

FALL 2008

TROUT TIMES



Vanguard
Chapter

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September Salmon Adventure 2008

By Dave Watson

We are going to fish the Pere Marquette this year on Friday the 19th of September to Sunday 21st September.

This is a great weekend to try a different style of fishing mixed with some camping. This is an opportunity to discover the techniques and good fishing locations from our salmon fishing experts.

We try to pick the best times and location when the Salmon are in the river. You will have a chance to wrestle with Coho, King, and Steelhead in this beautiful river. Maps will be issued later to those interested in making the trip. Some guys travel up on Friday and return Sunday.

Come and catch of these big strong fighting fish and enjoy the camping. Please contact Dave Watson for more details. Tel: 248-601-3828. E-mail: davexbt@gmail.com



HERITAGE DAYS AND VANGUARD TU

By Dave Watson

LENNOX TOWNSHIP—It was another very well organized Heritage Days 2008 on August 24 by Joy and Mike Bennett of the Huron Pointe Sportsmen's Club, giving people an excellent introduction into outdoor life and sports. The idea is to keep people aware of nature and how our sportsmen's conservation activities are helping us all to enjoy our outdoor activities now and for many years to come.

Volunteers from the Vanguard Chapter kept fairly busy all day with a lot of kids eager to tie a Woolly bugger and some old timers keen to try another pattern.

Every color combination under the rainbow was used providing enjoyment to the kids and parents. Old news letters were given to the interested students to have an understanding of our club and also to contact us with reports on how the flies worked, and maybe get involved with the Trout Unlimited.

This is the seventh year that the Vanguard Chapter has manned a booth at the Heritage Days event. Chapter volunteers, which this year included Dave Watson,

Please see *HERITAGE DAYS*, page 2.

HERITAGE DAYS

Continued from Front Page.

John Sabina, Keith Flood, Patrick Flood, Todd Randall, Alec Randall, and Matt Rackley, who took turns to explore the event and tie flies.

The Sportsmen's Club had some interesting demonstrations and new attractions. A group of American Indians who willingly shared their ancestor's culture and living techniques were particularly interesting.

After the event John Keith and Dave Watson aired their guns at the Trap shoot. It was a good way to end a very satisfying day.

My thanks to all the Vanguard Chapter fly tying crew.



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FLY FISHING UNLIMITED**

**Joe Barker, Editor
John Sabina, President**

President's Corner

By John Sabina

September 2008 is the start of Vanguard's 26th year of Chapter operation. Much has been accomplished over that period, thanks to the hard work of a number of very passionate conservationists. Our Chapter is recognized throughout the State of Michigan and even by a few nationally. The Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited selected us as Chapter of the Year twice in recent years. We have a solid financial footing and we still have a roster of 270 people despite the state of the Michigan economy. Even our attendance at chapter meetings has been on the upswing. My point is simply that the Vanguard Chapter has a lot of good things going for it.



But now for the rest of the story! The membership of any TU chapter naturally divides into three general groups: the chapter leaders, the active members, and the supporting members. Our supporting members continue to renew their memberships annually. While the total number is down a bit, that decline is not unexpected in the present economy. How many of our members are considered to be active members depends very much on how you define that category. If one looks at the number of members attending monthly chapter meetings or even our spring conservation banquet, one would conclude that our active membership is up in numbers (although still only a small percentage of our total roster.) If, however, one looks at our participation at chapter events such as the spring outing, the River Day participation, the work weekend attendees, Heritage Day, and the like, one can see the fundamental problem. Very few members put active participation very high on their personal priority list. It has been said that running a TU chapter is like pushing on a rope—no results to show despite the effort expended.

The dwindling number of members who participate in chapter outings and events is causing our biggest issue—our chapter leadership is also dwindling. Joe Barker now lives in Chicago, although he still contributes greatly as our editor. Al Woody no longer lives in the area. Todd Randall is largely consumed by raising his family. Even Joe Swantek, our hardest worker for many years, is spending more time fishing and less time in town since his retirement from Comerica. Many other "regulars" have not been seen lately. I have been an officer or board member in Vanguard for 16 years. I guess the truth is that I am becoming burned out. It is time for some new folks to step up to assist Dave Watson, our most enthusiastic board member.

