



The Flyline

The Newsletter of the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association

December 2022



Fall on Paint Creek
Photo by Dave Weesner
(check beaver activity!!)

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The President's Hatch

Sometimes it does one good to look back and see where one has been and what one has accomplished. The "one" in the previous sentence refers to an individual (that being me in this case) and as an organization (that being the HFFA).

From my first President's Hatch on February 24, 2017

I'm really looking forward to working as your president for the next two years. This is a time when the ecosystems that affect the streams of Iowa are under continued threat. As society becomes more urban and the number of mentors becomes smaller, we all are going to have to step up to the plate and do our share if not a little more than our share. I hope to lead the HFFA through the next two years by example and with strong encouragement. Together we can make a difference. That's difficult to do as an individual, but each individual effort when combined can help to make positive changes in the fishing and water quality in Iowa.

Well, those two years took longer than anyone would have expected, a full six years. A pandemic could have set us years behind, but a great group of individuals on the HFFA board prevented that. In previous editions of the "Flyline," a list of stream restorations, acquired easements, and environmental support was published. I would really like to thank the HFFA board and all of the HFFA members for making all of this happen. I'm certain that the next president and board will continue this work with the help of the members.



John Carl Miller

That said, none of this would be possible without the support of the members of the HFFA. As president, I have become aware of the number of life members that we have and I am astonished by the donations that are above the required dues. Thanks to all of you for your membership and for your contributions.

Most of you know that I am a "people person" and take the opportunity to talk with who ever I run into (some would say that I talk too much). Sometimes that can be a big advantage. It's amazing how many people that I run into on a stream that have no idea the HFFA or its chapters exist. My parting suggestion would be that the HFFA should have business cards printed and distributed to each member. (maybe a dozen when they

renew their membership) so that they can pass them out on the stream or even in the bar or grocery store. It might be nice to list the chapters, their respective cities, and a contact person (with e-mail address). It might require a yearly printing as contact persons change, but could be well worth it.

It's been a great six years and a very productive six years. It's been a pleasure sharing my passion for the environment with a like group of similarly passionate outdoors persons. I have faith that the HFFA will continue to be one of the premier outdoor organizations.

John



Scott Norby, Dave Whitlock & Charlene Whitlock
Dave Whitlock died 11-24-2022



**Help Support
Port-a-Potties at N&S Bear Creeks
Go Fund Me**
<https://www.gofundme.com/port-a-potty>

Contacts & Meetings

2022 Board of Directors

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dbqflyfisher@mchsi.com

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Cedar Rapids, IA 52408
mullinb1427@yahoo.com

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209 S. Vail
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katelodge25@gmail.com

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3114 34th Place
Des Moines, IA 50310
macerbo@iastate.edu

CR/IC, Director

Vacant

Davis Horton, Conservation Chair

dhorton@hardincountyia.gov
515-577-6619

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing

Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday of Month
7 to 9 pm

Paralyzed Veterans of America
Iowa Chapter

7025 Hickman Road Ste #1
Urbandale, IA

Contact: Dale Sanders
iaflyfisher@outlook.com

Quad Cities Chapter

Meets 3rd Thursday Every Month
6:00 pm to 8+

QCCA Expo Center
2621 4th Ave. Rock Island

Contact: John Channon
jc.channon@mchsi.com

Dubuque Fly Fishers

Meets 2nd & 4th Monday 7:00 pm
September to May

Swiss Valley Nature Center
13606 Swiss Valley Rd., Dubuque,
IA

Contact: Gary Woerdehoff
garyruth15@gmail.com
facebook.com/dubuqueflyfishers

Central Iowa Fly Fishers

Meets 3rd Saturday 9:00 am
September to May

Our Lady's Immaculate Heart
Church

510 East 1st St., Ankeny, IA
Contact: Kirk Rosenow
kcrosenow@gmail.com

Iowa City Contact

Contact: Ryan Maas
maas_ryan@yahoo.com

Cedar Rapids Contact

Contact: Lance Zook
l.a.zook@mchsi.com

TROUT UNLIMITED

NORTH BEAR CHAPTER

Meetings held second Thursday
of month

September – May, Starting at
6:30 pm.

The Tavern Pizza & Pasta Grill
1755 50th St.

West Des Moines, IA

Website: tu-northbear.org

David Klemme - President

president@tu-northbear.org

TROUT UNLIMITED

DRIFTLESS CHAPTER

Meets the first Thursday of the
month October through May @

7:00 pm in the basement of
T-Bocks Sports Bar and Grill,

206 Water St. Decorah

www.iadriftless.org

Iowa Women Fly Fishers

Join us for good fishing
and good company .

