

# KBIC Contributes to Sustainable Fisheries

By Bill Leder

HANCOCK — Gene Mensch, Fisheries and Wildlife Biologist with the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Natural Resources Department, was the guest speaker during the January general membership meeting. The KBIC is a federally recognized Chippewa Tribe. The Natural Resources Department has grown from humble beginnings in the 1980s when attempts were made to propagate lake whitefish and lake trout in small tanks with minimal controls. Now the Department includes 12 persons, modern fish-rearing and scientific capabilities, and activities involving wildlife, environmental services, and water quality.



Gene Mensch (left) and Jim Baker

KBIC has stocked more than two million fish from the late 1980's to present — lake trout, lake whitefish, brook trout, coaster brook trout, and a small number of walleye — into Lake Superior and some of its tributaries. Along with other agencies, these efforts have contributed to bringing back the lake trout from a near zero level in the mid-1900's to a thriving population today.

The KBIC also is committed to advancing the scientific understanding of fisheries within and near reservation waters, including Lake Superior, streams and smaller lakes. During the presentation, Gene provided the following example: Did you know that there are as many as 12 strains of fat lake trout? Just to clarify this statement, several "types" of lake trout have been reported in recent years. There is a lot of research and effort being undertaken to distinguish fat lake trout/siscowets from lean lake trout. At times, some scientists have distinguished 12

or more "morphotypes" in Lake Superior. The current general lake trout identification trend is to try to separate out fats, leans, intermediates (potential half-breeds), and a form called the "humper" which typically lives on the east end of Lake Superior in areas with huge "humps" that quickly go from shallow to deep water. There is much question and debate regarding just how many "types" of lakers there may be, and whether they are actually different. On a smaller scale, the coaster brook trout vs. stream brook trout issue is very similar to this.

Gene also mentioned the recent high potential for commercial interest in fat/siscowet lake trout because of their high concentrations of omega-3 fatty acids.

Although there has been a lot of focus on lake trout, KBIC pursues other activities as well. These include brook trout rearing and research programs, and organizing and

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- *May Meeting: Thursday, May 8, 2008, 7:00 p.m., Ramada Inn, Hancock*
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# CCCTU Donates \$500 to Keweenaw Land Trust Endowment

By Bill Leder

During its December 19 meeting at Calumet High School, the CCCTU Board unanimously agreed to donate \$500 to the Keweenaw Land Trust Endowment Fund.

First organized in 1996, the Keweenaw Land Trust (KLT) is a local, non-governmental, charitable organization that protects land, water, and quality of life through conservation, stewardship, and education. KLT is part of a national land trust movement in the United States and Canada that protects millions of acres of land, often creating permanent opportunities for public access including low-impact recreation. KLT is a grass-roots effort governed by a board of directors made up of local citizens. KLT relies on contributions from the public, fundraising events, grants and member support to carry out its programs.

KLT and CCCTU are complementary organizations, with many shared values.

The two groups have combined forces and currently are partnering in a joint effort to create a conservation easement in Portage Charter Township that would enhance public recreation on approximately 1,000 acres of land with nearly two miles of the Pilgrim River. CCCTU President Shawn Hagan said, "We are very pleased to be working so closely with KLT on a project that has the shared goal of conserving a stellar section of the Pilgrim River Valley." Hagan added, "We still are in the exploratory phase, but we have high expectations that by working together with KLT, we will achieve the CCCTU goal of making public fishing on the Pilgrim a reality for future generations."

KLT Executive Director Evan McDonald said "We are grateful for CCCTU's financial contribution to the KLT endowment. For me, support of the KLT's long-term financial health is recognition that land and natural resource conservation is a commitment to the future. Looking ahead, we certainly hope our cooperative efforts to protect the Pilgrim River will be successful and help build our team that

can go on to do other important conservation projects together."

