

## 2018-19 Oak Brook Trout Unlimited Conservation/Stream Restoration Programs

**TUDARE** (Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Restoration Effort) is a long-term effort to protect, restore and enhance coldwater streams in the Driftless Area of southeast Minnesota, southwest Wisconsin, northeast Iowa, and northwest Illinois. Over the past 15 years TUDARE has helped raise \$60 million for stream restoration projects while providing over 450 miles of public stream access. OBTU's support is an annual \$1,500 grant that goes directly to TUDARE general operations and will continue in 2018-19. See the enclosed Duke Welter interview on TUDARE.



The **Weister Creek** project is a great example of a specific stream restoration in the Driftless Area supported by OBTU. It is a multi-year effort to restore a 2.6 mile section of an important tributary to the Kickapoo River in Vernon County. The project is a combined effort drawing funding support from numerous organizations, including OBTU and other Wisconsin and Illinois TU chapters. Our contribution this year is \$2,500 to help fund the restoration work being done by expert Wisconsin DNR contractors.



Our ongoing **Sparta, WI** stream restoration projects in the Driftless Area encompass work to reduce soil erosion and phosphorus discharge within the city of Sparta, WI. Since 2014, OBTU has provided both volunteer and financial support that has been leveraged to get large government grants. This year, we will continue stream restoration heading north on **Beaver Creek** just outside of Sparta. A work day to build LUNKER structures is scheduled for June. OBTU plans to donate \$2,500 toward this project in 2018.



The **Dowagiac River** is the newest stream restoration focus for OBTU. It is one of the closest rivers to our chapter with potential for a high-quality coldwater fishery. The removal of the Pucker Street Dam in Niles, MI this summer will open up the entire river system to upstream migrations of steelhead, salmon, and other fish species. Conservation efforts are coordinated by MEANDRS (Meeting Ecological and Agricultural Needs within the Dowagiac River System), of which OBTU is a member. Volunteers will be needed to help with stream surveying work this summer. We plan to contribute \$1,000 toward a watershed restoration program.



Two macroinvertebrate survey work days will be part of our ongoing cooperative effort with the Michigan's **Coldwater River** Watershed Council (CRWC) that began thirteen years ago. In May and October, members will collect stream samples from designated sites, then count and classify the aquatic insects and various macroinvertebrates found. By classifying and trending the population data, the CRWC gets an idea of how the river's health is evolving. This year OBTU budgeted \$1,000 to help the CRWC fund a Biological Monitoring Study.

