

JUNE 2004

# TROUT TIMES



**Vanguard  
Chapter**

Volume 04 Number 2

A Publication of Vanguard Chapter Trout Unlimited



## IN THIS ISSUE

- Clinton River Project
- Dam Removal?
- Heritage Days Volunteers
- Michigan TU Spring Outing
- President's Corner
- River Day
- Lake St. Clair Outing
- Brown Trout Planting

## HEX HATCH BECKONS VANGUARD MEMBERS

GRAYLING—One of the most prolific and reliable Hex hatches occurs on the upper portions of the Manistee River. The stretch below County Road 612 in Crawford County features numerous silt beds around almost every bend. These murky flats are incubators for Hex nymphs and provide a safe haven until warm summer nights make the urge to emerge irresistible. That begins the feeding frenzy by glutton trout.

Vanguard members hope to catch part of the action during their annual fishing outing open to Chapter members during the weekend of June 26-27. The event will be hosted by Trout Times Editor Joe Barker at his cabin on the banks of prime Hex water on the Manistee River 15 miles northwest of Grayling.

Those who attended Joe's presenta-

**Please see *HEX HATCH*, page 7.**

## NEW RECRUITS ENLISTED AT EXPO



*Vanguard volunteers, including Chapter President Todd Randall (left with back to camera), sign up new members eager to participate in TU's many benefits and conservation efforts. They were also hoping to be the lucky winner of the Winston rod raffle.*

WARREN—Thanks to a special membership drive offered by Trout Unlimited at the national level, the Vanguard volunteers made the most of the opportunity to sign up 21 new members to the Chapter. New members could sign up for half the regular annual dues (\$17.50), and received their choice of dozen free flies tied by Joe Barker, or a Trout Unlimited

T-shirt. Most of the new members took the flies because of the money-back guarantee that accompanies the flies (you do the math if the flies are free).

This was the first year that the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo, which is spon-

**Please see *EXPO*, page 2.**

## EXPO

Continued from Front Page

sored by the Michigan Fly Fishing Club, was held at Macomb Community College in Warren. The Expo, which is held in March of each year, outgrew the Southfield Civic Center, and many attendees and vendors commented positively on the change in venue.

"I'd say the combination of incentives and the new show venue right in our backyard contributed to our success," commented Chapter President Todd Randall, "as well as the fact that many prospective members come to the booth already interested in the Chapter due to increased press coverage and activity related to the Clinton River."

Many of the new members were eager to sign up for various Chapter projects that were featured at the show.

Of course, the highlight of the event was the rod raffle, which serves as one of the major fundraisers for the Chapter.

And the winner was ticket #529...Peter Albertson, the immediate past-president of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club, who purchased \$10 worth of tickets on Sunday. I guess that proves that good things happen to those who help the conservation effort.

Peter has been a member of the Fly Fishing Club for about 14 years and he loves to fish the North Branch of the Au Sable River with his buddy "Al the hackleman," another MFFC member. Peter owns other Winston rods and the two of them visited the Winston rod factory last August while on a trip to Yellowstone Park. Maybe it was destiny that Peter win another Winston rod because he's such a fan.

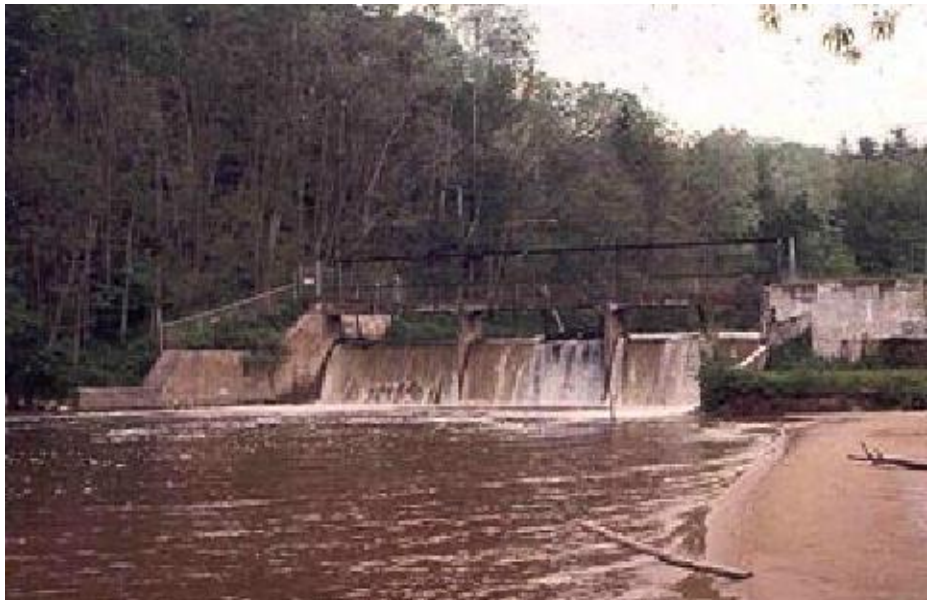
Another big winner in the rod raffle was the Vanguard Chapter. Ticket sales totaled \$1,776, with net proceedings after expenses of \$1,409; all of which will go into future conservation programs.

