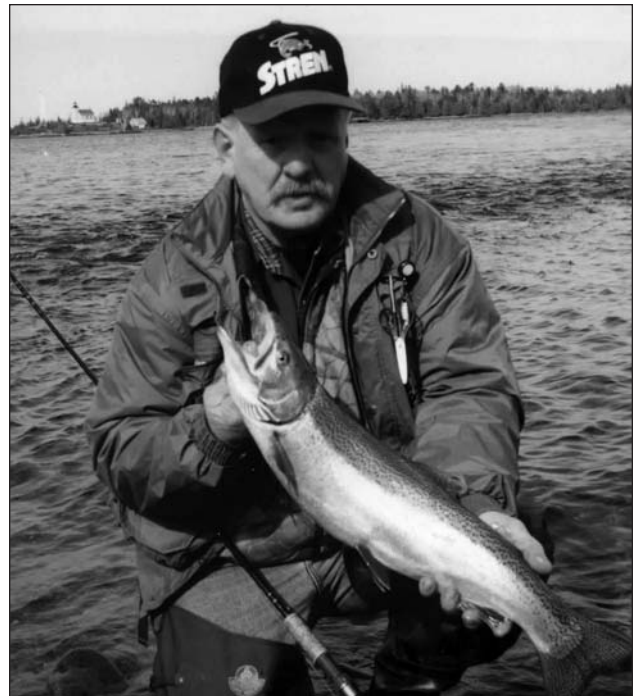


Remembering Billy Lehtinen

HOUGHTON — William James “Billy” Lehtinen of Calumet died in a tragic work-related accident at Michigan Tech on Saturday, October 14, 2006. He was 57 years old. Billy, a charter member of CCCTU and member of the Board of Directors, was a Keweenaw native and outdoor legend. A tireless conservationist, he initiated the annual CCCTU/DNR brook trout stocking program in Lost Lake in 1999 and was a past Trout Unlimited Volunteer of the Year. Billy’s many other conservation activities are far too numerous to include here but will be remembered by his friends and colleagues. He was an excellent cook who volunteered for Range VFW and CCCTU summer socials. Vici Burrows, his beloved life partner, has decided to honor Billy’s dedication to CCCTU by completing his term on the Board.



Billy Lehtinen with a nice steelhead —Photo by Jim Junttila

Memorials and remembrances may be made in memory of William James Lehtinen to the Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited, PO Box 232, Hancock, MI 49930.

The remainder of this article is devoted to remembrances from many friends and associates who will miss Billy very much.

I never went fishing with Billy but did more things to try to improve fishing with Billy than anyone else in my life -- well, except maybe Deepy. He was fun company and fun to work with. I loved his dry wit. He had great ideas, great because they were do-able, practical and they worked. The biggest brook trout I have ever caught in the UP have been at Lost Lake, thanks Billy. While sometimes it appeared he moved slowly, he was a ball of energy and was involved in most CCCTU projects that required volunteer help and hard work. Those who knew Billy will never be

able to forget him. If there's fish in heaven, he's scoping 'em out.

— Ray Weglarz

I became aware of Bill Lehtinen in 1997 when our Chapter of Trout Unlimited was in its very formative stages. I say “became aware of him” because I don’t ever remember anyone formally introducing us. What I do remember most about him, at that time, was the enormous sense of self-confidence he exhibited in a very calm demeanor.

We both joined the Chapter’s Board of Directors about the same time, and my appreciation of his contributions to the Chapter grew steadily as we continued to serve together. Much of the time during a meeting he would sit and listen to the others, but when he did say something, it really meant something, and it was taken seriously.

During the story telling periods following our meetings, I always enjoyed hearing him

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- Join CCCTU
- Announcements

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relate situations about his hunting, fishing, and other outdoor experiences. Except for these stories, however, I never really got to know much about Bill's life because he seldom talked about himself.

I found out the most about Bill's life from reading his obituary in the Gazette, hearing the eulogy by Butch Paavola, and listening to the stories from his many friends who attended the memorial service. Their stories were in response to my question, "How did you come to know Bill?" Now after reading and listening to all these new stories, at least new to me, I believe I appreciate even more what he meant to all of us. Bill Lehtinen, in the way he lived his life, has provided each of us with an example of how to go about living a full and satisfying life!

— Steve Albee

I didn't know Billy as well as I would have liked, but I do know that the chicken at the summer social was the best I've ever had.

—Chris Ipson

Compared to the founding members of CCCTU, I'm a newcomer and this is my first year on the Board of Directors. I was just getting to know Bill Lehtinen. The first time I saw him at a meeting, I thought, "I bet this guy has had a million jobs, can fix anything, and is one hell of an outdoorsman." It was written right on his weathered face. I shook my head when I read his obituary -- I was right on. I only had one beer with Lehtinen after a board meeting where he shared some stories about perch fishing on Lily Pond. While he was talking, I secretly hoped that this wouldn't be the last beer I would ever have with him. Sadly, it was. The future leaders of this Chapter will have to depend heavily on the knowledge of people like him. His presence will be sorely missed.

— Jeremy Shannon

What impressed me the most about Billy was how he dealt with complex issues in meetings. He had a way of cutting through the rhetoric and making clear, concise, and intelligent statements just when they were needed the most. When he spoke, people listened.