[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/170891783425206](https://www.facebook.com/groups/170891783425206)

katelodge25@gmail.com

willacamp@gmail.com

Trout Unlimited

Spring Creeks Chapter

Ray Thys – President

Check Their Facebook

www.facebook.com/springcreekstu

Iowa's Coldwater

Conservancy

Tom Murray

jandtmurray@gmail.com

Event Calendar

<p><u>December 2022</u></p> <p><u>January 2023</u></p> <p>January ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cancelled for 2023 Southern Wisconsin TU Icebreaker American Family Insurance Madison, WI www.swtu.org</p> <p><u>February 2023</u></p> <p>February ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cancelled for 2023 Badger Fly Fishers Fly Fishing Spring Opener American Family Insurance Madison, WI www.badgerflyfishers.com</p> <p>February 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wisconsin TU Council Banquet Oshkosh, WI Scott Allen jscottallen12@gmail.com</p> <p><u>March 2023</u></p> <p>March 10 - 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HFFA Annual Meeting & Show FFA Enrichment Center 1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway Ankeny, IA 50023 Kirk Rosenow kcrosenow@gmail.com Willa Campbell willacamp@gmail.com</p> <p>March 17 - 19</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo Hamline University St. Paul, MN info@greatwatersflyexpo.com</p>	<p>March 23 - 25</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Sowbug Roundup 2023 Baxter County Fairgrounds Mountain Home, AR www.sowbugroundup.org</p> <p>March ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Iowa Spring Creeks TU Rendezvous 9 AM to 4 PM Eagles Club Monticello, Iowa</p> <p><u>April 2023</u></p> <p>April ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Driftless TU Work Day 9:00 AM to noon 1280 Quandahl Rd 1 mile East of Highlandville Steve Perry 641-583-1604</p> <p><u>May 2023</u></p> <p>May 10 - 12</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HFFA Bluegill Outing Lake Wapello Drakesville, IA Dan Peterson dpeterson578@gmail.com</p> <p><u>June 2023</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics wisconsinwomenflyfishing@gmail.com</p> <p><u>July 2023</u></p> <p>July 31</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Deadline for State fair Tying Contest</p> <p><u>August 2023</u></p>	<p><u>September 2023</u></p> <p>September ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Brule river Spey Day Lake Superior Steelhead Assn. Brule river@ McNeil House Brule, WI www.steelheaders.org</p> <p>September ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2023 Driftless Flyathon Decorah, Iowa flyathon@driftlessonthefly.com</p> <p><u>October 2023</u></p> <p>October ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2023 Casting for Recovery Camp Ewalu's Stone Retreat Center Strawberry Point, IA 52076 norrisl@ihaonline.org</p> <p>October ?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Driftless TU Work Day 9:00 AM to noon 1280 Quandahl Rd 1 mile East of Highlandville Steve Perry 641-583-1604</p> <p><u>November 2023</u></p> <p><u>December 2023</u></p>
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The Flyline is the official publication of the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association. It is published in April, June, September, and December. The HFFA is a chapter of the Fly Fishers International. Articles may be submitted as MS Word or as a text file. Typed, printed or clearly handwritten documents are also accepted. Photos can be submitted digitally. Send original jpeg. Deadline is one month before publication. Send all materials to:

Don Otto, The Flyline Editor
hawkeyeflyfisher@gmail.com
 641-230-1468

2023 HFFA Fly Fishing Show

Save the Date
HFFA Annual Meeting and Show
March 10, 11, & 12th, 2023
FFA Enrichment Center
1055 SW Prairie Trail Parkway
Ankeny, IA 50023
Kirk Rosenow
kcrosenow@gmail.com
Willa Campbell
willacamp@gmail.com

