



WindKnots

News, views and piscatorial propaganda from the MadDog Chapter

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Spring, 2007

Forecasts

by Clark Amadon, President

Greetings MadDog Chapter Members!



With the snow finally (and hopefully) a grim memory of "April in Vermont," I'm ready to cast a line for trout! The gear is in the basement semi-ready for the season, I have a new reel to test out, AND there's work to do

along the streams of the MadDog watersheds. Before I get too distracted by the prospect of actually fishing, I wanted to review where we've been with chapter business since November '06 and what's up through the end of June.

Monthly meetings a success

Our chapter has met monthly since the first Thursday in November; we've just completed our "winter season meetings" with Rich Kirm's overview of trout surveys from last year and the state's effort to improve fish passage through the thousands of culverts underneath our roads.

We also learned much about fishing our local waters and were enticed to journey to New Zealand thanks to MadDog VP and fly fishing guide Lawton Weber, who gave two insightful presentations over the last few months. We've tied flies and spent a "media" evening getting re-acquainted with Lee Wulff, as he fished for Labrador brookies and Atlantic salmon and learned about "Trout Grass," the story of where the bamboo used in fine fly rods comes from, and how it is fashioned into works of such superb beauty and function. We seemed to have settled in on a new venue for meetings at *The Steak House* on the Barre Montpelier Road, as well. This seems to suit our needs pretty well, food, drink and talking about trout.

Spring projects — help needed!

We have a number of important spring projects coming up: Saturday & Sunday April 28th - 29th & Sunday, May 6th we'll be in Marshfield doing plantings along

the Winooski River. It was just this past November when stalwart chapter members planted maples along the banks of the Winooski in Moretown and Waterbury. Thanks goes out to Lawton Weber, John Mudgett and Don Coffey for putting in trees on a *cold* November day. We also have days planned for the Dog River and the Mad River. We need your help! Please email me at clark@amadononline.net to volunteer. More details to be emailed.

Mark your calendars!

Important dates and events:

Annual Banquet

Saturday, April 28,
Best Western Inn,
Waterbury Ctr

Tree plantings

Sat. & Sun, April 28-
29, Sat. May 6 —
Winooski River,
Marshfield; call for
info.

Connecticut River Trip

June 22, 23 & 24;
info. to come

Annual Spring Banquet features Tom Rosenbauer

As you probably know by now, our Annual Spring Banquet and Auction is Saturday, April 28th at the Best Western Inn in Waterbury Center! Tom Rosenbauer, Orvis Marketing Director, and author of over a dozen books will present "Reading the Water." This is a great opportunity to hear a genuine master share his thoughts and expertise about trout and how to better fish for them.

Best auction in years...

We have a zillion great items this year, including our Grand-Slam feature, a *Concept2* indoor rowing machine. This is "the" great indoor fitness machine. Made right here in Morrisville, Vermont, it is considered the finest of its kind in the world. Stay fit for bounding over slippery boulders with this great machine. We also have books, art work, fly fishing tackle, gift certificates, food and fine jewelry (remember Mothers Day follows soon after the banquet). *Please support your chapter and reserve your spot as soon as possible.*

MadDog Board expanded

We're happy to report that we've been able to expand our Board of Directors. Current Board members VP Lawton Weber, Secretary Budd Shedaker and Treasurer John Mudgett have been joined by Dana Lawrence. The expansion will better enable us to stay more involved in fisheries issues in the area *There's always room for more — so if you'd like to serve on the Board, or help with projects or issues of special interest to you, please contact any one of the Board members.*

Visit www.maddogtu.org!

The MadDog Chapter has just launched its website! As I write this, our webmaster is finishing much of the home page engineering. A lot of this work involved designing the home page and constructing it so that adding content can be done with some ease going forward.

The site is intended to enable you to stay informed about upcoming meetings and events, volunteer for projects, learn about important issues we face in our watersheds, email suggestions for projects and events, share photos and comments, — even share a rant you may *need* to unload. In addition, you'll be able to link to local fishing resources and guides, check out podcast sites about fly fishing and trout, view new media from places like *youtube*, check water levels and temps and (*phew*), see copies of newsletters!

We hope you'll use this site regularly to stay connected to chapter events — and much more. Most importantly, please email me with your feedback and suggestions.

Tight Lines!
Clark

Cox Brook Dam Update

The Cox Brook dam removal project is moving ahead — albeit slowly.

Late in November, former and current MadDog presidents Tom Murray and Clark Amadon, along with Rich Kirn from VT Fish and Wildlife, and Brian Fitzgerald from the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources, met with the Northfield Town Select Board to discuss plans and ideas for removing the dam.

They asked us to have an article published in the *Northfield News* to help inform the community about the proposal.

Interestingly, after the publication of the article, which appeared later that same week, a letter to the editor appeared, which detailed the dam's history.

It wasn't another victim of the Great Flood of '27, after all — nupe!

It was actually built by a Norwich engineering professor in the 1930s who planned to use it as a project to help students learn about hydropower production.

After the dam was completed, however, the university

decided *not* to take over ownership as was originally planned. The dam was damaged in a later flood and was never used.

