



The Evening

Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

May 2025 Edition

2025 Club Banquet with Tim Flagler

The afternoon started with a couple of fly-tying sessions with Tim with his wife Joan in attendance as well.



During the banquet, Tim discussed their experiences at the Spring Creek Lodge in northern Patagonia.



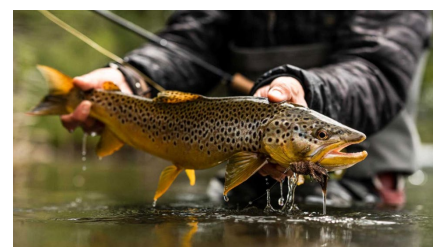
Later that afternoon, the banquet MC stated that this year's Howard Gellar Volunteer of the Year Award is given to Scott Freeburg



Upcoming Club Events

- 05/25/25: Driftless Spring Trip
- 06/04/25: Summer Speaker Meeting
- 07/09/25: Summer Speaker Meeting
- 07/17/25: WawaSum Outing
- 07/19/25: Club Picnic
- 07/26/25: Education Outing
- 07/26/25: Yellowstone Trip #1
- 08/02/25: Yellowstone Trip #2
- 08/06/25: Summer Speaker Meeting
- 08/09/25: Yellowstone Trip #3
- 09/20/25: Scout School
- 09/21/25: Driftless Fall Trip
- 09/26/25: FFI Flyfest

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



Michigan Fly Fishing Club – Business Section

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting April 9th, 2025

Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm

Present: K. Lipp, S. Hunter; J. Bada;
J. Aitken; J. Haxton, T. DeFauw; N.
Tabaka; J. Eriksson

Absent: J. Aukee

Approval of the Minutes: minutes
from 03/12/25 approved

Approval of the Agenda: agenda
from 04/09/25 approved

Officer's Report

President: K. Lipp

- Noted that Trout Tune-Up was good.
- Looking forward to the upcoming club banquet

Vice President: J. Bada

- Thanked Kevin for his service as Club President
- Deadline for the Hatch articles is the Thursday after the Board of Director's meeting

Treasurer: J. Aitken

- Budget tracking is on target for this year
- The Evening Hatch is over budget currently; discussions about how we could proceed to get these cost down

Corresponding Secretary: S. Hunter

- No report given

Membership: J. Eriksson

- Membership now stands at 424

Events and Outings:

- Member School is 04/12 in Royal Oak
- MFFC Banquet is 05/14 in Livonia; Tim Flagler will be the speaker
- Browns & Bourbon is 07/17 in Grayling
- Club Picnic is 07/19 in Commerce Township

Grindstone Port Hope Youth Outdoor Education Day is 07/26 in Port Hope

Events and Outings: (continued)

- FlyFest – 09/26 and 27 in Grand Rapids

New Business:

- Create a donation link for people and family members to donate to the club in their memory (by Jim Aitken); and use Kroger's donation efforts for 501.3.c organizations (by Jon Bada)

Old Business:

- None to report

Visitors:

- Vern White
- Todd Schotts
- James Harris

New Club Members: Tight Lines!!

Daniel Black, Fremont, MI

William Duttman, Harper Woods, MI

Steve Hanson, Maumee, OH

Doyle Letson, Novi MI



Results from April's Election of 2025-2026 Club Officers

- President: Todd Schotts
- Vice President: Jon Bada
- Treasurer: Jim Aitken
- Membership: John Eriksson
- Corresponding Secretary: James Harris
- Recording Secretary: John Aukee
- Director at Large: Norm Tabaka

The following two Directors at Large will be serving their second year on a Two Year Term:

- Joyce Haxton
- Terry DeFauw

2024-2025 Club Officers

President:

Todd Schotts

mailto: president@mffc.org

Vice President:

Jon Bada

mailto: vicepresident@mffc.org

Treasurer:

Jim Aitken

mailto: treasurer@mffc.org

Membership:

John Eriksson

mailto: membership@mffc.org

Recording Secretary:

