

A LOCAL CHAPTER OF
AMERICA'S LEADING NONPROFIT
COLDWATER FISHERIES
CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

THE MERSHON
MUDDLER

◆ *Newsletter of the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited* ◆

1989, 1996 & 1997 RECIPIENT OF THE MICHIGAN COUNCIL TU CHAPTER OF THE YEAR AWARD

Meanders

A few thoughts from
the president



Robb Smith, chapter president

Summer is finally upon us, and the rewards of a relatively cool and wet spring have provided improved angling in most of our streams and rivers. I'll be honest, it has been hard to break away from the temptations to wet a line and focus on the business of the Mershon chapter. We have covered a lot of ground since our last issue, and I am pleased to report in this addition the results of our banquet, the upcoming events of our chapter and the future directions of the Mershon chapter.

The Annual Spring Banquet was very successful due to the donations made by our membership and the cost containing measures taken by the banquet committee. I would like to thank everyone involved with the banquet including committee members, volunteers, contributors and attendees. Just over \$10,000 was raised and will be used to make contributions to several projects providing habitat rehabilitation and activities associated with trout fishing. My vision for next year's banquet is that we invigorate interest and increase our attendance by at least 25%. Our banquet should be an event to celebrate our accomplishments as well as a venue in which to provide resource funding, so we need you all to participate. If you have any new ideas for next year's event or recommendations as to where we could do better, please feel free to pass them on to Chrissy at christinevhsmith@gmail.com or me at rsmithsr@chartermi.net.

See *Meanders* page 5

Calendar of Events

Mershon Chapter
AU SABLE RIVER CLEAN-UP
Saturday, September 9, 2006
Bob Linsenman's Au Sable Angler,
479 S. M-33 (Mt. Tom Rd.)
Mio, MI

Mershon Chapter
RIFLE RIVER
RESTORATION PROJECT
Saturday, September 23, 2006
Rifle River Trail adjacent to
Troll Canoe Landing
(btwn. High Banks & Fair Grounds)

MERSHON BOARD MEETINGS
Wednesday, September 6, 2006
Wednesday, October 4, 2006
Wednesday, November 1, 2006
5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Gander Mountain, Saginaw

Au Sable River clean-up planned for September 9

by Tom Buhr

This year, the Au Sable River clean-up is planned for Saturday September 9th at 8 a.m. at Bob Linsenman's Au Sable Angler. Everyone who participates gets a 10% gift certificate at the shop (good for balance of the year), plus they are entered in a drawing for the following: Ross Rhythm 2 Reel, Scott E2 5-wt. rod, custom-built net, and box of streamers. Please call 989-826-8500 to register or send me an e-mail at tombuhr@prodigy.net. Bring waders and gloves. Food and soft drinks will be served. ♦

Rifle River restoration project set for September 23

We will again be doing a bank restoration project on the Rifle River this year that will involve 500' of tree revetment. The location is on Rifle River Trail adjacent to Troll Canoe Landing (between High Banks and the Fair Grounds), and will require approximately 70 trees set with the usual tie-back method. A TENTATIVE date is set for Saturday, Sept. 23, 2006 and should require one (1) day, as the Ann Arbor chapter will also be on site. A finalized notice will be sent; however, any questions or comments can be directed to Bob Spence at (989)799-6617 or rsspe2@chartermi.net. ♦

Casting for Recovery needs river helpers

Casting for Recovery is in need of 3-4 good people to act as river helpers for our participants on Sunday, September 10 from 8:45 to 11:30 a.m. at Ranch Rudolph outside Traverse City. All are invited to stay and have lunch with us at noon. The Ann Arbor TU sends 7 helpers, and Dave Leonard sends 3-4 of his employees, and we have 14 participants. We would like each woman to have her own "guide," which would free up the 3 of us from CFR so that we can be on the river bank to troubleshoot, hand out water, help the women out of the river, etc. The only items you need to bring are your waders, vest, something to hold flies (flies are provided), and a wonderful attitude. Please consider helping; you won't be disappointed. To volunteer contact Judy McCann 989-652-9869 or jmccann113@aol.com by the first of August. Thanks! ♦

Did you miss this year's Spring Fundraising Banquet?

