

ONTARIO STEELHEADERS

HELPING HANDS

Newsletter -- April 2011

Prepared for members and Ontario Anglers

Supported in part by: Wade Tech- Brantford (866) 901 3272



Thank You!

March 21, 2011 – Ontario Steelheaders Presidents Report

Welcome everyone, to a new year and another exciting steelhead season. Much has come to pass over the last few months. The Ontario Steelheaders have a new set of Directors, an MNR liaison, and a new Denny's Park Committee.

With this comes the passing of the torch from some people whose shoes will be very hard to fill. So thanks must be passed on to these people. First and foremost, thanks to Rod Jones and his crew of hard workers who for years put their dedication, hard work and effort into getting things where they are today.

Also thanks to those who have been involved in the past, i.e. past, and interim directors, MNR personnel and land owners.

Thank you to the Ministry of Natural Resources who have put into place things like Communities Fisheries Involvement Program and improvement of the Walkerton fish way. And hopefully the continued support of the existing projects and those planned for the future.

The Lake Huron Fishing Club has reared tens of thousands of yearling rainbows and assisted in the egg collection again year after year. Your time and effort is invaluable to us. For this, we thank you!

Thanks to Darryl Choronzey for his tireless efforts as Fisheries Liaison Officer for the Ontario Steelheaders; making sure that all things are in place, and moving in a forward direction.

And finally, thanks to you the members, who have come back in strong numbers to show the support of what has taken place in the past and for the future. Without your efforts, we couldn't have done this alone.

In case you haven't seen or heard; Denny's Park endured some of its own changes as a result of the formation of an ice dam causing the park to flood to levels not seen since the mid 90's. The park may not open as early as usual, due to the remnants of ice chunks left behind, and there will be some clean-up but it has held its ground with no serious damage.

There are some very exciting things that will be taking place this year and into the future as you'll read in the pages of this newsletter. I hope you're as excited as I am about all the good news coming from the O.S these days!!

I am asking all members to think about how you can get more involved in the OS like submitting an article to the newsletter on something you'd like to share with your fellow Steelheaders like fishing techniques, a project report, safety tips, or maybe just to write a story about a trip you made with your buddies or family that you may have found exciting. Everyone will appreciate your contribution whatever the content.

You may want to think about becoming a director so you can add new and possibly better ideas and energies to ensure that the O.S. is here for years to come. The OS needs your continuing support in order to keep our great resource protected, growing and moving forward. Please feel free to contact myself or any one of the Directors with your interests or questions.

Yours in Fishing!

Karl Redin

President

Ontario Steelheaders

president@ontariosteelheaders.ca



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2011 Membership Application Form

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I wish to opt out of receiving newsletters and other communications by mail (paper copy). I prefer to receive communications by E-mail only

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Junior 1 Year (16 years or under) = 10.00 Senior 1 Year (age 65 and over) = \$20.00

List all Names for Family Membership

New

Renew

_____	_____	_____
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_____	_____	_____
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NOTE: For Family Membership, all correspondence will be addressed to the person first named above.

I am interested in the following:

Stream Rehabilitation _____ Egg Collection/Adult Transfer _____ Smolt Release _____ Hatchery Work _____

Committee / Director Work _____ News and Media Work _____ Other _____

I have enclosed a cheque/money order for \$ _____ with this membership application, payable to:

The Ontario Steelheaders
Box 604, Brantford, On.
N3T 5P9

Please allow 3 weeks from time of receipt of this application, for mailing of Membership Cards, crests and decals.

www.ontariosteelheaders.ca

Your Management team:

General elections were held in October of 2010, where the members elected their new Board of Directors. Voter participation at the Fall Derby ceremonies was very high and the voters made very clear choices. The 2011 Board of Directors of the Ontario Steelheaders is as follows:

Karl Redin, president -- president@ontariosteelheaders.ca

Madeline Walker, membership director -- membership@ontariosteelheaders.ca

Al Frenette, news and media -- webmaster@ontariosteelheaders.ca

Harold Curtis, secretary-treasurer

Carlo Baldassarra, merchandise director

Don Power, Fundraising director

Dave Munro, social events director



Rod and Shirley Jones

Around the same time, a Special Committee designed to steer and manage **The Denny's Park Project** was hand-picked by the project's former Chairman, Mr. Rod Jones. Rod has stepped down as chairman but remains on the committee. Your 2011 Denny's Park Project Committee, are as follows:

Project Chairman -- Gary Sherman

Committee members -- Rod Jones, Doug Swan, Carol Turner, Pete Gilles, Darek Czarnota.

Soon after the election in Octoberber, The Board of Directors selected **Mr. Darryl Choronzey** as **Spokesperson, and Fisheries Liaison Officer for the Ontario Steelheaders**. Mr. Choronzey accepted the offer, and has been hard at work ever since!

Please take a moment to thank, and encourage these people for not only their hard work to date, but for the work that lies before them. All of them have been very busy putting their own projects in motion to protect, and enhance our fishery, add value to your membership dollars, and enjoyment to your experience at Denny's Park.

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2010 What a Year!

From last year at this time, up until this year, we can proudly say one hell of a lot has been accomplished. For starters there was the annual spring transfer of adult steelhead into the prime spring waters of the Otter and Beatty Rivers above Walkerton. Our totals were accomplished and those silver hens and hooked nosed males were allowed to get in on some of the finest cold, clear spawning waters found anywhere in the province.