John Aukee

mailto: recordingsecretary@mffc.org

Corresponding Secretary:

James Harris

mailto: correspondence@mffc.org

Director At-Large:

Norm Tabaka

mailto: ntabaka@gmail.com

Director At-Large:

Joyce Haxton

mailto: rainbow10trout@gmail.com

Director At-Large:

Terry DeFauw

mailto: tdefauw59@aol.com

Immediate Past President:

Kevin Lipp

mailto: kjlipp@gmail.com

Club Editors & Publishers

Hatch Editor - Production:

Jon Bada

mailto: vicepresident@mffc.org

Club Webmaster:

Sybil Hunter

mailto: admin@mffc.org

Club Facebook Administrator:

Joyce Haxton

mailto: rainbow10trout@gmail.com

Michigan Fly Fishing Club's President & Board of Directors Page

2025 Education & Conservation Grant Committee Report

Committee Members

- Al Haxton
- Jeff McGowan
- Joe Sprys
- Kevin Lipp
- Todd Schotts



Request 1: Cedars for the Au Sable

The northern white cedars along the Au Sable River in Michigan provide needed shade to maintain the cold-water fishery. The presence of cedar sweepers at the water line provides protection for the fish, increases the amount of large woody debris in the water, as well as the preservation of the riverbank by locking in the soil. However, there has been no natural reforestation/regeneration of northern white-cedar seedlings along this river for the past four decades.

A grant is requested to purchase northern white-cedar seedlings and their protective enclosures to be planted by volunteers along the riparian corridor of the Au Sable and Manistee Rivers.

Expected Total Cost:	\$10,200
Request Amount:	\$1000
Approved Amount:	\$1000
Recommended Funding Source:	Conservation Reserve Fund

Request 2: Dam 4 Portable Toilet

Place a portable toilet at the end of Dam 4 Road in Lovells's Township from 5/22/25 thru 9/2/25. This busy landing is used by fishers, kayakers and canoeists throughout the summer season. The landing has no toilet facilities.

The cost would be split between the MFFC and the Lovells Township Board.

Expected Total Cost:	\$371.43
Request Amount:	\$185.72
Approved Amount:	\$185.72
Recommended Funding Source:	Education & Special Grants



Request 3: Grayling Fish Hatchery Fish Feeders

The Hatchery needs updated, functional and varmint-resistant automated fish feeders to assist (their) staff in keeping the Hatchery fish healthy and properly fed.

Expected Total Cost:	\$3000 to \$4000
Request Amount:	\$2000
Approved Amount:	\$2000
Recommended Funding Source:	Education & Special Grants

Request 4: Anglers of the Au Sable - North Branch Au Sable Habitat Project

Install over 50 structures on the North Branch between Twin Bridges and Lovells Bridge utilizing proven structure types including inverted V's, brush bundles, parallel logs and bank overhangs. Work will commence and conclude in the summer of 2025. The goal of this project is to provide the trout population with a diverse selection of habitat types to encourage survival in all age classes. This work functions in conjunction with our other habitat work between Twin Bridges and the Meadows Access.

Project benefits include the exposure of gravel through the use of flow-moving and scouring structures, protecting and encouraging spawning trout, increasing the number of aquatic insects and providing cold-water refuges by protecting spring steepes with large woody debris.

Expected Total Cost:	\$40,000
Request Amount:	\$10,000
Approved Amount:	\$10,000
Recommended Funding Source:	Conservation Reserve Fund

Request 5: Mason Griffith Chapter – TU Electrofishing Equipment Upgrade

In the fall of 2022 MGFTU purchased electrofishing equipment and required supporting equipment. The total for the electro-fishing barge was \$18,340 and the required supporting equipment needed was close to \$1,000. This equipment has been used to perform pre-habitat work fish population estimates, and post-habitat work fish estimates.

The DNR has cut back on their assistance to only index stations and no longer conduct fish population estimates on in-stream habitat projects.