## DAM IT? OR DAM WRONG! (Or Who Gives a Dam?)

STERLING HEIGHTS—Interesting questions that got your attention, right? Dams and dam removal were the focus of Bryan Burroughs at a recent membership meeting, another in a series of presentations offered by the Vanguard Chapter. Bryan is a student at Michigan State University in the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, who is enthusiastic about fish and fishing. He is working on his PHD in fisheries and wildlife management.

for the better and other times for the worse.

Many dams were created to harness the power of rivers for electricity, but clean burning coal has surpassed hydroelectricity in cost effectiveness. Because the average life span of a dam is 50 years, many dams are on the verge of obsolescence. By 2020 an estimated 80% of the dams will have outlived their useful life.



Dams have become a focal point of conservation efforts by various organizations, including Trout Unlimited, which made Bryan's presentation all the more timely. According to Bryan, there are an estimated 2.5 million dams in the United States of various shapes and sizes. Some 76,000 dams are more than 6 feet high. Nearly every river system in the lower 48 states has at least one dam, so obviously the significance of dams can't be ignored.

Dams have had both good and bad consequences, such as changing river habitat, reducing flooding, and slowing flows. Water temperatures usually shift and stream channels change, sometimes

Therein lies the rub, according to Bryan. What to do these relics that create potential safety hazards, require costly maintenance, and provide little economic benefit. The environmentalist's answer is dam removal, but costs to do so are high and there have been few studies on the impact of such action, even though over 400 dams have been removed to date.

Enter Bryan Burroughs and the removal of the Stronach Dam on the Pine River near Cadillac that began in 1996. He has accumulated nine years of information on the subject, which makes it the

**Please see DAM IT?, page 4**

# President's Corner

By Todd Randall

Wow! Spring has sprung! Been fishing yet? Tried the Clinton?

This year because of the involvement of volunteers from Vanguard, and fellow Southeastern Michigan TU Chapters, the Michigan DNR planted many trout in the mainstream of the Clinton. That's right, the **mainstream** of the Clinton. You've heard of the multi (big) fish days down on the Huron? How about some stories from our own backyard? The DNR stocked 425 "retired" brood-stock fish in the Clinton in late March. These fish are in the 16" – 24" range! That's in addition to the annual steelhead smolt stocking and the annual Paint Creek plants.

Fishing right here at home ought to be better than it has been in a long time (not a bad thing when you look at the sign at the corner gas station).

I've been told in no uncertain terms by the DNR and others involved in this project, that if it wasn't for the hard work of TU volunteers, they couldn't make this kind of thing happen. The DNR like a business needs to get a return on their investment and part of the equation is increased use and interest in fishing in this area of the state. Also, if you get out, let us know about it. Or better yet, let the DNR know about it.

How do we keep it going? Well, if you haven't yet heard, we're again looking for volunteer help with survey work this time on Paint Creek. And as always we're looking past this year and planning the project's next phases for 2005 and beyond so stay tuned for more.

If you are interested in getting involved, Vanguard could use your help. We are always searching for motivated, people to join our board of directors or serve as a Chapter officer. Many of us have been doing this for quite a while and welcome new faces, fresh ideas, and your enthusiasm. If you're interested in serving as a director please contact any of the

officers or directors listed in this newsletter.

Don't forget to look at the calendar for upcoming events and get out and fish!