— Bill Leder

I never got to know Bill until CCCTU was formed in 1998. Of course, I knew of him and his exploits from comments and articles written about him by Glen Sheppard in "The North Woods Call." It was real obvious that Bill was a "cut above" in his philosophy and attitude towards the environment, in general, and especially rivers and the Keweenaw, in particular. He was dedicated to the well being of the resource. I also learned that when Bill spoke and had new ideas, it really paid to listen because what he had to say was well thought out and right on the money. Lost Lake brook trout planting was 100% his idea. He also supported the coaster reintroduction to the Keweenaw, although not necessarily in the Gratiot River. But he was at the first plant of coasters in the Gratiot in 1999 on a workday. He said "this was a \$200 day" for him to not be working but he wouldn't miss the chance to


participate in this historic and significant event. At the Summer Social last summer we talked about stocking eyed coaster eggs into the Tobacco or Traverse Rivers. That was the main reason we went on our "exploration" of the Tobacco back in July 2003. Plans are still afoot. I could go on in this vein but you get the idea.

We all lost a tremendous talent, intellect and defender of what our Chapter stands for when he died. He can't be replaced. All we can do is try to carry on with our mission and think about what Bill would do in any given situation. You don't meet very many "Billy Lehtinens" in this life. I'm just glad I got to meet one. I miss him a lot.

— Bill Deephouse

Billy was a friend to everyone, a friend to the environment, and a cherished friend of this Chapter. While he and I often talked about heading into the woods or onto the water together, regretfully, we never made the time so most of my memories of Bill are of working together on TU activities and sharing ideas about what the Chapter could do to make a difference. As an active chapter member and strong board member, I gained great respect for Billy as someone who always let his position be clearly known in an articulate and studied manner. Even if you didn't agree with him it was easy to objectively understand and respect his beliefs on a any topic. He was also committed to "finding solutions, not problems" related to the causes he believed in and could always be counted on for constructive input. If the Chapter ever needed anything done, we could turn to Billy, and if he was available he would be there in full support. If he wasn't available, it was often because he was tied up helping some other worthwhile cause. The untimely loss of Billy is a crushing blow to the whole Copper Country in so many ways. However I am confident that this Chapter will uphold his memory by continuing to restore and preserve coldwater fisheries and their watersheds while he watches over us from the banks, ready to wet his line.

— Jim Baker



ONE MORE CAST

**Newsletter of the
Copper Country Chapter
of Trout Unlimited**

Published quarterly

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Keith Anderson, Jeremy Shannon
& Bill Leder

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A Featured River: Huron Creek and its Watershed

By Steve Albee

During the last spring and summer, readers of the Daily Mining Gazette had the opportunity to become acquainted with Huron Creek, an urban stream that runs through parts of both Portage Township and the City of Houghton. Through a series of feature stories by Gazette reporters, the readers came to know a great deal about this stream. We read with interest about the stream's water quality and the different organisms that live in the channel. We were made aware of environmental issues that are having a negative impact on the water quality and on those creatures. We also learned about three organizations that have been working together to address these concerns.

Advocates

One group is Michigan Technological University's Center for Water and Society (MTCWS), which is made up of teachers, researchers, and students. The second group is the Huron Creek Advisory Committee (HCAC). This group includes local residents and representatives of area stakeholder organizations, such as our Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited. The third group is the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), a state agency, which has provided MTCWS with a \$38,667 grant to prepare a watershed management plan for Huron Creek. All three groups have a strong interest in seeing that a healthy local stream is restored and protected in Portage Township and the City of Houghton.

To undertake a program of stream restoration and protection, however, requires an objective that can create an atmosphere of community awareness and support. This becomes problematic with Huron Creek. Why? Because Huron Creek is such a transparent landscape feature. Except for very small segments of the channel, most of the stream is not seen by the everyday passerby. Secondly, the creek has no public pedestrian-friendly access to its

stream banks. Being so much out of sight, it has dropped out of most people's consciousness. Consequently, to begin an examination of our featured stream, we must first locate the channel within the watershed.

Location

Huron Creek originates west of Green Acres Road in Portage Township. The wetlands next to and south of the Ontonagon REA warehouse are its headwaters. From there its waters flow under Green Acres Road into another wetland parcel. Then it moves downhill in a northeasterly direction behind the Copper Country Mall and the Wal-Mart Super Center.

Behind these two commercial facilities, until 2005 when they were drained, Huron Creek emptied into two impoundments, referred to as Frog Pool Location. Here the stream's waters remained temporarily before proceeding downhill. From these former impoundments the stream channel was reconfigured to flow under Razorback Drive where it twists and turns for a short distance until the waters enter a narrow, tree-lined ravine between Ridge Road and Razorback Drive.

Huron Creek continues flowing along this ravine, going almost unnoticed under Sharon Avenue, passing behind Copper Country Mental Health Services and Northern Foot Care Center before it reaches Calverley Street. At this point the stream channel crosses under the highway, emerging on the north side of M-26 for a short distance before it passes under Canal Road. Emerging in Kestner Waterfront Park, the creek flows across the park grounds before discharging into Portage Lake.

