



The RollCast



The Official Publication of the Perrin - Lansing Chapter of Trout Unlimited

September 2006

Fall Edition

NOTICE:

September Perrin Chapter meeting

Tuesday, September 26th, 7pm at the MUCC Headquarters on Wood Street in Lansing.

One of the meeting highlights will be a Double Feature Slide Show Presentation..... one by Jim Bedford, entitled "Exciter Tactics with Lures and Flies for Chinook", and another by Jim Hicks covering the Ox Bow Dam project on the Ausable South Branch.

And as part of our continuing effort to entice members to "show up", we will again have some nice raffle items.

Don't miss this one!!

MISSION STATEMENT



The Perrin - Lansing Chapter of Trout Unlimited fully supports the national Trout Unlimited mission to conserve, protect, and restore North America's Trout and Salmon fisheries and their watersheds. We will do this in Michigan with a volunteer membership network and partnerships involved in:

- 1. Education of our members and the public on important mission issues.*
- 2. Conservation/Improvement of specific cold water habitat watershed projects.*
- 3. Participation in Trout Unlimited meetings and initiatives to legislative reform.*
- 4. Cooperative Fund Raising activities to allow financial grants to be selectively awarded for activities in agreement with the mission. To preserve, protect and restore Michigan's watersheds which*

TROUT TRAGEDY

By Jim Bedford

Heavy thunderstorms the previous evening had drawn me to Tyler Creek on Friday, July 28th. I was hoping to find the creek up a bit and was not disappointed. The flow was strong and there was just enough turbidity to give "mystery" to the holes and runs. Tyler Creek is a tributary to Coldwater Creek and is located in the southeastern corner of Kent County. It is home to both wild and hatchery Brown trout and growth rates are excellent. Over my 40+ years of Michigan trout fishing this creek has been my second best producer of browns

over 20 inches. As is my usual practice on the mornings of warm summer days, I spot my car at my end bridge and walk first to my starting point. While I did notice a dead fish at the bridge I walked
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downstream not knowing anything was amiss and anticipating a good outing. As I started to fish upstream it was obvious that something was wrong. In the shallows and lodged against logs and brush there were dead fish. Below each good hole there was a dead brown trout or two in the 12 to 20 inch size range along with smaller trout. Their eyes were still clear and there was no odor to them indicating a relatively recent demise.

I kept casting as I quickly walked upstream, hoping that there were some survivors but not even a creek chub would hit my spinner. After about a half hour, I reached a hole where an intermittent stream joined the creek. This tributary flows steadily in spring but only during heavy rainstorms in the summer. It was not flowing this morning, but pools of water in it indicated that it had been flowing the night before. I cast into the pool and was shocked to receive a hard strike. I set the hook and was fast to a large brown. As I fought the trophy trout I was hoping that the tributary had been the source of the toxicant and there would be live trout upstream. Finally the 21 inch male was in the net and I quickly unhooked and released it. My next cast yielded a small brown. But that was it. Not another hit, just lots of dead browns along with suckers and creek chubs all the way to the bridge. The logical conclusion is that the two trout survived by moving into the flow of the tributary when the toxic material was passing by.

Near the bridge I collected three dead trout and then checked to see if there were dead trout above the bridge. Next I went to call the DNR. I contacted both the Fisheries Division in Plainwell and the DEQ via the PEAS Hotline. Then, hoping to salvage some of my trout fishing time I switched to another branch of Tyler. The fishing was slow but at least there were no dead fish. As I returned to my car, fisheries biologists Jay Wesley and Scott Hanshue were waiting. I told them all I knew and that the fish were okay in this branch and gave them the three trout I had on ice.

They returned to the other branch and proceeded up stream looking for the source of the toxicant and the end of the “trail of dead trout”. They found both about a mile further upstream.

As I write this, the investigation continues but it is almost a sure bet that manure was the culprit. It had been freshly applied to a field near the creek and the heavy thunderstorm had washed a slug of it into the creek. Nobody was there to take samples that night butcampers at the Tyler Creek Campground said that there was a strong smell of manure coming from the creek after the rain storm. Manure has a very high biochemical oxygen demand and takes all of the dissolved oxygen out of the water, thus suffocating the fish and many other aquatic fauna. Ammonia is also present in manure and it is very toxic to fish.

