



2023 January Newsletter



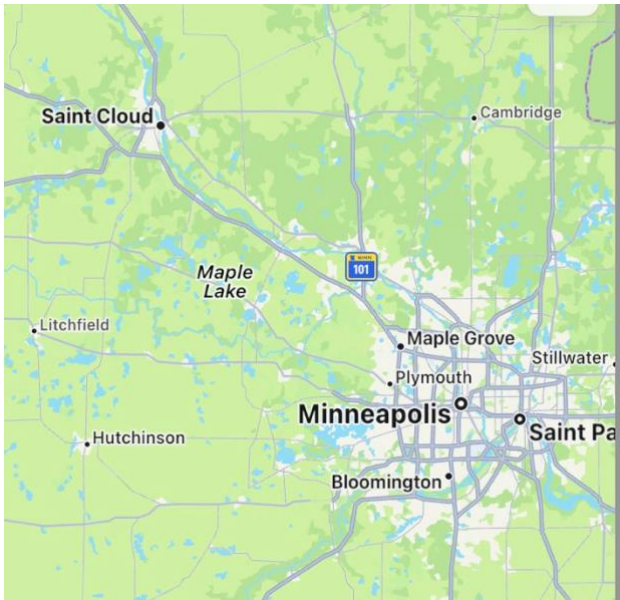
Southeast TU MN Hotline

Editorial by Carl Berberich

Trout-In-the-Classroom Program Continues

The state-wide Trout-In-the-Classroom school education program is going strong in MN. In this newsletter we are now publishing our first TIC school article directly of a school from Maple Lake, MN. This is from the Jane Goodall Environmental Sciences Academy. This TU program teaches the biology and environmental science that is required for trout to survive and grow in our streams.

The TIC program is in 60-70 schools state-wide. The TIC program’s state funding for 2022-2023 was not continued because last year’s MN State Legislature did not approve all of the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) projects. The results were that state funding ended this fall for the TIC school program because this new bill did not pass through the Legislature, which would have continued the funding of the program and other programs.



That means, the current funding for our smaller scaled-back version of the original TIC program is now paid by the MNTU State Council, and the five TU chapters of Minnesota. Thanks to Amber Taylor, (Minnesota Trout Unlimited Education Program Supervisor) who came up with an alternate scaled-back plan (so we could continue to teach this program across the state), also thanks to MNTU state council, and TCTU for paying the lion’s share of this funding.

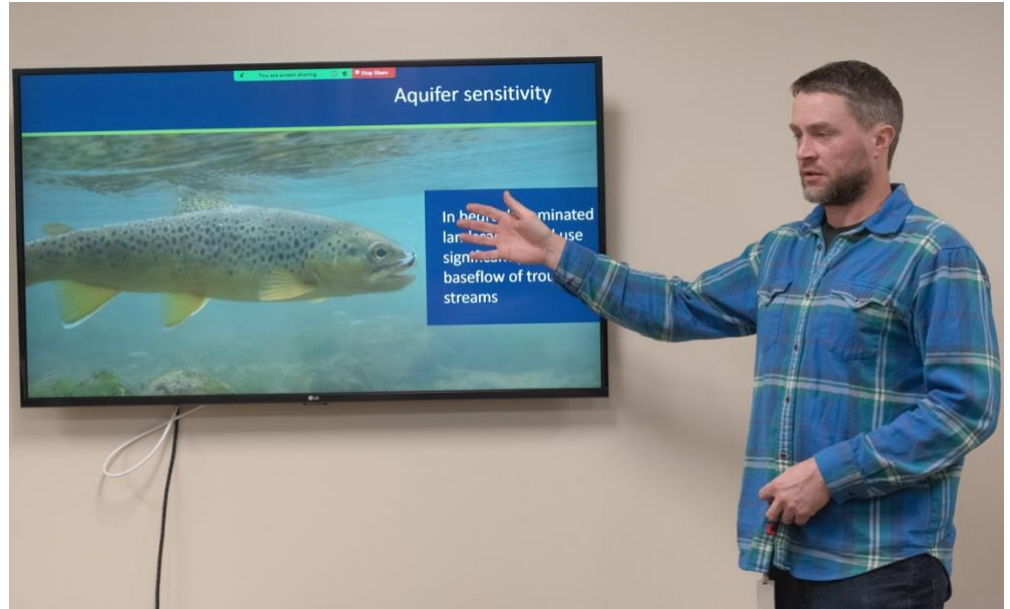
This accompanying TIC newsletter article for the school (hopefully there will be more schools contributing), shows what the schools are currently doing. And it also shows the current state of their program (the eggs in the aquarium have just recently hatched). This program, in my opinion teaches and shows the values that TU members have for trout species and the requirements for their environment, to the students. This also shows how much the TIC program relies on our volunteers to help with the teaching and the other program activities.