Chapter elections will be held at the November 13th Chapter meeting. Each member has to decide if they can contribute more. Please consider becoming an officer or board member. It only involves one board meeting per month and lets you get a much better view of "the big picture." If time or circumstances do not permit you to consider joining the chapter leadership, then at least vow to become more active and join us for a Chapter outing our event. Your Chapter needs you.



KETCHUM ‘EM IN IDAHO

By Joe Barker

KETCHUM, IDAHO—Finally, a town that lives up to its name. Not like Grayling, Michigan, where the last time a Grayling swam in the Manistee or Au Sable Rivers was when Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders charged up San Juan Hill. Or maybe I’m thinking of Clarence Thomas and Anita Hill. Or has it been since Teddy waded up the San Juan River? Whatever.

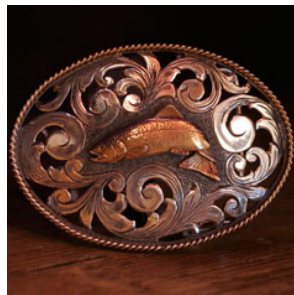
Furthermore, Ketchum isn’t a dam fishing town like Dutch John, Utah (named after John McCain, who insisted that when it comes to national healthcare that every citizen should “Go Dutch”) located below the Flaming Gorge Dam on the Green River; or Fort Smith, Montana, named in recognition of Will Smith’s little known movie that was a box office disaster, “Men in Blue.” In this sci-fi thriller, which is a sequel to “Men in Black,” Smith encounters alien trout in the Big Horn River, some six feet long with a single eye located in the middle of their forehead and with three tails, which, quite understandably, put up a hell of a fight on a five-weight fly rod.

Despite the notoriety of the Green and Big Horn Rivers, the towns of Dutch John and Fort Smith have a single street running through town and offer little more than a couple general stores (and I do mean general). The fly shops sell strange named flies like the “Ray Charles,” which feels for trout as it bounces along the river bottom, grabs them by the tail (which comes as a shock to the fish who are curious about how a size 18 fly can find a pair of sunglasses that small) and tosses them into the drift boat; and the “Chernobyl Ant,” which uses radiation from nuclear waste to paralyze any fish that happens to swim within 50 feet of the fly, after which they float to the surface where the avid sportsman can scoop them up with a landing net. Unfortunately, there are few repeat buyers of this fly, and the anglers

that do tend to have an iridescent glow about them.

By contrast, Ketchum offers less famous rivers such as the Big Wood River and the Big Lost River, both of which have lots of slippery rocks and swift currents that can send you spiraling down the river in your waders with a misplaced step, but neither of which has any wood nor are they hard to find. And by western standards, the rivers are not really that big, certainly no where near the size of the Big Horn or the (Almost-as-Big) Green rivers.

However, Ketchum does offer fly shops with chic outdoor fashions such as Ex-Officio and Simms, and Clint Orms belt buckles that boast a \$3,200 price tag. I bought one for my wading belt. You won’t find a ladies’ clothing stores like Panache (even the name sounds expensive) or a Starbucks in Dutch John and Fort Smith, although it won’t surprise me if I found one my next trip there. Ketchum is where the beautiful people are found both in the summer and winter, much of it due to the nearby Sun Valley ski resort, the first to have chair lifts. Can you imagine walking up those mountains to go skiing? Despite chair lifts, now it’s sport in the summer to hike or bike up some of the biggest mountains, although not with skis in tow.



My new wading belt buckle.

Ketchum also boasts some excellent dining establishments such as the Roosevelt Grille and the Pioneer Saloon, known for their tender and delicious \$25 steaks. By comparison, Fort Smith has Polly’s, named for the parrot that runs the restaurant and serves hungry fishermen all the standard fare that birds of that feather crave; seeds, nuts, leaves, and insects.

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“NEW SCOTLAND SALMON”

By Keith F. Flood

Dave Watson, VP of TU Vanguard Chapter has been putting together the annual Vanguard Salmon Outing for the past three years and has been doing a great job. Members of TU Vanguard have made the annual drive to the famous Pere Marquette River in Baldwin, Michigan to fish for Pacific Salmon, mainly King or Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) and Coho Salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*). Now and then someone will hook into a fresh Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) adding a little variety to the menu. Dave, some of us have enjoyed some of the best salmon fishing in the Midwest. Thanks for taking the time to build some fine memories and camaraderie throughout TU Vanguard.

