

**SPRING  
2025**



**Photo courtesy Larry Olson**

## **INSIDE EDITION:**

**LARRY OLSON    [fencelinepool@gmail.com](mailto:fencelinepool@gmail.com)**

**Communications Director, Upper Midwest Council**

Spring fly fishing is almost upon us, and we hope you are doing well! The purpose of this message is to announce an **FFI Upper Midwest Council (UMC) all member virtual meeting held on Saturday morning April 5, 2025 at 10:30 A.M.** We believe that the meeting will run between 30 to 45 minutes in length and discuss upcoming UMC membership events and an opportunity to vote on the slate of officers for the year 2025-2026. We hope that you can save the date and time to participate in this event. The ZOOM information for attending via computer or telephone is available by requesting the link from Ray Morris at his email listed below.

Thank you for your continued support of Fly Fishers International and we hope you will attend. If you have any questions, please contact FFI UMC Vice President Ray Morris at his email [raywmorris@gmail.com](mailto:raywmorris@gmail.com).

GREAT WATERS FLY FISHING EXPO  
MARCH 21ST THROUGH THE 23RD  
HAMLINE UNIVERSITY, ST. PAUL, MN

STOP BY THE UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL BOOTH AND VISIT WITH US FOR MORE ON ALL THE OPPORTUNITIIES TO GET INVOLVED!

## **UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL PRESIDENT: LYTH'S RANDOM THOUGHTS**

In our last Blue Lines issue I used my article to introduce you to the members of the UMC Board of Directors. A significant project that we have been working on in the last few months is revising our By-Laws as suggested by Fly Fishers International. One of the most significant changes to the By-Laws is that we need to hold an Annual Meeting of our council membership. We are planning to hold this meeting via Zoom on April 5, 2025. We are choosing to use Zoom because we decided it would be unrealistic to try to hold this meeting as an in-person meeting given the large geographic area of our Council. At that meeting we will provide an orientation for the members who may not know much about our council and it's activities. Recently, you should have received an e-mail from the Council about this meeting with the details of time and with the Zoom link for the meeting. We plan to be as brief as possible, so we do not take up your whole day with this, as I know most of you are very busy preparing for the upcoming "soft water" fishing season.

A significant agenda item for this meeting will be the Election of Board Members and Officers. With that in mind, I am announcing that I will be resigning my role as President of the Upper Midwest Council, and we plan to elect a new president for our Council at that meeting. (Fortunately, Ray Morris who is our current Vice President is willing to step up to the President's role. Thanks, Ray, for your service to our Council!!) I have served as president for several years and I believe it's time for new ideas to come from that position on the Board.

I have enjoyed the many good things that have occurred during my time as President. We improved our Communications efforts by creating a web site and the Blue Lines Newsletter. We began to use “Mail Chimp” for our e-mail program to members. Our involvement with FFI’s Women Connect Program has resulted in several editions of the Driftless Rendezvous that has been a huge hit with women from all over our country. We have kept up with the Conservation efforts of the FFI and our involvement with the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo has been useful in providing hundreds of Fly-Casting lessons to the attendees of the Expo. We now have a new Casting Director for the Council, and we will have a more robust casting effort going forward. Fly Tying is also an integral part of what we do, and we have a large presence at the Expo with fly tying also.

What remains to be done is to resurrect the Fly-Fishing School that we used to operate prior to the Covid 19 Pandemic. We are also beginning to plan for Council sponsored fly-fishing outings so stay tuned for those in the near future.

If any of you are interested in running for a Board or Officer position, please reach out to me and I can answer your questions. The UMC had good people on the Board, and we have a membership of about 375 in the States of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Illinois. The UMC plays a critical role in promoting the sport of fly-fishing in these states which are rich in fly-fishing opportunities!

This will be my last Blue Lines article as President and I want to thank all of you for your support and for your work promoting fly-fishing!

