



2002 Wisconsin Trout Stamp  
By Bill Millonig

# BROOKIE NEWS

Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited  
Conserving, Protecting and Restoring Coldwater Fisheries

May 2017

## Streaming from the Pine

By President Laura Tucker

I spent Saturday May 6 on the Waupaca River at the River Keepers Stream Training Class. Peggy Compton from UW-Extension and Dave Bolha from the WDNR presented an informational day for new river keepers. Participants learned to measure the velocity of the water, measure the width and the depth of the river, determine turbidity of the water and inspect the river temperature and oxygen content. Students were also given hands-on experience learning entomology. I never thought I would enjoy studying insects. What a lovely day!

Central Wisconsin Trout Unlimited has been actively involved in water monitoring since 2004. Currently, volunteers are monitoring over 30 sites on rivers and streams in central Wisconsin. CWTU River Keepers do not have to be Trout Unlimited members to participate. River Keepers are advocates for the area rivers, streams and creeks. They monitor their watershed once a month with their teams from May through September. In doing so, they become watchdogs of the watershed, looking for invasive species and possible environmental problems. After they have collected the data from the monitoring session, it is posted on the Water Action Volunteers website. This advocacy and stewardship is fun, rewarding and a great way to meet new people. We all believe this data will support clean water for future generations. The program is conducted with the support of the

University of Wisconsin Extension and the Wisconsin DNR. CWTU is grateful to Bob Jozwowski, who coordinates the program for the area. If you are interested in participating contact Bob at (920) 765-1887 or email [bobjozwowski@gmail.com](mailto:bobjozwowski@gmail.com).

Last but not least, the Bob Hunt Commemorative program was well attended. The program honors a person who has worked to enhance the trout species and the waters in which they thrive through a science-based approach. This year's speaker was Dr. Ray J. White. He lectured on "Restoring Trout Habitat in Wisconsin Streams, 1950-2015 - History and Science." His work toward improving water quality is greatly appreciated.

### Note: Banquet Committee Meeting

The banquet committee meeting has been rescheduled for 5:30pm on June 21 at Oshkosh Office Systems (Scott Grady's office).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**CWTU PICNIC  
FLY CASTING AND RIGGING**  
Tuesday, June 13, 2017  
5:30 Picnic  
Casting & rigging to follow  
Marble Park, Winneconne

**CWTU PICNIC**  
Tuesday, July 11, 2017  
5:30 Picnic / Meeting  
Hosted by Laura & John Tucker  
N5424 Sunny Hill Road, Saxeville  
on the Pine River

**CWTU BBQ COOKOUT**  
HOSTED BY: IRA & KAREN GIESE  
Saturday, August 12, 2017  
More details to come

**SUMMER WORK DAYS**  
VISIT [CWTU.ORG/WORKDAYS](http://CWTU.ORG/WORKDAYS)  
FOR EVENT INFORMATION

- Saturday, June 17
- Saturday, July 15
- Saturday, August 19
- Saturday, September 16

*Jeff Goad's fish on the Mecan*



# River Work Day 101

By Dennis Drazkowski

On the bright side, at least the mosquitoes weren't a problem. On Saturday, May 20, 37 hearty souls braved the unseasonable cold and blustery weather to make the first CWTU/DNR stream habitat and restoration workday of the 2017 season on the White River. The tasks were varied and interesting, lunch was delicious, and the camaraderie and fish stories were always enjoyable. Thank you to all for the great turnout!



Thank you to our friends and partners from the Fox Valley and Elliott Donnelly TU chapters for their able assistance. A special thanks goes to the EDTU chapter for its \$4,000 donation for future stream and habitat restoration efforts and materials. The financial assistance is really appreciated.

CWTU member Dave Conroy donated a beautiful fishing vest for the workday door prize – Jim Murphy was the lucky winner. Thanks again, Dave.

Under the leadership of the DNR, four separate work crews were formed for the day's activities. Work began at the



## The Crew

confluence of the West Branch and White rivers and then continued downstream about 1 mile. The work crews did the following:

- Installed resting logs into defined river bends and channels.
  - Brushed invasive buckthorn overgrowth to improve river fishability.
  - Built and placed brush bundles to improve river channel definition.
  - Constructed an access path to the confluence of the West Branch and White rivers.
  - Dredged silt/sand build-up to create 300 feet of river bank. Then placed about 150 bundled Christmas trees to stabilize the bank and prevent 'braiding.'
- Planted about 200+ sapling trees for habitat restoration alongside the White River.

**Wow – all that in 4 hours – great job, ladies and gentlemen!**

For action photos of the workday, check out the Central Wisconsin TU chapter website, [www.cwtu.org](http://www.cwtu.org). Thank you, Nate Ratliff (FVTU) for taking the photos – another great job.

Our next stream and habitat restoration workday will be Saturday, June 17 on the West Branch of the White River. Email announcements will be sent. See you there!

