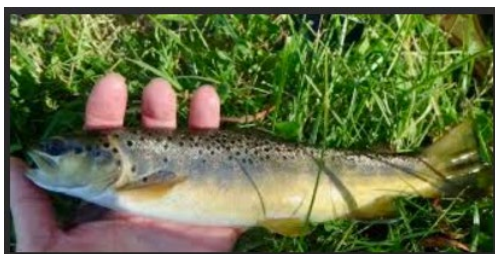




The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

November 2024 Edition

So Here's My Drift



Submitted by: Jerry Deputat with contributions from Bob Deputat, Scott Freeberg, Jim DuFresne, Jess Farris, Al and Joyce Haxton, Bill MaGee, Dan McKeon, Tom Mogford, Jim and Juanita Montagne, Bob Niemi, John O'Brien, Craig and Kellie Summers and Corey Thelan

Timber Coulee, Hornby Creek, Bohemian Valley, Lars Road, Warner Creek, Billings Creek, *Driftless Café*, "Spotted Cow", "P Road"... just a few of the memories etched in the minds of those that ventured into the **Driftless Area of Wisconsin** the week of September 29th. In all, seventeen members of MFFC made this first Wisconsin outing near the small town of Viroqua, WI, the alleged "Grayling" of the Badger State.

For most, it was a long drive through the Chicago area, but some elected to bypass the insanity by traversing thru the UP, or electing to take the ferry across Lake Michigan at Muskegon. I always found that the longest part of the journey was the last one hundred miles.....going through small towns, reducing speeds to 25 mph, and driv-

ing through the hills and curves of the Kickapoo Valley, at times encountering a farmer's combine or an Amish horse-driven cart on its way to marketa picturesque journey nonetheless, especially at this time of year.,

If your GPS was kind to you, you found our destination, namely Nature Nook's Retreat (NNR), an 87-acre property, showcasing the natural beauty of the Wisconsin Driftless. We were told by the property owners Tom and Pam, that stone artifacts on the grounds of NNR show the area has been seasonally occupied for 12,000 years. Their brochure states that "local wildlife specialists state that it is the most single biodiverse property they have ever walked" or (in my words) "climbed", as was the case for Bob Niemi, Scott Freeberg and Jim DuFresne who had to traverse a ladder each night to bed! The setting itself though was beautiful amid the fall colors, being greeted each morning by a symphony of birds or roaming deer



Upcoming Club Events

- 11/06/24: Speaker Meeting
- 11/13/24: Board Meeting
- 11/20/24: Activity Meeting
- 12/04/24: Speaker Meeting
- 12/06/24: Rod Building Session
- 12/11/24: Board Meeting
- 12/18/24: Garage Sale Event
- 01/08/25: Speaker Meeting
- 01/09/25: Ultimate Fishing Show
- 01/15/25: Board Meeting
- 01/22/25: Activity Meeting
- 02/05/25: Speaker Meeting
- 02/12/25: Board Meeting
- 02/19/25: Activity Meeting
- 02/20/25: Outdoorama
- 02/23/25: White River Trip #1
- 03/05/25: Activity Meeting
- 03/08/25: Midwest Flyfishing Expo
- 03/09/25: Midwest Flyfishing Expo
- 03/12/25: Board Meeting
- 03/16/25: White River Trip #2
- 03/19/25: Speaker Meeting
- 04/02/25: Speaker Meeting
- 04/09/25: Board Meeting
- 04/16/25: Activity Meeting
- 05/07/25: Activity Meeting
- 05/12/25: Board Meeting
- 05/14/25: MFFC Banquet

For the most current listing of events, check our club's website: mffc.org

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting October 09th, 2024

Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 7:30pm

Present: K. Lipp; J. Aitken

S. Hunter; J. Bada; J. Aukee; J.

Haxton, T. DeFauw

Absent: N. Tabaka;

Approval of the Minutes: minutes
from 09/18/24 approved

Approval of the Agenda: agenda
from 10/09/24 approved

Officer's Reports

President: K. Lipp

- Covered in new business

Vice President: J. Bada

- Covered in events & new business

Treasurer: J. Aitken

- Income is up, we are behind on spending conservation & education funds (covid related),
- We will be in a position to begin spending those funds this year.