Happily, support for the project so far from local landowners has been strong. Also happily, funding for the project may be provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We are waiting for updates on the funding and other details, and will keep you informed.

Join us on our 3rd Annual Connecticut River Expedition, June 22, 23, and 24...

The headline says it all — and all MadDog members are invited! From Friday June 22 through Sunday June 24th, the *MadDog Hardcore* will venture forth on their 3rd Annual "Big C" adventure.

Like last year, we'll be tenting those nights in "Weber's Meadow" in Bloomfield, VT. The site is right on the river with nice water flowing within pi.. uh, spitting distance of the site.

Also like last year, you'll be treated to the fabulous *Brasserie Amadon*, a canopied outdoor kitchen so extravagant that its ambience is tarnished by neither weather nor black flies!

June is one of the best times to venture north to the Upper Connecticut. Water temps and bug activity are generally excellent and the fish eager. There are many spots to explore in the surrounding area: you can angle next to the campsite, drive a short ways up stream to Lyman Falls (an old crib dam), wade up or down river, head up river about 3 miles to "the airport" or fish near Colebrook, NH, about 10 miles up river. You'll also want to journey for an afternoon or an evening to "The Trophy Stretch" in Pittsburg, NH between Lake Francis and First Connecticut Lake — an area that has been very productive each of the 3 years we've organized this trip.

Also nearby is Little Diamond Pond in NH, Pauls Stream (which flows out of Maidstone Lake) or you can take a not-too-long drive up to the "Big A," the Androscoggin River, which is very fishable in Errol, NH.

For fishing the CT River when it borders VT and NH you can use your VT license; other areas in NH require a NH non-resident license, which you can get on-line.

If you don't want to camp, accommodations are available within a few miles of the campsite.

Let us know if you plan to join us; more details will be released over the next 4 to 6 weeks.

Campeur Clark!



It's Time to Protect the Winooski's Spawning Wild Rainbow Trout!



The Mad-Dog chapter has started a petition this spring to close Ridley, Joiner, and Preston brooks until May 31 to allow spawning wild rainbows from the Winooski River below Bolton Dam to spawn without being harvested beforehand.

Since 1998 almost every tributary below Bolton Dam has seen a 30-60% decrease in trout populations. While all trout populations have natural cycles, created by floods, drought, and loss of habitat, habitat loss appears *not* to be an issue here — and, of course, we cannot control weather-related impacts.

Many anglers feel that the fishing for rainbows is not what it has been in previous years. Nevertheless, there are still a number of anglers who head into these brooks and harvest many adult rainbows *before* they spawn. Considering the high amount of adult trout habitat available in the Winooski, it would appear that we're neither achieving nor "optimizing" the amount of wild trout that these brooks *can* produce.

Healthy trout populations are shaped a bit like pyramids, with lots of young-of-the-year at the base, a lot less juveniles at the next level, followed by even fewer sub-adults and still fewer sexually mature adult trout at the top of the pyramid. By allowing as many adult rainbows as possible to spawn successfully —without being harvested beforehand — we enable this trout population to maximize its potential.

On the Willoughby and Black rivers to the north, and the White River to the south, the Vt. Fish and Wildlife Department has closed important spawning tributaries in the spring for precisely this reason.

Yet the Winooski below Bolton Dam has more fishing pressure than any river in Vermont!

It's time that our Winooski rainbows get the same respect and protection as those other important fisheries.

This regulation proposal is a conservation effort by and for *all* anglers, whether you fly-fish, spin-fish, etc. We can and should all make the effort to maintain and hopefully improve our special wild rainbow trout fishery.

You can sign the petition at our Mad-Dog T.U. Banquet, at both the Classic Outfitters in South Burlington and the Green Mountain Troutfitters in Jeffersonville, and on our website. It will be turned over to the Fish and Wildlife Department at the end of the 2007 season.

Thanks!

Lawton Weber
Vice President

Watershed Events

As most MadDog members know, a Winooski River Watershed study, advisory and planning project was initiated earlier this year under the direction of Kristen Rose of the



VT Department of Environmental Conservation. A number of TU members attended variety of meetings around the area which focused on the attributes, assets, liabilities and threats affecting the Winooski River's major tributaries.

Following these initial meetings, individual councils were to be formed that would help develop programs aimed at responsible governance of the watershed with respect to the issues affecting it. Council membership was open to all interested persons.

Due to low turnout at several of the meetings, a decision was made to create just one council that would gather input from representatives of the various tributaries comprising the greater Winooski watershed.

Two such council meetings were held before the project director announced, on April 13, that she was resigning her position with VT DEC to relocate out of state.

We have been informed that the project will continue, and will keep you informed of future developments.

One thing that has become clear from the meetings that have taken place, is that the project is NOT one to be taken lightly. While most council members appear to be the kind of environmental advocates with whom we, as TU members, would have much in common, there are those for whom commercial interests are a clear priority. For example, each council meeting has been attended by a vocal professional lobbyist whose knowledge of the political process — and its manipulation — could overwhelm or undermine the efforts of those less experienced in how to influence the establishment of public policy and the laws that define it.

So stay tuned; your vocal participation and advocacy will be needed in the coming months...

Budd Shedaker
Secretary

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