Again, I hope that future state funding for the program will succeed in the next legislative session, so that our TU funding of the TIC program will not be necessary. But we will still need volunteers to help this program. If you are curious, one can see all school locations in the Google map link in the [Resources](#) section of this newsletter and [here](#). Maybe your local community school that has the program needs volunteers? Check it out!

HTU Chapter Members Meeting on Jan 9

By John Weiss, HTU Board member

We were lucky to have Justin Watkins, a watershed unit supervisor for the MPCA in Rochester, talk to us about nitrates, a continuing chemical of concern for this region. He concentrated on where it's coming from. He followed Jason Rieke who talked about trout fishing in winter, his favor time. When he was done Watkins took center stage. "There is not as much fun stuff in this one," he said.

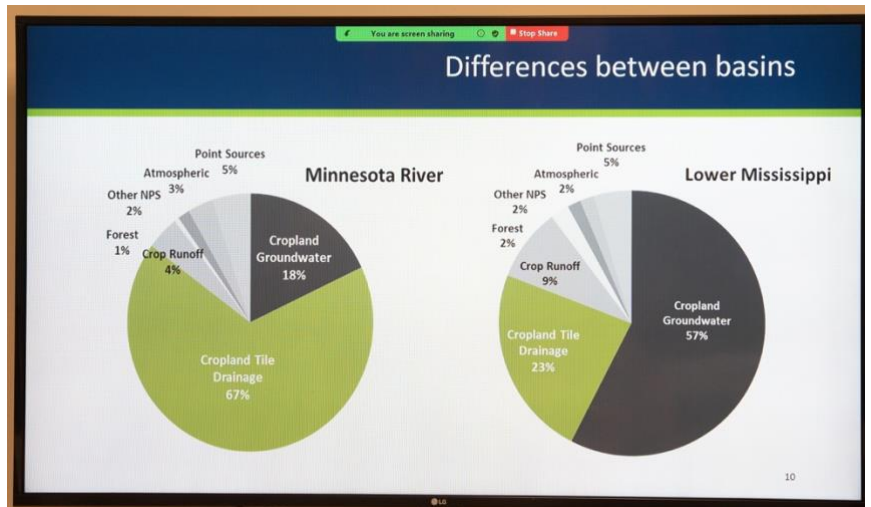


Justin Watkins talks about nitrates in our ground and surface water

In Minnesota, five agencies - MPCA, Ag, Health, BWSR and DNR - all play a part in regulating and monitoring the chemicals. His agency monitors many rivers and trout streams in the region, looking for stressors. Nitrates affect local people by contaminating ground water that we drink, the trout streams that we fish, as well as flowing into the Mississippi River that flows into the Gulf of Mexico and leads to a slump in dissolved oxygen that greatly harms all kinds of aquatic life. The agency gets water samples from across the state and many of the worst ones are in the karst region of SE Minnesota.

Unlike erosion, which is easy to see with gullies, nitrates are basically invisible.