**CASTING DIRECTOR REPORT**  
**KAYLN HOGGARD, CI**



CALLING ALL PRO AND AM CASTERS

# WANTED

**“BEST IN THE DRIFTLESS”**

**CASTING COMPETITION**



**REWARD** **REWARD**

**WHEN** **WHERE**

June 6th, 2025  Driftless Drive-In Fly Fishing Show

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**  
Kalyn Hoggard at [kalyn@theflyroad.com](mailto:kalyn@theflyroad.com)  
Marty McVey at [martymcveyflyfishing@gmail.com](mailto:martymcveyflyfishing@gmail.com)

**SUPPORT FROM**



# **CONSERVATION REPORT**

**Chris “Vinny” Vincent**

**Conservation Director Upper Midwest Council**

**FFi Board of Directors—Conservation VP**

## **KEEPING POLLUTION OUT OF YOUR WATER: HOW THE CLEAN WATER ACT PROTECTS YOUR WATER**

**By Eric Boucher**



It might seem obvious to state that the Clean Water Act (CWA), established in 1972, is critical to the drinking supply of millions of Americans. After all, this fundamental U.S. law is specifically tasked with reducing water pollution and protecting the nation’s water resources. Unfortunately, the incoming administration is very focused on deregulation, and polluters are working to undermine or outright gut vital clean water safeguards. This means some or all of the Act could be on the chopping block. With this risk in mind, let’s look at five ways the Clean Water Act is so important to protecting your clean water.

### **1. It sets water quality standards**

The Act mandates that states establish water quality standards for all surface waters, defining the desired condition of a water body and the necessary protections to achieve that condition. These permits set scientifically based limits or restrictions on the types and amounts of pollutants, ensuring that waters are safe for activities like swimming, fishing, and most critically, as a source of drinking water.

#### **What does this mean for you?**

Strong federal standards are important because everyone in our country should have clean, safe, reliable drinking water – it shouldn't matter who your governor is or what zip code you live in. It doesn't matter what political party is in office in your state, wherever you live in a city or the country, there are water quality standards that protect your drinking water. Plus, rivers and streams flow across state boundaries. Without federal safeguards, the actions in a neighboring state could pollute your water, even if your state has good protections.

### **2. It regulates direct discharges into waterways**

The Clean Water Act requires facilities to obtain permits before discharging pollutants directly into bodies of water. These permits set limits on the types and amounts of pollutants that can be released, ensuring that discharges do not harm water quality or public health. This system helps control pollution from sources like factories and wastewater treatment plants.

#### **What does this mean for you?**

Your river should not be used as a sewer or dumping ground. Companies need to responsibly dispose of their waste. These safeguards are in place so no one can just dump chemical waste in rivers, which prevents an untold amount of harmful contaminants from getting in your drinking water.

### **3. It funds wastewater treatment facilities**

The Clean Water Act provides financial assistance to states and communities to support the construction and improvement of sewage treatment plants. This funding is crucial in reducing the discharge of untreated or inadequately treated wastewater into rivers, lakes, and streams, thereby improving overall water quality.

**What does this mean for you?** The cost of wastewater treatment infrastructure is significant, especially in communities with polluted waterways. The financial assistance the Clean Water Act provides helps offset this large cost for communities in need.

#### **4. It calls out nonpoint source pollution**

The Clean Water Act recognizes that pollution also comes from indirect sources like agricultural runoff and urban stormwater. Through a variety of regulations and programs, it encourages states to develop and implement plans to manage and reduce this type of pollution, which is a significant contributor to water quality issues nationwide.

#### **What does this mean for you?**

Nonpoint pollution (contamination that comes from many sources and can't be traced back to a single point) can be difficult to identify, but this guidance gives states the ability to attempt to manage these pollution sources, which can cost a lot of money to remove from your drinking water. If left unchecked this type of pollution can fuel toxic algae outbreaks and impact drinking water sources.

#### **5. It protects wetlands and aquatic river ecosystems**

The Act includes rules to protect wetlands and other vital small streams from being filled or degraded. These areas are essential for maintaining water quality, providing wildlife habitat, and supporting biodiversity absorbing floodwaters. By regulating activities that could harm these ecosystems, the Clean Water Act helps preserve their ecological integrity.

#### **What does that mean for you?**

Wetlands filter pollution and help safeguard our drinking water. They also absorb and store floodwaters, protecting communities. What's more, they provide vital wildlife habitat. Freshwater species are going extinct at a significant rate, largely due to loss of livable habitat. Protecting wetlands and streams means the critical ecosystems that house so many species can continue to support this important biodiversity. protects the entire web of life.

For over 50 years, the Clean Water Act has played a pivotal role in improving the health of U.S. waters, making them safer for recreation, wildlife, and as sources of drinking water. Eliminating the Clean Water Act or any part of it puts your drinking water at risk and potentially damages ecosystems that support thousands of species. We must support and strengthen these federal clean water safeguards, to ensure everyone in our country has safe, clean, reliable water. This bedrock law must be maintained, and federal protection of our rivers, streams, and wetlands must continue.