The Huron Creek stream channel covers a distance of three miles from its origin in Portage Township to its discharge point at Portage Lake. Over this distance the watershed drops 458 feet in elevation, from 1,060 feet to 602 feet, mean sea level. The stream

drains a watershed that encompasses about 1,920 acres, or approximately three square miles as shown on the accompanying map.

Water quality, a measure of the health of any stream, is a function of watershed land uses. Huron Creek is no exception: its watershed land uses, both past and present, provide quite a story. It is helpful in telling this story, however, to divide the historical record into two periods -- the period before 1970 and the period after 1970, the year Houghton officially became a city. Before then, Houghton was a village, confined to a small area on a hillside along the shoreline of Portage Lake. It also was part of Portage Township.

Land Use Before 1970

Today Houghton stretches up the hill with well-developed neighborhoods and commercial areas on both sides of Huron Creek and Highway M-26 (West Memorial Drive). Until the mid-1970s, however, Houghton's west side city limits were considered to be M-26 and Huron Creek. With the exception of Dakota Heights (see map), and the former Copper Range Railroad roundhouse and switch yard, then at the base of the hill, west of M-26 was the countryside.

Between 1852 and 1945 two copper mines, the Huron and the Isle Royale, operated in the watershed. They used the waters of Huron Creek to operate stamping mills that created an excess of stamp sand. These may be leaching copper, arsenic, and mercury into the stream. Erosion of the stamp sand from deposits located directly on the stream banks has contributed to sediment buildup in parts of the stream.

When the mines ceased operations in the late 1940s, this part of the landscape acquired a new land use pattern described as one dominated by former mining locations that included clusters of residential neighborhoods; e.g., Hurontown and Dodgeville. Surrounding these

Continued on page 4

Featured River - Huron Creek, continued from page 3

neighborhoods are hundreds of acres of former industrial property that once served the mining industry. Over the years this property became large open spaces that filled in with trees and brush.

Planners/geographers Frank J. Popper of "Buffalo Commons" fame and his associate, Michael R. Greenberg, have coined a term for these former industrial properties. They call them TOADS (Temporarily Obsolete Abandoned Derelict Sites). These TOADS came to play an important role in the watershed after 1970.

Two other land uses were also sources of environmental problems. One problem has stemmed from the clusters of residential neighborhoods and the aged septic systems with inefficient drain fields that served them. The remnants of these systems continue to plague the stream today.

The second land use that created an environmental problem dealt with solid waste management. Between the 1950s and the 1970s, two landfills were operated in the watershed. The first landfill was opened in the 1950's and was closed in the early 1970's. It was adjacent to the west side of Huron Creek, between what is now Sharon Avenue and Frog Pool Street. This landfill was capped and closed in 1970, but has a long and continuing history of leaching concentrations of iron, flocculent slime, high levels of dissolved solids and ammonia, all of which are affecting water quality in Huron Creek. A second landfill was opened upon closure of the first and operated until sometime in the 1980's. Its location was the slope of the hill adjacent to Sharon Avenue which drains into Huron Creek. Its impact on Huron Creek is still being investigated.

Land Use After 1970

During the mid 1970's the section of Highway M-26 within the watershed was realigned and reconstructed. This involved widening the right-of-way and traffic lanes, and reducing the grade of the roadway up to the crest of the hill. In addition, the