At the Vanguard TU August 2008 board of directors meeting, I asked Dave if he would like to perhaps add a little twist to our annual Salmon outing and fish for Atlantic Salmon (*Salmo salar*). John Sabina, Vanguard TU President, mentioned that the St. Mary’s River just north of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula has a good run of Atlantic Salmon and I agree. But I was thinking more of the Cape

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KETCHUM

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While you better be prepared to wait for a table in Ketchum, be prepared to wait a long time for your food in Fort Smith.

Okay, so maybe with my 25-year old K-Mart, thread-bare pocket (Simm's calls theirs vented) fishing vest and Cabella waders patched so many times that the patches are patched, I fit in better at Fort Smith than Ketchum, where the likes of Tom Hanks and Arnold Schwarzenegger are known to hang out. Can you imagine Arnold getting skunked after a day of fishing. Does he menacingly mutter from behind his dark wrap-around sunglasses, "I'll be back." None of our six-member group of fishermen is anywhere near as well-heeled as the celebrity set in Ketchum, but I know of at least one member of our group who irons his fishing vest and puts it on a hanger after each day's fishing. That at least should be worth style points.

Yes, Ketchum is becoming Aspenized. As a concession for our highbrow destination this year, I did wash my fishing vest. Big mistake. Dried fish slime and black river bottom gunk had been the glue holding it together for years. With half as many pockets left after the spin cycle, I had to lighten my load capacity of rarely used fishing paraphernalia (snake bite kit, etc.) and flies from 97 pounds to 51 pounds, although my stylish carrying satchel remains intact, which doubles as a 32-gallon garbage bag.

However, it was the fishing that brought us to Ketchum. An article in Fly Fisherman magazine had touted the Big Wood River and Silver Creek, probably the most famous of the Idaho trout streams and known as the graduate school for fly fishermen. That may be true, but where are the squeaky, three-legged chairs and the chewing gum underneath the desktops? Catch-and-release and barbless hooks are the order of the day and being a spring creek, Browns and Rainbows glide nonchalantly between mounds of watercress and gravel shoots. They've seen hundreds of fishermen in their lifetime and we're no different. They've also

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SUMMER CHAPTER OUTING: The Curse & the Hex

By Joe Barker

GRAYLING—The calendar said it was prime Hex time. The days warmed up nicely. In the summer solstice simmered beds of black muck hugging the river bends and stillwaters behind grassy islands. By mid-day, stream thermometers the Upper Manistee River just below County Road 612 registered in the upper 50's; prime conditions for Hexes to wriggle from their cozy black sheets and rise to the surface when the sun dipped below the horizon.

Seven Vanguard anglers killed time along the banks having spent the day reminiscing of past hatches and spinner falls that brought the heavy rises of big reckless trout in the twilight. During the last 13 years, the Hexes had never disappointed. Sure, it wasn't always at the same time each year, but it would happen. At some point, the irresistible urge to emerge would get the best of even the most reticent Hex. Sometimes the number of squirming, twisting bundles of wings and dirty yellow bodies were more

prolific than others, but the nocturnal carnage could be counted on.

But this year, when the last of the sun's warming rays vanished, cool air in quickly settled into the river valley. As the Brookies splashed at the smattering of Brown Drakes, Pale Evening Duns, and Little Fat Bastards in the dusk, the big Browns brooded in the log jams. The steamy breathes of anglers rising from the stream signaled that yet another evening would be gripped by chilly, crisp air and the Hexes would pull another blanket of muck over their heads.

Few Hexes would shed their pajamas to brave these conditions. They craved the sweaty, stuffy air that not even the disappearance of the sun could relieve. It would be another short evening of fishing. If anglers hadn't flung a few smaller flies at rising Brookies and a few modest Brownies, they would be cursed by the

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At the summer Vanguard outing, the fishing wasn't great, but the food was pretty good.

KETCHUM

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been caught many times over, so they know the routine, but they're disinclined to repeat the experience. As our tiny #22 Tricos gently float by, Mr. Brightsides tips his head up and you can almost hear him say in perfect Fishaneez, with a slight Western drawl, "Been there, done that. I think I'll sit this one out until the real McCoy comes along." The wait is short because like most spring creeks, the insect life is prolific. So as the surface dimples with sipping trout to the point that it seems we've been caught in a soft summer shower, we fling our pathetic frauds at each smirking trout. After a couple days of that, we realize it's time to go back to high school. It's name? The Big Lost River.