Corresponding Secretary: S. Hunter
(interim)

- Oct: Chuck Farneth casting instructor is set for our next meeting presenter
- Nov: Greg Bajuk on Savannah Fly Fishing Invitational and Todd Shotts will present on Frogging.
- Dec: Glenn Wisner on "Mystery of Midges
- Jan: Jim Dufresne speaker
- Feb: Carl Beuter is possible
- Apr: Mark Hendrick is doing a Casting Demonstration
- May: Tim Flagler will be our banquet speaker

Membership: J. Eriksson

- 52 % of memberships are paid,
- Expectation is that we will be at 60% by the end of the month with incoming mail

Events and Outings:

- Casting Clinic on 10/16 at Plymouth Twp Park

Events and Outings: continued

- Rod Building at HFF starting on weekend of 12/06/24
- Ultimate Fishing Show – 01/09/25
- Arkansas White River Trip #1 – 02/23/25
- Midwest Fly Fishing Expo – 03/08/25; vendors are lining up and 3 featured speakers booked
- Arkansas White River Trip #2– 03/16/25
- MFFC Banquet – 03/15/25 with co-chairs Kathy Oehring and Joyce Haxton
- FFI Expo - 09/25/25 in Grand Rapids, MI

Old Business:

- New Member Guides - about six guides have been sent out, there are still some email discrepancies we are working out.
- WawaSum – dates for May & July 2025 are TBD Tom Coleman has offered to head up the second outing.

New Business:

- Request for Education Grant - Jim Aitken received a request for us to resupply fish stickers that we had out at events. Sybil Hunter made a motion to use Education Funds to spend \$1000 to print fish stickers to pass out at both fishing shows which should last for 4-5 years of usage; Jon Bada seconded the motion. The motion passed.
- Club Shirts - John Aukee has a potential source for club expo shirts if desired.
- Lansing Community College Fly Fishing Club - Sybil was contacted by Dan Mulligan where his students would like to start a local fly fishing club and looking for resources and donations. We could use education funds, we also may have old fly tying vices that could be donated.
- Project Healing Waters for US Military Vets - Sybil stated PHW member liaison will be leaving and a new liaison will be named (Terry Adams), Keith Furban may or not be back

2024-2025 Club Officers

President:

Kevin Lipp

president@mffc.org

Vice President:

Jon Bada

vicepresident@mffc.org

Treasurer:

Jim Aitken

treasurer@mffc.org

Membership:

John Eriksson

membership@mffc.org

Recording Secretary:

John Aukee

recordingsecretary@mffc.org

Corresponding Secretary:

Vacant

correspondence@mffc.org

Director At-Large:

Norm Tabaka

ntabaka@gmail.com

Director At-Large:

Joyce Haxton

rainbow10trout@gmail.com

Director At-Large:

Terry DeFauw

tdefauw59@aol.com

Immediate Past President:

Sybil Hunter

Sybil.MFFC@gmail.com

Club Editors & Publishers

Hatch Editor - Production:

Jon Bada

vicepresident@mffc.org

Club Webmaster:

Sybil Hunter

admin@mffc.org

Club Facebook Administrator:

Joyce Haxton

rainbow10trout@gmail.com

President’s Message: MFFC Eyeglass Collection

In September 2003 Fred Field wrote the article below for The Evening Hatch. It’s almost 2025 and everything Fred wrote 22 years ago still rings true. Fred reports that the Club has donated well over 5000 pairs of glasses, an amazing number. During the winter meetings please give your glasses to Kevin Lipp.

From Fred Field: **Your Help Will Go A Long Way To Help Others See Better.**

Here is a new project for the Michigan Fly Fishing club. It costs us NOTHING, you don’t have to do any volunteer work, and it will do a lot of good. What we need you to do is bring your used eyeglasses to a meeting , and give them to me, Fred Field.

