

# ALDER FORK JOURNAL

## Newsletter of the Aldo Leopold Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Serving Columbia, Dodge and Sauk Counties since 1982



SPRING 2015

### IN THE LOOP

By Scott Allen

President, Aldo Leopold Chapter



In May of 1978 a doe-eyed freshman at UW-Stevens Point should have been studying for a forestry class final exam but instead could be found on hands and knees casting for his first brook trout in the Little Plover River south of Stevens Point. He used a Rooster Tail spinner and a worm, together, to land that first trout.

I'd like to introduce myself as the new president of the chapter, succeeding Mike Barniskis and yes, that was me, fishing instead of studying. Mike held the position of President for 12 exemplary years and will continue as a member of the Board of Directors. And I, 37 years later, continue to fish instead of study. Trout Unlimited is an advocacy organization championing cold-water resources and the salmonids, wildlife and people that depend on the resource. I may not be telling you something you didn't already know, but let me tell you why I think this is not to be forgotten. Since that memorable day in 1978, due to ground water depletion, the Little Plover has unfortunately dried up completely on more than one occasion. Today it is again flowing, albeit perilously, because of the collaborative efforts of public, private and industrial entities. This is just one example of the many small "pushes" all of us are making within our state to move cold-water resources in the right direction. To that end, my primary role as president is advocacy. At Bear Creek we can see the positive results of bringing together county, state, federal agencies, in addition to individuals and several TU chapters. Overseeing community outreach, fund raising and being a liaison to public and private organizations will keep my creel full. My secondary role, that of a trout fisher, will address the concerns and enthusiasm for one of the reasons most of us joined TU and continue as members: we love to fish!

As cold-water champions, we are in the final phase of restoration of Bear Creek in Sauk County. The last 3,100 feet of stream will be restored this summer. If you

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haven't been adding up our progress over the 5 years, it totals to more than 4.25 miles! We have you to thank for this "push" in the right direction. We are now discussing and planning the maintenance of our work on Bear.

We are also looking at additional maintenance and further restoration of Manley Creek within the Riverland Conservancy property north of Merrimac. Members Mike Stapleton, Tom Gawle and I met streamside on March 19th with Linda Lynch



*Chapter members joined folks from the DNR, Sauk County Conservation Department, Riverland Conservancy and the NRCS to view past improvements to Manley Creek.*

of Riverland, Dan Fuller and Nate Nye of DNR, Tony Pillow of NRCS, and Brent Bergstrom of Sauk County Land Conservation. Riverland Conservancy is very enthusiastic about preserving and restoring this habitat for a unique population of truly native eastern brook trout. Our chapter funded and recently installed temperature monitors in Manley to give the team a pre-planning idea of habitat potential.

We are a growing chapter deep in potential. I plan to add more

programming to our meetings to provide our members with experiences that will compliment their dedication to clean water and trout fishing. There are many conservation organizations in the state with complimentary missions that I hope to collaborate with through our community outreach. But most importantly my role will be to keep each member "in the loop" as a reminder of the importance of your role in conserving and protecting cold clean water.

As fishers, we will be gathering for the free, annual chapter picnic and fund-raiser in Lodi on June 9th. This fund-raising picnic is important to the chapter's existence in that it brings in about 50% of our annual operating budget dollars. There will be many raffle and silent-auction items including a new custom-made bamboo fly rod, a guided Hayward-area float trip by Hayward Fly Fishing Company, a fly-tying cabinet and much more. Of course, there will be great food, camaraderie, and maybe a few fish stories. I hope to see you there. 

#### **ALDO LEOPOLD CHAPTER MISSION STATEMENT**

**The Aldo Leopold Chapter's mission is to conserve, protect, restore and enhance trout and salmonid fisheries, watersheds, the groundwater that sustains them, and the doctrine of public trust that defends them, in Columbia, Dodge and Sauk Counties. We do this through education, cooperation, rehabilitation and advocacy using an extensive and dedicated volunteer network.**



## IMPORTANT CHAPTER DATES TO REMEMBER

**Saturday, April 18, 2015**, 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.  
Manley Creek Brush Clearing Work Day. Meet at Manley Creek parking area on Hwy 113, north of Merrimac, WI. Bring loppers, hand saws, work gloves, waders.

