

Area streams stocked with trout

Brook trout will rejuvenate Lost River, Fawn Creek

BY TOM KLEIN
The Timberjay

In an ongoing effort to rejuvenate area trout streams, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources released brook trout to stock the Lost River and Fawn Creek last week.

The DNR had stocked both streams with trout in 2013 and will continue the stocking program on an annual basis until the trout population in Lost River and Fawn Creek are strong enough to be self-sustaining, according to Kevin Peterson, area fisheries supervisor for the DNR in International Falls.

The trout project was initiated locally by anglers Julian Brzoznowski, Jim Aker and Val Cook. Through their efforts, they were able to secure \$10,000 in local contributions to leverage a \$100,000 grant from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council. The council was formed to oversee distribution of dollars generated by the Legacy Amendment. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$400,000.

Some of the grant funds were used to demolish beaver dams in rivers and creeks and to pay trappers to reduce the beaver popu-



Dan Schemerhorn transfers trout from a tank at the transfer point in Cook.

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lation. Beaver dams slow the flow of water in creeks and beavers also remove trees that provide shade

over the water and keep it from heating up. Water temperatures of 65 degrees or below are ideal for brook trout, Peterson explained.

"I've seen water coming out of beaver ponds that is over 80 degrees. Trout can't survive that," he said.

Additional habitat work, such as deepening some pools in streams, is on the agenda for the future.

Stocking is being funded with proceeds from trout stamp sales, according to Peterson.

The trout delivered last week came from a hatchery at Crystal Springs in southern Minnesota, near Rochester. In addition to providing stock for Lost River and Fawn Creek, a portion of this batch of trout would also be used to stock Trout Brook and streams in the Baudette region. Forty-three pounds were earmarked for Trout Brook, 150 pounds for Lost River and 107 pounds for Fawn Creek, with the re-



One of the brook trout from the Crystal Springs hatchery being stocked in local creeks.

maining 85 pounds designated for Baudette.

Brzoznowski, who fished for trout as a youth and has resumed trout fishing, said he hopes to see more people take up the sport. It's a relatively inexpensive way to fish, he said. You don't need fancy equipment or even a boat. You can just fish alongside a stream, he noted.

He's contemplating working with the area schools to encourage a day of trout

fishing for youngsters to help introduce them to the sport.

Cook said there has been growing interest in trout fishing and the stocking program and other steps being taken to improve the habitat will get more folks interested in fishing for trout.

"One guy even marked his spot for fishing with red ribbon," Cook laughed.

Peterson said there are

some die-hard trout anglers in the area. Although he's unsure whether their numbers will grow, as long as interest in trout fishing continues, he said the DNR will continue its support.

"We'd like to see folks get out there and make use of the opportunity," said Peterson. "As long as folks are using it and we're getting a good return for our investment, we'll keep on with the program."

QUITE THE CATCH



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From the left, Jason Boorman, Mason Boorman, Haylee Maish and Anthony Boorman show off the fish they caught last weekend on Rainy Lake during Minnesota's walleye fishing opener.

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