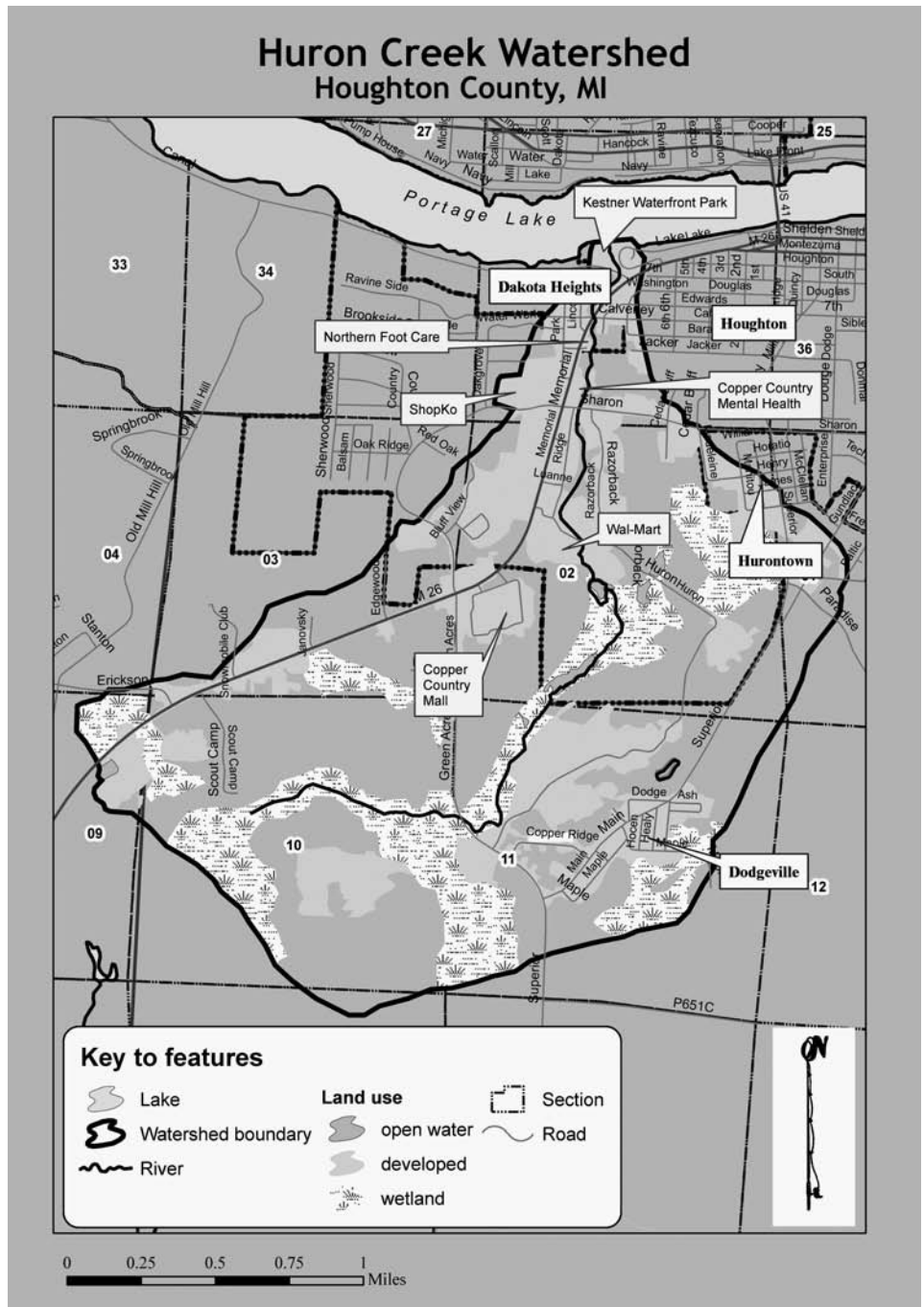
former Copper Range Railroad facilities were removed, clearing the way for the eventual construction of Kestner Waterfront Park.

The M-26 improvement project had an immediate effect on the land use adjacent to the highway. It was converted into a commercial corridor. In the following years, a major arterial street (Sharon Avenue) was built to intersect with M-26, along with a network of interior streets throughout a major portion of the watershed as expansion of commercial and residential developments called for

them. As commercial and residential expansion moved deeper into the interior of the watershed, the TOADS became valuable redevelopment properties.

Along with this expansion came additional pollution sources to negatively impact Huron Creek. Commercial development in particular increased the impervious surfaces. Runoff from roofs and parking lots containing road salts, sediments, and pollutants associated with automobiles and trucks became

Continued on page 5



Why Fuss Over Huron Creek?

By Jim Baker

This edition of *One More Cast* includes a Featured River Article on Huron Creek. I often get questioned by Chapter members and others who are curious about why we are spending effort on this watershed. The general themes of the comments include questions about its relevance to our mission driven by the reality that, even if it were healthy, it probably wouldn't support a viable trout population; or questions relating to the perceived hopelessness of repairing damage done over decades of development going all the way back to impacts from the original mineral processing activity. So why are we fussing over this little creek that even a majority of Houghton residents don't know exists, although they cross it several times a day?

Is it because we have dreams of seeing 20 inch coasters in the fall, or even 6 inch brookies any time during the year? – no. Is it because we all imagine a day when we will hold the CCCTU summer picnic on the banks of Huron Creek, including water games for the kids and a casting competition? – no. It is because this Chapter is all about conserving, protecting, and restoring the Copper Country's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds and helping everybody understand, appreciate, and respect the importance of the health of all watersheds, whether as expansive as Lake Superior, as precious as a blue ribbon trout stream, or as unnoticeable and seemingly insignificant as a small local drainage like Huron Creek.

To me, the fact that many people within the watershed are unaware of the existence of the creek is clear evidence that more needs to be done to raise awareness of the importance

and relevance of healthy watersheds to all of us. Even as it relates to impacts on Huron Creek, "we all live downstream" in one way or another. At its core, raising awareness of the importance of healthy watersheds to everybody is what the Huron Creek Advisory Committee is all about. While the results of the Committee will not turn a stream with marginal flows into a blue ribbon trout stream, it will help the residents of that and nearby watersheds develop a better understanding of how activities in any watershed ultimately result in downstream impacts that effect us all.

Development pressures on watersheds will continue as a result of the ever-expanding physical activities of humankind. Increasing the awareness of and respect for the Huron Creek watershed will not produce an urban blue ribbon trout stream, but it will result in an increased appreciation for the importance of the health of all watersheds that will enable more citizens to be participatory and effective stewards of this and other watersheds (including the blue ribbon ones) now and into the future.

I am very thankful for the efforts of CCCTU Board Members Jeremy Shannon and Don Kreher who have been willing to take time out of their busy schedules to participate in the Advisory Committee and provide relevant and substantive input into the process. This is clearly not glamorous duty for either of them and won't result in a world renown trout fishery, but I believe that the outreach effort may also help preserve other trout fisheries in the Copper Country and elsewhere.