If you missed this year's Annual Spring Fundraising Banquet—you missed something special, an evening full of excitement and anticipation for the season opener, shared stories, tall tales, and laughter. If you missed the banquet—you missed bidding on and perhaps winning one or several prizes from "the best selection we've had in years." If you missed the banquet because you don't like "banquets"—you missed a table full of delicious hors d'oeuvres, a fabulous all-you-can-eat dinner,

and a cocktail or two shared with your friends. If you missed this year's banquet for one reason or another—you missed being part of an evening that raised over \$10,000.00, money that will go a long way to help preserve the cold water fisheries we all cherish. If you missed the banquet this year, talk to someone who was there; we're sure you'll want to make sure you don't miss next year's banquet. The committee is already planning to make next year's banquet the best ever. Don't miss it! ♦

**WILLIAM B. MERSHON CHAPTER
OF TROUT UNLIMITED
2006-2007**

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The Salesman Special

by Josh Butzin, chapter director

Every Trout fisherman who does not have the ability to devote the entirety of their life to one hundred percent Trout-Bumpkinism and is forced to live an existence of weekend fishing and sporadic trips to and fro needs to put together what I call "The Salesman Special." What is this thing? It is a fishing "system" that aids the common man in reaching the highest levels of troutified mysticism during those odd times when catching those slimy little torpedoes seems most unlikely. Unlikely, that is, for reasons different from what you may be thinking. Not because the hatch isn't going off, or the water is at flood stage, or some other environmental disaster, but rather because you happen to be wearing a suit, or standing in the parking lot of a "quaint little craft shop," or are maybe on the way to some other activity that you are overjoyed about.

Here are the nuts and bolts of it all, a list of items that are currently, but not exclusively, involved in my personal "Salesman Special":

1. Small Orvis chest-pack
2. Fenwick 4-pc, 7' Spin/Fly combo rod, circa 1960's or 70's
3. Scientific Anglers System-One reel with cracked reel foot and spooled with old line.
4. Cheap spinning reel. (blasphemy)
5. Old leaders from serious fishing, re-tied and very usable.

6. Fly Box containing these items:

- Various flies, mostly B-grades that didn't make it from my vise to my good fly boxes, mostly a mix of small creek streamers and dries along with some Bass poppers.
- Various Mepps (double blasphemy) and Panther Martin (triple blasphemy) spinners, the smallest ones that I can get.

7. Forceps and clippers.

8. County maps that I cut out of an atlas and then highlighted all of the water.

9. Tippet material

The contents of the Salesman Special are subject to change season to season. For example, in September or March, the little seven-foot rod could be substituted with an eight- or nine-weight Black Gum or Steelie rod. In October, the rod could be substituted with a bow and camo. Whatever the gear list may be, keep the Salesman Special with you at all times.

Why would you need this fishing system, you may ask? The reason is clear. As a dedicated fisher-person, there is simply just no telling when you may find yourself near fishy waters. For example, some Saturday afternoon you may find yourself with your dearly beloved spouse, touring Amish country. Fun. Little does your mate know that smack dab in the middle of Amishland is the Cedar River. Who knew? Or, while antiquing in Traverse, you may happen to find yourself standing downtown beside the Boardman. "Honey, are those Salmon I see?" Options aren't necessarily limited to trout

waters. Maybe your spouse says to you one Sunday morning that she would like to go visit great aunt so-and-so at the lake. A twenty five-inch brown would be absolute perfection, but a master angler perch wouldn't necessarily taste all that bad with a cold Pabst and some tartar sauce.

The need for the Salesman Special could also be work related. To support my case, I give you this real-life scenario. As a ski rep working in northern Michigan I often did overnights in Traverse City. In Traverse City there is a small, inexpensive motel called the Mitchell Creek Inn, and wouldn't you know it, but Mitchell Creek runs right through the property. My first adventure with the Inn was by accident and not realizing that there would be a Salmon run fifty feet from the parking lot, all that I had with me as far as fly rods go was an eight and a half-foot five-weight. Needless to say, I broke lots of leaders and almost broke my rod. I landed no fish that afternoon but was far better equipped on the next trip through.

Hopefully, by now you know where I'm coming from with this idea and are already in the basement rooting through your piles of old fishing gear looking for the perfect rod that you don't mind leaving to cook in your two hundred degree car this warm summer. Along with the rod, don't forget about the cracked old spool of fly line that hardly floats at the tip and could be further seasoned by a lengthy visit to the trunk of the family grocery-getter. Trust me, you won't be disappointed, and your spouse will only be momentarily annoyed by your impromptu fishing trips. ♦

Meanders, continued

The chapter is lining up several events in September including the Annual Au Sable River Clean-up starting from the Au Sable Angler Fly Shop on September 9th, a Rifle River restoration project scheduled for September 23rd, and the Annual Mason Tract Cedars for the Au Sable Project scheduled for September 30th. More planning information can be found within this issue, and it is our hope these activities will be confirmed in our next newsletter. If you have any questions, please give me a call or shoot over an e-mail to me at the address above. For information concerning the Rifle River project please contact Bob Spence at rsspe2@chartermi.net or Josh Butzin at jmbutzin@sbcglobal.net, who have taken over the coordinator job for one of our chapter's most important functions.

