

# TROUT TALK

The Official Newsletter of Western New York Trout Unlimited ([www.wnytroutunlimited.org](http://www.wnytroutunlimited.org)) April, 2011

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Shows-**Len Bigaj** (826-4178)  
Spring Banquet-**Len Bigaj** (826-4178)  
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**Gene Romanyshyn** (627-2888)  
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**Next WNY TU Chapter Meeting: Tuesday, April 26, 2011, 7:30 pm at the Donovan American Legion Post, 3210 Genesee Street, Cheektowaga, New York. Fly tying begins at 6 p.m. Please bring black thread, because we will be tying the Royal Coachman.**

**Our presenter, for the “entertainment” portion of the meeting, is tentatively (at “press time”) scheduled to be a representative from Casting for Recovery, who will describe the mission and activities of this fine organization.**

**Please join us.**

## President’s Report

Greetings Fellow TUers,

Many thanks to so many folks this month.

I want to thank Justin Damude and Brian Wood for a great presentation on tying steelhead flies and tactics for using them. As Brian pointed out, many flies are tied to show off or to catch the eye of the angler; but they are still fun to tie and to use.

The WNYTU Annual Fund Raiser & Awards banquet was a huge success again this year. Thanks to the Banquet Committee, led by Len Bigaj, we had a record attendance at the festivities. Len will have a report later in the newsletter.

A BIG “thank you” goes out to the generous benefactors who support TU’s mission. Without their yearly donations and support, we could not make all this possible.

And, of course, I would like to say, “Thank you”, to the membership and guests who came out to support our only major fund raiser of the year.

We have some pictures, later in this issue, of the recipients of the awards ceremonies; but I have also included a photo of the conservation professionals who attended the banquet. This will give you some idea of the support we get from the professional conservation community. Thanks again folks!

This spring and summer will prove to be a very busy time for stream projects. Chuck has more information on this; but, if you are on his contact mailing list, you’ll know when it’s time for action. Though all the details have not been worked out yet, the North Branch Wiscoy project will be one of the most labor- intensive we have undertaken. The McIntosh Brook project was completed in only one season, minus reworking some of the structures; but the Wiscoy project will likely be a two year program. As I have mentioned in previous issues, building the lunker structures will require the most effort in beginning the project. If you would like to help out but can only volunteer one day, that may be the day we need the most amount of help.

The Officers and Board of Directors, on behalf of your chapter, have taken positions in the past, and will continue to act on your behalf, with regard to conservation issues. The bait fish transportation legislation, intended to curb of the spread of VHS, is one of the “makes sense” rulings, because it takes out the “loopholes” and puts in practicality and protection.

Many of you are aware of the suspension of the marine fishing license fee. NYSDEC announced on April 8, 2011, that the \$10 recreational marine fishing license is no longer required in New York State marine districts. Gov. Andrew Cuomo and lawmakers mandated the change in budget legislation. Though we can agree that the new registry, required by Federal mandate to document U.S. fisheries and to help with long-term management, and planned to be in place by June, is a good idea, the lost revenue from anglers who have been paying nothing for generations to use this saltwater resource, to the tune of \$2.57million dollars last year, loses out on the \$1.4 million dollars from Federal matching funds. NYSDEC now loses not only all the revenue, but it still must manage these marine resources, already stretching a thin budget even thinner.

Our guest speaker for April’s meeting is tentatively scheduled to be a representative from Casting for Recovery. This promises to be a highly informative presentation.

We ALL live downstream. Please come out and support YOUR local chapter, become involved.

See you at the meeting.

Gary Coons, WNYTU Chapter President.

