



The Evening Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

March 2026 Edition

It's Expo Time

(Our Favorite Show of the Year)



Same sign ... new location



Our Club booth



Just before we opened our doors



Casting demo from Bill Mangan



Bill Keogh's display in the background



Barry Green and his son David



Our friends from Anglers of the AuSable



Todd getting caught red-handed

Upcoming Club Events

- 03/04/26: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 03/06/26: Midwest Flyfishing Expo
- 03/07/26: Expo (Pontiac, MI)
- 03/11/26: Board Meeting
- 03/16/26: White River (AR) Trip #2
- 03/18/26: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 04/01/26: Club Meeting (Speaker)
- 04/04/26: Trout Tune-Up
- 04/08/26: Board Meeting
- 04/11/26: Members School
- 04/15/26: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 04/25/26: Opening Day
- 05/06/26: Club Meeting (Activity)
- 05/06/26: Dick Schot New Member
- 05/13/26: Board Meeting
- 05/14/26: Smallmouth Outing
- 05/20/26: MFFC Banquet
- 06/03/26: Summer Meeting
- 06/06/26: Scout School
- 07/01/26: Summer Meeting
- 07/16/26: Bourbon & Browns
- 07/18/26: Club Picnic
- 07/25/26: Education Outing
- 08/01/26: Montana Trip Week #1
- 08/05/26: Summer Meeting
- 08/08/26: Montana Trip Week #2
- 08/15/26: Montana Trip Week #3
- 09/20/26: Driftless (Viroqua, WI) Trip

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 February 11, 2026

Roll Call:

Meeting called to order at 7:30 pm

Present: T. Schotts, J. Bada; J. Eriksson;
J. Aukee; J. Aitken; N. Tabaka, J. Harris;
K. Lipp, J. Haxton,
Absent: T. DeFauw

Approval of the Minutes: minutes from
01/14/26 approved

Approval of the Agenda: agenda for
02/11/26 approved

Officer's Report

President: T. Schotts

- No report given

Vice President: J. Bada

- No report given

Treasurer: J. Aitken

- The club is doing well financially.
- Our internet (site hosting) 2-3 year expense has come in
- We are starting to receive income from our CDs
- Treasurer will prepare a proposal for a new laptop computer (for the next Treasurer's use)
- Expo booth income is still coming in, about 50% to date (over last year)

Corresponding Secretary: J. Harris

- February tyer: Mary Lou Rogala
- March tyer: Dan Walker and March speaker is Steven Arnoczky
- April speaker is Mark Hendricks (casting demo)
- Trout Tune-Up is set for April 4th at the Yurt (Walled Lake Schools Nature Learning Center)
- Kevin Feenstra will be featured speaker at the Banquet
- We need tyers and booth help for Outdoorama on Saturday (Feb 21st), Corresponding Secretary to publicize the need (for volunteers)

Membership: J. Eriksson

- We had 438 members at the close of the Fiscal Year, July 31, 2025

- There are 30 new members since July 5th. There 358 members paid through July 31, 2026. Seventy-one members paid via PayPal
- Fund donations were received for conservation, education, operating costs.
- Member Survey Forms could be brought to the meetings

Visitor's Comments:

- J. Deputat: reported on the membership survey responses. The return rate was 24%. The responses were very positive, mostly between 4 and 5 on the scale of 1-5. Overall was 4.72. We should reinforce the importance of the surveys and encourage members to return surveys. He highlighted some of the responses. Members enjoyed the fishing reports, casting 4, the meeting location 4 (seating is a downside), Zoom Meetings are important to some members, we should see how they could be improved. Wednesday night summer outings were well received. Jerry will present the results at an upcoming meeting and hand out additional surveys.

Events and Outings:

- Banquet: ideas regarding door prizes and raffle ideas were discussed. Online tickets were discussed; more research needs to be done regarding viability of that option.
- Trout Tune Up: a need for a Certificate of Insurance is being worked on.