What is going to happen to them? People in poor countries, and here in the USA, that can’t afford glasses will get them. The Lions Clubs are one of the organizations that collect these

glasses. We give them to a program that first sorts the glasses as to strength, then sends them to an Optometrist working in either third world countries or in our own poor neighborhoods.

What does this have to do with Fly-fishing? Nothing. A club our size can do a lot simply because we have a large membership. It does not have to be a big bag of glasses; one or two at a time is just as welcome. Please put them in a bag so they I can carry them.

President’s Message #2: MFFC Annual Garage Sale

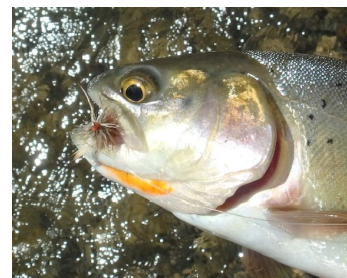
The annual garage sale is taking place at the Activity meeting on December 18th. Now’s the chance for you to clean out rods, reels, vests, fly boxes, books and other things you had to buy but don’t use anymore. This is also the chance for you to buy rods, reels, vests, fly boxes, books and other things that you need to have. There will be no fly tying sessions at this meeting. Casting will take place. This is a fishing garage sale, please don’t bring non-fishing items. Bring cash!



Pictures from 2024 Yellowstone Trip



Pictures from 2024 Yellowstone Trip



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So here's my Drift

and even seeing some rises on the west fork of the Kickapoo River which flows through the property. More on fishing later... But for those arriving that Sunday afternoon, an ice cold "Spotted Cow" (a popular local brew) certainly hit the spot.

As I arrived at NNR the day before we formally took occupancy, I was able to chat with another fishing group just departing. They lamented that the fishing was "slow".....perhaps a bad omen as to what to expect. The weather for our week (as well as the week before) was unusually warm.....80's and 70's, with clear skies and full sun.

For the most part, our plan was to utilize guides for the first few days, with most people doubling up for a half day session. This quickly enabled us to become better acquainted with the area and share new areas with others as the week progressed. [On a side, I once had a guide tell me that he could fish every day of the year in a different stream and still not exhaust his options. The DNR states that southwest Wisconsin has 12,600 miles of stream and creeks]. The guides did confirm that fishing was unusually slow, but for the most part they were able to put us into fish, acquaint us with small stream fishing techniques, and introduce us to the new flies, such as the Frankenhopper, Skater Tot, or Amish Go Kart. I think after a few days, we all recognized that fishing the driftless offers unique challenges and diversity that is different than what we may be accustomed to. From meadowlands fully exposed to the cloudless skies with mowed (or cow trampled) easements on each side of the stream, to narrow creeks no wider than a sidewalk's width with tall overhanging grasses, home to many hoppers, including those at the end of your line! We jokingly said that perhaps we should change our casting classes from the gym at Clarenceville to the corridors.

Throughout the week, we enjoyed various success. Fish landed were mostly in the 8-12" range with an occasional 14-15". Generally speaking, April and May are considered prime time for driftless fishing, slower in June and August, then accelerating from mid-September through the season closing in mid-October. Again, what we experienced with the warm temperatures was not really typical for the time of year. However, the beautiful weather that we had, did allow all to fully appreciate the true beauty of the area without the need to don rain gear or waders.



Breakfast was served each morning at 7am and coffee conversation centered on either the guided trips planned, or where to venture for the day. For the most part, our guides were furnished by the Driftless Angler Flyshop, and included either Nick, Jake, or Matt, all receiving very favorable reviews. We were also fortunate to have the company of club member, Corey Thelan, who joined us for a few days, providing further consulting. Corey is a Michigan transplant and now living in the Madison area and well acquainted with fishing the Driftless.

After a quick breakfast and a fast "brown bag assembly" for lunch, we were all ready to go exploring. By the way, those yellow MFFC stickers do come in handy - much easier to crowd a friendly club member than upset a perfect stranger.