## **Announcements**

- **A Report from Len Bigaj.**

**Banquet:** The 2011 Banquet is over, and we had a great one. First, though, I would like to thank my wife, Linda, for her patience and help with all I do. My thanks are also in order to the Banquet Committee, Lee

Ann Bigaj, Maria and Andrea Marracino. Without them, I could not do this. Thanks to my daughters, Peggy and Kelly, and my son-in-law, Ken, for working the door, selling raffle tickets, the 50/50, and helping with set up. Thanks, too, to Gary Coons for doing a great job as M.C. and to Paul Maciejewski for his auctioneering skills. Another “thank you” goes out to all our sponsors for their generous donations and assistance in selling tickets. Finally, I would like to thank all our friends who attended and, in so doing, donated to our organization.

The grand prize winner of the iPad was Tony Ventola. Chuck Campbell took home the 2-weight rod and reel.

We took in \$12,704.00 and cleared \$7,758.00.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Award Committee for the Presidential Special Award for working with the Vets through Project Healing Waters. This is the most rewarding endeavor I have ever worked on. Thanks to all, Len.

As you know, this was to be my last year as Banquet Chairman. However, at last month’s meeting, one of our newer members, Justin Damude, along with his soon-to-be wife, Marina, offered to help out on next year’s banquet if I stayed on as Chair. I had a meeting with our committee, and they agreed to stay on one more year in order to get things started. If you would like to help and to be on the committee, we could sure use your help. Please let me know. The 2012 Banquet will take place on March 24, 2012, at Lucarelli’s Banquet Center.

**Shows:** The next show will be the Erie County Fair, August 10 through 21, 2011. We will need help at the booth and in tying flies to sell. Please let me know if you can help out. I have a meeting on April 25 at the Fair Grounds. More information will follow. Thanks, Len.

**Project Healing Waters:** We will be fishing with the Vets at the Elma Conservation Club on Wednesday, April 27; Wednesday, May 18; Tuesday, June 7; Wednesday, June 29; Wednesday, July 20; Tuesday, August 9; Wednesday, September 7; and Thursday, September, 29. On Saturday, May 21, we will be taking the Vets to fish at a private pond in Forestville. The use of the pond was donated, by the land owner, for our Project. If you would like to help out, please let me know.

- **News from DEC: Mr. Scott Cornett** of Region 9, DEC, sends the following message.
  1. “Summary reports of DEC stream work and diary programs conducted in 2010 are now available (along with older surveys) at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/27272.html>.
  2. DEC Region 9 Fisheries is planning to conduct an angler use study and electrofishing surveys in 2011 – 2013, on East Koy Creek, to evaluate the trout stocking program there. This is part of a statewide study of our trout stocking program, designed to bring it up to date with changes that have occurred, in the last 25 years, in angler use, catch and release rates, and stocked trout survival. As part of this program, we will be marking all the trout that are stocked with various fin clips (combinations of adipose and ventral fins). This will help the field technician tell wild from hatchery fish and separate fish by stocking increment. (East Koy Creek gets three of these each year.) We are aware that some individuals in the past have been doing their own “experiments” by clipping the adipose fin on trout they catch and release. While we do not condone this in general, we especially ask that anglers not do this in 2011 – 2013, as it may negatively bias the results of our survey work. We appreciate your cooperation. “