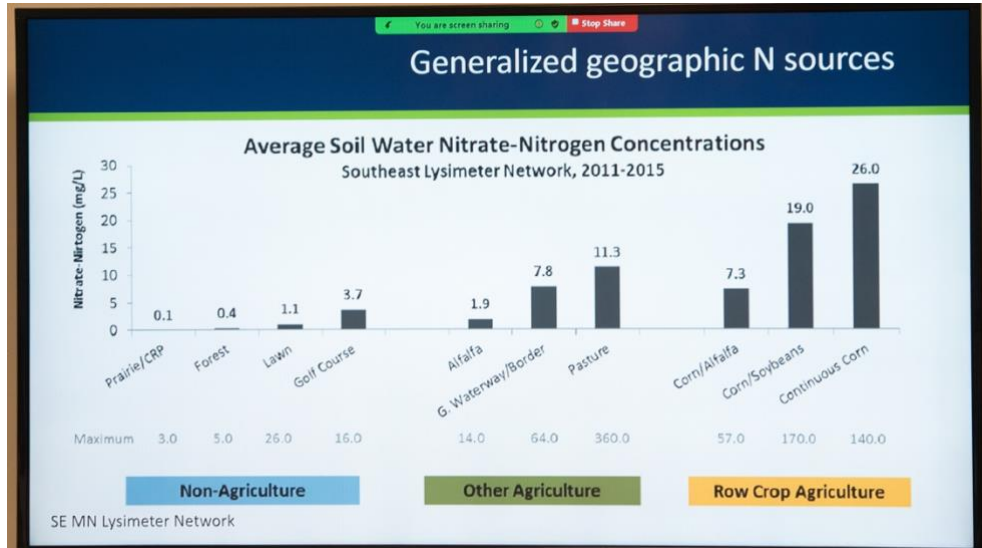
The source of nitrates can be lawns, septic systems, the atmosphere, animal waste and crop fertilizer. Levels tend to be lower after storms but that only means dilution. The state hasn't reduced nitrates leaving its borders but there is a third to half reduction in phosphorus. "That is a real success story," he said.



Not that every trout stream is bad. For example, Money Creek is about 1 part per million (the federal limit is 10 ppm) but less than 10 percent of its watershed is cultivated. On average, the more land cultivated in a watershed, the higher the nitrate level. The highest levels are around 140 ppm in land continuously in corn. “Not every one of them is bad,” Watkins said. “Fields are very different; management is very different.”

While some believe urban lawns are a major contributor, studies show that’s not true. For example, a cultivated field near Rochester had a well on it showing about 20 ppm nitrates. When the field was sold and the land turned into homes with lawns, levels plummeted to around 1 ppm. CRP grasslands are also very low.

Nitrates can also be an indicator chemical that hints that many others are there.



Experiments are going on now to determine what level of nitrates would be chronically bad for water in the long run and what level would be acute in the short term.

Some questions asked:

- *Would it be possible to require retention systems for water trying to leave farms?*

Watkins: There is nothing in the law about that now.

- *How many dead fish are needed to trigger an investigation?*

“There is no number like that written down anywhere.” If they see a number of dead trout, they will investigate.

TIC: Minnesota Trout-In-the-Classroom Questionnaire Results

By the Jane Goodall Environmental Science Academy, Maple Lake, MN

What/Who and How is TIC involved - Grade level/topic, # involved, etc.

9 students 8th-12th grade

Physical science, environmental science and life science

How long has TIC been running at your school?

This is our 3rd year

Where do students release their trout in the spring?

We have released at Brown’s Creek (Stillwater) and the Vermillion River (Farmington)

What are students currently learning about related to TIC?

This year students are very interested in the growth rate of Rainbow trout. They are planning to do a study and present at the U of MN Ecology Fair about their findings. We have a few “veteran” students that are stepping into leadership roles for new students to the group. This has been helpful in doing tank testing, feeding, observations and overall peer-to-peer learning opportunities.

Do they do any special TIC activities, projects, or field trips during the school year?

We are going to work with our TU volunteer, Mike Grengs, to do some fly casting in our gym and incorporate some fly fishing this spring. We are excited to do a field trip (again!) to the DNR Pathology Lab and the fly-fishing expo. We are also looking into doing some visits to fish hatcheries (a MN DNR hatchery and possibly USFWS Genoa National Fish Hatchery).

What are a few highlights from your time in the program?

Having new members who are dedicated and interested in this project has been fun this year. We are excited to have more trout to care for this year (we counted 560 in our initial count!) and to release. Our group’s senior student is taking on more leadership and helping to peer-teach younger new students.



Pictures of their aquarium and the newly hatched trout (from eggs acquired by the MN DNR hatcheries)

Win-Cres TU Chapter Report Status

By Chuck Shepard President of Win-Cres Chapter

Win-Cres has been gifted massive amounts of fly-tying material. Most of it came after the closing of the National Trout Center in Preston, a victim of the pandemic. Glen Creuziger was helpful in facilitating the transfer. We have received another large box of materials from a Pennsylvania TU member and supporter, Lee Schuman, who had accumulated so many materials that he was passing some on to TU chapters around the country. We spent an evening sorting (our second) and keep making discoveries. Among our discoveries: Herter's hooks, a jungle cock neck, half a caribou hide, and fur from a monkey butt. Anyone who needs monkey butt fur for that special pattern can give me a call.