The equipment has three probes, and as originally configured, if one person shuts down the electroshock to their unit, all units shut down. During electroshocking this is not desirable. The requested funds will assist in having the control unit rewired to correct this problem. The total cost for the rewiring is \$1,355.00.

Expected Total Cost:	\$1355
Request Amount:	\$765
Approved Amount:	\$765
Recommended Funding Source:	Conservation Reserve Fund



Recent Pics and Stories from Recent Club Outings and Events

New Members' Outing – WawaSum Lodge (submitted by Glen Easterbrook)

The New Members' Outing was a grand success again this year. WaWaSum hosted the Michigan Fly Fishing Club again at its wonderful facility. Bugs were hatching and the weather was wonderful. We were entertained by Kevin Gardiner who always has a colorful rendition of the history of the place. Dinner on Wednesday was picnic style brats and burgers from the grill. This was a fun way to introduce ourselves to each other and settle in. On Thursday morning Josh Greenburg from Gates Lodge and Fly Shop came to bring us up to speed on the river conditions, fishing success, and some detail on the effect of the Ice storm, progress at Grayling with new manufacturing and military plans. After that we split into groups with Arty Mikkola leading the way to tour the North Branch of the Au Sable, Scott Freeburg and Jess Ferris working the Main Branch with their drift boats so all new members got a taste of being in a guide boat for short trips. That evening we suppered on ham and Au Gratin potatoes with pie from the local bakery for dessert.



We were fortunate to be able to get Craig Kasmer from Michigan DNR – Hartwick Pines to give a presentation on the local trees. It was interesting and very informative. Morning found a little frost on the ground, and we started over again rotating the groups so all got a chance in the drift boats and to tour the North Branch. That evening after a hearty lasagna dinner with ice cream and pie for dessert. We adjourned to the great room where Jeff McGowan tied a few flies and spun a few yarns. Saturday morning we collected our thoughts and bid goodbye to WaWaSum for '25.



Our staff, which is the only reason this works, did a fantastic job. They include (in no particular order) Scott Freeburg, Jess Farris, Arty Mikkola and Bill Yaw as guides, Eric Schuldt as casting instructor, myself and many, many thanks to my wife who ran the kitchen to keep all 18 of well fed.

Smallmouth Bass Outing – Port Austin (submitted by Renee Gall)

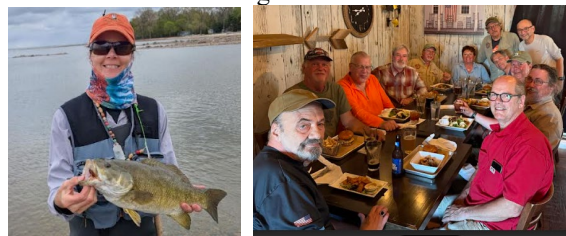
Our Annual Smallmouth Bass Outing is in the books. It was a great time by all of us. We had 28 fly anglers on the hunt for those aggressive "Smallies". Over the years we have all had to adapt to change. The one thing in life that is a guarantee is - change.



Over the years we have seen Lake Huron water levels rise and fall. At one time, about 12-15 years ago, we all fished at Eagle Bay and focused on stripping our lines over the beds and everyone waded to fish. In the course of the last number of years, we dealt with high water levels at the bay and started using fishing kayaks. This opened up more places to find fish. This year, the water level at Eagle Bay has dropped to the good ole days, yet it's still different. We started fishing in a nearby tributary of Lake Huron called Willow Creek. This body of water is like fantasy land. It has pods of Smallies swimming up or downstream that hold a hundred fish at a time. You feel like you are fishing at a hatchery as you are catching fish in nearly every cast.



Mother Nature gave us a sampling of nearly everything over the course of 4 days. We had calm winds and warm temps of 80°F to high winds and temps in the low 50's with a few light showers thrown in for ambiance. We were grateful that we didn't have to fish in the fog nor the snow this year as many of us have experienced up there. Well, it is Michigan and if you wait a few minutes the weather will change



Conservation News Articles

How are Science and Tradition Saving Sturgeon?