- News from DOH:** We are pleased to have received a communication from another New York State agency, namely, the Department of Health. **Ms. Regina Keenan**, of their Center for Environmental Health, sends word of a new booklet they are developing on the topic of chemical contamination in fish. They would like to partner with anglers and others to distribute the advisory, which should be available soon. Ms. Keenan writes: *“Due to chemical contamination of fish in some New York State waters, the New York State Department of Health annually issues health advice about eating fish you catch. This year New York State .... is introducing a new free brochure for western New York. **“Western Region: New York State Health Advice on Eating Fish You Catch 2011-2012”** includes the advice for Niagara, Cattaraugus, Genesee, Orleans, Wyoming and Chautauqua counties. The brochure has pictures of fish, a map and other graphics. Contact 518-402-7800, 800-458-1158 or [bttsa@health.state.ny.us](mailto:bttsa@health.state.ny.us) for copies, and check under "Western Region" on the website [www.health.ny.gov/fish](http://www.health.ny.gov/fish).”*
- Report by Chuck Godfrey on the North Branch, Wiscoy Creek, Project:** We are definitely planning on planting trees and bushes on the North Branch of the Wiscoy this May. We will start on Saturday, May 7, at 9am and probably work until late afternoon; because we have 2310 trees coming from the DEC nursery and another 100 elms coming from the Elm Research Institute in late April. We can use as much help as we can possibly get, due to the fact that we will not only be planting but also putting protective sleeves around as many as is economically feasible, which entails using 5 foot protectors and 6 foot stakes. No one needs to stay the whole time; any help we can get would be fine. Please let me know if you are interested in attending. We will be providing lunch, sandwiches and chips, and water, so it helps if we know how many are planning to attend. However, “walk-ins” are definitely welcome – I can always run into Pike to get more supplies, if necessary. We will be meeting along Rte. 368. I have enclosed an overhead picture of the stream. There is a dirt farmer’s road with a PFR Footpath access sign that you can see at about the halfway point on the map. I’ve also included a map of the immediate area for anyone who may not be familiar with the roads along that section of stream. (Construction of “lunkers” will begin at a later date.) Thanks in advance for all your help. (Ed. Note: The map and overhead view are presented later in this newsletter.)
- Website:** Webmaster, **Rick Toczek**, reports that he has made some changes to the website and has added pages. If the site needs updating or if there are issues with it, please let him know.
- Treasurer’s Report for the Period Ending March 31, 2011 (Submitted by Mr. Anthony Messina):**

BALANCE AT	MARCH 1, 2011	(CHECKING ACCT)	\$339.48
INFLOWS:	TRANSFER FROM MONEY MARKET ACCT.		\$400.00
	50/50 DRAWING		\$55.00
	TU REBATES		\$45.00
	SHOWS		\$671.00
		TOTAL INFLOWS	\$1,171.00

OUTFLOWS:	MONTHLY MEETING		\$70.00
	NEWSLETTER POSTAGE		\$220.00
	50/50 DRAWING		\$28.00
	SHOWS		\$85.56
	AWARDS		\$200.00
	FLY TYING SUPPLIES		\$80.69
		TOTAL OUTFLOWS:	\$684.25
BALANCE AT	MARCH 31. 2011		\$826.23
*****	*****	*****	*****
BALANCE AT	MARCH 1, 2011	(MONEY MKT ACCT)	\$17,528.91
INFLOWS:	INTEREST		\$1.49
OUTFLOWS:	TRANSFER TO CHECKING ACCT.		\$400.00
BALANCE AT	MARCH 31. 2011	(MONEY MKT ACCT)	\$17,130.40



## Articles

### Conservation vs. Marcellus Shale Gas: A Détente?

By Russell Shefrin

“We’re for conservation, but we’re not against progress”. How often have we heard those sentiments expressed at recent WNY TU meetings when the subject of the Marcellus Shale project comes up? And the project is getting a lot of press these days, from newspaper articles to the pages of the Spring, 2011, edition of “Trout” magazine. Many of these reports are highly cautionary. Concerns have been expressed about local and regional environmental damage; and some studies (e.g., as reported in the New York Times of April 12, 2011,) suggest that, when all aspects of natural gas extraction are taken into consideration, the overall carbon footprint produced by the burning of natural gas may not prove to be any better than that of coal. On the other hand, there is immense pressure to find

a relatively clean fuel that may provide a “bridge” to future energy sources which are more environmentally friendly, possibly renewable, and less sensitive to foreign intrigues. Now that new extraction technology is available, the natural gas trapped in the Marcellus Shale formation, which underlies our region and others nearby, becomes very attractive. Add the proximity to consumers in the highly populated northeast, and it is easy to understand the appeal. Is there some way to think about this controversy that might enable us to reconcile conservation and what is, hopefully, “progress”?