2023 HFFA Annual Meeting and Show Facts

1. First we would like to Thank Kevin Hansen of Rod & Rivet Fly Shop for being the principal sponsor of the 2023 Show. Rod & Rivet is a full service fly shop located at 5804 Franklin Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50332. Contact by phone 515-255-5086 or online at rodandrivet.com. Kevin and Kirby are very knowledgeable fly fishers and offer fly tying classes, guided trips and all the fly fishing tackle and accessories to make your fly fishing experience memorable..
2. Registration this year will be online at the HFFA website hawkeyeflyfishing.com. Registration will be a simple process. You can pay using any credit or debit card. HFFA is using PayPal to process the transaction. You do not need a PayPal account. A successful transaction will be followed by an online message you were successful followed by a email with an attached pdf Thanking you for the registration. If you do not get those two things something interfered with a completed transaction. An outdated credit card has been responsible in the past. If you are frustrated please contact either the co chairs listed above or hawkeyeflyfisher@gmail.com.
3. Friday night is something new. It is planned as a family night encouraging young fly fishers. Demonstrations and hands on fly tying, knot training and casting will be available. Our favorite bug guys (entomologists) will be there with all sorts of insects and explaining life cycles. There is a rumor of a pizza party.
4. Our speaker list is growing with the addition of John Van Vliet author of "Trout fishing in Northeast Iowa" and Zack Pope of TroutRoutes (online maps to trout streams). More to come.
5. The usual opportunities to win or buy stuff with games, bucket raffles, Grand Prize Raffle, silent and live auction.
6. If you have donations of items for the live auction, silent auction or bucket raffles contact Kirk at kcrosenow@gmail.com.
7. The annual business meeting will be at noon on Saturday. Election of officers, a slight change in the bylaws and other decisions by the membership will occur. The business lunch will be a "Big" club sandwich, chips, pasta, fruit salad and a cookie. Cost of the lunch is \$15. Note that this lunch is not included in the preregistration special.
8. Banquet will be held Saturday night. Awards, live auction, and entertainment with a great meal. The banquet buffet will be choice of carved beef tri-tip or chicken spiedini, twice baked potato casserole, cheesy corn, fall salad (romaine lettuce, strawberries and pecans), dessert bars. The banquet is from Rib Shack award winner in the State Fair best new food item for 2022. Disclaimer that weight gain is your problem. Cost is \$30 per person or best deal in preregistration show special.
9. See the featured speaker bios, grand prize raffle rod package and photo& essay contest rules in the pages that follow.
10. A block of rooms at the La Quinta Hotel 2402 SE Tones Drive, Ankeny, Iowa are offered at \$109.95 per night. Call 515-963-9500 and ask for the HFFA special.

Editors Note

Details for the show are evolving and the date the online registration starts will be in December
Check the website for progress.

A big Thank you to the small group of dedicated members planning this event!

Don

2023 HFFA Fly Fishing Show

JOIN US FOR:

FRIDAY FAMILY NIGHT WHERE KIDS LEARN TO CAST, TIE FLIES, PLAY GAMES, AND MORE!

FREE CASTING LESSONS FOR KIDS AND ADULTS

SIGNATURE FLY TYERS (PIKE, MUSKY, BASS, CARP, AND MORE)

FISHING VENDORS FROM ACROSS THE MIDWEST

LOCAL EXPERT PRESENTATIONS ON COLDWATER AND WARMWATER FLY FISHING

AUCTION AND RAFFLE ITEMS

FOOD, DRINKS, AND A GOOD TIME!



WITH HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS AT
ROD & RIVET

FLY FISHING SHOW

MARCH 10-12, 2023

FFA Enrichment Center

1055 SW Prairie Trail Pkwy, Ankeny, IA 50023

FRIDAY FAMILY NIGHT! (5 PM - 9 PM), SATURDAY (8 AM - 6 PM), SUNDAY (8 AM - 12 PM)



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

PAT DORSEY

COLORADO FISHING GUIDE, AUTHOR, AND FLY DESIGNER



MATT SUPINSKI

MICHIGAN FISHING GUIDE AND RENOWNED AUTHOR



[HTTPS://HAWKEYEFLYFISHING.COM/](https://hawkeyeflyfishing.com/)



2023 SHOW SPONSOR



FOR DETAILS ABOUT THE SHOW, SCAN THE QR CODE USING THE CAMERA ON YOUR SMART PHONE DEVICE.

Grand Prize Raffle

Douglas Sky G
9FT 5WT



Orvis Hydros II with Orvis
Hydros Trout Fly Line



ORVIS
DOUGLAS

ROD & RIVET

2023 HFFA Fly Fishing Show Speaker



Pat Dorsey

A native of Colorado, Pat Dorsey has been guiding for nearly 30 years. Pat Dorsey spends well over two hundred days a year on the water, a combination of guiding customers, hosting destination travel-trips, and personal days on the water.

Pat Dorsey is the head guide and co-owner of the Blue Quill Angler fly shop in Evergreen, Colorado. He oversees and trains more than 25 guides, setting the standard for integrity and professionalism in the Blue Quill Angler guide operation. Dorsey also, maintains an online stream report that monitors stream flows and conditions for the Blue, Colorado, South Platte (Cheesman, Deckers, Spinney Mountain Ranch, and Elevenmile Canyon), North Fork of the South Platte, and Williams Fork Rivers.

Pat Dorsey is a Simms Ambassador, a member of the Sage Elite Pro Team, Fishpond Ambassador, Orvis Pro Team Member, Yeti Pro staff, and Scientific Anglers pro staff. Pat Dorsey is the *Southwest Field Editor* for Fly Fisherman Magazine.