(produced and written by Kathy Johnson from: [GreatLakesNow](#))

When the Little River Band of Ottawa Indians in Manistee, MI, decided to start a lake sturgeon restoration program, they started by hiring two recently graduated fisheries research biologists to help them set it up.

“I remember getting there and realizing that the scientific knowledge that I had was only a piece,” fisheries biologist Marty Holtgren said.

Because many of the standard scientific practices of the time conflicted with the Tribe’s cultural beliefs. The Tribe challenged the restoration team to come up with alternative ways of helping the Big Manistee River Nmé (lake sturgeon.) Their inventive solution has revolutionized how lake sturgeon are raised, in the Great Lakes.

Streamside hatcheries are now the lead method for lake sturgeon restoration in the Great Lakes, with 14 facilities operating across the basin.

Watch this Feature via YouTube



Why smallmouth bass are getting bigger in Michigan Waterways (by Victoria Witke, [Great Lakes Echo](#))

Every spring for the last 15 years, Gene Gilliland and some friends have gone smallmouth bass fishing in Lake St. Clair in Southeast Michigan for a week. He and one friend travel from Oklahoma. Two others visit from Tennessee. Two more drive from Pennsylvania, and another comes from Florida. Over the years, the group also has included friends from Missouri.

That’s because Lake St. Clair has gained a reputation over the last two decades as one of the best bass fisheries in the world. “It’s been a real boom, and a lot of people will say that the good ole days in bass fishing are now,” Gilliland said.

Smallmouth bass in the lake are bigger than they used to be because they live longer, according to a recent study by the DNR and published in the Journal of Great Lakes Research. That’s largely due to fishers adopting catch and release practices.

Bass are often released back into the water instead of going home with fishers, so they live longer and can grow bigger. Bass have indeterminate growth – meaning that the fish keep growing until they die. According to the study, smallmouth bass in the early 1970s averaged about 4.5 years old. In 2023, they were generally 6.5 years old on average.

Gilliland is the national conservation director of the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (BASS), which works to preserve bass fishing and organize tournaments. He said in the early 1970s, the founder of the organization started promoting the idea of catch and release – at the time called “don’t kill your catch” – to sustain the tournaments.

BASS, based in Alabama, hosts a significant number of tournaments. Gilliland said fishers release more than 95% of the fish caught at its events.

In Lake St. Clair, that same percentage is voluntarily thrown back into the water, said Dan Kimmel, the conservation director of the Michigan Bass Federation and the Michigan Bass Fishing Coalition – groups mainly for bass tournament fishers. State-wide, he said 60% are caught and released. Technology on boats helps keep more fish alive and in good shape to survive when released, Kimmel said. That’s equipment like oxygen systems, aerators, pumps and chemicals.

But there are other factors that could contribute to bass sizes increasing over the last 50 years, according to the study and Kimmel. The Clean Water Act of 1972 and Canada Water Act of 1970 improved water quality in the Great Lakes – so fish are healthier. In 1995, the minimum size limit to keep a smallmouth bass in Michigan increased from 12 inches to 14. That protects young, small fish and allows them to get bigger.

“One researcher told me that might be the only regulation they’ve ever done that they could say made for bigger bass,” Kimmel said. Gilliland, the national conservation director, said the Great Lakes warming over time means bass have longer growing seasons – it’s the same idea as for plants. “Even though it may only be a matter of days or weeks that the growing season is longer, that is a pretty significant difference in terms of the potential for those fish to grow bigger sizes as they get older,” Gilliland said.

There’s also a theory that the invasive round goby – a small, bottom-dwelling fish – might help sustain bass. When zebra and quagga mussels invaded the Great Lakes and its connected waterways, they took nutrients for themselves, messing up the food web for native fish. When gobies arrived in the early 1990s, bass got a new food source.