Erik Lilleskov, Chair of the KLT Board of Directors, added: "I would like to say thank you to CCCTU. We greatly appreciate the gift to our endowment from CCCTU. The endowment is a key tool for KLT because it will stabilize our organization over the long haul, allowing us to continue to monitor the easements and preserves that are our perpetual responsibility. This gift is an affirmation of the shared goals of the two organizations, and an indication that CCCTU recognizes the unique role that KLT can play in protecting natural areas for use by ourselves, our children and generations to come. We also greatly value the role that CCCTU plays in focusing on stream and fish conservation, and see their focus and strengths as directly complementing ours. We hope and expect that our shared interests will lead to a long and fruitful collaborative relationship between our organizations. Together our organizations can achieve great successes in keeping natural areas accessible in our area."



## Newsletter of the Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited

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Bill Leder, Editor and Publicist

### Contributing Writers in This Issue

Joan Chadde, Bill Deephouse,  
Jim Baker and Bill Leder

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## KBIC Contributes to Sustainable Fisheries, continued from page 1

sponsoring the annual Kids Fishing Derby in June in Baraga. Gene extended an invitation to CCCTU members to visit the hatchery facilities.

CCCTU President Shawn Hagan said, "I want to thank Gene for

coming to our meeting on a very snowy evening and making us aware of the many contributions KBIC makes to preservation of our natural resources."

Want to know more? Visit the KBIC website: <http://www.kbic-nsn.gov/>



Wish I could do that! — Photo by Monte Draper

# The Redridge Dams on the Salmon Trout River

*By Bill Deephouse*

The Redridge Impoundment on the Salmon Trout River has an interesting history. In 1894 a timber crib and rock dam was constructed a short way above the site of the present steel dam. This dam impounded water that was used to process copper ore at the stamp mill located nearby on Lake Superior. The steel dam was constructed seven years later and inundated the timber crib and rock dam until recently. Stamping of copper ore ceased in the 1920's and for many years the steel dam was the only structure holding back the waters of the Salmon Trout River.

The Copper Range Company cut four 4 ft x 8 ft holes in the steel dam in 1979 to reduce pressure from high spring flows which sometimes overtopped the dam. This allowed the water level of the impoundment to recede and eventually exposed the uppermost portions of the timber crib dam. The timber crib dam began to deteriorate, and in 2001 the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality inspected it. An order was issued to Stanton Township to repair, replace or remove the timber crib dam. This eventually resulted in the removal of the top 10-12 feet of the timber crib dam by a local contractor and set the stage for the formation of the Redridge Dams Study Group (RDSG).

Over the past few years various individuals and organizations have worked together with Stanton Township to plan for the future of the Redridge Dams, Salmon Trout River and the entire watershed. The primary concern was the safety of both dams. However, many other issues were also being considered.

In August 2007, Stanton Township Board of Supervisors authorized the formation of a Study Group on the Redridge dams/Salmon Trout River for one year with written quarterly reports. Mr. Ken Vrana of Maritime Heritage Consulting agreed to organize and facilitate this effort on behalf of the Township. During the group's initial information gathering, Mr. Vrana noted that the best and most comprehensive piece of information concerning the Salmon Trout River and it's watershed was the Featured River article in the summer 2005 edition of *One More Cast*, our CCCTU newsletter. Steve Albee researched and wrote this article and he deserves high praise for it.

The first formal meeting of the RDSG was held on November 12, 2007 at Michigan Tech. The focus of the meeting was engineering-related investigations of the dams for purposes of assessing the stability and safety of these historical structures. Preliminary findings were made by a Michigan Tech Civil Engineering Senior Design Class (under supervision of Dr. Stan Vitton) and also addressed related questions by Study Group members.

Subsequent work by the students and Dr. Vitton resulted in an excellent report to the Stanton Township board in December 2007. This engineering study found both dams to have a high safety factor and posed no danger of failing. Several articles covering the dams have appeared in the *Daily Mining Gazette* (February 15 and March 1, 2008) and also on TV 6 news. Dr. Vitton thinks that with some additional in-depth analysis, both dams could be certified as safe by

the State of Michigan. Work is proceeding on this matter after the Stanton Township board voted to seek state certification in February 2008.