**Wednesday, April 22, 2015**, 5:00 p.m. ALCTU member meeting. Suzy's Steak and Seafood, 2711 County CX, Portage, 63901. WDNR Jean Unmuth will present water monitoring findings for Bear Creek.

**Saturday, April 26, 2015**, Wisconsin Early Inland Trout Fishing Season Closes.

**Saturday, May 2, 2015**, Wisconsin General Inland/Trout Fishing Season Opens.

**Saturday, May 16, 2015**, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
Boot Brush Installation Work Day. Meet at Lodi Spring Creek parking area on Hwy J downstream from Town of Lodi.

**Tuesday, June 9, 2015**, 5:00 p.m. ALCTU annual (and free) picnic. Habermann Park, Lodi

**Saturday, June 20, 2015**, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Tentative, Bear Creek Work Day. Meet at Hwy N and Hwy 130 in western Sauk County.

## OFFICERS AND BOARD DIRECTORY

### Chapter Mailing Address:

Aldo Leopold Chapter TU c/o Scott Allen  
E4835 N Stoney Ridge Road, Reedsburg, WI 53959

### Officers:

Scott Allen, President  
jscottallen12@gmail.com 608-524-1753  
Mike Stapleton, Vice President  
mikestapleton22@gmail.com 608-742-3665  
Mike Stupich, Treasurer  
mstupich@execpc.com 920-206-8433  
Tom Gawle, Secretary  
tomg@redtopstudio.com 920-887-2142

### Board of Directors:

Michael A. Barniskis  
barniskis@yahoo.com 920-356-0081  
Chad Volkmann  
CSVOLK06@gmail.com 608-886-0181  
Sally Gawle  
sallyg@fastmail.fm 920-887-2142  
Tim Hood  
jthood@charter.net 608-592-5405  
Dave Murphy  
davem17@gmail.com 608-963-2640  
Jim Peters  
sorneyrouter@outlook.com 608-212-9959

<http://aldoleopold.tu.org/>

## MANLEY CREEK IMPROVEMENTS

Discussions are taking place between ALCTU, Sauk County, DNR, NRCS and Riverland Conservancy to fund additional stream maintenance and possibly fund new stream restoration of Manley Creek in Sauk County north of Merrimac.

In the 1990's a habitat improvement project overseen and funded by DNR on the current Riverland Conservancy property produced impressive brook trout population growth from approximately 30 fish total for the stream to about 1,300 fish per mile today. The log structures and rock placement are in need of maintenance. Downstream of the improved section, water temperature data loggers have been placed this Spring to determine if the temperatures are low enough for trout habitat and if the section is worthy of improvements. Manley Creek, one of our smaller streams, has never been stocked and contains a healthy population of native eastern brook trout, making it a unique and special stream.

**Work Day Scheduled, April 18th**, help the chapter achieve its goal of making Manley Creek brush free. This past winter, Riverland Conservancy contracted to have alder, dogwood and willow removed along the riparian corridor of Manley Creek on the conservancy property north of Merrimac. There remains isolated patches of brush that need removal by hand, also a lot of cut brush needs to be dragged away from the creek channel and herbicide applied to stumps. Bring loppers, hand saws, waders and work gloves.

We will meet at the parking lot on Highway 113 about one mile south of County Highway DL, @ 8:30 a.m. This date is also the Riverland Conservancy Stewardship Day and we have been invited to join them at their noon lunch at the horse barn on Marsh Road. President Scott Allen will also give all attending a brief informal presentation on the importance of Manley Creek and TU's role in conservation. Don't miss this. 

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance as of April 15, 2015

Checking	\$3,003.00
Savings	\$1,185.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,188.00</b>

Michael C. Stupich, Treasurer

# WINTER BEGINNING FLY TYING CLASSES WELL ATTENDED

By Tom Gawle

Secretary, Aldo Leopold Chapter

Our annual, free-to-the-public beginner's fly tying course drew 17 students of all ages to the Portage Public Library for five consecutive weeks of classes. The chapter provides all of the materials and has vise kits to lend for students to use. The course is geared toward



individuals who have had little to no experience at tying. The group had some familiar faces in it and a number of new faces from about 12 years of age on up.

The "teachers," headed up by Mike Stapleton included chapter members, Jim Peters, Chad Volkmann, Dave Murphy, Sally Gawle and Tom Gawle.

The course has been held in the Baraboo and Portage area libraries for the past several years and both locations have produced a good number of students, each year. 