The program was a great success due to efforts of Tom Wilhelm, Keith Bielat, Jeremy Slade, Ed Michael, and Marvin Strauch, who brought with them a wealth of fly fishing knowledge and experience.

August also saw OBTU participation at the Cabela's kid's day at the Hammond store. Inside, Marvin Strauch showed kids how to tie flies, while outside Mitch Schwarz and Dan Cekander showed them how to cast a fly. The real highlight of the day was the role played by three very young and new members of OBTU, all recent graduates of the ILCTU Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing School. Emily Rabourn by



Emily Rabourn helps a student at the vice.

the end of the day was like a pro teaching kids how to tie woolly buggers and foam spiders. Emily Verticchio and Clair Cekander took kids who never had picked up a fly rod in their lives and had them casting nice little loops

in very short time. It was wonderment how simple thoughts conveyed between young minds could produce such instant good result. It really questions the value of all those books and videos and monumental egos of the fly casting world. Fly casting was done on concrete, known to tear up lines, but Cabela's will be giving us brand 6 new DT6Fs to replace any damage. We have Jillian Stasiak of Cabela's to thank both for the new lines as well as the opportunity to reach out to scores of young people in attendance.

Incidentally, this year's ILCTU Youth School was probably the best yet. Prof. Steve Kohler, Director of the Western Michigan Environmental Studies Program, not only subbed for his former classmate at Michigan, Prof. Mike Wiley, in teaching what is a river, but brought with him wealth of aquatic entomology knowledge, which is his specialty. Prof. Dan Hayes, from Michigan State University and whose academic discipline is fish populations and habitat, added his expertise to the mix with a good blend of practicality and humor. One of Dr. Hayes grad students, Corey Higley, who is doing a two year long study about mayfly populations on the Au Sable, showed us her work as well as presenting live bugs, in the style of Dean Hansen, in one of the few indoor classes of the program. All but the first evening's classes were hands on practicals, delivered out-of-doors, including the dissection of a trout and white sucker by Dr. Hayes. The camp, however, profited immensely not only from four young lady campers, Clair, Emily and Emily, mentioned above, together with Anna Robison from Virginia, but the addition of four lady mentors: OBTU's Laura Andersen, a scout leader (and instructor of the shot gun); Leslye Robinson, a special education teacher from Traverse City; Prof. Paula Kohler, Dr. of Special Education at MSU; and Elise Robison, RN, the camp nurse. Having women in camp indeed added another dimension to the perspective and expertise of an already very professional staff, all of whom are pure volunteers and in addition to their professional expertise all acted as mentors and guides for the kids, taking them fly fishing every day. Everyone at camp joined in the grime and sweat for what seems to have become our traditional woody debris work project, this time on the Au Sable's East Branch. The work project created a bond among and between kids and staff alike. All the kids are now member of TU: Alex Hoshino and Liam Mitchell, now of the Borger chapter, Caleb Fyan, Mason-Griffith Founders' chapter, and

Officers: President, Greg Prosen – prez@obtu.org 630-986-1310 • Vice President, Stan Zarnowiecki – vp@obtu.org 708-606-4148 • Treasurer, Larry Varsek – KESRAV@aol.com 815-729-9380 • Secretary, Clyde Alho – secretary@obtu.org 630-897-2401 Directors: jpkroger@sbcglobal.net 630-369-4148 • Arnie Leder – aleder@cin.net 815-252-3303 • Jeremy Slade – jrsl3040@yahoo.com 630-853-2948 • Joe Vitti – vittifam@ameritech.net 630-969-2251 • Ken Voight – knvoight@earthlink.net 630-466-9743 • Phil Young – pyoung2653@aol.com 630-553-4307 Ex Officio Director: Marvin Strauch – mjstrauch@comcast.net 708-599-5101 • Emeritus Directors: Jeff Berg – salmonsafari@sbcglobal.net 630-629-5681 • Wally Bock – wjbock1@comcast.net 708-598-6718 • Joe Hammon – jhammon@aol.com 708-453-8102 • Ed Michael – emichael@cs.com 847-831-4159 • Doug Vanerka – dvanerka@comcast.net 630-655-0084.

