



The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

April 2026 Edition

Casting Tips for the Upcoming Season

Presented by April's Speaker: Mark Hendricks

Although fly casting may appear to be really fancy or difficult, especially to beginners, in actuality, it's far easier than first impression might have you believe. In my experience, most people work way too hard when casting. A fly rod is designed by the manufacturer to throw the line for you and one of the real secrets to efficient fly casting is not to force or make the rod throw your line but rather to let the rod throw the line. Allow the rod to do the work for which it was designed.

There are only a few things that need to be done on each cast, and it really doesn't matter how you do them, but you must do them on every cast. There's no "right" way to cast. You can cast any way you like to or need to – wind, obstacles, etc. You can cast vertically (upright), sidearm, over the opposite shoulder – any way you like to cast or need to cast to hit your target.

The first thing is you have to **remove any slack from your line** so that tension can



be applied to the rod prior at the start of the cast. Line tension is what loads the rod and it must be maintained from the very start of the cast until the end of the cast when the fly hits the water. That's why there is a pause at the end of the back cast. You have to let the line straighten out and stay tight before you slowly reverse directions and begin the forward cast.



The second thing is to **begin the cast with the rod down low** to the water. Begin to slowly lift the rod tip up. Smoothly and gradually accelerate of the tip of the back cast to an abrupt stop at the top of the back cast. Stopping the rod abruptly unloads the rods and the rod throws the line for you. Lifting or lowering the rod only loads the rod - it's actually the stop that throws the line. The more sharply you stop the rod the better your line will go.

The third thing that needs to be done on each cast, is to try to **move the rod tip in a straight path** – straight back and

Upcoming Club Events

- 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



(to be continued on Page 8)

Michigan Fly Fishing Club – Business Section

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting March 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, K. Lipp, T. DeFauw, J. Haxton

Absent: J. Harris

Approval of the Minutes: minutes from 02/11/26 approved

Approval of the Agenda: Kevin Lipp made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Todd Schotts seconded the motion which carried for 03/11/26

Officer's Report

President: T. Schotts

- The Election Committee needs candidates for the Recording and Corresponding Secretaries. The Expo is past and we need to concentrate on upcoming events.

Vice President: J. Bada

- Request for Hatch content, he needs Expo pictures by Friday, March 13.

Treasurer: J. Aitken

- We were under budget at the start of March. Overall running within the budget. Jim brought 2 items to the board's attention:
- We have unspent funds in education and conservation
- Financial results from the Expo are still coming in.

Corresponding Secretary: T. Schotts

- March featured tyer and speaker will be Steven Arnoczky.
- On April 1 Mark Hendricks will be our featured speaker on Casting. Lou Tish will be the tyer; Trout Tune-Up is set for April 4 at the Yurt.
- Kevin Feenstra will be featured speaker at the (Club) Banquet.

Membership: J. Eriksson

- We had 438 members at the close of the Fiscal Year, July 31, 2025
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- 82 members paid via PayPal.

Membership: J. Eriksson

- Twenty-six new members joined from Ultimate fishing show and 18 from the Expo.

Visitor's Comments:

- V. White:
- S. Hunter:
- S. Freeburg: banquet update

Events and Outings:

- The Expo Summary & Discussion was moved to the April Meeting
- The Summer Meeting Location has been secured at the Plymouth Cultural Center.
- Technology Budget discussion we should add items for the budget meeting to include laptops and software licenses for the Treasurer, website administrator and publisher. In addition, there may be costs for AV equipment for Zoom meetings. A discussion followed on zoom technology requirements.

Old Business:

- We need to remove any recognizable picture from Club Display boards to ensure there is no conflict with Insurance requirements; Todd Schotts made a motion to update the display boards, Terry Defauw 2nd, motion carried.

New Business:

- New member handouts were discussed; Jon Bada has begun revising. It was determined that changes should not be made until the new constitution is approved by the membership. A committee consisting of Kevin Lipp, Vern White, Jon Bada, Todd Schotts will work on the New Member Handouts once the Constitution has been enacted.
- Volunteerism - Kevin Lipp made a motion for this discussion be moved to the next meeting to include insights from the Expo. Todd Schotts 2nd the motion, which carried.
- Banquet update: the banquet is coming together well. The committee is doing very good job; Ticket sales are moving along. Scott Freeburg reported that there will be

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



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Michigan Fly Fishing Club's Upcoming Events

Trout Opening Day & Remembrance

Date: April 25th, 2026 – 9:00 am to 11:00am
Location: Gates Au Sable Lodge
 471 S Stephan Bridge Rd, Grayling, MI 49738
Event Chair: **Al Haxton**



Join Club members at Gates Au Sable Lodge, under the tent with breakfast bakery treats, fruit, and Bloody Marys available for attendees 9am to 11am. It's a free event and open to all active club members.