## Vanguard Banquet Earlier This Year:

Our Fall banquet is by far our most important fundraiser every year. In fact, over 50 cents of every dollar we spend on coldwater conservation is raised at our conservation banquet.

This year the banquet will be held **September 23** (since the last Thursday is the night before the archery deer opener). The banquet will again be held at Fern Hill Country Club (17600 Clinton River Rd. in Clinton Township) and this year will feature the same great raffles and auctions we've had in the past, as well as some new surprises.

We'll have door prizes, a special ladies raffle, our feature raffle, and our Famous bucket raffles. If you've never been to a Trout Unlimited banquet, I suggest you come join us for a great evening of good food and friendship for a great cause. Vanguard has played a key role in the Clinton River coldwater conservation project, efforts to restore the upper Black River, as well as other worthwhile projects around Michigan. This can't happen without your support.

For ticket information please contact myself at [trandall@tir.com](mailto:trandall@tir.com), or (586) 336-0995 or Joe Swantek at (586) 939-6015. Contact us by September 1 and we'll enter you in our exclusive "Early Bird" raffle. This year registrations will be considered received on time if postmarked by September 1 **and** include either a check or credit card number to hold your reservation. We will not cash your check or charge your card until our final count is due to Fern Hill on September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Please **PRES. CORNER**, page 5.

## "RIVER DAY" OPEN HOUSE AT THE STERLING HEIGHTS NATURE CENTER

By Joe Swantek

STERLING HEIGHTS—Once again the Vanguard Chapter will assist the Clinton River Watershed Council in celebrating "River Day" on the Clinton River by sponsoring an Open House for the public at the Sterling Heights Nature Center on Saturday, June 12 from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Planned festivities include fly casting demonstrations and instructions by one of Vanguard's premier casters, fly tying instructions by superb fly tier Capt. Geoff Kowalczyk and his wife, Jaclyn, sample displays of macro-invertebrate (bugs) from the Clinton River, video screenings, reading material handouts, and prizes.

Unfortunately, we recently lost Keith Benoit, one of our most valuable River Day volunteers, so we will need a least three or four more volunteers to staff the Center during our event. If you can spare a few hours on June 12, we can sure use you. We use this event as an educational outreach event for the Sterling Heights community, a requirement of our non-profit charter.

Gordon Lani, the Sterling Heights Nature Center's naturalist, will be contacting local newspapers and middle schools in an effort to increase attendance.

If you would like to volunteer contact Joe Swantek @ 586-939-6015

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Joe Barker, Editor  
Todd Randall, President

## DAM IT?

Continued from page 2.

longest study on the subject. According to Bryan, it is a dangerous assumption that dam removal will reverse damage already done. Ecosystems change with the presence of a dam and it not always possible to recreate the prior environment.

The Pine River itself is some 48 miles long with a relatively fast flow and groundwater accounting for most of its volume. However, because of the impact of both the bygone logging era and natural terrain, an estimated 50,000 tons of sand flows into the river each year.

The history of Stronach dam starts in 1912 when it was built for hydroelectric generation. Its 12-foot height created a 66-acre impoundment and backed up water for two and a half miles. However, because of the terrain through which the Pine River flows, within 20 years the reservoir had filled with sand, and despite continual dredging, by 1953 the dam was decommissioned.

During the dam's existence, the river below the dam was deep and slow moving for the few miles before it emptied into the impoundment created by Tippy Dam on the Manistee River. Warm water fish species dominated this portion of the Pine River. When it was decided that the dam would be removed in the mid-90's, the question was not only what impact would it have on the river itself, but what would access by warm water species have on trout in the cool water upper reaches.

After the dam was gradually removed over a seven-year period, which was completed in December 2003, the river channel experienced a dramatic change. With the drop of water and the shifting of sand from behind the dam, the water surface was lowered seven feet in the river channel above the dam site. Below the dam site, the inverse occurred; the stream level rose by two feet. The river decreased in width to about 50 feet in the two and half miles above the dam site, which matches those portions well above the dam that had not been impacted by the prior

Please see *DAM IT?*, page 7.



Reigning Michigan Trout Queen Belinda Burkett "knights" Rich Bowman, while Trout King Bob Summers, of bamboo rod maker fame, watches.