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Malte Roenne, of Grassau, Germany, whose chapter assignment will be interesting to see. In addition to Laura, Fred Hodge, Arnie Leder and Marvin Strauch were the other OBTU staff members. Darwin Adams and Dr. Barry Coddens, from Borger, rounded out the staff. Andy Snyder, a TU National Volunteer operations Coordinator also joined the camp staff for the week and pitched in all the activities, particularly the mentoring and guiding, Andy in a previous life being a professional guide in Montana. Carl Hueter, a past Michigan council chair, opened to us his old River House and set beats for the kids on the North Branch of the Au sable. Kudos are in order for all who participated. The kids came away the biggest winners at what turned out to be a great camp. This was sustainment at its best.

As always OBTU continued to be strong in youth and education programs, but we have not been strong in our support for conservation programs. Only Ron Abrant, Carl Peterson, and Stan Zarnowiecki made the time to travel to Fox Valley restoration project in the Sand Country last July. There was even less participation at the August 28th Paradise springs project, with only Rich Ference and Stan Zarnowiecki attending, however word from Borger was that the two brought a whirlwind of enthusiasm and energy with them which resulted in a lot of work accomplished. OBTU also furnished liquid refreshment for the work party. OBTU has committed to support with both money and labor the work that is being done at Paradise Springs. Hopefully we will be better able to give our full support to this project in the future. The September chapter meeting will feature Ken Voight and David Dornblaser who will present the work the conservation committee has done in seeking a restoration project in the driftless area for OBTU. Hopefully a project of our very own will garner a great deal more support than what we have shown in supporting the projects of other chapters.

Congratulations are order to Fred Hodge, having been selected by National Trout Unlimited as a 2010 winner of its Youth Education Award. Presentation will be made at the Awards Luncheon on September 17, a part of the Annual Meeting at Waterville Valley, NH, September 15-19. Details to follow the award!

There is still time for some volunteer work. We have the last Scout Fly Fishing Merit Badge class scheduled on September 11 at the Max McGraw Foundation in Elgin. Call Marvin Strauch if you would like to take a Scout fly fishing.



ScoutFest 100 needs help! On the week-end September 17-19, the Chicago Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America will celebrate Scouting's 100th Anniversary by hosting an encampment of regional Scout Troops on Northerly Island in Chicago. The Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited will be participating on Saturday September 18th from 9:00 am till 5:00 pm. Fly tying and fly casting instructors are still needed. Help inform Scouts and their leaders about our TU programs: Trout in the Classroom, scout merit badge as well as our local conservation efforts. Let us not miss this opportunity to inform yet another segment of the public about what TU does. Contact Barry Coddens by email at (bac248@northwestern.edu) or by phone at (847-347-0063).

Doug Vanerka is trying to put together a fishing week-end and stream help project in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan over a long week-end, September 24-26. This will be season's end for trout in the UP; the project is expected to be beaver dam removal. Give Doug a call. The fall colors should be great!

Keep an eye on the web site and look for e-mail messages as we may have a few more youth education and/or fishing days in October, probably around the Columbus Day week-end. Marvin Strauch and Stan Zarnowiecki will likely be getting the word out on these late fall activities.

Lastly, the annual picnic appears to have been a success. Good times were had by all. Thanks to Stan Zarnowiecki, everyone had good things to eat. Many thanks also to Dottie and Doug Vanerka for giving us the run of their home! If you weren't in attendance, be sure to come to the Holiday dinner at Harry Caray's and mingle with other OBTU members.



Handwritten signature or initials.