Please **park at the Stephan Bridge Canoe Access Site Road** to keep the parking lot open at the Lodge.

We will shop, get the fishing report, share fishing stories, remember departed friends, and partake in some delicious mid-morning snacks! As always, we will share good times, stories and remember good friends that are no longer fishing with us.

Come join us for the celebration! When it is time to adjourn to the river, we can all seek the most beautiful fish in the world – the Michigan Brook Trout.

Dick Schot New Member Outing



The MFFC New Members outing will be held again at Michigan State University's WaWaSum Lodge. The lodge is located about 7 miles, east of

Grayling, MI (377 Wa Wa Sum, Grayling, MI 49738)

We will be checking in on Wednesday the 6th of May after 3 PM and checking out on the Saturday, May 9th by 11 AM. The cost is \$290 per person. This includes meals and lodging.

Make your check out to Michigan Fly Fishing Club (or MFFC). I would like to have the checks dated May 1, 2026. I give the payment to the club right after the trip. If you have to cancel I can just return your check or rip it up. When you date your check for May 1st you know I will present it to the Club after the trip. Your check is your reservation. I am starting the reservation list now.

We do not have speakers lined up yet, but will hopefully provide for a presentation every night. The accommodations are separate rooms that hold three to four people per room.

Contact: **Glen Easterbrook** (geasterbrook@ameritech.net)

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**



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

Banquet dinner tickets will be available and for sale in Grayling at Gate's Lodge during the Trout Opening Day Celebration in the tent, Saturday April 25th.

Dinner Tickets will be \$50 per person. Choice of: NY Strip Steak, Chicken Marsala, Roasted Salmon or Vegetarian Lasagna. (Gluten Free available)

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)

The Annual Smallmouth Outing

Date: Thursday, May 14th – Sunday, May 17th
Location: Blue Spruce Motel
 8527 Lake St, Port Austin, MI 48467
Event Chair: **Renee Gall**



The cost of the Outing is \$55 for Short sleeve and \$60 if choosing Long-Sleeve shirt, made payable to Renee Gall by April 15, 2026. Registration deadline is April 8th. No refunds

given after the registration deadline.

The cost of the Outing is \$55 for Short sleeve and \$60 if
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Member & Community News

Smallmouth Outing (continued from previous page)

choosing Long-Sleeve shirt, made payable to Renee Gall by April 15, 2026.

This includes:

- Annual Smallmouth Outing T-Shirt
- Pizza party Friday night around campfire (BYOB)
- Saturday is Texas BBQ
- Firewood, paper products, etc.

For more information about this event, check our club's event page at: [Smallmouth Outing - Michigan Fly Fishing Club](#)

Contact: [Renee Gall](mailto:reneeschatzleygall@gmail.com) (reneeschatzleygall@gmail.com)

Trout Tune-Up (April 4th)



Member School (April 11th)



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Member School (April 11th) (continued from previous column)



Michigan DNR to Begin Spring Steelhead Egg Collection on Little Manistee River April 14

(written by *Olen Gannon & Scott Heintzelman*)

Love fishing for steelhead? Collection of steelhead eggs at the Little Manistee River Weir in Stronach (Manistee County), Michigan, is tentatively scheduled to begin Tuesday, April 14th. The facility is open to the public for up-close viewing during egg-collection operations. This annual egg collection is popular viewing for anglers, students and anyone interested in learning more about fish.

Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus Mykiss*) provides sport fishing opportunities for both open-water fishing on the Great Lakes and tributary stream fishing, making the species a favorite of many anglers. Yearling steelhead produced through hatchery operations are stocked in select tributaries of all the Great Lakes.



Since 1968, the Little Manistee River Weir has served as the sole source of winter steelhead eggs for fish hatcheries in Michigan and the main source for Ohio and Indiana. This year, the Michigan DNR plans to collect 4.6 million eggs. Thompson State Fish Hatchery (in Manistique) and Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery (in Mattawan) will receive 3.7 million of those eggs, Ohio will receive 500,000 eggs and Indiana will receive 400,000 eggs.