Half the fun is just getting there. What starts out as a Sunday drive on a smooth paved road past a manicured golf course and a meandering creek in Sun Valley turns into a white knuckle, cliff-hanging adventure on wheels. Navigating on a single lane, washboard dirt road with no guardrails, and an unencumbered drop of several thousand feet to the canyon floor, is reason enough to soil your shorts, but add suicide mountain bikers to the mix who play a game of chicken with approaching vehicles and one can't hug

the inside of the hairpin turns tight enough. The sign at the bottom that warns the road is restricted to four-wheel drive trucks seems to invite every mid-size Lexus, BMW, and trailer-hauling vehicle in the state to roll the dice on meeting our vehicle head on at some point in the road where the only way around is to sprout wings. Did I mention there are no guardrails?

But once you reach the summit, and dry off the front of your pants, it's all forgotten. A narrow valley of lush flowers opens into a broad basin of sagebrush crisscrossed by numerous clear, cold, rock-strewn streams with eager trout willing to hit just about any dry fly you throw at them. Not at all like the snobs on Silver Creek. However, this all assumes that you are there at the right time. Too soon before the Fourth of July and babbling brooks are unwadeable torrents. Too late

and both the water and fish are long gone. Snow melt is their lifeblood and the continuing drought in the West is no friend to any of these streams. Fortunately, we hit it just right. But even during the week we were there, the drop in the water level was noticeable and the bigger fish were making a hasty retreat. In holes and runs that 12-16 inch Rainbows, Western Slope Cutthroat, Fine-Spotted Cutthroat, and Brook trout once called home, their smaller

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SCOTLAND

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Breton Highlands (Margaree Forks) in Nova Scotia, Canada.

The famous Margaree River is recognized as one of the finest Atlantic Salmon rivers in the world and is a blue ribbon Stream. The Margaree River is famous for its fall Atlantic Salmon Run which begins in mid-September and runs through October 31st. Fall is the prime time to fish the Margaree. All of the board member seemed enthused and I received many suggestions in how to present this idea. One suggestion was to rent a few vans (3 to a van). The distance is about 1,400 miles (24 hours drive time). We could camp near the river, however there are cottage rentals near the Margaree River with salmon pools within walking distance.

The Nova Scotia Salmon Association has a wealth of information in regards to fishing the Margaree River. I've been in contact with Larry Shortt, a Director of the Nova Scotia Salmon Association and he is a great point of contact for our annual outing. Larry has already recommend several inexpensive, yet nice cottages for a potential outing. Cranton Cottages:

<http://www.crantoncottages.com/> is one of a few mentioned. Larry also said the he knows some walk-in guides that will put us right on the fish for a reasonable price. Also, <http://www.novascotiasalmon.ns.ca/fishinginns/margaree.htm> and the Nova Scotia Salmon Association has wealth of information.

It's a little to late to book a trip to the Margaree this Fall, we'll be fishing the Pere Marquette in Baldwin, Michigan. However, we can plan the annual 2009 or 2010 Salmon Outing on the Margaree. I for one plan on being in Vanguard TU in 2010 as well as most of the members. If interested in fishing the Margaree River, please contact me at: (248) 808-4024. There is no better time to start planning that salmon fishing trip of a life-time. Watch for more on the Margaree River in upcoming Trout Times.

Work Weekend Cancelled!

By John Sabina

That was one headline that I never expected to write. This is the first time to my memory over 18 years that the Vanguard Chapter has not honored a commitment. When the Upper Black River Restoration Committee presented at our February Chapter meeting, we expressed a strong interest in renewing our efforts on the Black River.

The last issue of Trout Times reported that our annual work weekend would be held the weekend of August 2. The plan was to work on habitat enhancement on the section of the Black River that is currently under special regulations to see how reduced angling mortality might impact the resident brook trout population. To those of us who feel that tighter fishing regulations are a key to larger fish, this DNR study is certainly worthy of our efforts.