Pigeon River Dam *continued from page 1*

been killed due to the incident. Following the event, the State of Michigan entered into litigation with the owners of the dam, Golden Lotus, Inc. Subsequently, Michigan Trout Unlimited along with the Pigeon River Country Association joined the lawsuit and added two unique complaints to the case. MITU was represented in the case by Peter Gustafson. Mr. Gustafson, a past Chair of the Pigeon River Country State Forest - Advisory Council, a landowner in the Au Sable River watershed, an angler and a devoted coldwater fisheries conservationist, volunteered his time and skill in this legal representation.

For approximately a year and a half, Mr. Gustafson, along with MITU Executive Director Bryan Burroughs (coincidentally a dam removal expert), and local Headwaters TU Chapter President John Walters, represented MITU behind the scenes on the litigation. MITU added uniquely to the lawsuit by filing two complaints that the State of Michigan had not, strengthening the case. But perhaps its most valuable contribution was in working with the other parties to help negotiate and effectuate a settlement which involved removal of the

will need to hold public meetings to satisfy requirements for public input regarding the proposed permit application. So, by the time an approved permit to remove the dam is formed, it may be too late to start the actual removal in 2010. Brown and brook trout spawn in the fall, so beginning the removal then could potential create disruptions to the spawning which are best avoided. Additionally, it's desirable to begin the pond drawdown process during the "growing season" (spring – summer), so that the newly exposed bottom sediments can quickly re-vegetate. So, in all likelihood, the actually start of the dam removal may well be the spring of 2011.

Without the dam and river survey data collected, it's hard to precisely predict how the dam should be removed. However, we do generally know a few things about the impoundment that can lead to a few predictions on how the dam will likely be removed. First, for about 1 mile upstream of the dam, there is a "pond" and this pond is largely filled in with very fine organic "muck". Upstream from this point, the dam alters the river more subtly for about another 1.5 miles. In this section, the bottom is largely filled with sand, and the river is slower and wider than it should be. With all this sediment behind the

The owners of the dam had expressed remorse for the incident and a true desire to do what was best for the Pigeon River and its natural resources.

dam. This particular dam had been altering the flow, water temperature and habitat conditions in the river, making them less suitable to coldwater fish like brown, rainbow and brook trout that are present. Removal of this dam is predicted to greatly improve about 18 miles of river downstream. Removal of the dam was the primary objective of MITU in entering this lawsuit.

On April 5, 2010, an interim order was signed between all of the parties to the lawsuit. The order provided for a settlement which was mutually agreeable by all parties and represented all parties' desires to see the Pigeon River restored via removal of the dam. The owners of the dam had expressed remorse for the incident and a true desire to do what was best for the Pigeon River and its natural resources. The order provides that the owners will pay for the removal of their dam, and will also contribute monetarily to the State of Michigan to help compensate for the cost of the investigation activities. The order also details how the dam removal planning will occur, and ensures that MITU will remain involved throughout the dam removal planning process.

Since the order was signed, there have been meetings between the State of Michigan's technical team, MITU staff, and the dam owners and their consultants. A "conceptual plan" was drafted and discussed, and surveys of the dam and river were scheduled to be conducted during mid-June. By early July the data will be analyzed and provided for review to MITU and the DNRE. Later in July the groups will meet again to discuss the results of the surveys, and how the plan will be implemented for the most appropriate method to remove the dam. Following that important meeting, the dam owners will prepare and submit an official permit application to the MDNRE for review. The DNRE will likely take about 30 days to review it, and then they

dam, the removal of the dam will need to be done slowly, so as not to allow excessive amounts of the sediment to be moved at any one point in time.

Removing dams enables rivers to restore themselves by letting the river cut itself a new river channel downward vertically through the accumulated pond sediments – thus increasing its slope and speed. Every other aspect of the river channel follows from the slope increasing; the steeper the slope the faster the water velocity, the narrower the river channel, the coarser the gravel, the more riffles and pools are formed, and so on. The Pigeon River has a relatively high gradient (or slope) naturally, and has the capacity to move certain volumes of fine sediments. Plans for dam removal will allow the river to erode downward through the accumulated pond sediments in small discrete amounts. If too much is eroded at any one point, it could suspend excessive amounts of the fine sediment, and lead to a situation much like what caused the fish kill in the first place. To avoid this, information on the distribution, composition and quantities of different sediments in the impounded reach of river will be used to determine the precise appropriate schedule for which the dam will be removed. Engineering surveys will help make sure that we have mechanisms at the dam to allow the precise controlled removal of the dam.