Featured River - Huron Creek, continued from page 4

a concern. Sediment from soil erosion due to commercial and residential construction also contributed to stream degradation. Thus, there is a wide range of pollution sources that stem from land uses in the watershed. All tend to diminish the health and attractiveness of Huron Creek.

The Future

On the dark side there is no question that Huron Creek, over a long history, has been abused and ignored. The documented list of environmental issues can attest to that conclusion. If steps are not taken soon, however, the only cost-effective solution to remediating these environmental issues may be to eliminate the stream as an open drainage ditch. One course of action would be to run a covered stormwater sewer pipe down the stream's channel to drain the watershed. Such a course of action could be construed as a

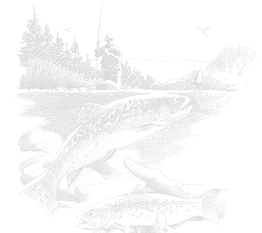
criminal act against our natural heritage. An admission that we have truly lost our way in the natural world. An acknowledgement that we have refused the responsibility to be stewards of our part of the planet.

There still is a way out of this dilemma. On the bright side, Huron Creek is still a live stream, even after all the abuse. There aren't any fish in it and water quality is spotty in places, but there are still aquatic creatures that live in the stream. This certainly indicates the stream, so far, has been able to sustain life within it. It is a sign to our Chapter, however, that we need to step forward and support the efforts of the Center for Water and Society, the Huron Creek Advisory Committee, and MDEQ.

Our mission is to conserve, protect, and restore the Copper Country's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. More broadly, we believe responsible management of all

watersheds is important for a healthy environment for both fish and humans. We see an effective management plan for Huron Creek to be a positive contribution to the local environment within the watershed and broadly to the Copper Country through general water quality improvement.

Perhaps Huron Creek may never support fish, but there is no reason, under a management plan, it cannot be returned to a condition of an attractive recreational resource. If no effort is made, what can be the future of the other streams that face similar development pressures such as Coles, Swedetown, Muggun, St. Louis and Hammel Creeks — and yes, even the Pilgrim River?



Leonard and Sally Ollila's Legacy to the People of the Copper Country

By Bill Leder

PORTAGE TOWNSHIP -- July 3, 2006, marked the passing of Leonard Ollila, friend to many a Pilgrim River trout fisherman and father of CCCTU member John Ollila. On a cold, windy late October day, Bill Deephouse and this reporter visited John. As we sat around the Jotul woodstove in the kitchen of his farmhouse, he talked about his parents.

Leonard was born on October 12, 1915 in a logging camp on the Portage/Adams Township line, the fifth child of Matt and Sanna Ollila, Finnish immigrants. The Ollila and Piipo families acquired and farmed land in the Pilgrim River valley as part of a sale by the federal government to finance the construction of the Portage canals.

Leonard grew up working on the farm – he plowed with draft animals at age 12 — but never was a farmer in adult life. He held a wide variety of jobs and worked many years with the Davey Tree Company in Ohio, Missouri, and Kansas. He served in the army in WWII and upon return married Sally in 1946, moving to lower Michigan to continue work with Davey.

After the family returned to the UP in the late 1950s, Leonard worked ten

years as a brakeman on the Copper Range Railroad, sold herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizer as a Farm Bureau agent, and finally retired after years as a sexton at Forest Hill Cemetery. Until his death Leonard lived in his house on Superior Road next to the Pilgrim River. He was a hunter and trapper, but, surprisingly, not a fisherman.

When asked how are you, Leonard's response always was, "Okay so far."

John said it was his mother who was the firm believer that their land along the Pilgrim should not be built up with houses but should remain open for fishing and hiking. His mother often took the children to the river for picnics, swimming, and thimbleberry picking, and it was from these expeditions that John's appreciation for the river and nature were formed. After Sally's death in 1997, Leonard continued the family open land policy, enjoying conversation with all who visited. Leonard had an amazing group of friends, and all will recall that when asked how are you, his response always was, "Okay so far."

John intends to continue the legacy of his parents, as the Ollila land along the Pilgrim remains available to those who respect the land by enjoying it responsibly. John has been working on a conservation easement to protect the river corridor, ensuring the property will remain wooded and that fishermen and hikers will have perpetual access.

Ray Weglarz Remembers Leonard Ollila

CCCTU charter member Ray Weglarz had this to say about Leonard. "I met Leonard Ollila in 1975 while attending Michigan Tech. My fishing buddy Mike Huntley rented the small house behind the family home, and I was a frequent visitor to the active gentleman's farm he tended. As a river front landowner Leonard was different than some of the other locals I had met at the time in that he welcomed people to enjoy and use the river and his property.

He also valued higher education and did not make disparaging remarks about Tech students. What came through, loud and clear, by his actions more than his words, was his love and respect for the land and the river and trees and the fish. My hottest sauna ever was in his sauna behind the house. He welcomed us, and didn't imply we were daft when we dragged our canoes across his farm field upstream in deep, wet snow early in April 1976 to canoe the Pilgrim from "the forks" on his property to the Portage. He was a man who planted trees, lots of them, every year. From this and many other things he did, you could tell he cared about the future, his son's future, other young peoples' future, the future of the forest and the river. For me Leonard embodied a true conservationist. He knew the resources intimately, yet didn't view them as resources but special gifts from the Creator. He was a steward of the land and river, not a selfish user.