Old Business:

- (IRS W-2) Tax 1099 reporting increased (reporting threshold from \$600 to \$2,000)
- The Election Committee is hard at work (upcoming in April)

New Business:

- Certificate of Insurance will be added to checklists for chairpersons of events.
- Insurance with FFI is going forward.
(to be continued on Page 8)

2025 - 2026 Club Officers

President:

Todd A. 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 Board of Directors Page

Messages from the Board of Directors: Upcoming Events

Trout Tune-Up

Date: April 4th @ 8:00 am - 2:00 pm

Location: At the Lowe's Yurt Outdoor Education Center
3577 Sleeth Court, Commerce Twp., Michigan 48382

This day-long event on the first Saturday in April and is free to Club members, with continental breakfast and lunch provided, and is an excellent opportunity for new members to meet other members and try out some of the new equipment you may have purchased at the Expo.



We fish the Huron River, which will have been recently stocked by the DNR with trout from a nearby hatchery. This event was started by the MFFC in 1972. We paid \$400 for initial trout planting. It was such a success, the DNR took over and will

usually plant 2,000 to 3,000 Brown and Rainbow trout between the Moss Lake dam and Wixom Road Bridge. Special trout regulations (flies only) are in effect for that stretch from the 1st of April thru the end of the month.

Contact: James Harris



Members School

Date: April 11th

Location: Wayne County Community College - Ted Scott
Campus, 9555 Haggerty Road, Belleville, MI

This free day-long school is only available to paid-up members of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club. From the basics to intermediate levels: learn about fly rods and reels, knots, waders, fly lines, proper way to hold and handle a fly rod, basic casting techniques, entomology (the insects fish like to eat), and fly tying. The day will be split between the classroom and actual hands-on learning. Students are encouraged to bring their own rod and reel, if they have one, otherwise one will be provided by the Club.

The school runs from 9:00 am until 3:00 pm and includes coffee and donuts in the morning, and lunch at Noon. *Attendance at this school is a pre-requisite* for attendance at the Dick Schott New Member Outing in May

Contact: Vern White

2026 Club Banquet

Date: May 20th, 2026 – starting at 6:00pm

Location: Italian American Banquet Center
39200 W. Five Mile Rd., Livonia, MI 48152

Guest Speaker: Kevin Feenstra



Dinner Tickets will be \$50 per person.

Choice of: NY Strip Steak, Chicken Marsala, Roasted Salmon or Vegetarian Lasagna. (Gluten Free available)

Tickets will be available for purchase at monthly club meetings, expo club booth and other club activities. Please note, no tickets will be sold at the door. Cash or check only please.

Deadline to purchase tickets is Wednesday, May 6, 2026. Our evening program will begin at 6:00 pm, as our social hour begins with a cash bar. Tickets will be available to purchase for the Premium Prize Table, the Deck of Cards Raffle and the 50/50 drawing. Door prizes / welcome gift will be for our club members only. A ticket will be provided. We look forward to seeing everyone there for an enjoyable evening!!

Contact: Scott Freeburg

sfree357@aol.com or (248) 505-3563



Did You Know: about club members' fly patterns shown online? There is a subsection within our club website titled:

Fly of the Month

Featuring guest tyers' patterns from past meetings:

- Ken Harfoot's Estaz Nymph
- Dan Walker's Clouser Minnow Variations
- Glen Easterbrook's General Foam Attractor



Vern White's YouTube Channel: @vernwhite4752

Showing various videos on "Fly tying with Buffalo plaid" including these fly patterns:

- Blue Winged Olive
- Whites October Caddis
- Green Caddis Larva





Member & Community News

White River Trip – Week #1



Southern Division of Michigan Fly Fishing Club

(correspondence by Mary Dixon)

Four MFFC members have been busy fishing and catching in Venice, FL and the surrounding area. Jim Montagne and Len Dixon (and Art Cole a few times) have been fishing while standing on their own two feet or sitting on the beach. Dan Finstad, a true waterman, does his fishing either from his kayak or a friend's boat.

I believe Jim/Len /Art have landed the most species, however Dan wins the prize for the biggest "WOW" factor.