MITU will continue to be involved in the removal of this dam on the Pigeon River, and will continue to provide you updates as it progresses. We appreciate all the support and encouragement we have received from our members during this process. It is clear that the Pigeon River has many advocates and fans from all across Michigan. Thank you for your support of our involvement in this issue. ■

Summer work, fun, chapter building . . .

Stan Zarnowiecki

This is the second summer that I have been working with Fox Valley Trout Unlimited in Wisconsin. The chapter has a monthly work day scheduled throughout the summer months. Last year I helped build wing dam type structures on a branch of the Little Wolf river. This year, the August work day was scheduled with the chapter summer picnic. Three members from Oakbrook TU traveled up to Waupaca to work on sections of the Waupaca river.

We cleaned log jams, cut down sweepers that blocked the river, and picked up trash along the river banks. This section of the river is really beautiful and holds trout. There have been a lot of improvements along its banks. The river actually has two names, outside of Waupaca County it is known as the Tomorrow river but inside the county it is called the Waupaca.

After the work was completed it was time to get the picnic underway. The host of the day was a lady who owned a farm, The Rose farm, right on the banks of the river. The usual summer picnic fare was laid out, we provided fresh Brats from the Brat stop in Kenosha. A round of

Oakbrook Trout Unlimited members Carl Peterson, Ron Abrant, and Stan Zarnowiecki, along with Wisconsin TU members gather at the Fox Valley TU bench dedication on the banks of the Waupaca River.

conversations and beer followed and then the Fox Valley chapter had a bench dedication in honor of one of its members. Beforehand, they had poured and framed a footing right on a knoll overlooking the river. We were honored to have our picture taken on the bench, along with other members of different Wisconsin TU chapter members.

It was a very nice day and we all made some new friends. You should all try and participate in events like these. Oakbrook TU has an ongoing work project, in conjunction with Gary Borger TU, in Paradise springs, barely 2 hours from the Chicago area. It's a great experience and I urge you to volunteer for this type of event. ■

OBTU Mail — Scouts in Paradise.

I just wanted to drop you a note to let you know how much we enjoyed working with the Trout Unlimited folks this past weekend. My two young sons enjoyed meeting several members and working side by side such hard workers. They learned a lot about the conservation project, Paradise Springs and the surrounding area. We were able to combine a nice weekend of camping, working and fishing together and enjoy some quality outdoor family time. Thanks for the advance notice of the opportunity. Please continue to send notices to Troop 111 in Naperville and we'll see if we can spark some additional interest with other scouts.

Gene Sullivan
VFW Troop 111 Naperville



Circle your Calendar Oak Brook Chapter of Trout Unlimited Annual Holiday Dinner

December 8, 2010
Harry Caray's Italian Steak House & Bar
Located in the Westin Lombard Hotel
Waveland Room

70 Yorktown Center
Lombard, IL 60148

Fundraising Events
Raffles and Auctions
Sporting Gear, Guided
Trips, and More

AmeriCorp Member leading River Keepers Program

By John Walters, President, Headwaters TU

In cooperation with Huron Pines, the Headwaters Chapter has been selected as a host organization for an AmeriCorp Member. The Headwaters Chapter and Huron Pines are proud to announce this summers AmeriCorp member is Matt Breck. Matt will be performing duties from May 10 through October 31. His responsibilities will be to seek volunteers for the River Keepers Program – Pigeon River Mapping project, identify Road Stream Crossings on the Pigeon River and Sturgeon River watersheds, and identify Erosion Sites on the Pigeon River and Sturgeon River.