People who knew him respected him and were grateful for his allowing access to the river through his beautiful mixed hardwoods and conifer forest. No one I knew would think of littering or abusing the land and river he let us freely use, in large part because of his example. Many years later when CCCTU approached Leonard to do stream improvement work on the Pilgrim River as it flows through his land, he not only allowed us, he welcomed us, and in spite of his advanced age, he lent a hand, a shovel, a saw and his companionship.

Many folks in conservation talk a good talk about land stewardship; Leonard didn't have to, he walked the walk. He is an inspiration in how we should all take care of our land and water resources. I will miss him a lot, but always remember him fondly. I hope CCCTU has the vision to work with his son, John, to continue to improve fish habitat, and more importantly, protect the river so all may use it — our children too."



Leonard and John Ollila at the 2005 CCCTU Summer Social

Efforts to Conserve the Pilgrim River Continue

By Bill Leder

HANCOCK — Six months ago CCCTU announced a new initiative to save part of the Pilgrim River Valley from urban development. Since that time the Chapter has been exploring various alternatives with The Forestland Group (TFG), manager of a contiguous 1,080 tract along the river. Heartwood Forestland Fund II, LP, owns the land. Several productive meetings with TFG officials, the CCCTU Board, and Evan McDonald, Executive Director of the Keweenaw Land Trust, have been held here in the Copper Country.

The Pilgrim River Tract includes approximately two miles of the Pilgrim River between Superior and Pilgrim River Roads. The land is enrolled in Michigan's Commercial Forest Program that allows non-motorized public access for hunting and fishing. TFG has agreed to consider the idea of selling the land to a public entity, or possibly participating in establishing a conservation easement so that the long heritage of public access can continue. The tract — in a completely natural setting featuring steep hills, substantial ground water flows, abundant wildlife, and a well-known trout stream — is unique because of its close proximity to an urbanizing area of some 15,000 people.

A meeting with TFG representatives Shawn Hagan and Kaarsten Turner Dalby took place in Hancock on October 3. Dalby is Senior Director of Ecological Services. She said, "Selling the land to an appropriate buyer or establishing a conservation easement so that high-value natural resources can continue to be made available to the public is consistent with the values of our company, provided necessary rates of return to our investors can be obtained." The meetings are focusing on the preferred way



Evan McDonald, Shawn Hagan, and Kaarsten Turner Dalby meeting with the CCCTU Board

to accomplish that aim, including sources of funding to make it happen.

Jim Baker, CCCTU President, said, "We believe this project is very important to the conservation of an irreplaceable cold water fishery and to our community as a whole." He continued, "We are very pleased to be

working so closely and productively with the Keweenaw Land Trust and The Forestland Group."

The CCCTU Pilgrim River Committee members are Jim Baker, Bill Deephouse, Steve Albee, and Bill Leder. Please contact any of these folks if you have questions or would like more information.



Pilgrim River in late autumn

CCCTU Contributes to Gratiot River County Park Addition

By Jim Baker

HANCOCK — During its October 25 meeting, the Board of Directors agreed to contribute \$1,000 in matching funds to help add 740 acres to the Keweenaw County Park at the mouth of the Gratiot River. If a grant from the NOAA Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) becomes reality, an additional 3,170 feet of Lake

Superior shoreline and 7,050 feet of the Gratiot River will be protected. This would bring the amount of protected area around the mouth of the Gratiot to a total of 4,770 acres, including 4.4 miles along Lake Superior.



Copper Country Chapter
P.O. Box 232
Hancock, MI 49930

2000 Michigan Chapter of the Year
2000 Silver Trout Award Winner
2004 MOWA Clean Waters Award

October 24, 2006

David Kenaga
CELCP Grant Administrator
Coastal and Land Management Unit
Environmental Science and Services Division
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
P. O. Box 30458
Lansing, MI 48909-7958
Phone 517-335-3449
Fax 517-241-0858
kenaga1@michigan.gov

Dear Mr. Kenaga,

The Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited is partnering with the Northwoods Conservancy, Keweenaw County, the Michigan Nature Association, and the Copper Country Audubon Club on the *Addition to the Gratiot River County Park, Keweenaw County, Michigan*, NOAA Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) Grant Proposal.

Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited is dedicated to conserving, protecting, and restoring the Copper Country's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. More broadly, we believe that care for all watersheds is important for a healthy fishery as well as a generally healthy environment for both fish and humans. The Gratiot River is an exceptionally important coldwater resource and fundamental to efforts by CCCTU in cooperation with Michigan DNR to revitalize the once vibrant but now struggling coaster brook trout population.

Although CCCTU was only organized in 1998, our membership has grown to around 100 members representing a cross-section of Copper Country citizens. We enthusiastically support this effort to protect the Gratiot River. Specifically CCCTU has committed \$1,000 in cash match to the project as described in the project budget.

Sincerely,

Jim Baker, President
Copper Country Chapter of Trout Unlimited

The Northwoods Conservancy is spearheading the project. We are pleased to be partnering on this vital conservation project with the Northwoods Conservancy, Keweenaw County, the Michigan Nature Association, and the Copper Country Audubon Club. The full text of CCCTU's letter of support follows.