# Fly Tying for All Fish All Waters

*Flies, Recipes and Tying Guidance*

The FFI Fly Tying Group



High quality photos and articles from some of the finest fly tiers in the U.S.

Features the work of the demonstration tiers from the 2024 Fly Fishers International Fly Tying Group's 2024 show as well as that of past masters Craig Mathews, Al and Gretchen Beatty, Scott Sanchez, Masao Sakaguchi, Dave Whitlock, and Bruce Staples. Special introduction from Will Godfrey.

Articles and photos that will help improve your tying are included from noted tiers Charlie Craven, Hans von Klinken, Skip Morris, Kelly Galloup, and Buszek award winners Al Ritt, Dutch Baughman, Eric Austin, Fred Hannie, Fred Dupré, Jerry Coviello, Jim Ferguson, and Wayne Luallen.

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#### Chapter 1: Patterns and People Rendesvous 2024

Features the flies, tying instructions and materials list from the 30 tiers at the 2024 Dallas show.

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#### Chapter 2: Looking Back (previous Rendesvous)

A nostalgic look at tiers and flies from previous FFI shows

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#### Chapter 3: How to Become a Better Tier

Renown fly tiers show you how to improve your game.

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#### Chapter 4: The Buszek Library

An in-depth look at Fly Fishers International's Buszek Library, including work from past Buszek Award recipients.

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THE FLY TYING GROUP HAS A BOOK THAT ALL TIERS WILL WANT IN THEIR LIBRARY COMING OUT THIS JUNE OF 2025.

ALL PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THE BOOK BENEFIT THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUSZEK LIBRARY ON THE FFI WEBSITE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON IT'S RELEASE AND HOW TO BUY CHECK THE APRIL AND JULY ISSUES OF THE WHIP FINISH JOURNAL ON THE FLY TYING GROUP WEB PAGES AT :

**[flyfishersinternational.org](http://flyfishersinternational.org)**

**Or email me (Larry Olson)**

**At [fencelinepool@gmail.com](mailto:fencelinepool@gmail.com)**

# Welcome to Women Connect



March is Women History month. I would like to give a little history of FFi Women Connect. Women Connect was created by women who got together at one of the FFi gatherings and discussed what they wanted from FFi. They proposed Women Connect to the board. Then the hard work began – Writing a mission and goals and organizing women around the globe. The beauty of the mission statement was not just to be included but to encourage leadership in FFi and the fly-fishing industry.

## **FFi Women Connect Mission Statement**

**To create a community of women fly fishers where learning, sharing and inspiration are offered in a safe and non-intimidating environment, to develop and improve fly fishing/ tying skills and, offer new opportunities in a creative and fun manner. To encourage female leadership in FFI Clubs and the fly fishing industry as a whole by creating a platform where women can develop fly fishing skills and build confidence.**

Over the years since Women Connect is creating community within Fly Fishers International. They are using modern technology, local events, and international events to reach women all over the world.

This is creating community among fly fishing women locally, across state lines and around the world. Learning from and engaging with other women who fly fish, and finding support has helped more women continue to participate in this sport and grow skills to mentor, teach, event plan and lead.

More women are involved on Council Boards and on the Fly Fishers International Board of directors. Just this year FFi voted in the first female Board Chair – Tilda Evans from Colorado. Last year when a new Executive Director (a paid position) was needed they hired Rhonda Sellers from within the organization.



Tilda Evans

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Because of the many hours volunteers have given to Women Connect, a father who fly fishes can now easily show his daughters that women fly fish too. There are many great photos from events and the photo contest being used in web pages and newsletters. More companies in the industry show women fly fishing too, whether it is an advertisement for equipment or a guide advertising guide trips.

June is Women Connect Month. Get involved. Come to Get Your Cast On, fly casting lessons, evaluation and games. Sunday May 18th 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm at East River Flats Park, Minneapolis. RSVP [Womenconnect.umc.ffi@gmail.com](mailto:Womenconnect.umc.ffi@gmail.com)



Or look for activities near you and online. If there is not an activity near you help plan an activity with and for other women. As the UMC Women Connect Liaison I am here to help.

Through the support of Women Connect I see a future where more women are presenters at fly fishing shows. Think how exciting it would be for a show to highlight a female lead presenter.