## Good Fishing, Fun Times & Great Food Reign Supreme at TU Spring Outing

WALHALLA—"Rise Sir Richard and be fruitful." Presumably that means Michigan Trout Unlimited Council Executive Director Rich Bowman will continue his fine conservation efforts on behalf of TU rather than tilling the soil at a grape vineyard.

The knighting of Rich was just one of the rather interesting features of the Saturday evening banquet at this year's Michigan TU Spring Outing at Barothy's Lodge on the Pere Marquette River in early April. The feature raffle included a his and hers combination prize of a chainsaw and pearl necklace, which Rich modeled for the participants (the necklace, not the chainsaw). The winner was a cut-up (Kurt Bauer, president of the Paul Young Chapter), and his wife, in attendance, was a real gem. Word had it that she gets the chainsaw and he the pearls. Actually, both items ended up at the Paul Young Chapter's annual banquet later in the month.

The Vanguard Chapter was probably one of the better-represented Chapter's at the Spring Outing, which also serves as the quarterly meeting for Chapter representatives to the Michigan Council from

across the State. No fewer than 15 Vanguard members attended the event, the majority of who were holed up at the Whitetail Lodge, one of the newer and most luxurious of the accommodations at Barothy's.

The Whitetail Lodge comes complete with a hot tub and sauna, which became the gathering point for frozen toes of those who braved blowing snow to toss flies at pink sides. There were more fly-tossers than Steelhead on most occasions, but successes were plentiful (or at least the stories were plentiful).

Of course, no fishing weekend is complete without someone doing a half-gainer into the river. One member found his inflatable life vest wrapped around his neck after he made a bad choice of a slimy log as a step down from the bank.

And then there was the food. Rumors were that next year there would be a surcharge for the Whitetail Lodge for all the food our members devoured. But who could help it with Belinda's special baked salmon the main attraction for Saturday evening's feast. Bon Appetit!

**PRES. CORNER**

Continued from page 3.

**Vanguard Restoration Weekend Planned:**

Our annual trek to the wilderness of the Pigeon River Country State Forest will take place August 7 and 8 this year. We will be continuing the habitat restoration work begun in 2002 on the Black River. For the past 14 years Vanguard has supported financially and through volunteer labor the Upper Black River Restoration Committee in its efforts to rehabilitate and restore this unique Lower Peninsula fishery.

If you haven't ventured into the wilds of the Pigeon River Country and explored the Black or the other rivers in the area, this is a great opportunity. Our usual itinerary is to fish Friday night, work Saturday, possibly fish in the afternoon/evening, then fish in the area on Sunday before returning. If you are interested please contact Mark Green at (248) 814-8630 or [green\\_vanguardtu@ameritech.net](mailto:green_vanguardtu@ameritech.net).

There is no cost for the weekend to Chapter members. We will provide breakfast, lunch, and dinner Saturday, and breakfast on Sunday. If you are not a member you can join at the outing!

**Vanguard Founder Honored and Remembered:**

Keith Benoit, founding member and first president of Vanguard passed away on May 4, 2004, after a long illness. After 22 years, Keith was still involved with Chapter youth education efforts even while battling cancer for the past eight years.

He was one of several charter members, who in Keith's kitchen, signed the Vanguard charter in 1982. True to form, as Chapter members visited Keith in the past few weeks, he wanted to talk about the preparations for this year's River Day Youth Education event, one of his favorites, and passed along materials he felt the Chapter could make use of in future projects.

It is in this spirit the Board and Officers of Vanguard have established the Keith Benoit Youth Education Award. Each year applications will be accepted from youth ages 12-16. The winning applicant will be sponsored to the Kalamazoo Valley Trout Unlimited Youth Conservation Camp held each July. Applications will be accepted beginning next winter with the first award anticipated for the 2005 camp.

Please consider making a donation to the Vanguard Keith Benoit Youth Education Fund, in care of the Vanguard Chapter, to help make this program a reality. Checks can be sent to me at 131 Minot, Romeo, MI 48065.

