

WRTU Chapter May 2026 Newsletter

Chapter Report

by John Simonson, WRTU Chapter President

Finally, this Spring seems to have settled down. The trout streams are in great shape, the black flies are buzzing around our heads, the mayflies and caddisflies are hatching, and the trout are looking up. Soon the pesky mosquitoes will be out in force. That is all part of life in Northwest Wisconsin.

Earlier this Spring we held our Fly Tying Social Event and Pizza Party at the Sawmill Saloon. We had the best attendance ever for the event with around 50+ attendees. Many people came to learn how to tie flies and talk about fly fishing with us.



That was followed by our first ever, WRTU Coldwater Conservation Symposium on April 18th at Lakewoods Resort in Cable. We had a great attendance, many of which were not members. They got to learn more about WRTU Chapter's conservation efforts and listen to three wonderful presenters. Mike Miller from the DNR talked about the neonic insecticide issues; Paul Cunningham from the DNR talked about the Brook Trout Preserves program, and Emily Stone, from the Cable Natural History Museum, had a wonderful loon presentation. This was followed by a social hour with loads of delicious food. I have received a lot of thank you notes and praise from our attendees.

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WRTU Chapter just wrapped up our Ashland High School fly tying and fly casting class. This class started in January with fly tying classes almost every week. Dick Berge and Bob Traczyk did an excellent job teaching the 18 high school students. Larry Mann and Wendy Williamson lead the fly casting class in the Ashland High School gym. On May 7th, the class went to Les Voight Fish Hatchery and used their fly fishing skills and flies they tied to catch brood trout in the ponds. I took the students to Pike Creek to collect and learn about the aquatic macroinvertebrates in our trout streams, while Larry Mann, Wendy Williamson, Jason Nelson, and Dick Berge assisted the students catching the trout in the ponds. A special thank you to Sandra Dee Nass, she is the teacher for the class and without her this class would not happen.

NPS Wisconsin has been filming the fly fishing students this Spring. I was told it will air sometime in late Fall.

On May 8th, eleven Ashland High school students and Sandra Dee Ness joined WRTU chapter members, a couple non-members, and Nate Thomas from the DNR to plant tree seedlings along the South Fork of the White River in the White River State Fishery Area south of Delta, Wisconsin. We planted 2000+ tree seedlings which was followed by a WRTU lunch for all 22 attendees. PBS filmed this as well.

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Other good news... Landmark Conservancy is in the final stages of acquiring the White River property upstream of the White River dam, presently owned by Northland College. WRTU Chapter has agreed to donate \$5,000 for purchase of White River property. Kim McCarthy from the Wisconsin State Council has agreed to donate \$27,000 of Watershed Funds to the project. The White River property purchase is targeted for completion in August of 2026.

WRTU Upcoming Events 2026

Kids Fishing Day

Location: Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center, Ashland

Date: Saturday, June 6, 2026

Time: 9:00am – 1:00pm

Notes: Volunteers be there by 8:00am

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Volunteers needed to help with the kids fishing, email:

tu.wildrivers@gmail.com

Trout Habitat Workdays

Dates: June 9 thru 12, 2026

Location: Weirgor Springs Wildlife Area, near Exeland

Time: TBD

Volunteers needed to help, email: tu.wildrivers@gmail.com

Clam River State Fishery Area June Workdays

Dates: June 22 & 23, 2026

Location: North Fork of Clam River, Heart Lake Road

Time: 9:00 am to 2:00pm

Volunteers needed to help with the kids fishing, email:

tu.wildrivers@gmail.com

Clam River State Fishery Area July Workdays

Dates: July 13 & 14, 2026

Location: North Fork of Clam River, Heart Lake Road

Time: 9:00 am to 2:00pm

Volunteers needed to help with the kids fishing, email:

tu.wildrivers@gmail.com

North Fish Creek – trail access brushing

Dates: July/August

Location: Karaba Road

Volunteers needed to help with the kids fishing, email:

tu.wildrivers@gmail.com

DNR Electroshocking

Location: North Fish Creek and Pine Creek (Old US Hwy2)

Date: Early September

Notes: Two volunteers needed

Volunteers needed to help with the kids fishing, email:

tu.wildrivers@gmail.com

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Giving Back

by John Simonson, WRTU Chapter President

Wild Rivers TU Chapter is a non-profit, cold-water conservation organization that is made up of all volunteers. No one, including the chapter's Board of Directors, is paid. All the money we receive through donations and fund-raising events goes directly to stream projects or educational events within our northwest Wisconsin seven county area. Also, all the work we do with the DNR, national forest service, and US FWS on our northern streams is through volunteers.

Without volunteers and generation donations we would not exist. So please consider helping us by becoming a volunteer or donating. We all enjoy our cold water streams and rivers so please consider finding some way to contribute to our chapter.

When donating you can specify where you would like it applied to; such as White River State Fishery Area, Clam River State Fishery Area, Fish Creek fishermen access fund, Mosquito Brook donation, WRTU conservation education fund, veteran fund, or just a general donation. We keep specified donations in different WRTU accounting categories.

We are in the planning stages for a WRTU member gathering over the summer. I hope you will join us for a fun afternoon and project discussion.