DNR egg-take operations begin with the installation of the weir boards and jump screens by mid-March to stop the upstream steelhead migration in the Little Manistee River. Once pumps are turned on at the facility, fish are diverted into holding ponds. Fish usually ripen (become ready to reproduce) during the month of April and egg collection begins, continuing until the established egg quota has been reached.

During egg collection, unripe or "green" steelhead (those that are not yet ready to reproduce) are held in maturation ponds or counted and passed upstream to sustain the Little Manistee River wild steelhead run. Steelhead that are spawned during operations are also passed upstream and many eventually return to Lake Michigan, as this species can spawn multiple times. Once the quota of eggs is reached, the jump screens are removed, and all remaining fish are allowed to migrate upstream. Boards will remain in place to block the upstream migration of invasive sea lamprey.

Planned spring steelhead egg-collection dates for this year are April 14, 15, 16, 21 and 22. This is subject to change, based on the ripeness and number of fish present. Eggs will be taken each day between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m., and the public is welcome to view the process. To check on the status of the egg-collection schedule, call the Little Manistee River Weir hotline at 231-775-9727, then press 8.

Update from the DNR:

Steelhead egg collection was scheduled to begin today, Tuesday, April 14th, at the Little Manistee River Weir in Stronach, MI. However, electrical damage during overnight storms caused a power failure at the weir facility, resulting in the loss of some of the fish being held for egg collection.

This electrical damage not only affected the main source of power, but also the backup power source and the notification system that alerts staff to power failures. Without power, the systems that sustained the fish were inoperable, resulting in the loss of many of the fish held in the facility at the time.

The weir's main power source and three of the four pumps have been restored and are now functional; one pump is inoperable and will need repairs. Egg collection will continue as planned for the remaining live fish.

The effect this loss will have on steelhead egg collection for this season is still unknown. The Little Manistee River Weir is the exclusive source of steelhead in Michigan, as well as the primary source for neighboring states, and the planned egg collection quota was 4.6 million eggs.

"No question, this loss of steelhead right before egg collection is a substantial setback," said Randy Claramunt, chief of the Michigan DNR Fisheries Division. "This is disappointing to our staff, many of whom are anglers and care deeply about this fishery, but they are working quickly to collect eggs from the live fish at the weir to try to meet our needs for steelhead stocking next year."



Michigan Hunting and Fishing Regulator Votes to Oppose Dam Sale

(written by *Laura Herberg, Bridge Michigan*)

Michigan's hunting and fishing regulator voted unanimously Wednesday, April 8th, to pass a resolution opposing Consumers Energy's planned sale of 13 hydropower dams.

"From a natural resources standpoint, in good conscience, I cannot see how this is good for the state of Michigan," Michigan Natural Resources Commissioner Brandon Fewins said. The Natural Resources Commission has no authority over the sale, but, during a presentation from critics last month, Fewins said, "We don't have a vote, but we have a voice."

The resolution approved Wednesday says the rivers impacted by the dams are public trust resources and decisions affecting them "must ensure their long-term protection, stewardship, and public use." Aquatic habitat and fish could be wiped out by a dam failure, Fewins told Bridge Michigan.

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More Conservation News

Michigan Hunting and Fishing Regulator Votes to Oppose Dam Sale

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Consumers announced last fall it wants to sell the dams to Confluence Hydro, a newly created subsidiary of Maryland-based Hull Street Energy. If Confluence buys the dams, it wants to split up into 13 separate limited liability corporations, and Fewins worried one of those LLCs would declare bankruptcy in the case of a “catastrophic event.”

“It’s going to be the state of Michigan, it’s going to be the residents that live along that river, and most importantly, for me, right now, as a Natural Resources commissioner, it’s the public resource that will be devastated from this type of event,” he said. As part of the deal, Confluence would buy the dams for \$1 apiece, then sell the power back to Consumers at double the market rate for comparable power - plus a 2.5% annual increase.

Before the sale can go through, it needs to be approved by the Michigan Public Service Commission, the state’s utility and energy regulator. Confluence’s dam operations would not be subject to that body’s oversight. Confluence said it has a long track record of being in compliance with both federal and state regulations. It’s planning to hire some Consumers workers to maintain dam operations.

“One day we’ll be Consumers Energy, the next day we’ll be Confluence Hydro,” said Adam Monroe, the executive director of hydro generation at Consumers. “All we want the communities, the public to see is a change of a logo.”