This new program is designed to conduct River Mapping and River Inventories which will be shared with a variety of government agencies and conservation organization. This data will provide priority of projects on the Pigeon River and Sturgeon River.

Matt will be engaging volunteers in hands-on conservation. We are not only completing important projects but also educating and expanding our network of coldwater conservation champions. It is important that every AmeriCorps member participate in recruiting volunteers and developing high quality opportunities for those volunteers to serve our organization.

With the support from Michigan TU on the River Keepers Program, the Headwaters Chapter is engaged with the Pigeon River Mapping project. This project entails the collection data by measuring length, width and depth of the pools, riffles and runs in the Pigeon River. Recording the riverbed structure and large woody debris will be additional data, collected. We have begun the project as far upstream as possible, and then work downstream to the confluence of Mullet Lake.

The River Inventories will encompass identifying and assessing Road Stream Crossings and Erosion Sites on the Pigeon River and Sturgeon River watersheds. By using GPS coordinates and digital pictures of each site, the locations will be prioritized for future work necessary to enhance these Blue Ribbon Trout Streams. ■

Three Strikes an' Yer Out

The June 2008 fish kill resulting from an accidental release of silt and sediment from the Song of the Morning Ranch hydroelectric dam on the Pigeon River was not the first such incident, but thankfully it will now be the last. The 2008 disaster may have been the worst, extending over 21 miles downstream and finding carcasses of brown trout up to 19 inches bloating the banks. Recent memory of the 1984 accidental maintenance work sediment release brings nightmarish visions of thousands of brook, brown, and trout turned belly up. The first release, occurring in 1957 and producing an extensive fish kill, apparently didn't resonate strongly enough to bring about today's solution . . . nor did 1984, but there is something American about three strikes! Read Brian Burroughs story for the solution which such have come decades ago. ■

OBTU's 2011 Stream Improvement Project and Spring Outing

By David Dornblaser

Earlier this spring, the Conservation Committee decided that it was time for OBTU to be the "lead dog" on it's own stream improvement project. Since then the members of the committee have been searching for a suitable stream, talking to landowners, planning the stream project and preparing to apply for grants to fund the project. At the September 15th OBTU meeting the committee will share the story of their efforts so far and reveal where we stand with respect to our goal to head up our own stream project in 2011.



In the spring of 2011 OBTU will have a spring outing that will include pig roast and a survey of the stream that the Conservation Committee has targeted for OBTU's 2011 stream improvement project. The outing will be very family and spouse friendly with casting lessons for those new fly fishing, on-stream mentoring for any TU member or spouse or family member. There will be plenty of non-fishing activities as well for those who prefer to keep their feet dry. Mark your calendars now for May 20 - 22nd. Details will be revealed at the September 15th OBTU meeting. ■



Observations of the July 2010 IL Council TU Conservation Camp

By Laura Andersen

Greg Prosen, current President of the TU Oakbrook, IL chapter is a relentless master at getting out detailed information for any event he is tasked with the responsibility of communicating. Those were my thoughts when I received the latest of numerous updates (something he is famous for) on the schedule for the July 2010 Trout Unlimited Illinois council fly fishing school camp. I was immediately impressed with the quality of the other mentors and hoped that I had would be able to add something to help with the camp. . . I would do my best to live up to the upcoming week's high standard and knew that by the end of the week we would all come away learning something from each other.

As a mom, multi-tasking is just a normal facet of everyday life. Outdoor camps that cram every bit of the time with an interesting learning experience are just my style. Little did I know that I made one small miscalculation! Greg Prosen and the TU planning team are masters at cramming the schedule. Being a mom multi-tasker, the night before we were supposed to board the bus for the Illinois camp held in Michigan, I worked up until midnight trying to finish "stuff" at home in order to be gone for a week. No problem, I thought, I can catch a few zzzz's on the bus and be caught up in the sleep department. This camp goes from 0 to 90 mph as soon as the bus starts moving toward Michigan. And believe me; we needed that bus time, to get a head start of all the wonderful information and activities we were going to be exposed to at this week's camp.