This sad event is not an isolated incident. Numerous manure “spills” have occurred over the years and many have resulted in fish kills. More often it has been the breaching of a lagoon or other storage facility rather than runoff. The emergence of “factory farms” has probably increased the risk of these catastrophic events. Ironically, these concentrated feeding operations have reduced damage from cows pastured on trout streams. Duck Creek, another trout containing tributary to Coldwater Creek, used to have at least six active pastures on the creek and now has only one. I have watched the stream banks heal themselves with new vegetation.

The poisoning of all the trout in the mainstream of Tyler Creek and most of one of its branches is truly a tragedy. Good trout streams are scarce in southern Michigan and Tyler Creek WAS one of the best. Seeing the devastation first hand was gut wrenching to this die hard trout fishing nut. While it will take a number of years, we can reclaim Tyler Creek as a fine trout stream. But, let’s not let this happen again. It is time to strengthen the rules for handling manure and then enforce them.



Since the writing of the above article, Jim has indicated that MI TU has formed a “Tyler Creek Committee”, of which he is a member, to look into the incident, and manure handling rules in general, in an effort to try to prevent future fish kills.

Perrin TU Chapter Volunteers Help Make Spring Fishing Derby a Success

Thanks to Perrin Chapter TU volunteers, Jim Pifer, Greg Bovee, Dick Augustine, Chet Kapusinski, Jim Bedford, Matt Opdyke, Bill Rottiers, Bob Hanna, and Neil Gross, who helped make the Spring Fishing Derby at Birchfield Park a big success. Kids of all ages, and over 150 local area scouts, attended as well as their leaders who coordinated the event. Rainbow and Golden Trout were planted prior to the event and were the source of much excitement.



PERRIN WAWASUM 2006 – VOLUNTEERS & CONTRIBUTORS

The Chapter thanks all of the volunteers who participated by contributing their hard work at our continuing Conservation Projects at *“Guides Rest – Cedars for the AuSable”* & the *“Oxbow Stabilization Project”* on the South Branch. In

addition, the Chapter recognizes those who could not attend, but contributed financially to our efforts.

A special thanks to the following volunteers: Dick Augustine, Greg Bovee, Chet Kapusinski, Carole Robinson, Randall Robinson, Rob Flickinger, Paul Flickinger, Bob Flickinger, Mike Mathieu, Dan Oberst, Dale Nuoffer, Jim Kwasny, Steve Arnoczky, Pat Lindemann, Bob Hanna, John Richards, Chad Thelen (**who provided equipment from Stoney Creek Habitat Specialists**), Paul Pratt, Matt Bugbee, Larry Protasiewicz & Sons, Jim Pifer, Bill Sledd, Mel Comeau, Jeff Thornburg, Jim Winslow, Randy Atkinson, Rick Hicks, Bev Hicks, Jeff Hicks, Jim Hicks, LeeAnn Hicks, Cathy Hicks, Rod Ney, Gail Ney, William Fowler, Charlie Feldhauser, Pete Gustofson, Roger O’Dell, Dan Scherlnitzer, Debbie Schlermitzer, Ken Skare & others.

Others who were not able to attend, but contributed materially with cash donations or supplies include: Matt Bugbee, Theresa Lark, Kate Katje, Ron Raymond, Merlin Fulton & all the folks at the MI DNR & US Forest Service.

In addition to the scores of hours spent in preparation & planning for these projects, and their gracious hospitality, the **Hicks’ family** is recognized for their **generous \$1000.00** contribution to help continue our conservation efforts.

Some Weekend Highlights:



Men at Work



Polaris at Work



Some 'Old Dogs' never stay down



Woman at Work



And some got wet



OxBow Dam Site 2006



During Lunch



After Lunch



Story and Stogie Time



Bonefish at Wakely Lake!



Fishing in the Mist

Coldwater Creek Work Bee

On Saturday, July 29th, Jim Bedford, Dick Augustine, and Chet Kapusinski represented the Perrin chapter and braved the 90+ degree heat and flourishing Poison Ivy, to help install in-stream woody debris deflectors at Coldwater Creek.

In addition to the Coldwater Watershed members, volunteers of the West Michigan chapter were also in attendance. To our surprise, the work was done by 11:30, at which time we were all treated to delicious box lunches at the city park in Freeport.

Btw...Chet was unsuccessful in avoiding the Ivy and ended up with a couple minor rashes on his arm a few days afterward ☹



Dinner Time at camp WaWa Sum

SALMON/TROUT-IN-THE-CLASSROOM

By Dick Augustine

One of the most critical outreach/education projects that TU has developed is our **Trout/Salmon-in-the-Classroom (T/SIC)** effort. The Perrin Chapter initiated our support 2 years ago with the participation of instructor Everett Smith & the Ovid-Elsie School District. Our fundraising efforts provided a complete coldwater species aquarium set-up that allowed the District's students to appreciate & learn many of the environmental challenges that these fish face.