Late winter and spring brings a number our outreach activities: fly tying lessons for Winona Middle School students, the home-and-home series with the Goodhue Fishing Club, and several days supporting the Whitewater State Park Veterans fly tying retreat in early April. Our fly-tying materials will be used, along with decades of accumulated on-stream knowledge.

This will be our third year of working with the Vets. We have provided each veteran with a box of flies, distributing over 600 flies last September. If any of you want to contribute flies, please send them to me at 600 Washington St, Winona, MN 55987. Tie 25 of your favorite pattern and send them my way.

Iowa Driftless Chapter Upcoming Meeting

By Mike Rogers President of Driftless Chapter

Hello Driftless Chapter members--The annual fly-fishing clinic and swap meet is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 4 from 10am to Noon at the Decorah High School gym. This event is an opportunity for us to gain some new members, talk about conservation and give some folks encouragement to chase trout this Spring. We will need about 8 to 10 members to staff this event successfully.

- 1 or 2 Fly Tyers
- 1 Retail
- 1 Swap
- 4-6 casting instructors

Please contact Kent Kleckner at bcanglers@gmail.com or 563-419-4433 if you would like to assist that morning. In addition, if you have fly tying materials or fishing equipment that you'd like to donate to the cause, bring that or get it to myself or Kent beforehand.



Win-Cres Chapter Upcoming Meeting & Event Dates

By Mark Reisetter

Upcoming Dates:

- February 1, 8, 15, and 22 3:30-5:00: John Weaver, Winona Middle School will be hosting a fly-tying session for middle school students. Please bring a vise, if you have one.
- February 22 Win-Cres election of officers
- March 7-8 Driftless Symposium in LaCrosse, WI
- April Save Our Stream, Jennifer Biederman

Next Meeting:

- January 25, 2023
- Sobrieski Lodge, 965 East 7th Street, Winona
- 6:00 pm social hour and meal
- 7:00 pm presentation by Jim Melander of the Lanesboro Office

February Trip Planning

By Jason Reike

February is usually the time of year when I start to get the itch to flip through pictures of past trips and start to daydream about future adventures. I truly love winter trout fishing in the Driftless and try to not let the planning of a future trip take away too much time on the water. However, I understand the advantage of getting a head start on research and reserving days off from work so when those fleeting warm, long days of summer start to roll around I have a plan in place and am not wasting time or missing out on potential opportunities.

An afternoon spent pouring over maps, patterning river flows, reading through research papers on fish activity/movements, and scanning between fishing reports on fly shop websites for any nugget of advice is a great place to start. Identifying how much time you have for a trip is critical as well. A couple of the blessings about being in the Midwest is that we 1. have great opportunities for fun adventures close by if we only have a weekday evening or a weekend to and 2. are centrally located in the US to take a weeklong trip to a lot of great places.

Weekday Evening Trips:

Only have time after work? You are in luck with the Driftless. This area of Southeastern Minnesota boasts a lifetime of places to explore. With roughly 150 designated trout streams, each with their own unique character and many with public fishing access through easements, public lands, or bridge access (making sure to keep your feet wet), you will find 100's of ways to spend time after work. Maybe this is your year to set a goal of fishing 10 new trout streams. Checking out a new stream is a great way to spend an evening after work.

We are also lucky to have four sizable river systems that you can explore from a kayak, canoe, or other vessel. Between the Root, Zumbro, Whitewater, and Cannon rivers, there are hundreds of miles of floatable water and a surprising amount of fish species to cast at. Floating a few miles in an afternoon is also an evening well spent.