In 2005, Pat authored the book, *A Fly Fishing Guide to the South Platte River*, a complete how-to fly fishing manual for the entire South Platte River drainage. It encompasses a thorough look at each section of the river detailing the hatches and recommended fly patterns for each of the four seasons of the year.

In 2009 Pat Dorsey authored *Fly Fishing Tailwaters*, a comprehensive book on how to fish tailwater fisheries. In 2010 a companion book to *Fly Fishing Tailwaters* hit the shelves, *Tying and Fishing Tailwater Flies*, which is jam-packed with how to tie Pat Dorsey's favorite "guide flies". This book includes 500 step-by-step tutorials, as well as, helpful tips and illustrations on how to rig and fish them. His latest book is *Colorado Guide Flies*, which was released in 2015. It features tips from the state's best guides and includes approximately 600 proven guide flies with recipes. In 2020 Dorsey revised his book *Fly Fishing Guide to the South Platte River*, which includes complete updates, new photos, hatch charts, and maps.

Pat Dorsey is an accomplished fly tier and has originated a number of very effective patterns such as the Mercury series, UV scud, Limeade, Cherry-Limeade, Paper Tiger, Top Secret Midge, Medallion Midge and the famed Black Beauty. Although Pat Dorsey no longer has the time to tie flies commercially, he once produced over 28,000 flies in a year. Dorsey is a fly designer for Umpqua Feather Merchants. His signature flies are available at the Blue Quill Angler and other specialty fly shop throughout the United States. Pat Dorsey is also a Pro Team Member for Whiting Farms. Many of his flies incorporate Whiting Farm products.

Pat Dorsey is a nationally known speaker. He travels the United States sharing his passion for fly fishing at trade shows and private fishing clubs. He is very active in Trout Unlimited and the conservation of cold-water fisheries.

Pat Dorsey is the proud father of three wonderful boys, Forrest, Zach, and Hunter. He is also blessed with two step children, Nicole and Michael Richardson. They, like their dad, enjoy fly fishing. His wife, Kim, is an avid angler and often appears with Pat at trade shows and other speaking engagements. Kim and Pat Dorsey, also, host a yearly trip to Alaska Sportman's Lodge each September, Soaring Eagle Lodge in October, Nomadic Waters in Brazil in November, and Rio Manso Lodge (Patagonia) each April and December with a group of clients.

2023 HFFA Fly Fishing Show Speaker



Mathew Supinski

Matthew Supinski is a book author/editor/ fly fishing guide/outfitter/hospitality hotel/restaurant consultant/DVD producer/ instructor, lodge owner and operator, free-lance writer and photographer, book author and culinary trained chef from Newaygo, Michigan. He has been fly fishing and cooking/foraging the wilds since the age of seven for 46 years, having been brought up in the Niagara Frontier of upstate New York and spending time as a boy in Poland.

His degrees are from the Ohio State University- B.A School of Business, and the Culinary Institute of America. Prior to being a full-time fly fishing guide/writer/author, he was in the international corporate hotel business working in Europe and the U.S. for several hotel chains- Sheraton, Omni, Renaissance and Westin hotels as a corporate food and beverage director overseeing multiple hotels throughout North America. His highest attained position was Assist. V.P. of Corporate Food and Beverage for Omni International Hotels and V.P. of Food and Beverage for the Amway Hotel Corporation at the Amway Grand Plaza. He is very familiar with Mobile/AAA/Michelin rating systems and food critics with various Hotel/Restaurant industry and national publications. He has written countless magazine articles in the 1980-early 90's/2000's for Hotel/Restaurants/Resort and Culinary magazines.

In 1995, he opened his Gray Drake and Trout & Eagle Lodges on Michigan's Muskegon River- one of the purest freshwater aquifer systems in North America(www.graydrake.com), which he and his wife Laurie have been operating for 20 years.

He guides clients for trout, steelhead and salmon 280 days a year on Michigan's Great Lakes Rivers like the Muskegon, Pere Marquette, Big Manistee and St. Joseph and for Atlantic salmon on upper Michigan Rivers and lakes. He has fished from Russia to all of Europe, the U.K., and Patagonia, Iceland and extensively throughout all of North America including Canada from the Atlantic Maritimes to British Columbia's Skeena system.