Members of the Natural Resources Commission seemed skeptical that Confluence will hold on to the dams, despite intending to sign a 30-year contract. Commissioner Mark Eyster asked if Confluence could decommission a dam and sell off the acreage during that time period.

Consumers Energy hydropower dams

Consumers Energy is debating the future of its 13 hydroelectric dams, including whether to sell the dams and keep the impoundments in place or remove them.



Credit: Map courtesy of Consumers Energy

“I guess you could do that, but that’s not our intention nor do we have a demonstrated track record of doing so,” said Jillian Lawrence, chief operating officer for Confluence. She said there are some-times restrictions on building after a dam is removed: “It is not an easy ‘drain the land, put condos on it.’”

Some commissioners were convinced Confluence, which has purchased 47 dams in the past and sold 45 of them, would soon sell the dams if it acquired them.



“I guess you could do that, but that’s not our intention nor do we have a demonstrated track record of doing so,” said Jillian Lawrence, chief operating officer for Confluence. She said there are some-times restrictions on building after a dam is removed: “It is not an easy ‘drain the land, put condos on it.’”

Some commissioners were convinced Confluence, which has purchased 47 dams in the past and sold 45 of them, would soon sell the dams if it acquired them.

“I anticipate that you guys won’t even be the state’s partner two years from now,” said Commissioner James LaPorte. “Whoever you sell these dams to should really be part of this discussion.”

Confluence responded that holding the dams longterm is a new strategy for the company. The company said it has not had discussions about who to sell the dams to, that it’s planning near-term capital investments and is seeking to reap the full value of the purchase agreement.

The deal would bring in at least \$270 million in new profits for Consumers at the expense of ratepayers. The utility has said customers would pay more if they held onto the dams because it would need to charge ratepayers to maintain or demolish them. Critics have disputed that math.

An administrative law judge will issue a preliminary recommendation on the proposed sale in June. Consumers said Wednesday that the Public Service Commission’s final decision is expected in August.

This story was originally published by [Bridge Michigan](https://bit.ly/BridgeMichigan), 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>.



New member – Jenelle Farris on her first successful Steelhead Trip

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

Hyperlink for eMail

Outing and Events	2026 Dates	Where	Chairperson(s)
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 3rd	Plymouth Cultural Center and Ice Arena (Plymouth, MI)	
Scouting Merit Badge School	June 6th	Wayne County Community. College - Ted Scott Campus (Belleville, MI)	Norm Tabaka / Dave Oakley
Summer Meeting	July 1st	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 25th	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

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Board of Directors Meeting 03/11/26

door prizes for everyone and changes to the raffle procedure

- Club technologies – there was a discussion on technologies (web, email blasts, social media, zoom, etc.) like many organizations there are considerations for best use of technology and demands on volunteers for providing content and information/activity updates. MFFC needs to work on strategies to best serve the membership

Adjournment: J. Aitken made a motion to adjourn, K. Lipp 2nd the motion, motion carried; meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.



Update: Yellowstone, MT Trips
by trip chairperson Al Haxton

- **Week #1:** August 1st – August 8th:
 - An entire four (4) person cabin is available

- Two spots are available in another four-person cabin
- Al can hold spots until end of April, then must cancel the four-person cabin
- **Week #2:** August 8th – August 15th: full – at capacity
- **Week #3:** August 15th – August 22nd: full – at capacity



Michigan Fly Fishing Club – the Back Page

Casting Tips for the Upcoming Season (continued from Page 1)



straight forward. This is what determines the shape of your loop – the configuration of the line in the air. There are two legs of the loop – the rod leg on the bottom and the fly leg on top. The abrupt stop is what initially starts the loop to form but the

shape of the loop – how tight and narrow it is (good) or how wide & uncontrollable it is - will be determined by the shape in which the tip of the rod travels.

Finally, try to **develop using both a rod hand and a line hand**. This gives you more casting options than having both the rod and the line in one hand. Remember to keep tension on the rod at all times. Using both hands allows you to shoot line for longer casts and also to haul and double haul the line. Make sure the line stays tight between your line hand and the stripping guide (the guide nearest to the reel) throughout the cast. The easiest way to do this is to lift both hands simultaneously keeping them across from each other.

Remember – Do these three things and you'll see your casts improve right away.

Club Outing White River Trip Week #1:
Tom Malbouef - 24" Tiger Trout
(caught on Hunter's Redneck Nymph)



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