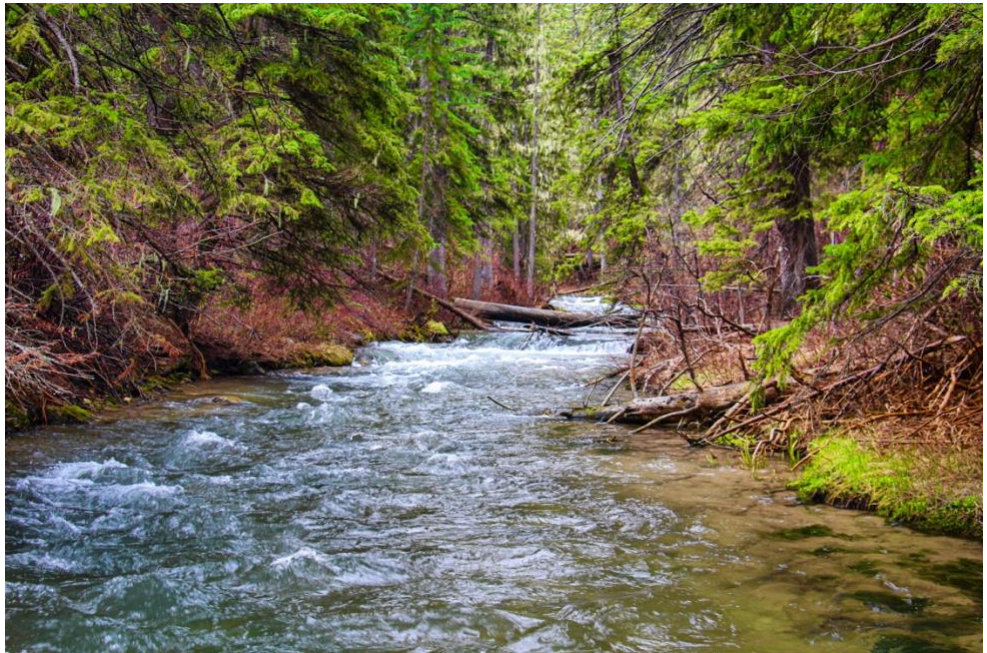


Photos from evening trips last summer in SE MN.
From left to right: small Driftless spring creek, hopper eating brown trout, afternoon float
down a local river

Midwest Weekend Trips:

We are fortunate in the Midwest to have a variety of fishing opportunities that can be accessed through a weekend trip. Whether it is a trip to the Lake Superior tributaries on Minnesota's north shore or Wisconsin's south shore for trout, a weekend canoe trip in the Boundary Waters, or a float down one of the famous northwoods rivers, there are endless amounts of opportunities. And if you have a longer weekend, a trip to South Dakota's Black Hills is truly a special trip as well.

Week Long Trips:



Spearfish Creek, South Dakota

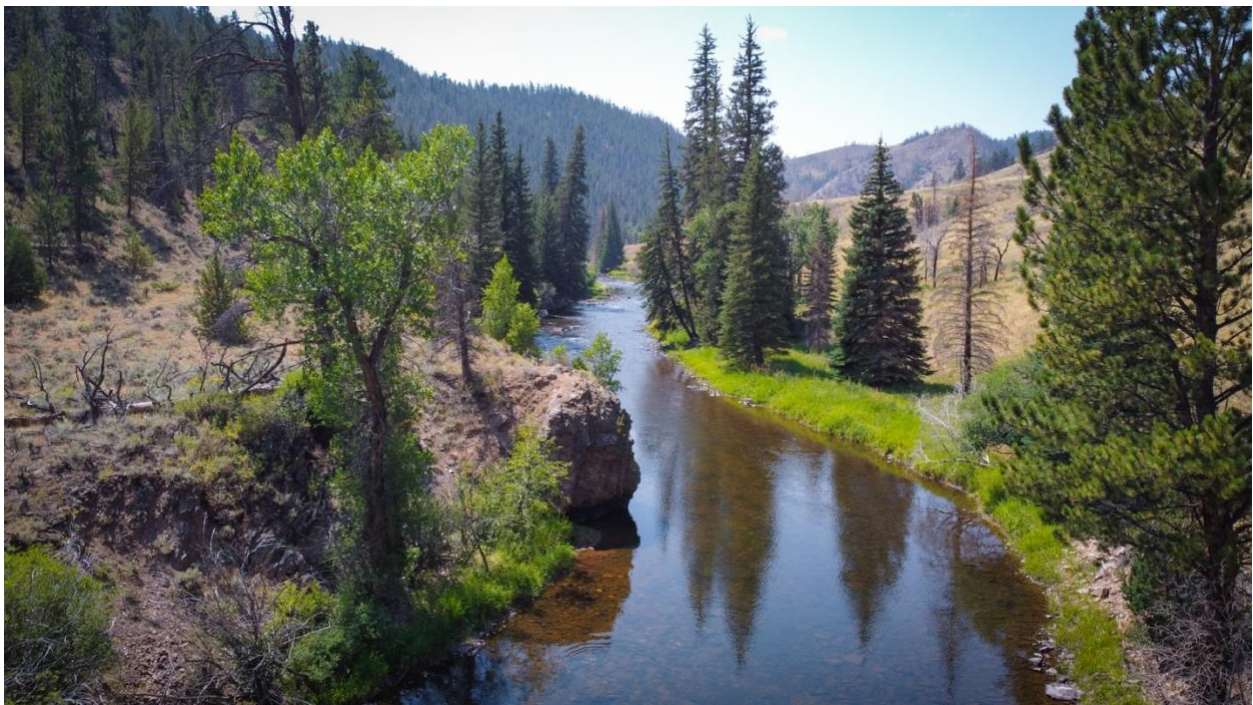
I feel like you need at least a week to really make the most of a trip out west. My go-to states for this type of trip have been Montana, Idaho, and Colorado, along with some excellent fly fishing in the mountains of Wyoming. I often leave on a Friday after work and try to make it somewhere in the middle of South Dakota or North Dakota to camp for the night and then finish the driving the next day. A day or two spent in the Black Hills or Southern Wyoming can be a great way to break up the travel if needed. Or you can get a few buddies to come along, and you can power drive straight through. Idaho is a HAUL from Rochester. If you do it right though, you could leave after work on a Friday and then be standing in a trout stream in the panhandle of Idaho by the end of the day Saturday. You'd also have the next 5 days to fish, explore and enjoy yourself before returning to reality.



Roaring Fork River, Colorado



Northwest Montana



One of my favorite places in southern Wyoming

Fly of The Month: Slider Bugger

By Lance Prado, HTU Board member



Fly of the Month is called the Slider Bugger. This fly is a great pattern to fish during winter months when the fish are down deep, and you need to drag your fly across the bottom to get their attention. I like to fish this fly in slower moving water and let the fly sink as deep as possible and then slowly strip it back to me. This fly works great in different colors like white and olive. When we had our recent rain in January, I fished this fly and had a lot of success. This fly works great for smallmouth bass also during the summer months.

Hook: Gamakatsu B10S, size #2

Thread: Veevus GSP Red 100D

Dumbbell Eyes: Hareline Brass Eyes, Black w/ White & Black Pupils, Size: Medium

Tail: Marabou Blood Quills Black

Hackle: Iridescent Black Schlappen

Body: Ice Dub UV Brown

Legs: Semperfli Barred Rubber Legs Orange/Black

Back Head: Senyo's Laser Dub, Black

Head: Black Deerhair

YouTube video by Root River Rod Co: [Tying the Slider Bugger](#)

Monthly Fishing Report

Lanesboro MN: [Root River Rod Co](#)

We had an unusually big rain in January when it should have been snow. The rain was enough to dirty some streams around the area and the bigger rivers like the Root. The rain brought a great opportunity for fishing streamers, and it was Great! With that being said the streams have now cleared and fishing is still good. Small to Medium black streamers like the slider bugger and

wooly bugger have been excellent. Midges, Scuds and black stoneflies are still working great. Euro Nymphing has been the most productive if you are looking for numbers, but all the bigger fish have been on streamers. Our fly shop and Guides are ready to help anyone have more fun on the water and we are always just a call away or find us online at www.rootrivorodco.com

Decorah IA: [Bear Creek Anglers](#)

Small scuds and midges are always a great bet this time of year, with my favorite being size 16-18 grey and pink scuds, and size 16-20 tan or red midge. Small hatches are still present at times, and very small Griffiths gnats or simple BWO patterns can be effective when top-water activity is present--I'd go size 18-22. Don't forget your streamer and leech patterns--dark olive or black tend to work best, and change your approach as you work, i.e., change stripping patterns and change jig movements. For basic nymph patterns, go size 14-18 with pheasant tails, prince nymphs, Higa's S.O.S., etc.