2023 HFFA Fly Fishing Show

Photo Contest Rules

1. All entries must be 8 x 10 prints.
2. Subject matter must clearly relate to some aspect of fly fishing and its environs. Only HFFA members may enter the contest.
3. All submissions become the property of the HFFA, and may be used for any purpose deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.
4. Judging will be by popular vote of the membership in attendance on Saturday of the Annual Meeting. Each member will receive one ballot to vote for his or her favorite photo. The photo with the most ballots wins. Second and third place prizes will also be awarded. Prizes will be gift certificates: \$100 for first, \$75 for second and \$50 for third.
5. In the event of a tie, the winner will be drawn at random from the entries that were tied (e.g., if entry #1 and entry #2 tied for 2nd place, a drawing is held and the entry that is drawn gets 2nd place and the other would get 3rd place).
6. Winners will be announced during the Annual Meeting Banquet.
7. There is no limit to the number of entries, but each person may only win once (e.g., if Jane Roe submits 2 photos and each would have won a prize, the higher prize will be awarded to Jane and the lower prize will go to the photo that had the next highest number of votes).
8. Photos received before February 10, 2023, will be assured of having a frame for display. Depending on the number of entries, photos received after that date might not get framed.
9. If the source of the photo is digital, a email with the source file is preferred & greatly appreciated.
10. Send photos to the address listed below.

Essay Contest Rules

1. Entries must not exceed 2,000 words in length. Shorter essays are welcomed.
2. Subject matter must clearly relate to some aspect of fly fishing and its environs. Only HFFA members may enter the contest.
3. All submissions become the property of the HFFA and may be used for any purpose deemed appropriate by the Board of Directors.
4. Judging will be by popular vote of the membership in attendance Saturday at the Annual Meeting. Each member will receive one ballot to vote for his or her favorite essay. The essay with the most ballots wins. Second and third place prizes will also be awarded. Prizes will be gift certificates: \$100 for first, \$75 for second and \$50 for third.
5. In the event of a tie, the winner will be drawn at random from the entries that were tied (e.g., if entry #1 and entry #2 tied for 2nd place, a drawing is held and the entry that is drawn gets 2nd place and the other would get 3rd place).
6. Winners will be announced at the Annual Meeting Banquet.
7. There is no limit to the number of entries, but each person may only win once (e.g., if John Brown submits 2 essays and each would have won a prize, the higher prize will be awarded to John and the lower prize will go to the essay that had the next highest number of votes).
8. If the essay is available as a digital text document, an email with the source file is greatly appreciated.
9. To give due consideration, essay submissions must be sent by email or US Mail no later than February 10, 2023
10. Send essays (electronic copies encouraged) to:

HFFA PHOTO & ESSAY CONTESTS
Don Otto
730 Lucas St..
Knoxville, Iowa 50138
Or send via email to: hawkeyeflyfisher@gmail.com

Don

HFFA Members Support Casting for Recovery

The first weekend in October found Casting for Recovery Iowa Chapter's fall retreat in full swing. HFFA members supported CFR with their help. Mick and Lisa McVey, long time HFFA members, help to organize this event. It was held at the Ewalu Stone Retreat Center just outside Strawberry Point, Iowa. This year 12 women, chosen from the registration process, learn all aspects of fly fishing and fly tying ending with fly fishing a day on the great NE Iowa trout streams.

Each participant is paired up with a "river helper". Some of the river helpers are as follows: Ron Stahlberg, Willa Campbell, Kate Lodge, Cheryl Channon, Mike Jacobs, Martin Acerbo, Lance Zook, Ronda Long, Dave Jones, Andy Totman, Jonathan Schmidt, and Lisa Davis. Many of these folks are HFFA members.

CFR covers all the expenses and supplies all the equipment for the fly fishing experience. Exile Brewing Company in Des Moines is a major supporter. Their "Ruthie Beer" is sold with one dollar going to CFR for each Ruthie sold. It is our understanding there is a non-alcoholic Ruthie also. Exile is hosting an event October 13th at their location on Walnut Street from 5:00 to 8:00 pm with 50% of proceeds to go to support CFR.

The Iowa chapter has been holding this retreat since 2013 with one year cancelled due to COVID. CFR is a great organization and prior participants sing the praises of this retreat each year. Watch for the registration request for 2023. (editor's note: Mike Jacobs, Lisa Davis & Mick and Lisa McVey supplied information and photos for this article)



Upper left Patty Berryman with nice rainbow. Upper right Dayna Carpenter with river helper Martin Acerbo
Below Traci Welch with Fish On!



Save Bloody Run Creek

by Steve Veysey & Larry Stone

Amidst the beauty of deep-cut limestone valleys, towering cliffs, subterranean caves, sinkholes, and cold-water springs, the karst region of NE Iowa, SE Minnesota, and SW Wisconsin is known far and wide as the Driftless Area. Bloody Run Creek, an Outstanding Iowa Water, runs into the Mississippi River at Marquette, Iowa, population 448. Sinkholes, often leading to underground caves and springs, form in the fractured and soluble limestone underneath shallow layers of till and are direct conduits for pollution to enter the aquifer within minutes.^[1]

The “Committee to Save Bloody Run,” local community groups, and the Iowa Chapters of the Sierra Club and Trout Unlimited, are working together to protect this unique ecosystem from a new, 12,000-head cattle feedlot built in Bloody Run Creek’s headwaters.