TU National has now developed a curriculum that local educators can now utilize to structure a complete education experience, from the basic nurturing of fertilized fish eggs to the responsible release of fingerlings into appropriate streams. The Michigan Council is also developing a "network" for participating teachers to share their experience. With the assistance from MI-DNR & Michigan State University, the program should not only expand the educational opportunities for participating school districts, but also best suit the particular needs & requirements in Michigan.

I have been in contact with **Patricia Jerry**, an educator in Nagaunee. She has participated in the **Salmon-in-the-Classroom Project for 5 years**. My conversations with Pat, has re-invigorated both of our efforts to promote the program. She has shared the curriculum that she developed with her students that will be of immense help. Last year, active Perrin Board Members all agreed that the Chapter should focus much of our future efforts on the Program. It not only helps to accomplish TU mission, but gives TU visibility to our local communities.

Chapter Members Bob Hanna, Jason Every, and Bill Rottiers have volunteered to help with the Project. They have put me in contact with local teachers that have shown an interest in participating. This has been a challenge in the past.

VOLUNTEER CHALLENGE

Are you willing to be a "Mentor" to a participating School? Willing to spend a few hours in the classroom to dedicate the equipment, to co-ordinate

any needs the instructor may have, and report back to the Chapter?

FINANCIAL CHALLENGE

The initial cost per program is **approximately \$1000.00**. Are **you** willing to dedicate a donation to support the Program? My wife Marilyn & I have made a commitment to support **one school**. We have made a \$1000.00 donation to the **Chapter Trout/Salmon-in-the-Classroom Fund**. If you or your business can commit to support of an entire program, your contribution will be noted on a plaque affixed to the "breeder tank", with your dedication words. Ours is ***"a thank you to our parents who took the time to take us fishing"***! If you wish to financially support the effort in any amount, you'll be recognized as a **Perrin Salmon/TIC Program Supporter**.

Please contact Dick Augustine re: your interest @ e-mail: augusti2@msu.edu
1329 Poppy Lane
DeWitt, MI 48820
(517) 668-3761

PERRIN-LANSING TU LENDING LIBRARY

The Chapter has recently established a **"Lending Library"**. The books & videos are the property of the Chapter but are available to all **"dues paid"** Members. If you would like to enjoy any of our current collection, **attend a Chapter meeting!** Mike Mathieu will have them available. If you would like to donate any volumes that you would like to share, please contact **Mike @ e-mail blswartz@tds.net**.

Membership services for Trout Unlimited

Check the Perrin Chapter website www.lansing-tu.org or the National TU site www.tu.org for current information of activities and answers to questions.

You can change your mailing address or other information or ask questions by logging into your

account on the National website or by calling 800-834-2419, or go to www.tu.org. And **Renew your Membership**

View your Transaction History (what money you've given to TU, including membership dues)

If you have any other membership questions, please contact Jim Pifer at 517-646-0141 or pifer@voyager.net



Perrin Chapter Trout Unlimited

Decal / Patch Order Form

Support the Perrin - Lansing Chapter of Trout Unlimited by purchasing and displaying our logo!



\$3.00 ea 3-1/3" outdoor self-adhesive decal

\$5.00 ea 3-1/3" embroidered patch

The money from the sale of our logo will be used for conservation of Michigan Streams and Rivers

Name _____
 Address _____
 City/State/Zip _____

No of Decals @ \$3	No of Patches @ \$5	Additional Donation \$2, \$5,\$10,\$25,more	Total Enclosed

Please make checks payable to: **Perrin Chapter Trout Unlimited.**

Mail this form and check to:

**PCTU
 Robert Flickinger
 6603 Windsong Way
 Lansing MI 48917**

Visit lansing-tu.org for all the latest Perrin-Lansing chapter news

Calendar of Events

September 26th Perrin - Lansing Chapter general meeting,
7pm, MUCC Headquarters, Wood Street

Chapter activities for the 2006-7 will remain essentially the same as last year. Dates and times have yet to be determined

Visit lansing-tu.org for news and upcoming events

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Jim Pifer, Webmaster, Membership
Chet Kapusinski, RollCast Editor, Trout Pond Coordinator

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