Higa's S.O.S

Upcoming Events:

Win-Cres members meeting: Wednesday January 25, at Sobieski Lodge in Winona. Fellowship and a light meal begins at 6:00 pm, with the program following at 7:00.

James Melander, the Habitat Construction Supervisor at the DNR's Lanesboro Fisheries Office, will provide the program. Jim has worn many hats in that office and will share some of his previous experiences working in fisheries, in obtaining AMA acquisitions, and in working at the Peterson hatchery. The bulk of his presentation will focus on the habitat work he and his crew have done, and also will highlight some of their upcoming projects.

Iowa Driftless Chapter: Saturday Feb 4, at Decorah High School gym. The annual fly-fishing clinic and swap meet. This event is an opportunity for us to gain some new members, talk about conservation and give some folks encouragement to chase trout this Spring. We will need about 8 to 10 members to staff this event successfully.

HTU Members meeting: Feb 6 at 7 pm at 125 Live in Rochester. If you have a mobile phone (or other camera) and you like to fish, you will enjoy Michael Melford (National Geographic photographer) talking and teaching about how to take better photos. Bring your phone (of course you will) and/or your camera and we will have a hands-on session.

Driftless Area Stream Restoration Symposium: March 7-8, 2023, More details to follow.

Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo. March 17-19 in St Paul, MN. View Presenters and vendors at <https://greatwatersflyexpo.com/>

Resources:

[SE Stream Conditions](#) (MN)
[State Map Trout Streams](#) (MN)
[Southeast Streams](#) (MN)
[AMA](#) (MN DNR Aquatic Management Areas)
[WMA](#) (MN DNR Wildlife Management Areas)
[SNA](#) (MN DNR Scientific and Natural Areas)
[State Forest](#) (MN lands)
[SE Minnesota Hatch Chart](#) (Driftless Region)
[MN DNR Fish Kills Reporting](#) (or call 651-649-5451 or 800-422-0798)
[Trout-In-the-Classroom Map](#) (School Locations in MN)
[Wisconsin DNR Trout Streams](#)
[Iowa DNR Driftless Trout Stream Maps](#)
[IA WMA](#) (IA DNR Wildlife Management Areas)
[HTU's Iowa Driftless Stream Map](#)
HTU Website: <https://hiawatha-tu.org>
TCTU Website: <https://www.twincitiestu.org/>

HTU Board of Directors:

Officers

Open	President/Chair	
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Bernie Nigon	Treasurer	bernard.nigon@gmail.com
John Weiss	Secretary	weiss239@gmail.com
Paul Krolak	Habitat Coordinator	pkrolak@gmail.com

Directors

Greg Goodnow		fishandpets@kmtel.com
Shane Huston	Website Coordinator	webmaster@hiawatha-tu.org
Carl Berberich	Newsletter Editor	cberberic@gmail.com
Tom Kollodge		tomkollodge@gmail.com
Lance Prado		lprado2727@gmail.com

Win-Cres Board of Directors:

Officers

Chuck Shepard	President	shepard@hbc.com
Dave Schulz	Vice President	milsch@hbc.com
Tom Stoa	Treasurer	stoa@hbc.com
Tom Stevens	Secretary	tstevens0873@charter.net

Directors

Bruce Fuller		bwanafuller@gmail.com
Dave Shaffer		dshaffer1000@gmail.com
John Weaver		john.weaver@winona.k12.mn.us
Klaus Friedli		kfriedli@smumn.edu
Mark Reisetter		jmarkreisetter@gmail.com
Neal Mundahl		nmundahl@winona.edu
Paul Girtler		pgirtler@fastenal.com
Roger Berg		bergr3@msn.com

MNTU State Council Contacts

Brent Notbohm	MNTU President/Chair	blnotbohm@hotmail.com
John Lenczewski	MNTU Executive Director	jlenczewski@comcast.net
Scott Criqui	MNTU Executive Assistant	scott.criqui@mntu.org
Mark Reisetter	MNTU Vice Chair Southern MN	jmarkreisetter@gmail.com
Randy Brock	MNTU NLC Representative	rwesleybrock@gmail.com
Amber Taylor	MNTU Education Program Supervisor	mntu.education@gmail.com

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