The following poem was written by Keith's son and was read at his funeral:

**THE MAN**

*By Ryan Benoit*

*The man is someone*

*There is only one*

*Not two*

*The man is a*

*Fisherman,*

*Father, husband,*

*Brother and a friend*

*He is a nice man*

*Like a fisherman*

*He has brothers*

*One is a twin brother*

*He is nice too*

*But sadly none of them go moo*

*The man is a person*

*That use to live in my house*

*He never wore a blouse*

*But he had cancer*

*The man is my dad*

*Yes my dad is the man*

*The man, the man, the man*

*He was a good fisherman,*

*Father, brother, and husband*

*He was here till*

*The Mayflowers*

*On the fourth*

*At five-thirty nine*

*He went to heaven*

*Not the other place*

*He has a halo*

*Not a tail*

*He left me to take the place of*

*The man, the man,*

*The fisherman.*

**Vanguard Offers Fly Fishing Outing for Smallies & Carp on Harson's Island**

On Saturday, June 19, 2004, the Vanguard Chapter will offer a fly fishing outing for Smallmouth Bass and Carp on Lake St. Clair at Harson's Island. Vanguard Member/ Fishing Guide Geoff, who will also provide a BBQ, will host the event.

Wading the sand and silt flats of Little Muskamoot Bay for wily Bass and Carp will begin at sunrise and continue until about 1 p.m. According to Geoff Kowalczyk, who guides trips of this type in these waters, the fish put up a hard fight.

To attend you will need a 5 to 7 weight fly rod with a floating line, leaders, and waders. Flies such as chartreuse Clousers and streamers work well. Geoff will have extra flies available for those who need them.

After an enjoyable morning of fishing, Geoff will be cooking hotdogs and offering refreshments.

For directions, contact Geoff at (586) 795-5182, or e-mail him at [finn@aol.com](mailto:finn@aol.com)

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Joe Carnacchio..... (586)771-6504

Kevin Neville..... (586)254-2849

Ray Spence..... (248)988-8808

## BE A FLY TYING VOLUNTEER—ENJOY HERITAGE DAYS!

LENOX—Every summer there is a gathering of outdoor enthusiasts with a passion for guns, bows, and fishing rods. This year, Heritage Days, sponsored by the Huron Pointe Sportmen's Association at its 84-acre location on 26 Mile Road, just east of Gratiot, will be held on Sunday, August 29.

The event "is dedicated to the education, promotion, and protection of our outdoor heritage." What better place is there for Trout Unlimited to share its enthusiasm for its conservation efforts to preserve our rivers and streams, and encourage responsible fishing practices.

Heritage Days is a family event attended by thousands. Kids are thrilled to shoot rifles at the shooting range, learn to use bows, and catch fish in the trout pond. There has always been a long line of boys and girls eager to tie their first fly, or to repeat their fly tying experience from the year before.

Despite our presence at the hugely successful event the last few years, the Vanguard Chapter has had only a couple volunteers each year to help the hundreds of kids learn to tie flies. This past year Todd Randall, Bob Schwartz, and Joe Barker were the only Chapter members there. Needless to say, that makes for a long day for these few volunteers, and what should be an enjoyable day becomes taxing.

It also means that the Chapter is not taking full advantage of a ready audience. Our display is in full view, but there is little opportunity to talk to people interested in Trout Unlimited and what we do. With more volunteers, we could be ambitious enough to offer fly-casting demonstrations as well.

However, none of this can happen without you! If interested, contact Joe Barker by email or phone; [joseph.barker@nlrb.gov](mailto:joseph.barker@nlrb.gov), or (313)226-3230.

## Clinton River Project Gains Momentum

By John Sabina

STERLING HEIGHTS—As we approach the second season of fieldwork, enthusiasm for the Clinton River Coldwater Conservation Project (CRCCP) remains high among project volunteers. The recent resumption of trout stocking by the DNR in the Clinton River above Yates Dam is an important sign of progress. [This is not to be confused with the annual steelhead stocking below Yates Dam that continues to produce a significant spring steelhead run.] Jim Francis, fisheries biologist with the MDNR and member of the project steering committee, pointed out that when the DNR stopped its annual trout stocking in 1994, no one seemed to care. Jim adds that with the effort shown by project participants to date and the large quantity of data collected last year, resumption of the trout stocking was an easy sell within the Fisheries Division. Thanks to Jim's efforts, 425 adult brown trout were added to the 4500 fingerling trout stocked this spring.

Project efforts will continue on several established fronts and some new ones as well. Temperature measurements within the project area will continue this summer. In addition, four temperature monitors will be placed in the North Branch of the Clinton to begin acquiring three years of water temperature profiles. Macro-invertebrate sampling teams will be increased from four to six and each team is being asked to sample more sites to better define our macro-invertebrate baseline levels. The macro-invertebrate numbers and diversity are both important overall indicators of a stream's health.