Enter the philosophy of Peter Kareiva, chief scientist at the Nature Conservancy. According to their spring, 2011, magazine “Nature Conservancy”, Dr. Kareiva, who is apparently something of a maverick among ecological scientists, has written that “The conservation of the future will be less and less about protected areas [what he calls the ‘fortress conservation’ approach] and increasingly about working landscapes, in which the most intrusive human activities are planned for and managed to generate the least damage and to avoid irreplaceable natural systems that cannot tolerate heavy impacts.” He adds, “The message of protecting nature from humans is a losing message to most of the world”; because, “People want to be safe and secure, have food and shelter, and have an opportunity to better their lives. And they will use natural resources in any way possible to further those objectives.” While, in Dr. Kareiva’s vision, conservation will eventually have to focus less on protected areas, those areas will still play an important role. Indeed, networks of protected regions and wildlife corridors could be integrated with “developed” areas to meet the human needs for food, water, livelihood, shelter, health, and security and to secure wild spaces and all the benefit they provide. Indeed, in this way, people may be induced, “to change the way [they] think about conservation, so that its connection to their well-being is ingrained”.

I was thinking about Dr. Kareiva’s comments as I watched TV interviews with inhabitants of small towns in Pennsylvania, newly flush with money generated by Marcellus Shale drilling operations. Many of them seemed very thankful for their new income and for all the things they could do with it. While people like me may favor a turn to a more modest and sustainable standard of living than the commercially promoted “American Dream”, I could imagine how hard a sell that would be to those hard working folks who now feel finally able to afford their piece of “the good life”. I am not all sure that documentaries on gas poisoned wells and oily rivers will convince them to go back to the bad old days of small and/or uncertain incomes.

So, maybe the answer will lie in some form of compromise: Dr. Kareiva’s working landscapes concept. If Marcellus gas extraction is inevitable, could a plan be generated that allows drilling but safeguards the most vulnerable and irreplaceable watersheds by identifying them, giving them a protected status, and connecting those “off limits” areas and streams in such a way that they remain viable? Ideally, those watersheds where gas extraction is allowed would be separated from the protected ones by natural features that would restrict the spread of pollution from gas production. And, to reduce the extent of that environmental degradation, could drilling be allowed but only if companies abide by stringent construction, operating, and remediation standards? Of course, to ensure compliance and to provide early detection of environmental threats, expected and unforeseen, some form of effective monitoring scheme needs to be in effect. In this connection, I read with interest the Spring, 2011, “Trout” magazine report on the role of TU in organizing volunteer stream monitors. This project could, potentially, put a large number of concerned and educated “eyes” into the field, perhaps providing both an incentive for compliance and an early warning system.