As it turns out, the knowledge acquired in the lifetime of each of the Professionals, Professors, Graduate students and TU mentors is downloaded to everyone in one week.

I saw 13-15 year old teenagers go from glazed eyes at the beginning of the week when learning the basics of fly fishing equipment nomenclature to conversing freely about what they were going to do to improve their casting techniques.

I saw 13-15 year old teenagers go from glazed eyes at the beginning of the week when learning the basics of fly fishing equipment nomenclature to conversing freely about what they were going to do to improve their casting techniques. At the end of the camp, I realized that we had them hooked as fly fishers! As an adult and mother it was a beautiful thing. These students embraced every facet of the camp; they understood the science and importance of river hydrology as it relates to sustaining fish, were fascinated with entomology and fly

tying, told us that the service project was the best part of the camp, and had positive attitudes on the practice needed to improve casting abilities. As an adult, I was appreciative of all the knowledge imparted to me. . . but I was really impressed that the students soaked it up and several of them "mastered" the knowledge and skills by the end of the week. I'm here to tell you there is hope in future generations.

This camp is the one of several hundreds of outdoor experiences that I have participated in teaching and enjoying the outdoors with youth. It is the first camp that I have witnessed such a complete transformation of students from novice to a skill and knowledge level that will enhance their future lifestyles and choices that they make.

It is my humble opinion that this camp opportunity must continue. We can only hope that we haven't started too late to save cold water streams and the trout and wildlife they harbor everywhere. ■

Fly-Fishing Camp on the Au Sable

By: Claire Cekander

I attended the Trout Unlimited Fly Fishing and Conservation School in Grayling, Michigan this past summer. I attended the camp with one of my closest friends who learned how to fly-fish from another camp we went to. The camp was filled with education, fishing, and fly-tying. We had many discussions about everything ranging from fish habitat to the way glaciers carved out the river to entomology. College professors were giving the talks that were absolutely fascinating. The river we fly-fished was the Au Sable River. (We later found out that Au Sable River means "river of sand.") The Au Sable was absolutely amazing. It was clean, cold and clear. Perfect trout conditions. We mostly caught Brook trout at the camp and they were so beautiful. A couple of mornings at camp we got to go out and fish the Trico hatch. Both days we fished then were extremely successful and exciting.

At the camp I learned how to effectively cast. I knew how to cast before the camp, but now I am much more comfortable and accomplished at casting thanks to an extremely helpful mentor. At the camp we tied many different flies that we got an opportunity to use later in the camp. Also at camp we got to shock fish to see how many fish are in a part of the river, and do a conservation project which consisted of putting small trees into the river bank to narrow the river. Overall, I completely and thoroughly enjoyed the camp. I highly recommend it to everyone and anyone who wants to learn how to fly-fish or improve while fishing a beautiful river and learning so much interesting information. ■

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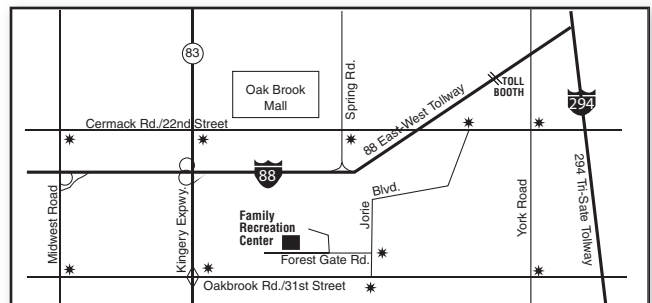
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Oak Brook Chapter meets at the Oak Brook Park District Recreation Center 1300 Forest Gate Rd.

From Jorie Blvd. Turn west at Forest Gate Rd. (first stop light north of 31st Street). Follow Forest Gate straight into the Recreation Center parking lot. We meet in Meeting Room 2/3.



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