



THE SMALLMOUTH HORIZON

Helping to Protect and Preserve Quality Smallmouth Bass Fishing

October 2009

DNR needs help in smallmouth stocking project

WSA board seeks member input.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is currently working on a smallmouth bass restoration project on the Apple River near Amery, Wisconsin in Polk County.

Just recently, the Woodley Dam located near highway 8 was removed. Removal of this structure has now allowed fish passage on the entire Upper Apple River watershed from the Apple River Flowage in Amery to its headwaters at Staples Lake as well as Fox Creek upstream to Bone Lake.

Currently, few smallmouth bass are found in this portion of river. However, habitat conditions are conducive for smallmouth bass in the opinion of fisheries biologist, Heath Benike. He believes that the Woodley Dam was likely one of the main limiting factors for the establishment of a viable smallmouth bass fishery.

Now that the dam is gone, Heath's goal is to create a viable spawning population of smallmouth bass in the section of the Apple River and Fox Creek. He plans to stock fingerling smallmouth bass over a three to five year period. If the fish were going to take hold, this should be a sufficient introductory stocking effort to make that happen.

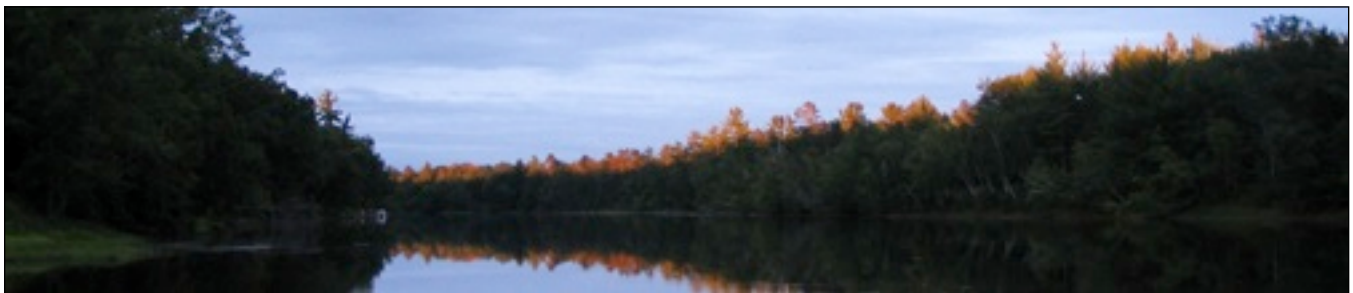
With the Apple River Flowage in Amery likely providing excellent overwintering habitat, and the riverine portion of river upstream of Amery to Staples Lake now free flowing, and providing critical spawning, nursery and summer riverine habitat, Heath is optimistic that this pulse stocking event can establish a viable natural reproducing smallmouth bass population in this portion of the Apple River Watershed.

He has submitted stocking quotas from state hatcheries for both the main section of the Apple River and Fox Creek. It is, however, unknown if this will happen. You indicated your chapter may have an interest in providing assistance.

Heath believes that if our club were able to help fund additional stocking of smallmouth bass in this reach of river, over a several year period, it would be of great help, and might be the only fish available for stocking if state resources are limited.

This year smallmouth bass are running about \$1.10 per fall fingerling from private fish farmers. Obviously the more fish stocked, the better the chance of success. A minimum effort would be approximately 2000-4000 fish stocked at two-three locations over a 3-5 year period.

Heath hopes that this unique opportunity to create a high quality, wadeable smallmouth bass fishery is something that our club would be able to support. The WSA board is requesting member feedback regarding this as a possible project.



November speaker set

Our friend Mike Pierce from Wausau will return with a new program for the November meeting. Mike has given us excellent presentations before (“Big Brookies of Kwagama Lodge”) and this time will be speaking on his “Favorite Places to Fish in the North Woods.”

Mike will offer information on locations that include smallmouth bass, panfish, trout, and salmon. This will be the premier of This program. Mike will discuss some of his favorite waters, strategies for the types of fish in each, and suggest best times of the year for maximum success.

One part of this program will help anglers find sites Mike and Joanie consider “two hour wonders.” These are smallmouth stream and river locations that are accessible to wading anglers that

offer good, wadable smallmouth habitat that can be covered by one or two anglers in the two hours before dusk.

Mike and his wife Joanie have been enthusiastic fly fishers since 1985. Originally they targeted trout in the spring creeks of northeastern Iowa and southwestern Wisconsin. In the early 1990's they branched out into smallmouth bass and other warmwater fish, with annual trips to Sylvania wilderness and other northern Wisconsin destinations. Since moving to Wausau, Wisconsin in 2000, Mike and Joanie have focused more on warmwater fly fishing and smallmouth bass than they have on trout. Their programs are a combination of great photography, useful information, and solid strategies that instruct and entertain.



Last month's program presenter, Tim Holschlag enjoyed a day on the Wisconsin River hosted by Mike Simon and Steve Winters

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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 are most appreciated.



Above: Rick Reece measures one of his fat Menominee River smallies: Below: Andy Davidson and Bob Selk got their turns in the front of Rick's canoe at some of the river's beautiful fish as well.



Our Next Meeting:

**Tuesday,
October 20th**

Mike Jacobs: The Smallies of the Maquoketa

Mike Jacobs, owner the Hawkeye Fly Tyer in Monticello, Iowa will present a program on the Maquoketa River in northeastern Iowa. 2009 is the 20th anniversary for special regulations on a portion of this very productive smallmouth fishery, and Mike will inform us of the possibilities the fishery offers to anglers.

This should be an exceptional program for our members who would like to visit a fishery that often produces fifty-fish days and is just over a two hour drive from Madison.



Photo courtesy of Ward Bean of warmwaterflytyer.com

Upcoming Events:

Tuesday, October 20th 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

Monday, October 26th 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

Tuesday, November 17th 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

Monday, November 23rd 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

Tuesday, December 15th 7:00 P.M
Mapletree Restaurant, McFarland

WSA Monthly Meeting
Mike Jacobs on the Maquoketa River

BFF Monthly Meeting
Trash & Treasure Night!

WSA Monthly Meeting
Mike Pierce: "Favorite Places to
Fish in the North Woods"

BFF Monthly Meeting
TBA

WSA and BFF Holiday Banquet