Monta Hayner - UMC Women Connect Liaison

[womenconnect.umn.ffi@gmail.com](mailto:womenconnect.umn.ffi@gmail.com)



## Minnesota's Driftless Rendezvous



Join the FFi Upper Midwest Council & FFi Women Connect this fall for our 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Driftless Rendezvous! This event will be held in the heart of the Minnesota Driftless. This area is known for its expansive trout habitat and beautiful, deeply carved river valleys with pristine spring creeks. This is an event hosted by women, for women! Registration includes food & lodging; all other travel, transportation, licensing, and guide trips are at your own expense.



Dates: Monday Oct. 6 - Sunday Oct. 12, 2025

Location: Cedar Valley Resort - Whalen, MN

**To Register:**

Info & registration will be posted on:  
[umcffi.org/women-connect/](http://umcffi.org/women-connect/)  
Or contact: [womenconnect.UMC.ffi@gmail.com](mailto:womenconnect.UMC.ffi@gmail.com)



**Pricing & Package Info:**

We are offering tiered pricing which includes all food and lodging. Everyone will have their own bed. Participants will help with food prep & clean up throughout the week. Not included: guided fees, tips, licensing, transportation, alcohol. You will be responsible for bringing your own fishing gear (4-5 wt rods w/ floating line recommended). Rates are for the entire week unless otherwise noted (does not include processing fees).

**Individual participant pricing for the 2025 trip is as follows:**

Private Room	Double Room	Loft	Weekender (Thur-Sun)
\$950	\$750	\$550	\$495

*Payments must be made prior and in full. In the event of a cancellation, refunds will be issued only if we are able to fill the spot.*

We will have events planned throughout the week including topics and events such as: conservation, casting skills development, social events, Driftless ecology & entomology, and of course, lots of fishing!!!

**Getting there:** Flights into Minneapolis (MSP) or Rochester (RST) airports.

**What to bring:** 4-5wt rod/reel with floating line, rubber soled boots & waders, net, polarized sunglasses.

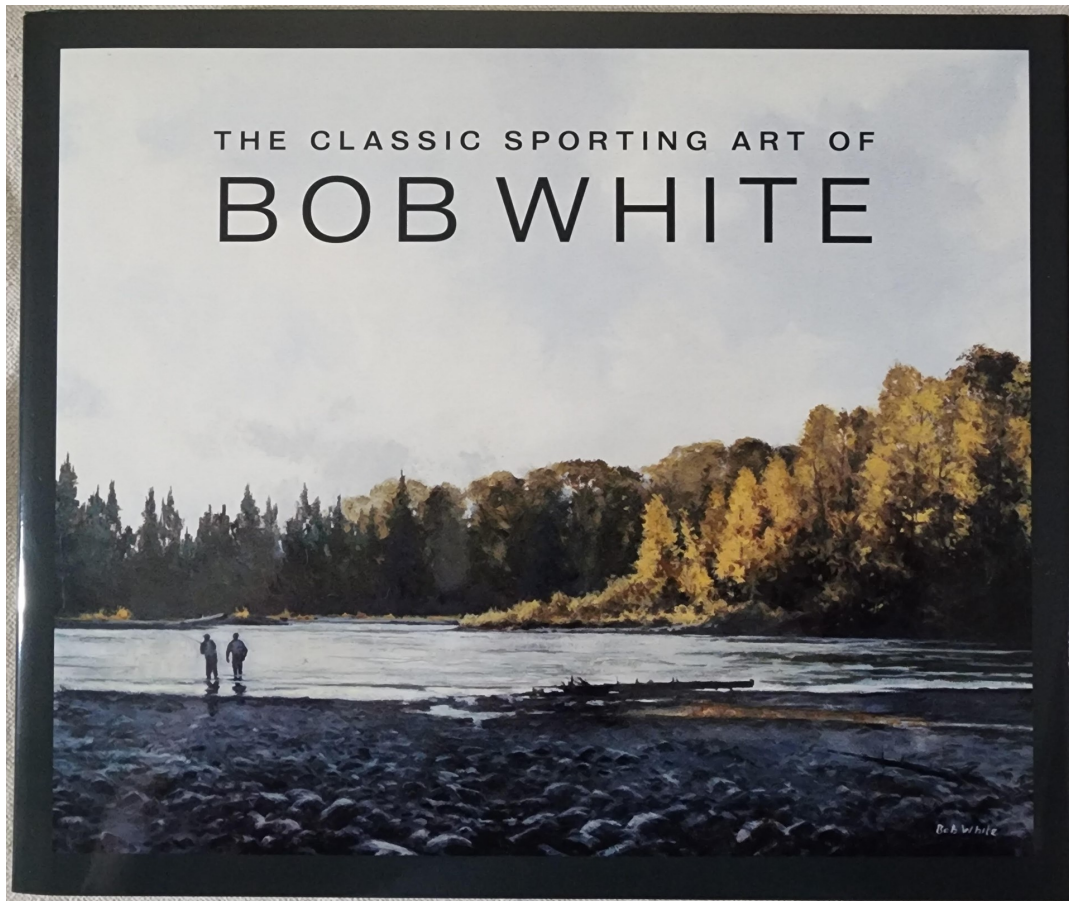
**Area Fly Fishing Shops & Guide Services:** Root River Rod Co (Lanesboro, MN), The Driftless Fly Fishing Company (Preston, MN), Women's Fly Shop/Driftless Angler (Viroqua, WI)

# UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL CHAPTER AND AFFILIATE NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



As March begins and winter fades, our members are gearing up for the 2025–2026 Minnesota fishing season. We hope everyone creates lasting memories on the water this year. In December, more than 30 members and guests attended Bob Trevis’s presentation on Plan B Trout Streams—Hidden Gems in the Driftless Area. Bob shared strategies for when you arrive at your favorite trout stream only to find multiple cars already at the access point. He highlighted well-known home waters and introduced alternative streams, often just 20 minutes away, allowing anglers to salvage the day and discover new, productive waters. In January, members gathered for a group fly-tying session featuring Ernie Dawson’s Ernie’s Diver. Before the tying began, Ernie spoke about the fly’s history and its effectiveness across multiple species. David Keene then guided participants through the tying process, making it an enjoyable and educational experience. February’s dinner meeting drew over 30 members and guests for Bob White’s presentation, The Intersection of Art and Fly Fishing—What I’ve Learned About One from the Other. For those who missed it, Bob White will be speaking at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo on Friday, March 21, from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM in Room A.

March will be a busy month for Lew Jewett Fly Fishers. Several members will be assisting the Upper Midwest Council with fly casting instruction at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo, and Monta Hayner and Peter Garrettson will lead the Youth Class on Saturday. If you attend the expo, stop by the Lew Jewett booth, located next to the Upper Midwest Council and casting instruction area. Our final dinner meeting of the off-season will be held on April 15. Jennifer Biederman, Minnesota TU Habitat Program Director, will discuss MNTU's habitat program and how elements of design relate to trout habitat and food production. This meeting also includes our annual board elections and silent auction fundraiser. Bob White has generously donated a signed 272-page book and a note-card box set for the auction.



All Monthly club meetings are free and open to the public! All meetings held from

6-8 pm at BoomTown Woodfire Bar & Grill, Duluth

**April 15th:** North American Fisheries Society: Eddie Carlson, Assistant Area Fisheries Supervisor for Grand Marais.

**May 20th:** Mark Reisetter, MNTU Vice-Chair (South) “Fly Fishing Minnesota’s Driftless Area.”

Additional events in 2025

March 17th: Outdoor Education In Duluth Public Schools, a class taught by AFF member

Introduction to Fly Fishing Classes: April 8th, 22nd, 29th and May 6th at Proctor Community Center. These classes will be taught by AFF members from 5:30-7:00 PM. For further information and registration see Proctor Community Education website.

May: Women’s Weekend of fishing in the Driftless area.

August 16th: Fishing the Pads on St. Louis River. “Event for all” Details forthcoming

Written by: Laurie Arndt, AFF Past President



# PROJECT HEALING WATERS

## APPLETON WISCONSIN—FOX VALLEY

The group is still in full tying mode and working their way through the gold award series of patterns as well as a host of others. The program has seen significant growth in the last two months, enough where we now have two separate tying classes, beginner and advanced.

The program is also now getting everything in place for our second fly rod building event in April. Rod building is a multi day event, usually taking place on a Saturday and Sunday. We have a very nice facility in which to hold this great event which is donated to the program at no cost. We will be sure to share pictures from the event in the next newsletter.



February was a busy month for classes 2 of Veterans Fishing University. The group started out learning about ice fishing and all it entails. We then jumped in full speed and over the course of three week worked our way through beginners fly tying with class #1 also joining us. The entire group of 12 veterans and their plus ones did a phenomenal job for never tying a fly before. Several of them really excelled and are wanting to get even deeper into the weeds in the world of fly tying. We in process of setting up additional more advanced classes for about half of the group. I enjoy tying flies a great deal and I am looking forward to these future classes.