“Gobies are getting eaten like crazy by the smallmouth. I’ve done camera work for a few TV shows, and I’ve seen underwater video of them where gobies come into a nest and the bass just eat one right after the other,” Kimmel said. Jan-Michael Hessenauer, a fisheries research biologist for the DNR and author of the study, said he was surprised that his research didn’t support the goby theory.

“The population [fish size] is changing at the same trajectory now as it was before the round goby invasion, which is not what I expected,” Hessenauer said. He said because of this misconception, people might be deliberately introducing goby to inland waterways that wouldn’t naturally be exposed to the invader from the flow of waterways. “People shouldn’t be spreading fish of any kind, but especially invasive species like round gobies,” he said.

Hessenauer said the study shows how dramatically anglers’ behavior can affect fish populations, but that there is rarely a single factor that makes a good fishing spot.

Conservation - Fly Fishers International Affiliation & Education News

Fly Fishers International News & Announcements

Fly Fishing Weekend in Grayling, MI – May 30th, 31st and June 1st presented by The Great Lakes Council of FFI

Friday, May 30th: 3:00pm Meet at Gates AuSable Lodge & Fly Shop; Hatch report from Josh or someone from the Shop
Evening: Open to fish

Saturday, May 31st: Morning: Open to fish
Afternoon (noon – 4:00pm): Grayling Fish Hatcher (4890 West North Down River Road, Grayling, MI). The Great Lakes Council will have the FFI Fly Casting Development Course set up on the grounds of the Hatchery for all to try out. Fly Casting Instruction and Fly Tying Instruction will also be available.

About the Grayling Hatchery: We're a non-profit education facility where visitors learn about this historic site, the trout common in Michigan streams, the environmental concerns in our area and the value of Michigan's stream-trout fisheries. Our mission is to preserve, protect and enhance the AuSable River by educating our guests about this history, ecology and the importance of this great river. We do not charge an admission fee to enter the Hatchery. Instead, we rely on generous donations to maintain this property, sustain the self-guided tour and feed our fish. Any donation, no matter how large or small, is greatly appreciated

(Editor's note: see Report #3 on Page 3)

Evening: Open to fish

Sunday, June 1st: Morning (10:am) – In person Great Lakes Council General Membership Meeting followed by a GLC Board of Directors meeting in Gates AuSable Lodge Board Room. Everyone is invited to attend. To be broadcast by Zoom as well.

Any questions, you can email to: info@ffiglc.org



Personal Conservation (excerpts from FFI)

To paraphrase Terry Pratchett, "This presentation was assembled using 100% recycled words." Even though the words are recycled, I hope that the quotations, ideals, photos and background will combine in a way that provokes thought and action

Definition of Conservation:

1. the act of conserving; prevention of injury, decay, waste, or loss; preservation: conservation of wildlife; conservation of human rights.
2. official supervision of rivers, forests, and other natural resources in order to preserve and protect them through prudent management.

(to be continued)

3. a district, river, forest, etc., under such supervision
4. the careful utilization of a natural resource, in order to prevent depletion.
5. the restoration and preservation of works of art.

FFI promotes **Catch and Release** as part of Personal Conservation

- Basics for Fish Release:
 - Use barbless artificial flies
 - Land fish quickly
 - Minimize time out of water
 - Handle fish gently
 - Back the hook out with a hemostat
 - Support fish facing the current until it swims away
- Basics on Handling your Catch
 - Minimize the time your fish is out of the water
 - Keep fingers away from gills and eyes
 - Wet your hands before handling your fish
 - Never squeeze your fish

FFI has a Conservation Partnership with **Keep 'Em Wet**

- Keeping fish in the water as much as possible
- Holding fish gently in or slightly above the water with wet hands
- Handling fish as little and as carefully as possible

Choose Gear to Minimize Injury to the Fish or Environment

- Barbless or pinched barb hooks
- Single/circle hook flies
- Net designed for catch & release (ie silicone rubber bag)
- Lead-free weights

2025 Youth School – May 3rd (by Len Dixon & Mike Matuszewski)

On Saturday, May 3, the MFFC Youth School was conducted with five youth and twelve club instructors and mentors. The event was held at MSU's Tollgate Conference Center and Farm. Instruction on entomology and fly tying got the day started. After lunch, more instruction on basic equipment, knots, and rod/reel assembly rounded out the indoor portion of the School. Each youth was provided with a loaded MFFC fly box with flies donated by club members and a place to include the flies they tied in the class.