A second meeting of the RDSG was held on February 12, 2008. By this time, our Chapter had become involved in the work being done at the dams as well as proposed biological activities for the future. I was authorized to represent our interests and became a member of the RDSG. The focus of this second meeting was for planning of a fisheries/ecological assessment of the watershed, scope of work for the Study Group and engagement of communities in the project. George Madison, District Fisheries Supervisor for MDNR at Baraga, told the group that although his staff was totally committed to previously planned lake and stream projects for 2008, he felt that an extensive fisheries survey of the entire Salmon Trout River watershed could be accomplished in 2009. CCCTU members will have an opportunity to assist in various ways when this survey begins.

We also learned that during the summer of 2007, personnel from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service-Sea Lamprey Control, based in Marquette, conducted a chemical evaluation of the river in a small area downstream from the steel dam. They found many sea lamprey (146) including five different year classes and five transforming lamprey. After this work they electrosurveyed the same area to determine how efficient they had been in removing sea lamprey from the chemically treated area. They

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# Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative Kicks Off in Copper Country Schools

By Joan Chadde

*Editor's Note: In the last issue of One More Cast, Joan reported on the grant application for this project.*

The Western U.P. Center for Science, Mathematics and Environmental Education has been awarded a \$200,000 grant from the Great Lakes Fishery Trust to create a stewardship hub in the Upper Peninsula for the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative. This proposal was submitted in partnership with the Keweenaw Land Trust, Keweenaw Economic Development Alliance, Michigan Tech Center for Water & Society, and the Isle Royale Institute, to implement the Lake Superior Stewardship Initiative (LSSI) in twelve area schools, working in partnership with fifteen community organizations, including CCCTU, in Houghton and Baraga Counties.



LSSI Kickoff Meeting

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## Michigan Tech Students Assist with Pilgrim River Project

By Bill Leder

This semester four Michigan Tech students are hard at work, assisting CCCTU and the Keweenaw Land Trust (KLT) in their joint efforts to establish a 1,000 acre conservation easement along 10,200 lineal feet of the Pilgrim River in Portage Township. The students are enrolled in a course named "Special Topics in Professional Writing." The conservation easement strategy is based in part on obtaining funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Jim Baker, CCCTU immediate past president, said, "Because the focus of the

course is on grant writing, the project is a real win-win opportunity for the students, CCCTU and KLT."

Tasks the students are accomplishing include developing written and graphic summaries for use in obtaining stakeholder support, preparing and conducting a survey, reviewing and summarizing the very extensive grant application process, and compiling a comprehensive contact list. These are essential steps in securing grant funding. The students meet with members of the Pilgrim River Committee every other Monday.

The goal is to submit the grant application by August 1.

The students are Eirik Visto and Alexander Kuzimski (majoring in Scientific and Technical Communications), Cristy Lowney (majoring in Applied Ecology), and Dan Graham (majoring in Wildlife Management). Their instructor is Marika Seigel, an Assistant Professor in the Humanities Department.



# Meet New Board Member Bob Page

Originally from Traverse City, Michigan, Bob Page and wife Charlene made their home in Houghton while attending Michigan Tech. Upon graduation, they promised each other to return to the area "someday." After an 18 year absence, that day came last July when they moved into their new home in Houghton with daughter Katy and son Thomas.



*Bob Page*

A life-long fisherman, Bob joined the Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited to help protect and preserve the sport. Each spring for several years, he and Thomas helped to plant over 3,000 trout into the Escanaba River as part of a Cub Scout wildlife conservation project.

Bob brings two particular skills that may help our Chapter with its mission. He has worked semi-professionally as a web site developer since 1995 and recently volunteered to take over the Chapter's web site. His first task will be to update the pages and to investigate methods to improve communication with members. Bob also has significant experience as a grant writer, having authored successful grant applications for both government and private grant opportunities. He has joined the Pilgrim River Project Committee to assist in the development of materials to obtain funding for the Project.

CCCTU President Shawn Hagan said, "I am very pleased that Bob has joined us. I know he will be a great contributor to our mission of cold water fisheries conservation and education."