Fall General Membership Meetings Cover a Range of Topics

By Bill Leder

HANCOCK -- An outstanding lineup of fall meetings at the Ramada Inn in Hancock included topics of wide appeal to fishing enthusiasts and those interested in the conservation of fisheries. From a renown fly fishing school to walleye tournaments to the ongoing Eagle River watershed study, there was something for almost everyone.

Michigan Council Fly Fishing School Explained

The meetings got off to an excellent start on September 14 with a presentation by Pat Merrill on the Michigan Council Fly Fishing School held every year at Ranch Rudolph on the Boardman River. Pat's father founded the school 36 years ago to provide an inexpensive, yet professionally run opportunity to learn about and experience fly fishing.



Pat Merrill talks about Ranch Rudolph

The curriculum includes a major emphasis on casting, beginning in the classroom and progressing to the lawn, ponds, and then the Boardman. Students work in small groups of two or three with lots of personal attention from volunteer instructors. For

those who don't have it, all equipment is available except waders. Pat explained that other topics including entomology, fly tying, and knots are covered, but plenty of time is reserved to actually fish. Students are grouped by their prior experience level -- from novice to expert. A Michigan Council TU official caps the classes with a graduation ceremony including a talk on conservation.

The cost of the school is around \$350, which includes instruction and meals and lodging on Friday and Saturday. There is a good mix of men and women, and youth over 14 are welcome. The Boardman River runs through Ranch Rudolph, which is located 12 miles south of Traverse City. Yes, it's in the Lower Peninsula, but looking at the DVD on the school reveals some nice country down there.

Paul Merrill (Pat's father) ran the school until 1997, when Pat assumed the leadership position. Pat ran the school until 2003, when he moved to Ironwood. His fishing experience includes five years as a guide in southwest Alaska.

Two websites are good sources of more information: www.mctu.org and www.ranchrudolph.com

MDNR to Study Walleye Tournaments

Are there effective ways to reduce fish mortality during walleye tournaments? That question was the topic of a presentation by George Madison during the CCCTU general membership meeting on October 12. Madison is the Western U.P. Fisheries Supervisor with the Michigan DNR and a frequent guest speaker during Chapter meetings.

George started by saying, "At no time has the DNR said that walleye tournaments are bad for the walleye fishery." However, the DNR plans to conduct a detailed study to investigate the impacts of walleye tournaments that have become so popular in recent years. Portage and Torch Lakes will be included. Among other tasks, an intensive netting survey at ice-out of the entire fish assemblage and a season-long creel survey are being planned. Two creel census clerks will be at work in the Keweenaw next summer.



George Madison is greeted by CCCTU President Jim Baker

George explained that mortality factors are thought to include hooking, handling, air exposure, water temperature, metabolites, trauma in live wells, and poorly organized weigh-ins. He noted that the tournament organizers are willing supporters of and will be participants in the study. A key to success is a well-designed study that will assess the total dynamics of a walleye tournament. One of the objectives is to sort out which factors can and can't be controlled.

Part of the study will compare tournament-caught and wild fish. George said that large pens will be employed to investigate dependent and independent variables and determine statistical differences between these two fish groups.

Another interesting aspect is input from a wide range of stakeholders. Groups will be formed to identify what is a socially acceptable level of mortality. The stakeholders will help establish an appropriate balance between the

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potential depletion of walleyes and the local economic benefits and recreational value of tournaments.

CCCTU would like to thank George for braving the first snowstorm of the season to travel to Hancock for the meeting.

The Eagle River Watershed Project

On November 9 Gina Nicholas, a member of the Board of Directors of the Houghton Keweenaw Conservation District (H/KCD), spoke about the Eagle River Project. The District applied for and received a grant in the amount of \$100,584 for a two-year project to develop a Watershed Management Plan.



Gina Nicholas with son Nick

The source of the grant is U.S. Environmental Protection Agency funds made available through the Federal Clean Water Act. The local match is \$15,880. The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is administering the grant. Gina said, "The Management Plan is a key first step, because once

it is approved, eligibility will have been established for Eagle River conservation projects."

The Eagle River watershed, in Keweenaw County, is comprised of 13,600 acres. Numerous copper mines were located in the watershed, generally before 1900. As a result, there are at least six stamp sand deposits in the watershed that leach copper into the water. Ten sampling points in the watershed were identified, and fieldwork was carried out earlier this year. Activities included stream flow monitoring, a habitat survey, and fish/macro-invertebrate studies.

Key tasks to be accomplished in 2007 include data tabulation and more research, identification of issues and potential solutions, definition of opportunities to conserve and protect the watershed, and public outreach meetings.

So, are there fish in the Eagle River? Casey Huckins, Assistant Professor of Biological Sciences at Michigan Tech and CCCTU member, discussed survey results in answer to that question. The electro-shocking survey work of last summer identified eight fish species. Chubs were most abundant. There were brook trout at eight of ten sites, but mostly not in large numbers. Also, there were not large quantities of macro-invertebrates, but Casey said those studies are not complete. Although studies are not complete he believes that conservation projects that mitigate the stamp sands should improve fish and insect populations.

CCCTU and Michigan Tech are two of the six partners working with the H/KCD on the Eagle River Project. CCCTU President Jim Baker said, "We are pleased to be partnering on this important effort to preserve a cold water fishery and watershed."