The Problem

In 2017, Supreme Beef LLC, began construction of a concentrated animal feeding operation (CAFO). Six massive cattle barns have been built adjacent to five sinkholes. A lagoon, located in the middle of a FEMA floodway, was approved for the industrial effluent associated with a planned methane digester. When the digester plan was scrapped, however, the lagoon site became a 39-million gallon earthen manure basin. Under Iowa law, earthen manure basins are prohibited in karst terrain unless there is 25 feet of separation to the bedrock. Here, bedrock is less than 10 feet below the bottom of this basin.

The “nutrient management plan” (NMP) required for the operation projected spreading 30 million gallons of liquid manure per year on nearby fields in the watersheds of Bloody Run Creek and nearby streams at rates of 17,600 gallons per acre. Most of the fields are designated by NRCS as highly erodible land, sinkholes are everywhere, and glacial till topsoil is thin. The underlying fractured limestone and dolomite are direct conduits for pollution to move quickly from the surface to both shallow and eventually deeper aquifers. Iowa Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR’s) own studies list these aquifers as very vulnerable to surface pollution.

The collective protectors of Bloody Run Creek have challenged the storm water permit, the nutrient management plan, NRCS conservation plan implementation, and the water withdrawal permit. In addition, they filed an Iowa Senate ethics complaint, and two court cases are pending.

The Clean Water Act (CWA) regulates point source pollution, yet in Iowa, most pollution is agricultural non-point source pollution which creates more hurdles in legally challenging water quality issues. This is why it is even more important that the CWA programs that apply to waters in agricultural areas, such as those relevant in Bloody Run Creek – water quality standards, antidegradation, CAFO NPDES permits, TMDLs, and construction storm water permits – be properly implemented.

Overdue Designation of Uses

In 2002, the DNR revealed that 83% of the state’s river and stream miles were designated only for “general use” without any numerical water quality criteria. The 17% of streams with water quality criteria had been assigned “protected flows,” which meant the volume of water used in calculating NPDES point source permit dilutions was not always in the stream. For most of the first decade of the 2000s, a coalition of environmental advocacy groups led by the Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club challenged EPA’s approval of these state’s water quality standards that did not meet the requirements of the CWA. The coalition prevailed, resulting in the presumption that all Iowa waters support aquatic life and recreational uses. Over a five-year period, every perennial river and stream segment was subjected to a scientific analysis called a Use Attainability Analysis (UAA) to confirm or rebut that presumption. In the waters that were confirmed to support aquatic life and recreation, hundreds of small municipalities and unsewered communities were required to upgrade their infrastructure, often to prevent direct discharges into agricultural tile lines. This significant achievement was heralded nationwide.

Establishment of Antidegradation Policy and Methods

At the same time, fishing groups in the coalition pushed for the establishment of Antidegradation Policies and Methods for “Outstanding Iowa Water” (Tier 2.5) and “Outstanding National Water” (Tier 3) categories that were totally absent from Iowa water quality standards. The result was a Tier 2.5 category with 31 stream segments and two lakes designated as “Outstanding Iowa Waters” for their exceptional recreational or ecological significance. Twenty-nine of those segments are trout streams located in the north-eastern Iowa part of the Driftless Area, including Bloody Run Creek. Amidst a state with countless sediment-laden, nitrate-polluted, and bacteria-riddled streams, the coalition thought they had protected a few precious gems, but there was more to the story because the agriculture industry in Iowa wields extraordinary influence in the way the CWA is implemented and enforced.

TMDLs Lagging Behind

In the late 1990s, the Sierra Club successfully sued the state of Iowa for not enforcing TMDL requirements. Bloody Run Creek has been on Iowa’s impaired waters list for bacteria since 2010. Once a water body is listed, development of a TMDL is required. Unfortunately, there is no plan for a TMDL on Bloody Run Creek even with the Outstanding Iowa Waters designation. Approximately half of the Outstanding Iowa Waters are on the current impaired waters list, and no TMDLs have been completed. Iowa’s 2019 Long-Term Vision document states:

“The Iowa DNR will investigate the feasibility of protection TMDLs for the state’s Outstanding Iowa Waters. At this time, Iowa DNR is not ready to commit to developing a protection TMDL but will consider it in the future.”^[2]

continued on next page

CAFO NPDES Permit Loophole

The CWA requires CAFOs the size of Supreme Beef LLC to obtain a NPDES permit, but many states have created a process for CAFOs to avoid the permit or minimize its requirements by demonstrating that they will not discharge to surface waters from the facility or the manure application fields. To be exempted from the permit requirements in Iowa, a CAFO only needs to state that they will not discharge. Supreme Beef LLC has made that claim. Manure from the 12,000 head of cattle contained in six 200-yard-long barns, totaling 30 million gallons every year, all of which must be disposed of in nearby watersheds, is not subject to an NPDES permit. From the perspective of the CWA, there is nothing for Save Bloody Run Creek and their partners to challenge.