Part of the enjoyment of a club outing is the camaraderie experienced by just getting together with members. Whether one elected to fish a partial or whole day, there was always an opportunity for relaxing conversation. We enjoyed three evening meals at NNR, one night of "on your own", and another at the famed Driftless Café in Viroqua, where the dinner menu changes every day, and includes entrees showcasing local purveyors, and prepared by 5 star chefs. We were also able to take advantage of the "retreat" feature of NNR, by using their big screen projection system to stream the Lions/Seahawks game, as well as the exciting Tigers run in the playoffs. Tom Mogford's homemade sausage and horseradish cheese was a great accompaniment. We did have a guest speaker planned but that was nixed due to his exposure to his wife's bout with covid. So we were never lacking for nightly entertainment. In fact, Tom Lukens, proprietor of NNR and local historian, horticulturist, and nature enthusiast, gave a brief seminar one evening including an impressive display of arrowheads collected from his surveying.

And least I forgot to mention the spacious decks on the property that always provided the perfect setting for a nightcap drink, a good cigar, and tales of fish caught, lost, seen, or imagined that day.

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Lawmakers say New Legislation will Hold Polluters Accountable, Increase Transparency

Written by: Kyle Davidson, *Michigan Advance*

On October 23rd, State Sen. Jeff Irwin (D-Ann Arbor) and State Rep. Jason Morgan (D-Ann Arbor) joined environmental advocates to break down the details of a newly introduced “polluter pay” package intended to bolster the state’s environmental cleanup standards.

The long-anticipated package of bills, introduced in the House as House Bills 5241-5247 and the Senate as Senate Bills 605-611 would set stricter requirements for environmental cleanups, increase transparency into cleanup sites, prevent the creation of new orphan sites and provide those impacted by pollution with options to seek justice.

“Polluter pay has a long history here in the state of Michigan,” Irwin said. “We’re trying to revive that history by improving our political accountability laws holding corporations accountable and making sure that the health and the beautiful environment that we have here in Michigan is something that residents can enjoy for generations and generations,” Irwin said.

Senate Bill 605 and House Bill 5247:

- Would give the Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) and the public more information about cleanups and polluted sites, including posting information about the polluter’s response, remediation and post closure plans alongside, assessment reports and proof of due care compliance.
- Would require polluters to pay for land and water to be restored as much as technically feasible, meeting the most stringent standard achievable with current remediation methods.
- Would allow EGLE to set cleanup criteria without Administrative Procedures Act rulemaking.
- Would require businesses with large amounts of potentially polluting materials to provide up-front financial assurance to cover the cost of environmental cleanup.
- Would empower the state to bring claims on behalf of the public to cover cleanup costs and damage to natural resources due to contaminants not known to be harmful when the statute of limitations for contamination claims expired.
- Will enable people exposed to hazardous substances to bring claims to polluters to cover the costs of medical monitoring for conditions linked to exposure to the contaminants.
- Would allow people harmed by pollution to seek justice through the courts by beginning the timeframe for the statute of limitations when a spill is discovered.

While Michigan previously had strong laws centered on polluter accountability, changes to the law under GOP former Gov. John Engler in 1994 shifted the focus to managing exposure to contaminants.



“By introducing this package lawmakers are looking to give environmental regulators more tools to enforce better cleanups, While current state law allows polluters to employ institutional controls to restrict access to polluted resources, these policies would prioritize cleanup of polluted sites,” Irwin said.

This package would also address concerns with “secret cleanups. Many people in Michigan don’t know that there’s an element of our law that allows a polluter to never tell the state about the pollution that they’ve found and just work on it on their own. We need to end these secret cleanups. The neighbors have a right to know. EGLE has a right to know. The people of Michigan have a right to know,” Irwin said.

According to EGLE there are between 24,000 and 26,000 contaminated sites identified in the state. By requiring businesses with the potential to contaminate a site to provide financial assurance to cover cleanup, rather than placing taxpayers on the hook for abandoned sites.

“We should give EGLE the authority to identify sectors that are likely to leave behind orphan sites and require them to have bonding or insurance, some sort of backstop so that the taxpayers aren’t left holding the bag and so that those neighbors have some assurance that that site could get cleaned up along the way,” Irwin said.

”The package also opens up additional legal avenues to address contamination and its impacts. The bills would start a new six-year clock for claims related to previously unregulated contaminants such as PFAS and would start the clock for the statute of limitations when a site is discovered, or when it should have been discovered,” Morgan said.