**Special thanks to our supporters! Click on the logos to visit their websites!**





# The Mekan River Runs Through It

By David Bolha

**The Mekan River is one of the Central Sands premier destinations for recreation, originating from the beautiful Mekan Springs.** The crystal clear waters of the Mekan River flow from the Springs 37 miles to the Fox River near the city of Princeton, draining a 148 square mile watershed. The Mekan River has a naturally reproducing brown trout fishery which attracts trout enthusiasts from far and wide. The upper Mekan River, Chaffee, Wedde, and Little Pine creeks provide abundant spawning and rearing habitat for browns. In the WDNR Water Resources Program, we randomly select locations across Wisconsin to monitor annually to assess the water quality of Wisconsin streams and rivers and report the conditions of our waters to the USEPA.

As part of this program, I conducted a survey of the Mekan River fish community upstream of Hwy 21 last August. The fish survey captured about 400 browns in 200 yards upstream of Hwy 21 and 2 brookies. The biggest brown was 12 inches.

We use a standard protocol to sample a fish community which can be used to assess the water quality of a stream compared to other reference streams across Wisconsin. The water quality rating was good based upon the fish captured during the survey. When compared to other streams statewide, the habitat in that stretch of the Mekan ranked excellent which would make sense with the habitat improvements that have been done.



In addition to WDNR monitoring, the CWTU River Keeper volunteers collected water samples throughout the summer at Hwy 21. Phosphorus is considered a pollutant to our waters in Wisconsin that can impair the fish and aquatic life that need clean water to thrive. The phosphorus levels during the summer were well below our water quality standards and were near reference conditions for streams in the Central Sands Area which indicate there has been little impact from the land uses in the watershed. When comparing the 2016 results, the phosphorus levels have not changed in the last 20 years.

## Future monitoring planned

This October, I will be sampling the macro invertebrate assemblages (bugs) longitudinally along the Mekan to determine how much they change

with distance, land use, and physical and chemical stream characteristics. This will provide information useful for estimating the length of stream a single macro invertebrate sample represents to guide future monitoring and assessment efforts in Wisconsin. Just as the fish community can be sampled to determine the water quality of a stream, the macro invertebrate assemblage is used in Wisconsin to assess water quality. I sampled the macro invertebrate community at Hwy 21 in October 2016; however, the sample analysis has not been completed yet. Upstream of Hwy 22, the macro invertebrate assemblage monitoring along the Mekan in the last 10 years has indicated good to excellent water quality.

*David Bolha, WDNR Water Quality Biologist, Upper Fox River Basin*

To list your conservation non-profit event in this newsletter, please email Jeff Wegand at [jeffwegand@hotmail.com](mailto:jeffwegand@hotmail.com).

# CWTU Board of Directors Minutes 4/11/17



President Laura Tucker commenced the meeting at 6:15 p.m.

## **Minutes for April 11, 2017 Board Meeting were approved.**

### **Treasurer Report:**

\$1,767.49 was approved for wood/supplies for work on the White River.

### **Casting Clinic and Picnic:**

Will take place on June 13 at Marble Park at 5:30 p.m. Jeff Treu is organizing casting instructors and Bob Haase will be teaching rigging during the program. The public is welcome at no charge. Families and children are encouraged to attend!

### **August 2017 Picnic:**

Will be hosted by Ira and Karen Giese at their home on Sat., Aug. 12. A tasty barbecue is being planned.

### **River Keepers Update:**

Was given by Bob Jozwowski. The River Keeper training seminar was held on May 6 on the Waupaca River. Three new teams have been added increasing the teams to 32 with over 70 members.

### **Fly Fishing School:**

Dan Harmon III gave a status report. 18 students (possible 19) are planning to attend. Dan is looking for guides for Sunday, June 4. If interested contact: him at (920) 235-1761.

### **Banquet Committee Meeting:**

June 7 at 5:30p.m. at Oshkosh Office Systems.

### **Work Day Update:**

Dennis Draskowski said the May 20 work day will be held on the White River (main section), about 2 miles south of Wautoma. CWTU will be assisting the DNR in building access trails, dredging and 500' of log work. Volunteers are asked to arrive by 7:45 a.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served. The Elliott Donnelley Trout Unlimited Chapter will be coming up to help. Their participation is much appreciated.

**Old Business:** None.

### **New Business:**

Bob Chamberlain passed away Feb 4. Bob was instrumental in CWTU's efforts to restore, maintain and protect the cold water fisheries. CWTU extends its sympathy to his family and friends. He will be missed.

Formation of a communications committee was proposed by Bob Haase. This will be further discussed at the next meeting.

Bob Burke reported on the status of high capacity well legislation.

A 3-year study is being done by the DNR with a report to the legislature on high capacity wells and their impact on water. Bob recommends CWTU keep an eye on this. River Keeper statistics are more important than ever to provide objective data regarding the health of the streams.

### **Motion to Adjourn**