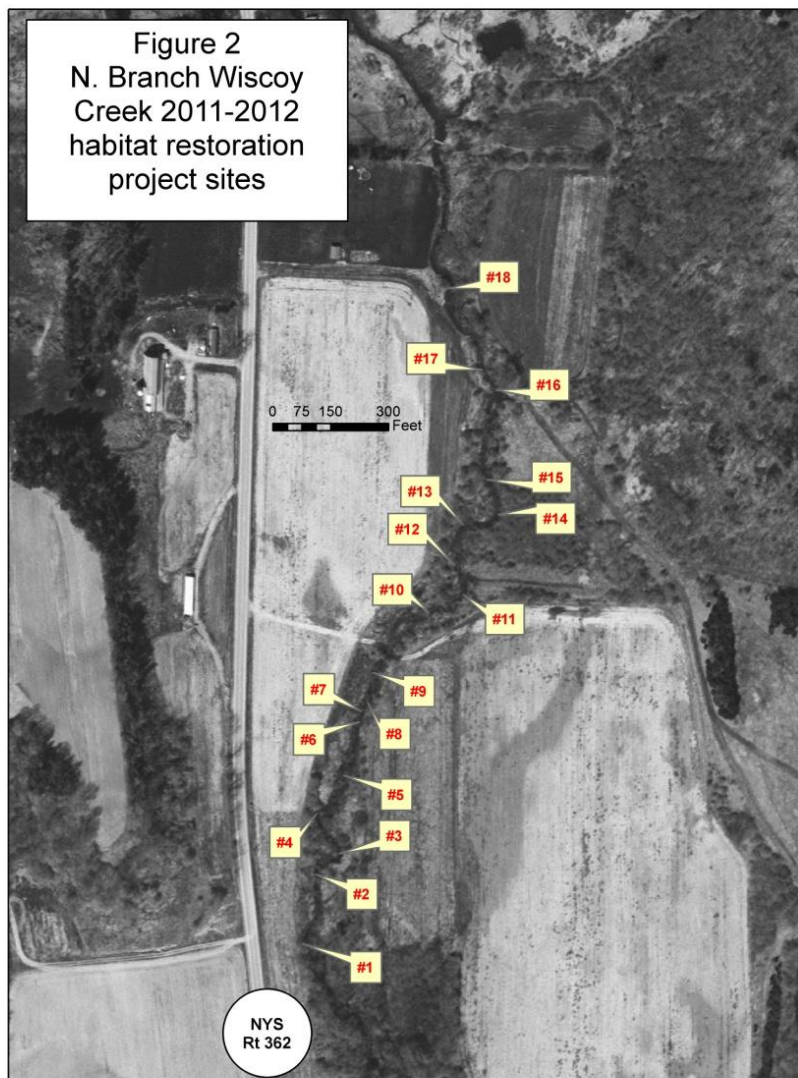
While the idea of a permanent moratorium on something as potentially dangerous as Marcellus shale gas extraction is appealing to many of us, it may prove impracticable. Personally, I like the idea of more research, not only to identify at risk areas (natural and populated), but also to see if there are safer ways of operating. But I have the feeling that, given the human needs noted in Dr. Kareiva’s article, we may not be able to hold off indefinitely. In that event, perhaps we conservationists will have to develop a more people centered perspective but one which

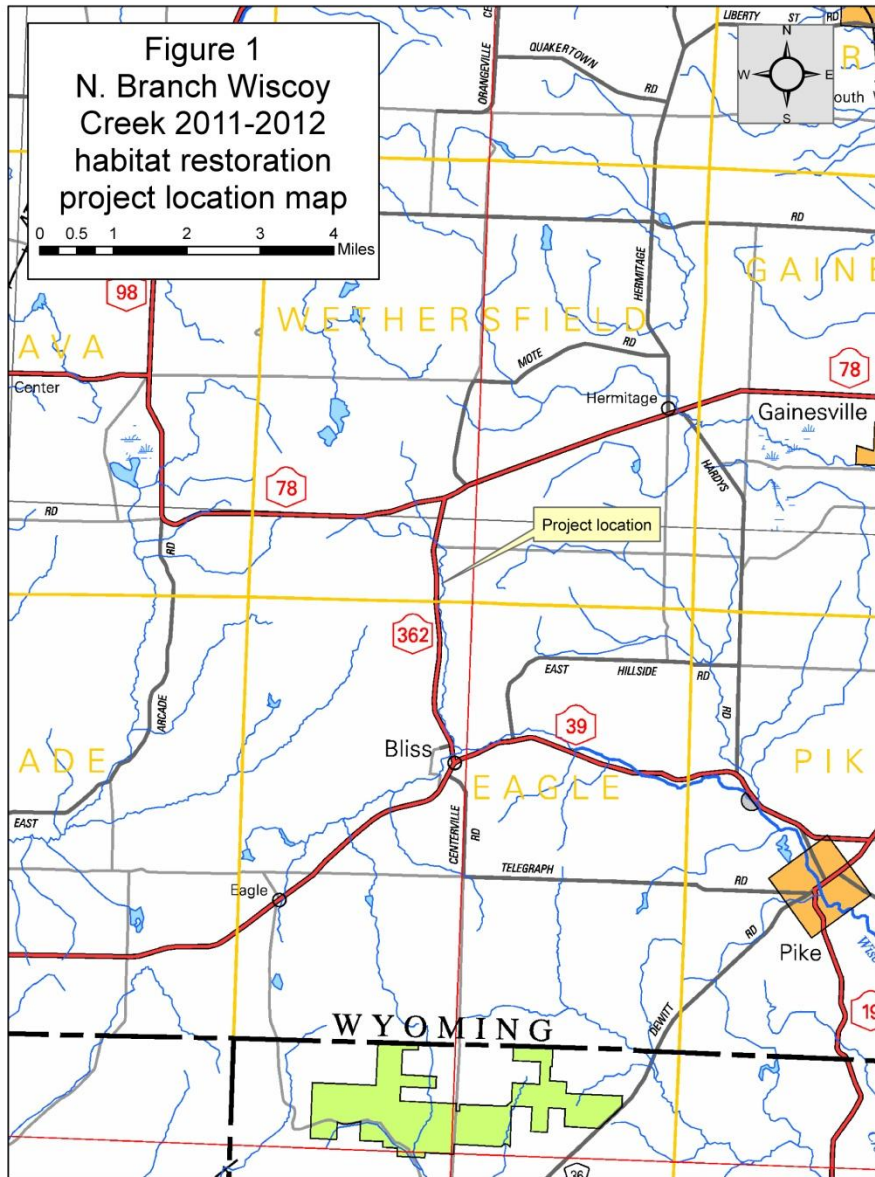
provides environmental protection and helps people to see that conservation is in the best interests of both nature and humans.