First the men on the beach. Together, they have caught

eighteen species of fish, which included Black Drum, Whiting, Flounder, Bluefish, Bonnethead Sharks, Crevalle Jack, Pompano, Sheeps-head, Ladyfish, Speckled Sea Trout, and most unusual - a Sting-ray with 29" wingspan and a 25" Atlantic Guitarfish. (Go ahead, folks, look these up and determine the appropriate fly to use. - big grin!)



Now, to Dan the Waterman. One of Dan's fishing adventures took him on a day-long fishing trip in a friend's jon boat. They caught a variety of species along the way, but the highlight of the trip was a school of dolphins circling their little boat begging for supper. One dolphin was 10 ft long, so you folks know who won. Yes, there is video of Dan feeding ladyfish to dolphins.

I think Dan would say another highlight of his Florida fishing was a recent 6-boat fishing derby. Enough fish were caught for a great community fish fry. Dan wins for the biggest fish that day - a 25", 9 lb Red Grouper. They were catching the fish on frozen squid and mackerel (look up equivalent fly patterns).

I am sure these gentlemen will be happy to share photos and stories with the Club once they are back to a meeting. (Well, unless they are all voted out of the Club for moving to the "dark side" using "tools of the devil".)



White River “Welcome Back Kottter” – Week #2



Michigan Fishing Regulator to Draft Resolution Against Consumers Dam Sale

(written by Laura Herberg and Kelly House, Bridge Michigan)

Michigan fish and game regulators appear poised to wade into the controversy over Consumers Energy’s proposal to sell its 13 aging hydropower dams to an out-of-state private equity company.

On Wednesday (March 4th), following a presentation from critics of the sale plan, members of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission discussed introducing a resolution to formally oppose it, with one member saying he fears selling the dams could leave Michiganders on the hook if they fall into disrepair.

“We don’t have a vote, but we have a voice,” said Commissioner Brandon Fewins, who told Bridge Michigan he intends to introduce the resolution at the next commission meeting on April 8th.

To take effect, the resolution would need support from a majority of the commission’s seven members. None of them clearly indicated Wednesday how they would vote if the matter moves forward.

The commission’s interest in the dams comes as regulators at the Michigan Public Service Commission and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ponder whether to authorize the proposed sale.

State utility regulators, Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel and several ratepayer and environmental advocacy groups have urged the Public Service Commission to reject the deal or impose conditions. They argue the current sale terms expose the public to financial and public safety risks by failing to ensure new owners will invest in needed maintenance on the structures.

Consumers dispute those arguments. An executive at the utility recently said if the deal isn’t approved as-is, Consumers will look to decommission all 13 dams - a move that would likely anger those who live along or recreate in the structures’ vast reservoirs.

For years, the utility has been looking for a way out of the hydropower business as it faces hundreds of millions in upcoming costs to maintain dams that generate little power or revenue. Last fall, officials announced plans to essentially give the dams away to Confluence Hydro LLC, a newly created subsidiary of Maryland private equity firm Hull Street Energy.

Consumers would then buy back the dams’ power at double the market price. The company estimates that arrangement would cost it and its customers \$1.25 billion in today’s dollars - a hefty sum, but hundreds of millions cheaper than keeping or decommissioning the structures by the company’s estimate.

But critics including Michigan DNR staff have accused the company of dramatically overestimating the cost of alternatives, while striking a deal that contains too few protections for rate-payers and the public.

(continued on next page)

Michigan Fishing Regulator to Draft Resolution Against Consumers Dam Sale (continued from Page 5)



Alcona Dam, pictured here. (Kelly House/Bridge Michigan)

The department, which typically favors dam removal, has taken the unusual step of getting involved in deliberations over the proposed sale, with its director, Scott Bowen, warning Wednesday he fears the arrangement would ultimately lead to taxpayers inheriting the expensive structures.

In a statement Wednesday, Consumers spokesperson Brian Wheeler maintained that selling the dams is “the best and most affordable” option for the utility’s customers.

“We firmly stand by our sale agreement for the dams, and we’re focusing our work on achieving that goal,” Wheeler said. “The views that were expressed at today’s NRC meeting are out of step with what we have heard from communities and most stakeholders regarding the future of these sites.”