Looking into the future, we are still waiting on a specific schedule for action to be taken by Huron Pines RC&D with regard to the "Clay Banks" project below Mio on the Au Sable River. Brad Jensen, the executive director of Huron Pines, has informed me that the USFWS has earmarked \$25,000 for the project, and the funding will be utilized to stabilize the

toe and establish a solid foundation of native plants on the bank. Additionally, in 2007, large woody debris (LWD) will be flown in to both deter foot traffic and provide some in-stream habitat. Brad contends that partners like the Mershon chapter will be instrumental in bringing this project to fruition as their funding will be used to leverage additional support. Stay tuned.

We also continue to work with Rollin Reineck of Affiliated Researchers in order to obtain grant monies to be used for research of the Au Sable River dam impoundments. The purpose of this research will be to determine if there is sufficient cooling water available to lower the river temperature in the warm-water months of July and August. If the backwaters of these dams could be lowered by only by a few degrees, the results to the fishery would be dramatic. It is obvious that the warm- and cold-water extremes caused by the dams will continue to adversely affect the trout populations in this lower part of the system. Presently, we are making contacts within the Dow Foundation and Consumers Energy to obtain funding.

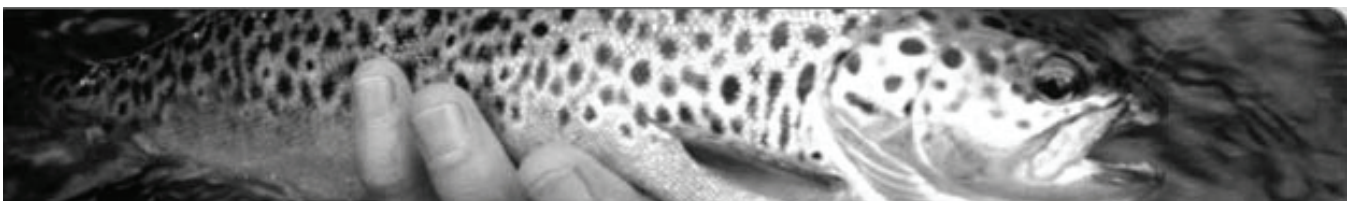
There are many good articles and editorials in the summer 2006 issue of Michigan Trout. The Kennecott Eagle project is updated and a letter of position provided by Trout Unlimited National and Michigan Council of Trout

Unlimited is summarized. At present, Trout Unlimited opposes the issuance of a mining permit for this project. Carl Heuter's column addressing Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited's methods of advocacy is also very interesting and should be read.

Positive news regarding the Mason Tract has come from U.S. magistrate judge Charles Binder in Bay City on June 21st. He stated that the government assessment of the environmental impact created by the proposed drilling for oil and gas near the Mason Tract was inadequate and recommended halting plans to allow drilling inside such an environmentally sensitive area. Subject to the approval of U.S. District Judge David Lawson. This will be great news for trout fisherman. The Justice Department has 10 days to file objections to Judge Binder's report. Savoy Energy of Traverse City has not commented on the recommendations at this time.

I'd like to conclude with an inspirational thought for you all, but the words just won't come together. Instead, I'll just encourage you to spend a day or night fishing your home waters with your pals and enjoying your favorite streamside rituals. Trout fishing is not a religion, but it is a revival of spirit. Just go do it!

Your President,
Robb Smith



TU comments on Kennecott permit

On Tuesday, May 16, 2006, Trout Unlimited submitted the following comments to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality on the Mining Permit Application of Kennecott Minerals Corporation proposed Eagle Project in northwestern Marquette County. Trout Unlimited will continue to carefully review and comment upon this project as long as it continues to move forward.

We have included the cover letter to the report here, which summarizes their findings. To read the full report, visit www.mctu.org.

May 16, 2006

Michigan Department of
Environmental Quality
Office of Geological Survey
525 W. Allegan
P. O. Box 30256
Lansing, MI 48909-7756

Attention: Steven E. Wilson -
wilsonse@michigan.gov

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed Kennecott Eagle Project Permit Application. Based upon our review of the information contained in the Mining Permit Application, Environmental Impact Assessment, and supporting appendices, submitted pursuant to section 632 of Public Act 451 of 1994, Trout Unlimited (TU) believes that the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality should deny the application based upon our comments below and attachments.