(Author's Note: This article reflects my personal views only. It is not to be construed as a statement of the policy of Trout Unlimited or the Western New York chapter.)

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North Branch, Wiscoy Map and Image (Please see Chuck Godfrey's report earlier in this newsletter.)





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(Next, Our Banquet Pictures)



Honored Guests of the Professional Conservation Community. (L to R: NYSDEC Region 9 Lake Erie Fisheries Unit Senior Aquatic Biologist, Jim Markham; USF &WLS Lower Great Lakes Fisheries Biologist, Ray Li; USF & WLS Lower Great Lakes Biologist, Kerri Li; NYSDEC Region 9 Fisheries Biologist, Scott Cornett; NYSDEC Region 9, retired, Jim Palmeroy; NYSDEC Region 9, retired, Joe Galati.)



Cold Water Fisheries Enhancement Award to Joe Galati, NYSDEC Region 9, retired. (L to R: WNYTU Pres. Gary Coons; Joe Galati; WNYTU Streams Project Chair, Chuck Godfrey)



Decade of Service Award to Joe Morgan (L to R: WNYTU Pres., Gary Coons; Joe Morgan; WNYTU Streams Project Chairman, Chuck Godfrey)



Good Friend of TU Award presented to Dave Labiak (L to R: WNYTU Streams Project Chairman, Chuck Godfrey; Dave Labiak; WNYTU President, Gary Coons)



Silver Trout Award to Dave Unetich (L to R: WNYTU Pres., Gary Coons; Dave Unetich; New York State Council, TU, Chairperson, Dee Maciejewski)



Cal Arthur President's Award to Ann Coons (L to R: WNYTU President, Gary Coons; Phyllis Arthur)



Special Presidential Award for Community Service to Len Bigaj, Dave Bollman, and Gene Romanyshyn (L to R: WNYTU President, Gary Coons; WNYTU Project Healing Waters Coordinator, Len Bigaj; WNYTU Vice President, Gene Romanyshyn, WNYTU PHW Volunteer, Dave Bollman; Project Healing Waters Northeast Regional Coordinator, Ray Markiewicz)



Two of our invaluable "Worker Bees": Maria Marricino and LeAnn Bigaj



Two Trout Unlimited benefactors: George Clemens (standing) and Judi Shelton (seated, to George's left)



"Hmmm, bamboo!" WNYTU President, Gary Coons, admires the donated bamboo rod, while Paul Maciejewski, member of the WNYTU Board of Directors and TU National Board of Trustees, plays the auctioneer.

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