Physical inventory of stream habitat will move from the mainstream and Gal-loway Creek last year to Paint Creek this

year. Paint Creek is a designated trout stream with very good access via the Paint Creek Trail along its length. The 17.0 miles of Paint Creek from the confluence with the Clinton River in Rochester to the dam at Lake Orion will be measured every 75 feet along its length. Volunteer coordination for this massive effort has been turned over to Heather Vandenberg of the Clinton River Watershed Council. The CRWC office and staff in Rochester are better equipped to handle this effort than last year's volunteer coordinators.

Team leaders last year reported their biggest difficulty was finding a mutually agreeable time to get their team members on the river. For 2004, team assignments will be based on availability times as well as friendships.



The ground riparian and habitat projects are tied to two large grant requests. The first request by the City of Auburn Hills to the Great Lakes National Project Office (GLNPO) seeks matching funds for a large lunger structure and bank restoration project within Auburn Hills. Expect to see activity on this by fall. The second request is by the CRWC to the National Fish and Wildlife Federation (NFWF) to cover a large riparian vegetation project within the Rookery Woods Preserve above Adams Road along the Clinton. With favorable funding decisions, planning work could start by fall of 2004 with the main planting and monitoring efforts in 2005. Project volunteers are also assisting the Oakland Land Conservancy to monitor riparian conditions with the Rookery Woods Preserve.

The last area of investigation started as the least defined, but is proving to be

**Please see CLINTON RIVER, page 7.**

# Hard work does pay off!!

By Mark Green

Over the past few years, Vanguard TU has toiled side-by-side with a coalition of organizations known as the Clinton River Coldwater Conservation Project (CRCCP.) This coalition also consists of the Clinton River Watershed Council (CRWC), Michigan DNR, and fellow TU chapters Paul H. Young, Challenge, and Clinton Valley. Completing a comprehensive study of the Clinton mainstream from Auburn Hills to Yates dam they have identified the Clinton River as a promising and potentially viable trout stream.

As validation of these findings, Jim Francis a Michigan DNR fisheries biologist has provided the project with a "kick-start" by stocking Brown Trout between Rochester and Auburn Hills. In early April approximately 4,500 yearling Brown Trout were released in hopes of these fish will become reproducing resident fish. But that's not all, it gets better; 425 larger trout known as brood stock were released in two locations within the project survey area.

This is the first planting of Brown Trout in the Clinton River since 1983. The DNR halted its stocking program after that summer's heat wave was determined to cause the water temperature to rise and led to a substantial die-off of Brown Trout. After the river assessment data was reviewed by the DNR, they found there were suitable conditions to support a Brown Trout fishery. Variables including riparian habitat, lower than expected water temperatures, and a decent food source of macroinvertebrates, led the DNR to believe these trout will not just survive, but thrive in the Clinton River.

This year the CRCCP includes Paint Creek in the assessment of the watershed. Paint Creek begins in Lake Orion and flows southeast to its confluence with the Clinton River in Rochester. This tributary of the Clinton River has already seen attention of many groups; but as of yet there is not a thorough understanding of the habitat.

Many volunteers have already signed up to help with the assessment and training sessions have been scheduled. More volunteers are always welcome so please feel free to contact your chapter for more details.

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## HEX HATCH

Continued from Front Page.

tion at a membership meeting last year on fishing at night with Hexes already know what to expect and how to fish for those voracious predators of darkness.

Cost for the outing will be \$20 per person to cover the cost of food. BYOB, sleeping bags, and pillows. Accommodations inside the cabin are already sold out, but there is plenty of space for camping.

RSVP to Joe Barker at (586) 228-8111.

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## DAM IT?

Continued from page 4.

reservoir. Meanwhile, the river below the dam site increased and flattened out with the increase load of sand being washed from above.

Brown Trout and suckers were the two primary cold-water fishes in the Pine River before removal, and both their numbers increased during the period the dam was being removed. Whether this was directly related to the dam removal, Bryan was reluctant to theorize because of the cyclical nature of fish populations. Rainbow Trout in the Pine have been less affected, but have shown increases.