The presentation at the Natural Resources Commission meeting came from representatives of three groups that have filed testimony before the Public Service Commission opposing the sale. Among their chief concerns is Confluence Hydro’s plan to divvy-up dam ownership among 13 separate limited liability companies.

Tom Baird, a former NRC chair who now represents river conservation groups Anglers of the Au Sable and the Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition, argued that arrangement is designed to shield the parent company from liability if its subsidiaries fail to maintain the structures, leaving the public to fund repairs or risk another failure like the 2020 Midland dam breaks that flooded vast areas of mid-Michigan and inflicted hundreds of millions of dollars’ worth of damage.

That concern seemed to resonate with Commissioner John Walters. “It’s very evident to me that, if this sale goes through and they create 13 different LLCs, and they walk away from all those, the state of Michigan and the citizens of Michigan are on the hook for this,” Walters said. “I find that to be completely appalling.”

Other critics of the proposed sale told fish and game regulators on Wednesday they fear new owners would fail to address longstanding water quality issues caused by the dams. The structures warm and fragment rivers to the detriment of cold-water fish, a reality that has fueled longstanding head-butting between conservation groups, environmental regulators and Consumers.

“If Consumers won’t clean up their mess, then why would I think that a Maryland private equity firm would give a damn?” asked George Heartwell, a consultant for the Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition.

In a statement to Bridge Michigan, Confluence Hydro spokesperson Natalie Joubert countered that the company has a track record of maintaining hydroelectric dams “on schedule, on budget and in compliance with all regulations.”

Mark Eyster, the newest Natural Resources Commission member and a former administrative law judge within the Public Service Commission, seemed skeptical that opponents of the sale could influence the commission. “Good luck,” he told them during Wednesday’s meeting, adding that it will be “an uphill fight.”

In testimony filed in the Public Service Commission case, DNR staff have argued that Consumers overestimated the cost of decommissioning the dams.

“This is a rare thing for us,” Bowen said of the agency’s involvement in the sale deliberations. “I don’t think, historically, the DNR has ever intervened in one of these cases and we didn’t come by it lightly.”

Although the agency hasn’t taken a formal stance on the sale, it has long supported dam removal wherever possible as a means of addressing the structures’ negative impacts on rivers and their high maintenance costs. Bowen noted Wednesday that the DNR owns more than 200 small dams, many of which it inherited from previous owners.

Noting that the agency has struggled to cover the cost of needed repairs on those structures, he said he sees the potential sale to Confluence Hydro as “a long-term way of us getting 13 more of them with bigger, bigger problems.”

This story was originally published by [Bridge Michigan](#), a nonprofit and nonpartisan news organization. To get regular coverage from Bridge Michigan, sign up for a free Bridge Michigan newsletter here:

(<https://bit.ly/BridgeMichiganNewsletter>).



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

Hyperlink for eMail

Outing and Events	2026 Dates	Where	Chairperson(s)
Trout Tune-Up	April 4 th	Walled Lake Outdoor Recreation Area (Walled Lake, MI)	James Harris
White River Trip #2	March 16 th – 21 st	White River Trout Lodge (Cotter, AR)	Jon Bada
Members School	April 11 th	Wayne County Community College - Ted Scott (Belleville, MI)	Vern White
Opening Day & Remembrance	April 25 th	Gates AuSable Lodge (Grayling, MI)	Al Haxton
Dick Schot New Member Outing	May 6 th – 9 th	WawaSum Lodge (Grayling, MI)	Glenn Easterbrook
Smallmouth Outing	May 14 th – 17 th	Blue Spruce Motel (Port Austin, MI)	Renée Gall
MFFC Banquet	May 20 th	Italian American Banquet Center (Livonia, MI)	Scott Freeburg / James Harris
Summer Meeting	June 3 rd	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Scouting Merit Badge School	June 6 th	Wayne County Community. College - Ted Scott Campus (Belleville, MI)	Norm Tabaka / Dave Oakley
Summer Meeting	July 1 st	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Wawa Sum: Bourbon & Browns	July 16 th – 19 th	WawaSum Lodge (Grayling, MI)	Tom Coleman
Club Picnic	July 18 th	Multi Lakes Conservation Club (Commerce Township, MI)	John Eriksson
Grindstone Port Hope Youth Outdoor Education Day	July 25 th	Grindstone Port Hope Sportsman Club Education Outing (Port Hope, MI)	John Eriksson
Yellowstone, MT Trip #1	August 1 st – 8 th	Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT)	Al Haxton
Summer Meeting	August 5 th	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Yellowstone, MT Trip #2	August 8 th – 15 th	Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT)	Al Haxton
Yellowstone, MT Trip #3	August 15 th – 22 nd	Driftwaters Resort (Cameron, MT)	Al Haxton
Driftless, WI Trip	September 20 th – 24 th	Viroqua, WI	Jerry Deputat
Youth School	TBD	TBD	Chairperson Needed