Before lines were wet, basic casting - forward, backward, and roll - precluded a short walk to the pond. With four of the five youth returning from previous year's schools and a quick-learning new youth, flies were soon in the water. A moderate breeze challenged the casting efforts.

At the end of the school, the total fish-caught count was 45 - a mix of Bluegill, Crappie, and Bass. All were successfully released. Three youth with the "magic" selection of flies fished and best location on the pond had fish-landed counts of 15, 14, and 10 respectively.

(pictures on Page 8)

MFFC Events and Outings w/ Chairperson's eMail (Hyperlink)

[Hyperlink for eMail](#)

Outing and Events	Dates	Where	Chairperson(s)
Driftless Spring Trip	May 25 th – 30 th	Quiet Valley Cabins (Coon Valley, WI)	Jess Farris
Summer Meeting - June <i>Speaker: Eduardo Crespo</i>	June 4 th	Northville Community Center (Northville, MI)	James Harris
Summer Meeting - July <i>Speaker: Corey Hasselhun</i>	July 9 th	Northville Community Center (Northville, MI)	James Harris
WawaSum: Bourbon & Browns	July 17 th – 20 th	WawaSum Lodge (Grayling, MI)	Tom Coleman
Club Picnic	July 19 th	Multi Lakes Conservation Club (Commerce Township, MI)	John Eriksson
Grindstone Port Hope Youth Outdoor Education Day	July 26 th	Grindstone Port Hope Sportsman Club Education Outing (Port Hope, 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
Summer Meeting - August <i>Speaker: Jason Bergwell</i>	August 6 th	Northville Community Center (Northville, MI)	James Harris
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
Scout School	September 20 th	Wayne County Community. College - Ted Scott Campus (Belleville, MI)	Dave Oakley / Norm Tabaka
Wisconsin Driftless Outing	September 21 st – 25 th	Nature Nooks Retreat (Viroqua, WI)	Jerry Deputat
2026 Midwest Flyfishing Expo	March 14 th – 15 th	Oakland Expo Center (Waterford Township, MI)	Kevin Lipp / Joe Sprys

A Quick Summary about this Summer's Guest Speakers - [Northville Community Center](#)

June 4th: Eduardo Crespo

[Peach Fishing and Adventures](#)
(Alpharetta, GA)

Eduardo fosters well-being and inter-cultural opportunities by promoting "Fly Fishing and Adventures" between people in Brazil and around the world.



July 9th: Corey Haseluhn

Sales Manager at [Schultz Outfitters](#)
(St Clair Shores, MI)

"Sleddy" loves being in and around the Great Lakes but especially his home turf, Lake St Clair. He's something of a warm water flyfishing guru.



August 6th: Jason Bergwell

manages the [Grayling Fish Hatchery](#)
(Grayling, MI)

Jason will be giving an update on the facility and will be providing insight on the grant project and new exciting changes around the grounds.



Michigan Fly Fishing Club – the Back Page

Trout Tune Up – Proud Lake (submitted by Scott Freeburg)

Here's a few of us club guys catching fish at Proud Lake. With me, were Steve Isgrigg & Dave Mayes



April 16" Smallmouth (by Greg Bajuk)



April 22nd on the AuSable - Mio Dam (submitted by Sheldon Edelstein)

A 21" (brown) trout caught April 22nd; it was really cold that day. Caught near Mio Dam on the Au Sable. I caught the fish on a minnow streamer pattern which our guide, Donnie Richards tied.



2025 Youth School – May 3rd (continued from Page 6 and proceeds onto the next column)



5.00"



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