If a CAFO without a permit discharges, the door opens for citizen lawsuits under the CWA. Save Bloody Run Creek is currently on that path with Supreme Beef LLC. Runoff samples collected after rain events in fall 2021 were professionally analyzed, revealing elevated ammonia and E. coli numbers in the thousands, well above the state water quality criteria. These results are a clear indication of manure discharges. A complaint filed with the DNR was rejected because,

“The DNR does not issue Notices of Violation or take enforcement actions based on third party sample results.”^[3] DNR disputed whether the bacteria came from the Supreme Beef CAFO. Volunteers will continue to monitor downstream of the facility until the body of evidence is irrefutable and a lawsuit can be filed.

The following public review and enforcement avenues have been pursued to date:

1. Construction Storm water NPDES Permit

In 2017, Save Bloody Run Creek engaged in the public discussion of the NPDES construction storm water permit requested by Walz Energy LLC (now Supreme Beef LLC). Hundreds of people were mobilized to attend the public hearing and submit passionate comments about the exquisite nature and value of Bloody Run Creek, and the harm that would be done by permitting the construction of the facility. The former State Geologist of Iowa explained the potential catastrophic consequences of manure pollution draining into the groundwater aquifer, given the known possibility that a sinkhole might open under the 39-million-gallon earthen basin in the karst terrain.^[4] This concern was deemed irrelevant to the permit proceedings because the risk did not relate directly to the construction activities under review. Unfortunately, since the DNR claimed that the construction storm water permit would only allow “temporary and limited degradation,” the public opposition, the Outstanding Iowa Water status, and the inevitable risks were dismissed. During construction, the DNR cited the owners with nine violations, several of which directly impacted Bloody Run Creek.

2. Nutrient Management Plan – Administrative Procedures Act Challenge

Although Supreme Beef LLC was able to avoid the CAFO NPDES permit, a state-approved nutrient management plan (NMP) was still required because the operation would house more than 1,000 cattle. Under Iowa rules, manure from large animal feeding operations (AFOs) must be applied at agronomic rates based upon the estimated crop uptake of nitrogen and phosphorus. The plan must identify enough field-acres available to accept the annual projected amount of nitrogen and phosphorus in the manure. Over the course of eight months, three versions of Supreme Beef LLC’s NMP were submitted due to errors, omissions, and incorrect calculations. Save Bloody Run Creek believes the final plan, approved in April of 2021, is still flawed in its calculation of the nutrient content of the manure. Consequently, the plan grossly underestimates the number of field-acres needed for manure application without resulting in water quality problems. Save Bloody Run is challenging the NMP under the state’s Administrative Procedures Act, claiming that DNR’s approval of the plan was arbitrary and capricious.

The coalition’s additional strategies include challenging the state water withdrawal permit and filing a whistleblower complaint about USDA payments received without an approved Conservation Compliance plan.

Conclusions and Takeaways

Bloody Run Creek is a special jewel deserving of extra protection, and it is CWA-designated as such. In Iowa the demands of industrialized agriculture have overshadowed the highly publicized and years-long struggle to protect this little stream. The shortcomings of state rules, implementation, and enforcement have been exposed, including the CWA programs run by the state such as the water quality standards, CAFO NPDES, and TMDL programs. Even working other laws and legal strategies, the siloed nature of the state agencies and protections of big agricultural interests have made it very difficult to move the needle on point or nonpoint source impairments in Iowa.

However, there is always hope. Thousands of individuals in Iowa have engaged or supported the Save Bloody Run Creek efforts. As was the case during their campaign 20 years ago to designate water uses and implement antidegradation, it seems they are making hidden progress. The glass is half full, even if the water in it is still dirty.

Footnotes

[1] Iowa Geological Survey, Living In Karst, Guidebook Series No. 25, 2005.

[2] Long-Term Vision for Assessment, Restoration, and Protection under the Clean Water Act Section 303(d) Program Updated: September 2019

[3] Iowa Department of Natural Resources Response to Complaint ID#30314, December 20, 2021.