However, one week before the work session, only four members had signed up—that is 4 people out of a 349-member chapter roster. Sending such a small work crew would be an embarrassment and hardly worth the extra effort required by the Upper Black River Restoration Committee to schedule Saturday work. So, I felt that I had no choice but to cancel the work session. A number of factors likely contributed to the low number of volunteers. The date chosen conflicted with business trips for several members, a vacation trip for another, and was the wedding date for your editor's stepdaughter.

To make matters worse, the Upper Black River Restoration Committee and the Headwaters Chapter of Trout Unlimited had been awarded an Embrace-A-Stream grant to fund this Black River improvement effort. The grant application offered 250 hours of volunteer work to partially offset the monies from TU National. (Of course, not all of these hours were to be from Vanguard mem-

Please see **WORK WEEKEND**, page 7.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thursday, September 11—Chapter Membership Meeting. Joe Swantek will show photos of his recent trips.

Friday – Sunday, September 19-21—Chapter Salmon Outing on the Pere Marquette River. Contact Dave Watson at 248-601-3828.

Thursday, September 25—Board Meeting at Dave Watson's house. Visitors always welcome.

Thursday, October 9—Chapter Membership Meeting. Meet Dr. Bryan Burroughs, Executive Director of the Michigan Council of TU.

Thursday, October 23—Board Meeting at John Sabina's house. Visitors always welcome.

Thursday, November 13—Chapter Membership Meeting. Election of officers and Board members. Program to be announced.

Thursday, December 11—Chapter Membership Meeting. New officers and Board members take the reins. Program to be announced.

Thursday, January 8—Chapter Meeting. Program to be announced.

Chapter Membership Meetings

Membership meetings are currently held on the second Thursday of the month at the Rochester Hills Environmental Education Center. Special events are held at various other locations around Southeastern Michigan.

Meetings are open to TU members and non members alike. Please feel free to attend if you are considering joining TU. Just ask any officer and we'll be happy to provide you with information and/or an application.

Meetings begin at 7:30pm and adjourn at 9:30pm. Programs for each meeting are listed on the [Calendar of Events](#). Each year we bring in renowned guides and authors from around the state as well as resource pros who make a living conserving the resources we all enjoy.

If you have ideas about a potential program drop us a line on our website at [Meeting Program Idea](#). We are always looking for ways to better the Chapter and help the members better their angling skills. Hope to see you at the next meeting.

Check Out Vanguard On-line

For the latest updates on upcoming Vanguard Chapter news and events, visit our website at www.vanguardtu.org.

In addition to our homepage, you'll find links describing our purpose, meetings, outings, the Chapter calendar, youth programs, projects, events, newsletters, Chapter officers, a member's page, becoming a member, Chapter links, and contacting us.

KETCHUM

Continued from page 5.

cousins were now taking up summer residence, while the water lasted. Catching all four types of trout during a single day's fishing is known as a grand slam. I felt like Barry Bonds on steroids. Not only did I do that, but I caught them in succession all from the same hole.

After long, sometimes 12-hour days of fishing for a week (hey, someone's got to do it!), it still wasn't easy to leave the East Fork of the Big Lost on the last day in order to make it down White-Knuckle Road (or as the Native Americans call it "Peeinthepants Trail") before the demise of the fleeting sun. It's the kind of place where you want to swing your fly rod just one more time before you leave just to see what you'll hit, or more accurately, hits you.

FOOTNOTE: My apologies to Rich To-sches. During the Idaho trip, I read his book, "Zipping My Fly: Moments in the Life of an American Sportsman." His irreverent, ADHD humor and writing style had me in stitches and has crept into this account of our trip to Idaho. Although I'm healing quickly, the stitches have still not fallen out. If you are looking for a good, funny read, pick up a copy of his book. In checking Amazon.com, you can get a used copy for \$.01. It's worth every penny. Someone must have used it to wrap fish.

SUMMER OUTING

Continued from page 5.

big chill. The water would be quiet and still as the stream disappeared into shadows. This scene played out again and again for two weeks after the Chapter's weekend outing in late June had ended. On a few mornings, the thermometer registered 38 degrees, testament to the frigidness of the evening before.

A few Hexes bravely scooted from their beds during the heat of day, only to be devoured by opportunistic Brookies as they struggled on the surface. If they were lucky enough to escape their watery birth sites, they were easy prey for swooping birds before they could reach the safety of the shoreline trees and shrubs. Such was the fate of the brave few.