The bills would start a new six-year clock for claims related to previously unregulated contaminants such as PFAS and would start the clock for the statute of limitations when a site is discovered, or when it should have been discovered, Morgan said. Currently, the statute of limitations begins at the date when the spill occurs.

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Once Near Extinction, Lake Trout are Officially Recovered in Lake Superior

Written by: Kelly House, *Bridge Michigan*

Seven decades after overfishing and invasive species nearly wiped them off the map, Lake Superior's lake trout population has finally recovered. That's the conclusion of a binational group of tribal, US and Canadian species managers, who announced the milestone November 20th in light of data that shows the self-sustaining population today is roughly as big as it was in the 1930s, before overfishing and invasive sea lamprey devastated the fish.

The group, known as the Lake Superior Committee, celebrated the recovery as testament to the progress that can be achieved when competing interest groups set aside their differences to work toward a common goal. The recovery announcement may not be all that surprising to Lake Superior anglers — the local lake trout have been doing well for quite some time.

"It's probably been 20 years that we've been in a pretty decent place," said Dave Caroffino, a fisheries biologist in the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and vice chair of the Lake Superior Committee.

But recent analyses of fish population data allowed species managers to officially declare victory. It's a massive turnaround for a fish once on the brink of extinction. Amid fishing pressure and the proliferation of lamprey that arrived in the Great Lakes via human-made shipping canals, annual harvests plummeted from historic averages of about 4 million pounds to just 210,000 pounds in 1964.

"They were on the edge of disappearing," said Bill Mattes, Great Lakes section leader for the Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission and chair of the Lake Superior Committee. Managers felt the fishermen might as well fish, because they're going to be gone anyway."

The crisis led the governments of the US and Canada to form the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, a body tasked with reining in overfishing and finding a way to control sea lamprey.

The game-changer: A 1958 discovery that the chemical compound 3-trifluoromethyl-4'-nitrophenol, or TFM, was capable of killing lamprey without significantly affecting other species. For decades since, rivers throughout the Great Lakes have been regularly treated with the chemicals. Stricter fishing regulations and a hatchery-raised fish stocking program also aided the recovery, eventually allowing naturally reproducing fish to repopulate the lake.

Seven decades may seem like a long time, but to Mattes, the lake trout recovery has been remarkably swift. The average lake trout doesn't begin reproducing until it's about 9 years old and lives to age 40. That means it's only been five generations since the collapse.

Today, there's no need to regularly stock lake trout in Lake Superior. But regular lampricide treatments will remain necessary. "We've been able to drive [lamprey] down to 10% of their non-controlled level, but that 10% still takes a significant number of fish," Mattes said. "we need to keep that control up."

Today, fishery managers estimate Lake Superior's self-sustaining trout population is at least as large as it was in 1938, before sea lamprey arrived. Populations in the other four Great Lakes are not so robust.

Lake Trout recovery efforts are still ongoing in lakes Michigan, Huron, Erie and Ontario, with some encouraging signs in parts of lakes Michigan and Huron. But those lakes also contend with invasive mussels and alewives that can't gain a foothold in Lake Superior's frigid waters.

It's unclear whether lake trout can thrive despite the onslaught. But Mattes said there's reason to hold out hope. "Lake trout are a very resilient species," he said. "If given the chance, they can do well."



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Lawmakers say New Legislation will Hold Polluters Accountable, Increase Transparency

Michiganders who are exposed to high levels of contaminants would also be able to sue the polluter for the costs of medical monitoring for conditions tied to their exposure to pollutants. The current law doesn't provide resources for people until after they're diagnosed with a disease which is often too late, Morgan said.

"These bills are about protecting Michiganders and giving them the tools to hold polluters accountable for the impacts that they cause them and their families. If you are responsible for causing pollution, you should have to pay to clean it up. This legislation makes it clear that fencing off land and closing drinking water wells is not a substitute for removing as much pollution as possible," Morgan said.