[4] Iowa Geological Survey, Living In Karst, Guidebook Series No. 25, 2005, p.42; Robert D. Libra, State Geologist of Iowa, retired, Review of the Geology and Proposed Earthen Waste Lagoon near Monona IA, November 27, 2017.

Steve & Larry

www.savebloodyrun.org

Targeting Iowa's Smallest Temperate Bass, The Yellow Bass

by Davis Horton

Yellow bass are one of the most misunderstood, under fished species we have in the state of Iowa. Anglers often associate them with being problematic in lake systems such as Clear Lake, Lake Cornelia, or Three Mile Lake. While they can be prolific in places with low predation rates and ample food sources, in most systems the trophy class individuals are difficult to find. Targeting them effectively is an entirely different challenge.

Spawn occurs throughout May when water temperatures surpass 60 degrees. Larger individuals will push into the shallows amongst the crappies, bluegills, and largemouth bass to find suitable habitat to deposit eggs. Open gravel bars, rock ledges, or small rock reefs serve as spawning grounds for these striped beauties. May is also the peak time to target trophy quality yellow bass on the fly. Since yellow bass are not nest builders, provide no care to their offspring, and freely drop eggs on open gravel, don't think of this as bed fishing. You will be looking for "cruisers" in the shallows. These are just fish passing through skinny water in search of mates. As yellow bass patrol the bars, they are often hyper aggressive at any approaching baitfish, insect, or potential predator that may disturb their mating cycle. This is the peak time to get out your mini sized streamers and take a crack at these little bass.

During May, yellow bass will "blow up" on baitfish just like their white bass, wiper, and striped bass cousins. Casting to blow ups is an efficient way to target the larger yellow bass. Look for scatterings of minnows, shiners, and even shad when yellow bass are putting on the feed bags. A small, size 8 or 10 clouser minnow often does the job when yellows are targeting small forage. White with silver flash, pink and white, or chartreuse and white clousers are all you need to entice these aggressive predators throughout the spring season. Small hooks are crucial with this species. The mouths of yellow bass are little. They struggle to eat anything much bigger than a quarter. This is even true for the larger individuals.

As the spawn ends, there are noticeable behavioral changes in yellow bass. They evacuate the shallows and head for slightly deeper water where schooling will occur. This is another great time to target fish that have freshly dropped eggs. The fish are in recovery mode and in search of meals to restore their lost mass from the spawn. Schools of yellows will suspend in a few feet of water, and they will be on constant look out for an easy snack. These fish do not like to sit still, so move as the fish move. Small baitfish patterns still excel during this time. However, even large individuals can be notoriously insectivorous. I like to have a smattering of Mayer's mini leeches (black, size 14), articulated damselfly nymphs (chartreuse, size 14), and other buggy creations available if the fish get picky. My largest yellow bass ever was taken on a size 16 articulated damselfly nymph, so be sure to have a selection of bugs in your box.

Post spawn ends in late June on a normal weather year. As the summer progresses, the fish will get into summer feeding cycles where they suspend over rock reefs, swim throughout the bulrushes, or swim freely over open sand. Nearly unpredictable behavior to adequately target them from shore. By the end of June, I will usually give the yellows a break and look to target other species. If you choose to fish out of a boat with side imaging capable electronics, you will have a much easier time finding fish when they become scattered.

My favorite rod for yellow bass is a 9 foot, 4 weight with a weight forward floating line. A 7.5-foot leader tapered down to 2x fluorocarbon is usually perfect. 2x or stronger is essential because of the initial impact on the fly and leader. Strong tippet allows some stretch so that you don't bust the fish off in the first few seconds of the fight. They strike a fly like a mini hybrid striped bass. If they eat your fly, you will certainly feel it.

Don't get discouraged if you find yourself inundated with small fish at first. Large yellow bass are a bit more solitary, tend to be less abundant, and can be quite shy when it comes to grabbing flies. For every 10" fish caught, you'll have 20 or more individuals that are 8" or less. Just like any type of fishing, it's all about patience and picking through the smaller individuals. The best part of yellow bass fly fishing is the by catching additional species. Crappies, largemouth, bluegills, yellow perch, and even the occasional bullhead will give your fly a crack as you are casting for yellows.

If you need a place to start, look at Lake Cornelia to learn the seasonal feeding cycles of yellow bass. There won't be many big ones, but you'll get to play the numbers game. Once you've become comfortable with targeting the species, wander to the Iowa Great Lakes or Clear Lake in search of your trophy. There are many other lakes with large yellow bass near central Iowa. Use the Iowa Department of Natural Resources "Fish Species" pages to learn more about the yellow bass and some of the lakes where the species is often found.

Davis



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