



March MMTU Meeting Recording

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President's Corner

Dear MMTU members,

The three chapters of TU in Missouri: Mid-Missouri Chapter, Gateway Chapter (St. Louis area) and MoKan Chapter (Kansas City area) had a joint zoom meeting on Tuesday March 2nd at 7:00 Pm. The guest speaker was Duke Welter from Wisconsin talked on the stream improvements made on the trout streams in the Driftless Area in north east Iowa, and southern Wisconsin and Minnesota.

We invited Capital City Flyfishing members. In addition to seeing the success stories about the Driftless Area, which we helped fund in Iowa, we had a chance to meet everyone in the council and CCFF members too.

Thanks for your patience with Covid. Keep in touch and we will get together in person when it is safe, possibly in April. It was great to see you on Zoom March 2.

Sincerely,
John Wenzlick

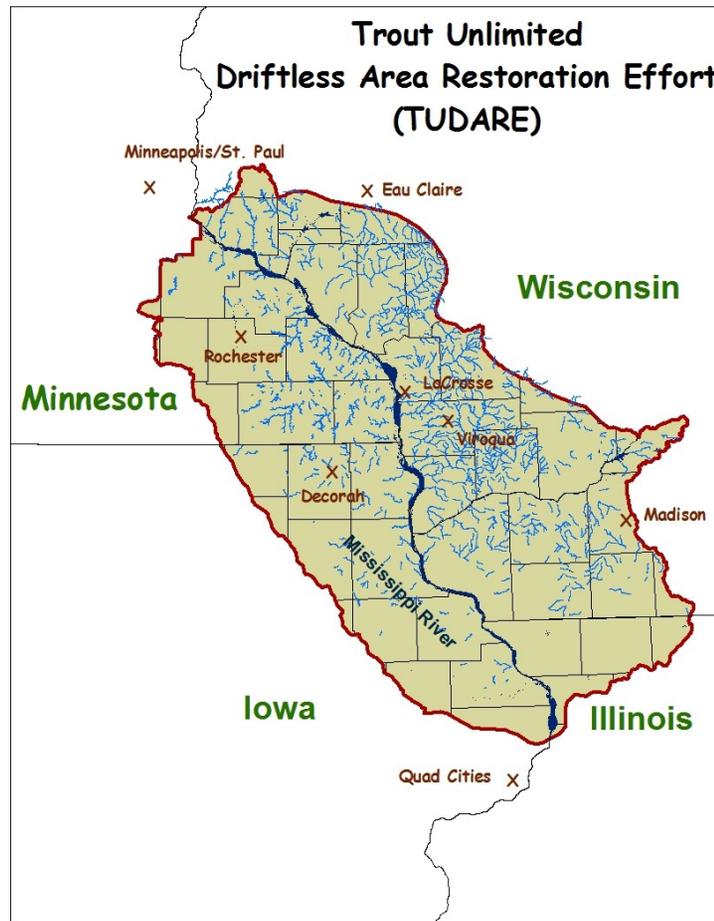


Bill scheduled John "Duke" Welter for our March 2nd meeting. Duke came to us from the unglaciated area of the Upper Mississippi River Basin, where he was instrumental in starting and

building TU's Driftless Area Restoration Effort (DARE) over the past 20 years. The region's coldwater streams had taken a beating since Europeans settled there in the mid-19th century, and still labored under heavy sediment loads and poor habitat conditions. DARE has addressed those problems with new techniques, expanded funding and community-supported projects. In the process, over 500 miles of public stream access has been added across the region and nearly 400 projects completed.

Anglers are beginning to recognize that many of the region's 600 watersheds and 6,000 miles of coldwater streams offer quality trout angling and abundant access. Once a stream has been gone through a restoration project, its trout population may jump from 250 to 2,500 (or more) trout per mile. Economic impact of \$1.6 billion a year helps local communities.

Duke promises an entertaining evening looking at the unique fisheries and resource challenges across the Driftless, how TU has met them with this expansive program, and some of the quirks and foibles of a picturesque land and its people.



Our speaker, Duke Welter, lives in Viroqua, Wisconsin, in the Heart of the Driftless Area. He works across the unglaciated region for Trout Unlimited on the Driftless Area Restoration Effort (DARE). As a member of TU since 1982, he has led at the local chapter, state and National Levels, chaired its National Leadership Council and served on its Board of Trustees for 8 years. TU has recognized him with its top awards for conservation leadership at all its levels. He helped conceive the DARE project in 2003 and led it as a grassroots volunteer until 2010, when he came to work for TU. Duke also served Wisconsin as a member of the Natural Resources Board from 2003-2010. He

has served in other nonprofit organizations and recently retired after 41 years of service as a member of the National Ski Patrol at Indianhead Mountain in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. As an angler, he has fished across North America and in Patagonia and New Zealand.

Duke always yearned to be a college teacher. Here's his college resume: he was a co-developer of the "Introduction to Fly-Fishing" class at UW-Stout, a business law instructor at UW-Eau Claire, a college level ski instructor and a frequent lecturer on continuing legal education topics with the State Bar of Wisconsin's continuing education branch.

He earned bachelors and law degrees from UW-Madison. His first career was as a daily newspaper reporter. His subsequent career was 28 years of civil litigation law practice, from which he has mostly recovered. Duke lives in Viroqua with his wife, Kris. Their home is less than 3 minutes from the nearest trout stream, and within 25 miles of over 300 miles of trout streams.

TUDARE was the first National Fish Habitat Initiative recognized by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, succeeded by 30 others, and was inducted into the National Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame in 2017.

Duke retired from his TU job last spring, and fished close to home with his wife last season. Now he's working to [fish more and] raise funding for removal of the two remaining dams on the Kinnickinnic River in River Falls, Wisconsin. Donations of from \$1 dollar to \$2 million dollars for that project are welcome.

There were 78 of us on the call, a great turnout. It showed that our TU chapters and the Capital City Flyfishers can readily meet and share speakers. Chris Selle, the Mokaan president and Evan Muskopf, who manages the Gateway FB page, suggested we have more joint meetings. I agree we share speakers on Zoom.

If you did not join us, I posted the recording on Youtube, [Duke Welter Driftless Restoration Area Presentation](#)

Taking Care of Trout

At the beginning of the meeting John mentioned another effort by the Missouri legislature to control the Department of Conservation. [HJR 55](#) would add 5 conservation commissions who would be elected. Currently there are 4 appointed by the governor.

Chase Whiting a TU member in the Northeast wrote a very incitful blog on the Administration's executive order addressing the [Impact of climate change on trout and salmon](#). It is definitely worth reading.

Below is an important piece of polling research on reducing carbon emissions that recently came out of Colorado College. A large majority of westerners see climate change as a serious/extremely serious issue, and that a majority of republicans agree that climate change is a serious/very serious issue. There is about 70% support for "net zero emissions" on western public lands. The carbon fee and dividend that TU endorsed last year would reduce carbon emissions by at least 40% in 12 years.

Stay safe and share your stories and pictures for the newsletter, web site and Facebook page.

Jeff Holzem
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