During Wednesday's press conference, members of the Great Lakes PFAS Action Network, West Michigan Environmental Action Council and Great Lakes Business network shared support for the package. Marshall Kilgore, director of engagement for the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, said the bill would be beneficial in fighting environmental injustice.

| Outing and Events | Dates | Where | Chairperson(s) |
|--|--|---|---------------------------|
| Rod Building Class | December 6 th – 8 th . (*24) | HFF Custom Rods (Taylor, MI) | Jon Bada / Steve Haywood |
| Ultimate Fishing Show | January 9 th – 12 th , | Suburban Showcase (Novi, MI) | Jim Aitken / Dave Nowicki |
| Outdoorama | February 20 th – 23 rd | Suburban Showcase (Novi, MI) | Jim Aitken / Dave Nowicki |
| White River Trip #1 | February 23 rd – 28 th | White River Trout Lodge (Cotter, AR) | Scott Freeburg |
| Midwest Fly Fishing Expo | March 8 th – 9 th | Macomb County Community College (Warren, MI) | Kevin Lipp / Joe Sprys |
| White River Trip #2 | March 16 th – 21 st | White River Trout Lodge (Cotter, AR) | Jon Bada |
| Trout Tune-Up | April 5 th | Walled Lake Outdoor Recreation Area (Walled Lake, MI) | TBD |
| Member's School | April 12 th | Church Hill Middle School (Royal Oak, MI) | Vince Caruso |
| Scout School | April 19 th | Wayne County Community. College (Belleville, MI) | Dave Oakley / Norm Tabaka |
| Opening Day & Remembrance | April 26 th | Gates AuSable Lodge (Grayling, MI) | Al Haxton |
| Youth School | May 3 rd | MSU Tollgate (Novi, MI) | Len Dixon |
| WawaSum: Dick Schott New Member Outing | May 7 th – 11 th | WawaSum Lodge (Grayling, MI) | Glenn Easterbrook |
| MFFC Banquet | May 14 th | Italian American Banquet Center (Livonia, MI) | Kathy Oehring |
| Smallmouth Outing | May 15 th - 18 th | Blue Spruce Motel (Port Austin, MI) | Renee Gall |
| WawaSum: Bourbon and Browns | July 16 th – 20 th | WawaSum Lodge (Grayling, MI) | Tom Coleman |
| Club Picnic | July 19 th | Multi Lakes Conservation Club (Commerce Township, MI) | John Eriksson |
| Yellowstone, MT Trip #1 | July 26 th – August 2 nd | Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT) | Al Haxton |
| Yellowstone, MT Trip #2 | August 2 nd – 9 th | Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT) | Al Haxton |
| Yellowstone, MT Trip #3 | August 9 th - 16 th | Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT) | Al Haxton |
| AuSable River Cleanup | September 6 th | Gates AuSable Lodge (Grayling, MI) | Anglers of the AuSable |
| Wisconsin Driftless Outing | September 21 st – 25 th | Nature Nooks Retreat (Viroqua, WI) | Jerry Deputat |

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So here's my Drift

So all in all, I feel a good time was had by all. Using hindsight, with the warm weather, fishing may have improved if we fished much earlier in the day or later at night. But I think all saw the potential that the Driftless Waters provided. In any case, we'll all be more experienced the next go-around. So if you are looking for a break from Michigan fishing, or just an excuse to perhaps wrap a new rod or tie some different flies, the Driftless Waters offers that option



Are you interested on **Rod Building at HFF Custom Rods**? Our next MFFC Build Session will be December 6th – 8th.

Contact Jon Bada (vicepresident@mffc.org) to find out more information and to reserve your spot (limited number of building benches are available). Or contact Steve Haywood (stevenh@hffccustomrods.com) if you would like to know what varieties of blanks and components they have at HFF. If space allows, I will build a 3wt rod using a Mike McFarland blank!!

According to John Aukee, “the class was a blast. It was a very good challenge and rewarding to the end”

Dave Oakley and Norm Tabaka – at the MFFC Table at Ted Scott (WCCC) Campus-sponsored Halloween Event



Michigan Fly Fishing Club
P.O. Box 530861
Livonia, MI 48153