For more information about the Houghton/Keweenaw Conservation District, go to www.hkconserve.com

MCTU Executive Director Moves to the Nature Conservancy

By Jim Baker

After seven years of service to the Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited, Executive Director Rich Bowman stepped down from his position this past fall to become Michigan Director of Government Relations for the Nature Conservancy. The Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited is currently searching for a new person to fill the Executive Director position which, through Rich's seemingly tireless actions, has become fundamental in effectively and efficiently moving the priorities of the Michigan Council, and therefore this Chapter, forward both within the state and nationally.

The Michigan Council, composed of all of the chapters within the state of Michigan, serves as a focal point to move our collective interests forward. Through the Council we have a much louder voice

than we could ever dream to have alone. And through Rich's commitment to the Council, including each and every one of its chapters, that collective leverage was effectively brought to bear on a number of issues important to the CCCTU. One of particular importance is helping to ensure that rules established by the state for non-ferrous metal mining will help protect coldwater fisheries for generations. Probably the strongest testament to Rich's effectiveness is a quote from Michigan Senator Patti Birkholz that ran in the Michigan Council's press release announcing the move: "Rich Bowman has increased the effectiveness of the Michigan Council and has taken Trout Unlimited to be the 'go-to' conservation organization in Lansing when coldwater issues are at stake."

Even though, the Copper Country was almost 500 miles away from Rich's office in Grand Rapids, and his schedule was as full as one could imagine, Rich made the effort to come visit and discuss the activities of the Council and hear about the priorities of our Chapter. This effort to make sure our interests were represented among the Council surely made for a more productive Council and allowed us to have an effective and legitimate voice in significant issues.

While we are sad to lose an asset such as Rich, we wish him the best in his new role with the Nature Conservancy and we look forward to working with the next Executive Director to continue and build upon the momentum that Rich and the rest of the Council leadership has built.

News from the Board

By Jim Baker

This is the first in what is intended to be a regular feature covering activities of the CCCTU Board of Directors. The Board is the primary governing and decision-making body of the Chapter and represents the broader membership by working to manage meetings, special projects, and the administrative affairs of the Chapter. This includes financial management and reporting to Trout Unlimited National and the Michigan Council. The Board provides the continuity of effort needed to move projects forward and to do all we can to achieve the goals of the Chapter. Most of the Board's activities are discussed in the General Membership Meetings and also described in the minutes of those meetings. However, since a portion of our members may not be able to regularly attend meetings and may not have time to review the minutes, this feature is intended to summarize the Board's activities in brief and keep the broader membership better apprised of the Board's actions. This first installment will discuss some of our larger projects and some notable but smaller actions, as well as the general regular activities of the Board.

The single biggest project that the Board is currently working on is supporting the Chapter's efforts to maintain property along the Pilgrim River in the Commercial Forest Reserve or otherwise open to public access into the future. This activity has involved the establishment of a Pilgrim River subcommittee of the Board which is working to keep the activity moving forward by scheduling meetings with relevant stakeholders and preparing documents or proposals in support of the goal. The subcommittee members include Bill Leder, Bill Deephouse, Steve Albee, Shawn Hagan, and Jim Baker. Some of the details of this activity have been described in previous *One More Cast* articles and will be described in future articles but there is a lot of work that is done by the subcommittee and the Board as a whole on a weekly and monthly basis.

The Board also recently commissioned the 2007 board and officers nominating subcommittee. This subcommittee is composed of Shawn Hagan and Bill Deephouse. They are setting forth on the important business of recruiting members for the 2007 Board of Directors class. Each Board class serves a 3-year term and is requested to attend monthly Board meetings and actively participate in moving various projects forward. Anyone with interest in serving on the Board should contact Shawn or Bill to learn more.

Other regular business of the Board over recent meetings has included: the ongoing task of selection and recruitment of speakers for the General Membership meetings, participation in the Huron Creek Advisory Committee, work and decisions on cash and in-kind match in support of various grants by organizations including the Huron River Project, the Northwoods Conservancy, the Keweenaw Land Trust and the Houghton/Keweenaw Conservation District.

... if you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact any Board member to learn more.

Broader activities of the Board include development and management of over-arching programs like the Chapter's strategic plan, conservation agenda, annual calendar, and fundraising planning. You will hear more about these and other activities in future installments of this article. As always, if you have something that you think the Chapter should be working on, please bring it to a General Membership meeting or mention it to a Board member directly. Also, if you are interested in serving on the Board, please contact any Board member to learn more. The more participation we have, the more we can collectively achieve in support of the Copper Country's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.



General Membership Meeting Cancellation Policy

The treacherous driving conditions on October 12, due to an early winter storm, prompted the CCCTU Board to consider when and how General Membership Meetings should be cancelled in the interest of the safety of members and speakers.

If the public schools in Houghton County are closed on the day of the General Membership Meeting due to weather, the meeting is cancelled.

After discussion, it was decided that if Houghton-County Schools are closed on the day of a General Membership Meeting due to weather, then the meeting will not be held. This was deemed the best way to communicate a cancellation to the nearly 100 members of the Chapter.

**NEXT MEETING: Thursday, January 11, 2007 — 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 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