TU does not oppose all mining activity, but opposes any mining operation we perceive as having a potential negative impact on a coldwater resource. TU opposes this particular project as currently outlined in the mining permit application. In particular, TU feels that inadequate attention has been given to the sensitivity of the resident coaster brook trout population in the Salmon Trout watershed and to potential impacts that could arise from this proposed mining operation and its associated infrastructure.

TU's vision is to ensure that by the next generation robust populations of native coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range. Consistent with that vision, for more than 15 years TU has worked with partners across the Lake Superior basin to protect and restore coaster habitat, strengthen harvest regulations, improve scientific understanding, and increase awareness and support for restoration of this magnificent fish. The Salmon Trout River population of coaster brook trout is the last known viable remnant population on the south shore of Lake Superior, and therefore, is vitally important to the broader restoration effort.

TU also opposes the issuance of a mining permit for this project because we believe that the Kennecott Eagle Project Mining Permit Application has several significant gaps that need to be addressed. TU retained the services of two consultants who provided expert technical review of the application. Please consider their comments as part of TU's comments. Their comments and recommendations are detailed in the attached memorandum and cover groundwater and surface water modeling, fractured bedrock simulations, water quality monitoring, effluent standards, bore hole decommissioning, and transportation infrastructure and plans. The most glaring omission is the lack of detailed contingency plans. We feel that it is extremely important for Kennecott to address all issues

outlined in the “Recommendations Summary.” The financial assurance bonding for the project should also be recalculated to cover all the measures detailed in those as yet to be identified contingency plans, per the requirements of Part 632 of Public Act 451 of 1994. In the event that the Kennecott Eagle Project Permit Application is approved and the project moves forward, we want to ensure that every feasible precaution, including a requirement for a double liner under the development rock containment area, has been taken to protect the natural resources of the Salmon Trout River watershed and coaster brook trout, in particular.

TU applauds the State of Michigan for instituting legislation and administrative rules to regulate mining activity in potentially reactive non-metallic mineral bodies to ensure the protection of the State’s natural resources. This first application under this new law will set an important precedent for all future mining activity of this type in the State. We strongly encourage you to rigorously scrutinize the application and set the highest standard for mining operations

and mitigation possible, including rejecting projects where the site is determined to be too sensitive for the proposed undertaking.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to provide comments on this project. If you have any questions related to our comments, please do not hesitate to contact us by phone or email. Steve can be reached at 703-284-9406 or smoyer@tu.org. Carl can be reached at 734-668-0340 or cohueter@umich.edu.

Sincerely,

Steve Moyer, Vice President for Government Affairs & Volunteer Operations

Carl Hueter, Michigan TU Council Chair

Enclosure

cc: Rich Bowman, Michigan TU Executive Director
Laura Hewitt, TU Midwest Conservation Director



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP



YES! Please begin my one-year introductory membership in Trout Unlimited at the rate I have checked at right. I understand my dues payment entitles me to all regular membership benefits, including a TU decal, personal membership card and quarterly issues of *Trout* magazine with *Action Line*.

Please check membership category:

- New member membership (\$17.50)
- Regular membership (\$35) / 3 years (\$90)
- Family membership (\$50) / 3 years (\$100)
- Sponsoring contributor (\$100)*
- Conservator contributor (250)*
- Individual Life (\$1,000) (*No further dues*)*
- Family Life (\$1,100) (*Husband and Wife*)*
- Senior (62 and over) membership (\$20)
- Full-time Student/Youth (under 18) (\$20)
- Business membership (\$200)

All contributions over \$12 are tax deductible.

**Note: special benefits provided for these membership categories.*

***Make checks payable to: TROUT UNLIMITED*

Clip and mail this application to join TU today!

Name (please print) _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Telephone _____
020 Mershon
Chapter _____
Michigan Council - Code 5449
Sponsor _____

Payment enclosed** Please bill me _____

Visa # _____ Exp. Date _____

MasterCard _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Mail to: **TROUT UNLIMITED, PO BOX 1335, MERRIFIELD, VA 22116**

(Please remember that board members can help you sign up new members at the membership rate of \$17.50 and that all of this money comes back to the Mershon chapter if the membership application references our chapter #20.)

THE MERSHON
MUDDLER

◆ *Newsletter of the William B. Mershon Chapter of Trout Unlimited* ◆

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