Bryan's conclusion; overall he believes the removal of the dam has been beneficial. Of one thing he's certain; he's catching more fish.

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## CLINTON RIVER

Continued from page 6.

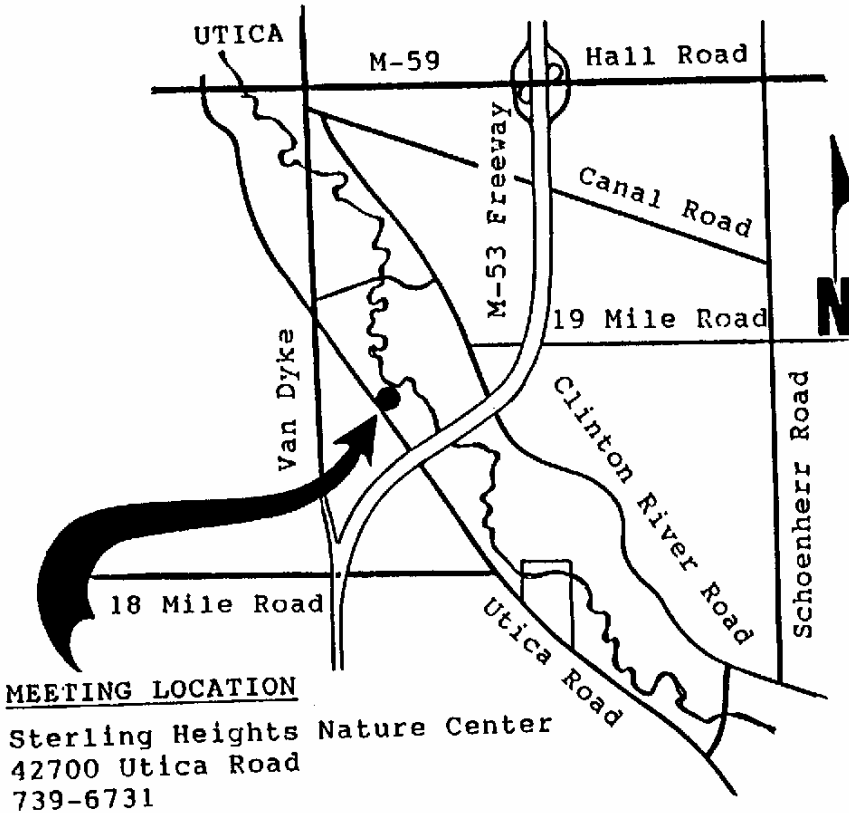
the most interesting. Virtually all of the physical habitat surveys from 2003 reported evidence of very high peak flows and very low base flows, particularly during the hot summer months. In fact, we found out that the Clinton almost dries up

in many spots in late July and early August. The low base flows are known to influence the warm summer water temperatures measured. A sub-committee set out to develop a flow model for the Clinton mainstream in the project area. Using maps, we have identified 46 impoundments on the Clinton River and its tributaries above Opdyke Road. These impoundments total over 5500 acres of surface area. United States Geological Survey (USGS) gage stations on the Clinton show that water levels in the river are influenced more by dam operation than by weather. The legal aspects of lake level definition and control are extremely complex.

The sub-committee had the general impression that a more logical lake level control scheme could improve the river without damaging the lakes, but lacked the technical expertise to define such a scheme. We have met with two Professors of Civil Engineering, Don Carpenter of Lawrence Tech and Carol Miller of Wayne State. They have enlightened us about an available Army Corps of Engineers modeling program called Hydrologic Engineering Center – River Assessment System (HEC-RAS.) This modeling program is intended to define the flooded area resulting from increased river flow. It will also define the reduction in flooded area and water depths with decreased river flows.

To set up a HEC-RAS model, one needs very specific river cross-sectional dimensions and details of the bottom and bank structure to estimate roughness coefficients. Our physical inventory data from last summer is exactly what is needed to build the model. The transect pictures that were taken are needed to better define the bank structures. Not all of the pictures have been turned in. Please get them to me ASAP. Both professors expressed a strong interest in our project and agreed to set up the HEC-RAS model for us. Armed with data that defines the percentage of habitat loss as the river flows decrease, we should be able to shine some light on this very complex problem. Please take pride in the fact that your volunteer efforts are being put to good use. Keep up the good work.

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