There were reports of big bugs on the lower Manistee and Au Sable Rivers. But our frosty reception one evening near the CCC Bridge of the Manistee, which again chilled the Hexes, convinced us to wait on our home waters for the spinners that would never come.

The upside? New friendships and one 18 inch Brown the first evening on the river which decided to swat a LFB. This would be my largest fish during three weeks of fishing, which would include Idaho, and which you can read about elsewhere in this newsletter. At least in that regard the old, trusty Manistee didn't disappoint.

WORK WEEKEND

Continued from page 6.

bers. Northeast Lower Peninsula volunteers are needed as well.)

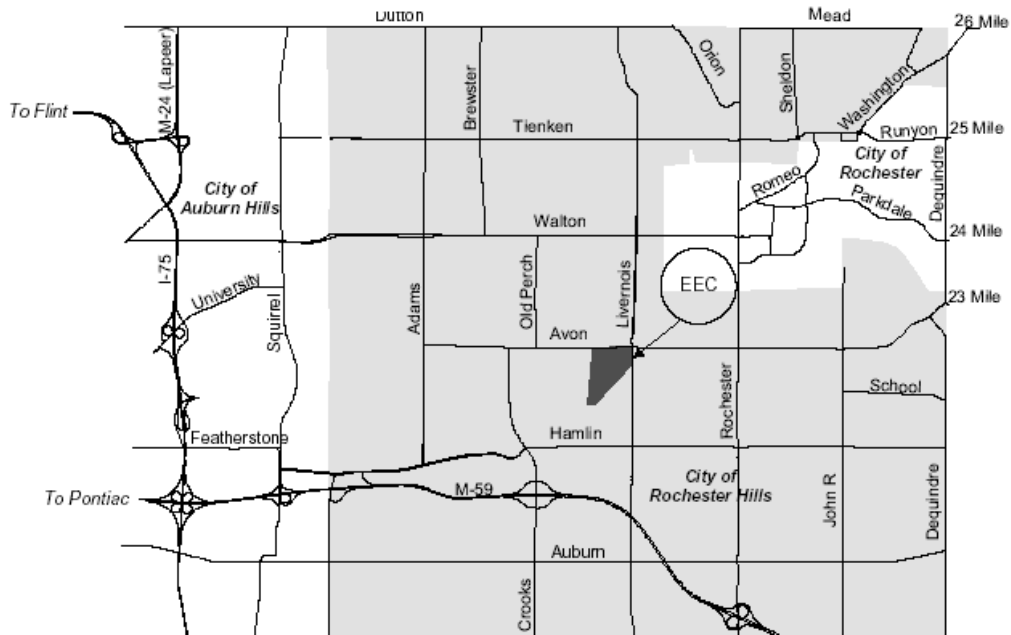
Mr. Paul Rose, our Black River contact, was most gracious when I called to explain the situation. I suggested that perhaps a later date might result in a larger work crew. Unfortunately, their summer work force consists of college students who return to school before Labor Day. Thus, the August 2 date was the only possibility on their end. Paul did point out that the Embrace-A-Stream grant is for a two-year project. Several delays have resulted in limited progress on the Black River this summer and thus, the project will focus hard on the summer of 2009.

The Vanguard Chapter will return to help improve habitat on the Upper Black River. We will provide much longer lead-time for next summer's schedule. It is my firm hope and belief that more than four of our members are interested in making a difference on the Black River. If you have never joined us for a work weekend, you should try one. These weekends are both rewarding and fun. Please watch for more details.



Opposite is one of the many typical 14 inch Rainbows caught on the Lost River system in the Copper Basin just outside of Sun Valley Idaho. The fly of choice was a #10 Parachute Adams, which made for easy visibility and reliable hookups. Green Drakes were available throughout much of the afternoon, and various Green Drake patterns were acceptable to the trout, but the Adams served the same purpose. In fact, a female Adams with a bright yellow butt was hard to beat. While Rainbows predominated, Western Slope Cutthroats, Fine Spotted Cutthroats, and the occasional Brook Trout could also be found.

Our New Meeting location:
Rochester Hills Environmental Education Center (EEC)
is located at: 1115 West Avon Road in Rochester Hills



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