## *Redridge Dams on Salmon Trout River, continued from page 3*

were surprised to find quite a few additional lamprey (81) the chemical had not killed. Based on these findings, they plan to chemically treat the entire river from the steel dam downstream to Lake Superior sometime during July 2008. USFWS plans to do this using the lamprecide TFM when they are in the Keweenaw treating the Traverse River this summer. They have really increased their attention on the Salmon Trout River after learning about all the attention and planning efforts that are being expended by the RDSG.

Additionally, USFWS-Sea Lamprey Control plans to conduct an extensive electrosurvey of upstream locations this summer to determine if any sea lamprey have been successful in ascending the dams to spawn. They also plan to electrosurvey the area between the steel dam and timber crib-rock dam to

see if lamprey have been able to ascend the discharge pipes under the steel dam. An offer was made of assistance from CCCTU volunteers in these surveys but with the logistics of such work, it is probably not possible. Flow conditions, weather, finding remote locations and scheduling of other rivers for surveys are difficult enough for them without trying to coordinate volunteer activities.

As you can tell, lots of things are going on in the Salmon Trout watershed. Somewhere down the road, CCCTU volunteers will be needed, and I am sure our members will step up to contribute their time and talents. Our newsletter will be used to keep the membership updated on activities, meetings, surveys and other items concerning the Redridge Dams and Salmon Trout River.



*Jeremy Shannon with a nice fish*

# CCCTU Supports Kolke Creek Project

By Bill Leder

*Editors Note: Material for this article came from Anglers of the Au Sable website, the Traverse City Record-Eagle, and an email exchange with Rusty Gates.*

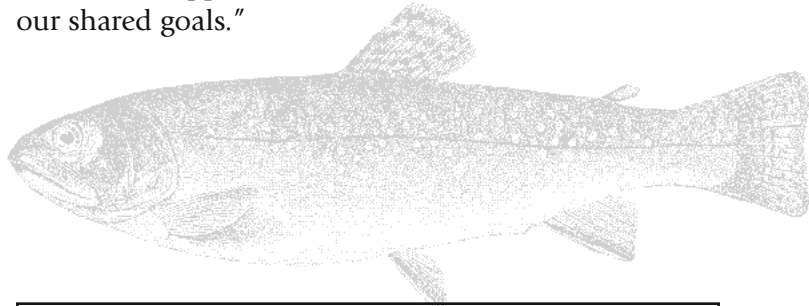
On December 19 the Board approved a motion to contribute \$250 to Anglers of the Au Sable in their continuing effort to protect the Au Sable River in northern lower Michigan. Anglers of the Au Sable, an affiliated member of the Federated Fly Fishers, has been a litigant in a protracted effort to prevent the diversion of 1.5 million gallons of water per day from the Manistee to the Au Sable watersheds via Kolke Creek.

In March 2005 the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality issued a permit to Merit Energy to remediate a large plume of contaminated ground water. Merit agreed to remediate the contamination as part of a purchase agreement with Shell Oil Company. The remediation plan was based on air-stripping to purge the water of a cocktail of toxic chemicals. The residual water would then be discharged into Kolke Creek, a tributary of the Au Sable. However, the source of the water is in the Manistee watershed. Anglers of the Au Sable believes the effects, if the discharge were allowed, would include increased water levels, erosion, sedimentation, temperature modification and other impacts resulting from the unnatural transport of water between the river systems.

Anglers of the Au Sable and co-plaintiff Lyn Lake Property Owners won their case in Otsego County Circuit Court in May. However, an appeal has been filed by defendants Merit Energy and DEQ. At least another year of legal battles is anticipated. During the pendency of the appeal, Merit and DEQ are investigating other remediation alternatives, but they too have associated environmental concerns.

Rusty Gates, president of Anglers of the Au Sable, remarked about the lawsuit, "It has been outrageously expensive! While the court has awarded the expert witness fees...it might be years before we ever collect. And we would get half of these, as our co-plaintiff the Lyn Lake Property Owners, would get the other half. The attorneys tell me they routinely appeal, appeal, appeal and at some future date, settle for a lesser amount. We've proved environmental damage would occur... which is huge. Our expenses to date...over \$300,000 paid. Thanks for helping our kitty."

