



# THE SMALLMOUTH HORIZON

*Helping to Protect and Preserve Quality Smallmouth Bass Fishing*

January 2010

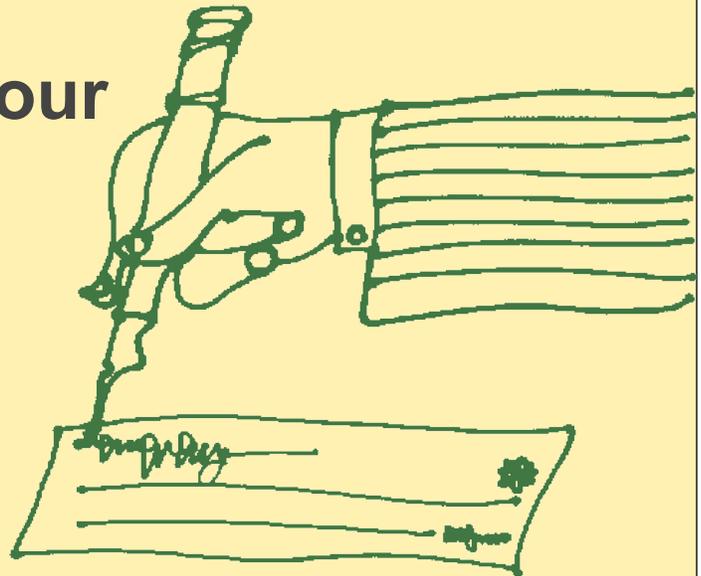
## Please renew your membership

by Mike Simon, treasurer/membership

Despite the fact that we have had many members renew, we still have over half of our members who have not. As you know, we rely on membership dues and bucket raffles to fund our speakers, maintain our website, and to publish our newsletter.

Our club depends on loyal smallmouth enthusiasts like yourself. If you have not renewed, please print out the form found in this newsletter. Better yet, consider renewing for multiple years to avoid the annual hassle.

Please take the time to renew today. Thank you!



# Fly lines and rod weights

by Steve Winters



I heard a nationally known fly fishing celebrity tell an audience that we should all, without exception, load our reels with lines that are one size larger than the weight listed on the rod. That seemed like a strange statement to make, and to be honest, got me to thinking about fly lines and rod weights that are now being sold.

I did some research on the subject, and found some information by William “Dr. Bill” Hanneman. It seems that the AFTMA (American Fishing Tackle Manufacturers Association) has set some standards for line weights.

The front 30 feet (exclusive of the tip) of a five weight line should weigh 140 grains. One would think that they might be able to assess rod weights some way or another, but apparently do not, and so it would seem that the weight designation for the rod you own was simply a matter of the manufacturer’s discretion.

That’s okay, as few of today’s lines fall into the guidelines for weight that AFTMA assigned them originally anyway. The guidelines were set in 1961, and as far as I know have not changed in the last 48 years. Before that lines were labeled on a letter system according to the diameter at the thickest point, and most lines were double tapered affairs made of silk.

I still have a rod that I bought new in 1957, and it took a size D line as I recall, though there was no labeling on the rod to indicate that. Not labeling the rod was a pretty good idea when you think about it, as it made you actually try a few different line sizes to see

which one worked the best for the primary purpose the rod would serve.

Trying the rod with a few different lines, or the line you prefer with a few different rods was a good idea then, and is a good idea to this day. Understand that a Sue Burgess 7 wt. line will probably not weigh the same, or cast the same as a 7 weight Cortland, Orvis, or Rio line. To get the maximum performance (and pleasure) from a given rod, it is probably a good idea to match it up with the line that works the best for you.

Now for the big question: if a rod that is labeled a 6 weight works best with a 7 weight line, which one is mislabeled, the rod or the line?

The rods keep getting stiffer and the lines keep getting heavier, as far as I can tell, so it is entirely possible that neither item is what it is represented to be.

The point of all this is to suggest to everyone who fly fishes not to take the labeling of either the rod or the line as an absolute. They all vary, as does most folks’ casting strokes, capabilities, distance, and accuracy requirements.

When you buy a rod, why not take the reel and line you intend to use with it along to try it out? If you have the rod you want, and are looking for a line for it, then try out various lines, rather than just buying what is someone else’s idea of the ideal line. Then you can compare the attributes of several different rod and line combinations.

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Articles, photos, information, and calendar events for the newsletter are encouraged and should be submitted by the 1st day of the month to: Dan Johnson, 426 Glenway St. Madison, WI 53711. Word files sent to: [johnson7@tds.net](mailto:johnson7@tds.net) are most appreciated.

# It's Time To Renew Your Membership!

Our membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. We rely on membership dues and our bucket raffles to fund our speakers and our newsletter. Now is the time to renew for the coming year! Please support the Smallmouth Alliance. You can renew at the next meeting, or use the form enclosed in this newsletter. Be sure to include your email address. Thank you for your continued support!

## YES, I WANT TO RENEW MY MEMBERSHIP!

Individual \$20    Family \$25

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

email \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: WSA

Mail to: Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance, Ltd.  
2701 Gust Road  
Verona, WI 53593

# Our Next Meeting:

**Tuesday,  
January 19<sup>th</sup>**

## Heath Benike on Apple River restoration

DNR Fisheries Biologist Heath Benike who covers Polk and Barron Counties in Northwest Wisconsin, will be presenting a program on the smallmouth bass restoration project on the Apple River in Polk County.

In 2009, the Woodley Dam at State Highway 8 was removed. This has restored fish passage from the headwaters of the Apple River and its main tributary, Fox Creek, downstream to the Apple River Flowage in Amery. Currently, few, if any smallmouth bass are found in this portion of river. However, the portion of river downstream from the flowage has a reproducing population of smallmouth.

The DNR's plan is to re-introduce smallmouth bass into the free flowing portions of the Apple River and Fox Creek upstream of Amery for a 3-5 year period. It is hoped that this will create a moderate density population that can sustain itself without stocking in the future, similar to the population downstream of the flowage. This portion of stream is wadeable and is on average about 70 feet in width. It has high to moderate gradient and considerable rocky substrate with numerous large boulders which create excellent smallmouth habitat. The DNR is looking for partnership resources to help support the project and assist in the restoration effort.



*Before (above)  
and after the  
dam removal.*



# Upcoming Events:

**Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup> 7:00 P.M**  
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

**Monday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 7:00 P.M**  
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

**Saturday, February 6<sup>th</sup> 8:00 A.M**  
Radisson Hotel Madison

**Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup> 7:00 P.M**  
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

**Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> 7:00 P.M**  
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

**WSA Monthly Meeting**  
Heath Benike on Apple River restoration.

**BFF Monthly Meeting**  
Robert Tomes: Muskie on the fly rod.

**BFF Spring Opener**  
Speakers, demonstrations, vendors and more

**WSA Monthly Meeting**  
T.b.a.

**BFF Monthly Meeting**  
Bill Engber and Jim Bartelt: Brule River steelhead