Editor's Note: to proceed onto the Hyperlinks show above: from your desktop computer- press on the CONTROL key and click over the colored box



New Club Members

- Dan Allie (Livonia, MI)
- Cary Armbruster (Milford, MI)
- Andrew Bacheller (Bloomfield Hills, MI)
- James Bass (Sparta, MI)
- Andrew Bishop (Northville, MI)
- Matthew Diehl (Monroe, MI)
- Joe Dombrowski (Farmington Hills, MI)
- Robert Farr (Plymouth, MI)
- Jenelle Ferris (Farmington, MI)
- Patrick Gales (Clarkston, MI)
- Carol Giordano (Wixom, MI)
- David Giordano (Wixom, MI)
- Josh Greenburg (Grayling, MI)
- Daniel Groth (Chesterfield, MI)
- Robert Harvey (Bingham Farms, MI)
- Brayden Isreal (Trenton, MI)
- Susan Janowicz (Novi, MI)
- William Knapp (Farmington Hills, MI)
- Danielle Kotlarczyk (Livonia, MI)
- Mark Kovach (Lexington, MI)
- Michael Kulick (Troy, MI)
- Jeff Liskay (Avon, OH)
- Keith Loutzenhiser (Swartz Creek, MI)
- Jacob Mack (Ann Arbor, MI)
- Mike Morean (Onaway, MI)

Michigan Fly Fishing Club – the Back Page

Board Minutes (February 2026) (continued from Page 2)

- Releases / waivers for usage of photos of children under 18 that are used for club publicity, or in the Hatch. Discussion centered on the need for parental approval/release for NIL of child. Photos of child's face must be unrecognizable. John Aukee made a motion to not include any image of a child tying at one of our events for publicity purposes. Todd Schotts seconded the motion which carried.
- Project Healing Waters requested a free booth for the Expo. Todd Schotts made a motion to not allow discounts for Expo booths, Norm Tabaka seconded the motion. In the following discussion Jim Aitken noted that non-profits were offered booths at \$250. Todd Schotts amended his motion to remain with the status quo of \$250 for Non-Profits. The motion carried.

Club Outing White River Trip Week #2: Lance Wozniak - 21" Brown



New Club Members

- Brandon Nation (Monroe, MI)
- Michael Orzol (Southgate, MI)
- Steve Peason (Livonia, MI)
- Dean Pilat (China Township, MI)
- Brian Pitser (Interlocken, MI)
- Mark Rei (Bloomfield Hills, MI)
- Elizabeth Ross (Beverly Hills, MI)
- Nick Ryan (Grand Rapids, MI)
- John Saunders (Northville, MI)
- Peter Shunyia (Rochester, MI)
- Corey Small (Plymouth, MI)
- Craig Small (Yorkville, IL)
- Sam Solotorow (Birmingham, MI)
- Steve Solotorow (Birmingham, MI)
- Paul Stiem (Farmington Hills, MI)
- Michael Stoppa (Livonia, MI)
- Dustin Tabert (Whitmore Lake, MI)
- Michael Thomasian (Livonia, MI)
- Patrick Toohey (Grand Blanc, MI)
- Alex Walkuski (Brighton, MI)
- Gerald Zielinski (Sterling Heights, MI)



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