CCCTU President Shawn Hagan said, "Although this issue is playing out a long distance from the Keweenaw, its outcome is important to all anglers in Michigan, so the Board decided to show our Chapter's support for a sister cold waters fishery conservation organization." Hagan went on to say, "The day may come when we need their support as we continue to work to achieve our shared goals."



## Angling By The Numbers

*This article is reprinted from Trout Magazine, Winter 2008 Edition*

According to a 2006 U.S. Fish and Wildlife survey, sportsmen and women spend \$76 billion per year in fishing and hunting. A few interesting findings from the survey follow.

- More people (30 million) go fishing each year than go to Disney World (16 million), the number one vacation destination in the world.
- Spending by hunters and anglers is more than the combined revenues of Microsoft, Google, eBay, and Yahoo.
- The sport fishing industry supports twice as many jobs as the U.S. Postal Service.
- If the \$76 billion that sportsmen and women spend on hunting and fishing were the gross domestic product of a country, sportsmen and women as a nation would rank 57th out of the World Bank list of 181 nations.
- Through excise taxes and license revenues, hunters and anglers have contributed more than \$10 billion to state and federal conservation programs. In fact, sportsmen and women provide more than 80% of the funding for most state fish and wildlife agencies.

# CCCTU Participates in Michigan Coastal Cleanup at Gratiot River County Park

By Jim Baker

This past September, as we have for a number of years now, CCCTU sent a crew to spend the morning picking up litter at the Gratiot River County Park in Keweenaw County. This cleanup, coordinated locally by the Northwoods Conservancy, is part of the Michigan Coastal Cleanup and the International Coastal Cleanup.

The International Coastal Cleanup has been an annual event since 1986 and is a good example of how we people collectively pitch in for some truly impressive accomplishments. Over the years, more than 6.5 million volunteers have picked up 116 million pounds of debris on beaches across 65 participating countries.

Since the effort began in Michigan in 1991 as the Michigan Coastal Cleanup, 20,000 volunteers have picked up nearly 110,000 pounds of litter. At the end of the event all of the trash is tallied (there were approximately 1.9 million cigarette butts picked up in 2006 alone) and the organizers use the data to promote policy changes intended to reduce the amount of debris that finds its way into our waterways and favorite fishing holes.

This year, volunteers included Dave and Marcy Cella, Chris Ipson, David and Joanne Evans, my children (Jonathan and Lily), and me. It was a perfect day for a stroll on the beach with a rod or a garbage bag in your hand. I have been a participant in this for some time, and while it does seem that the total volume of garbage declines from year to year, it is clear that an annual scrubbing is necessary just to keep up. For our part on the count, we got the expected share of cans, bottles, broken glass, furniture and appliance parts, and miscellaneous unidentifiable stuff, but nothing truly out of the ordinary. My daughter Lily also made good and sure not to leave any seagull feathers lying on the beach, although they came home with us and didn't make it on our tally sheet.

Next year's cleanup will be in mid-September, and as usual, we will be looking for volunteers willing to take a stroll along the beach with a garbage bag in tow — but please plan to at least leave a few feathers for Lily.



*The clean-up crew*

**MAY MEETING: Thursday, May, 8, 2008 — 7pm  
Ramada Inn, Hancock Waterfront**

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## Join Trout Unlimited Today!

To join or renew your membership in Trout Unlimited, including in the Copper Country Chapter, please either:

Go to: [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org) and click on the "Join/Renew Tab"

Or send \$35 (single) or \$50 (family) to:

Copper Country Chapter Trout Unlimited  
PO Box 232  
Hancock, MI 49930

Checks should be made payable to Trout Unlimited, or include credit card information.

Any amount given above regular membership is an additional gift to help Trout Unlimited promote coldwater conservation.

Trout Unlimited is a 501(c)(3) organization. Membership fees and other contributions to TU and the local chapter are tax exempt to the extent allowable by law.

If you have any questions, please contact Gloria Strieter, CCCTU Treasurer, at 906-296-8422, [strieter@pasty.com](mailto:strieter@pasty.com)