As has been the case in the past five years, members of the Ontario Steelheaders worked in close conjunction with the members of the Lake Huron Fishing Club to collect and fertilize approximately 125,000 steelhead eggs at Denny's Dam for transfer to the Lake Huron Club's Kincardine hatchery. Once the eggs were shipped to the Kincardine facility, the boys took over the job of babysitting the little finned devils and trust me; this is the most important part of the game. Picking and sorting eggs, removing mortalities and feeding the hungry little trout is never an easy task.

The members of the Lake Huron Club do one hell of a job and as far as I'm concerned, they do it better than anyone else in the province. If you get the opportunity please visit the Kincardine facility. When it comes to volunteer hatcheries, this volunteer facility really is the best in the province and deserves a visit.



The two clubs; the Ontario Steelheaders and the Lake Huron Fishing Club really are making dramatic improvements not only to the Saugeen River, but Lake Huron as well. No one can dispute the fact that the Saugeen's steelhead fishery has improved tenfold since this working partnership between the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Lake Huron Fishing Club and the Ontario Steelheaders was initiated a little more than five years ago. And trust me. It's only going to get better!

Darryl Choronzey

Fisheries Liaison Officer
Ontario Steelheaders

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Walkerton Fishway gets a major Overhaul

The following Article appeared in the Owen Sound Sun Times on November 30th 2010 the work described and photographed took place on December 3rd 2010.

--- Article compiled by Al Frenette ---

Change at Walkerton dam should help fish.

By: PAUL JANKOWSKI SUN TIMES STAFF – Press Release By Darryl Choronzey

A new fishway being installed at the dam in Walkerton on Friday will have a major impact on sports angling in the whole Saugeen watershed, a Ministry of Natural Resources official said Monday.

"It's going to greatly enhance natural spawning and natural reproduction in the Saugeen. This will have positive results," acting Grey County biologist Jody Scheifley said in an interview.

The idea behind the new fishway is to "get fish into the headwaters, all the cold water that's upstream from Walkerton. That's where the cold water is, the Beatty Saugeen, all the tributaries that feed into the Saugeen River. All the cold water that's necessary for rainbows to spawn and successfully hatch their young is all upstream of this dam," he said.

The dam at Walkerton has a fishway built in 1986 that just wasn't working, Scheifley said. A two-year study he did concluded last year that fish just can't get through it.

"It was a good attempt, the concept was good, but the design just didn't come through, so we're just basically rectifying that original design. We're still using a lot of the components of the first fishway, but we've made it better," Scheifley said.

Scheifley said he spoke to various groups about his conclusions "and everybody bought in, everybody from Brockton's mayor to you name it."

The Ontario Steelheaders, the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, the Municipality of Brockton, the Lake Huron Fishing Club, the Bruce Resource Stewardship Network, the Grey County Forest Stewardship Network and the MNR all teamed up for the new fishway project. The partners raised somewhere between \$35,000 and \$40,000 to make it possible.

"The community came together," Scheifley said.

There are a number of other barriers to migrating fish along the Saugeen -- from Denny's Dam at Southampton to the Maple Hill dam near Hanover -- but the Walkerton dam is "the real culprit" in keeping fish out of cold-water spawning areas, Scheifley said.

Getting rid of the dam entirely is "something Brockton is exploring. I wouldn't want to comment on their behalf," but it would be an expensive and time-consuming proposition requiring an environmental assessment, feasibility studies, engineering and capital costs, he said. "So this is probably a Band- Aid solution until hopefully, at some time, the dam is removed."

MNR's position on the dam is **"as with any barrier, it's better to have it removed. Any barrier in place is a restriction . . . the health and the integrity of the river would be much better if it is removed,"** Scheifley said.

While the trout fishery is expected to benefit most, the fishway should also benefit salmon, he added.

"It's hard to say, it might even pass some warm-water fish like bass and pike, but it's predominately the cold-water species that have a lot more energy for jumping, like the salmon and rainbow trout and brown trout."



A new trash boom was put in place and a temporary berm was constructed to hold back the water. The top and bottom plates were then removed.



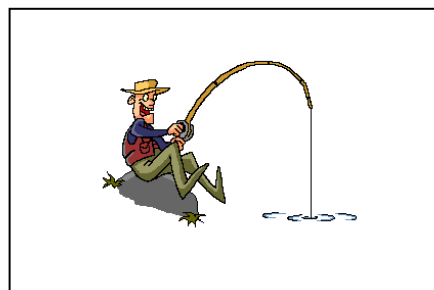
The engineered flow-control device which can be adjusted for optimum flow rates is carefully hoisted in place and anchored.

Continued next page...

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The berm is removed and optimum flow is restored to the upper entrance (left) creating a much improved, and now easily-negotiated lower entrance.



The trash boom remains in place to divert debris (left) and "The Crew" pose for the camera.

Photos By: Darryl Choronzey

"This will make a difference on the Saugeen"

Jody Schiefeley, MNR – Owen Sound

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Facsimile: (519) 372-3305



December 16, 2010

Ontario Steelheaders
PO Box 604
Brantford, ON N3T 5P9

Attention: Mr. Karl Redin

Dear Karl:

The Owen Sound Ministry of Natural Resources would like to thank the Ontario Steelheaders for your generous contribution to the Walkerton Fishway Project.

Installation of the new fishway design was successfully installed on Friday, December 3, 2010.

Through your support, this project will now ensure migratory fish can access the prime spawning and nursery habitat found in the headwaters of the Saugeen River.

The Ministry of Natural Resources is planning a partner ribbon cutting event at the Walkerton Fishway during next Spring's rainbow trout run. An invitation for your attendance will be made when arrangements have been finalized.

Thank-you for your support in enhancing Ontario's fisheries,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shawn Carey".

Shawn Carey
Area Supervisor
Ministry of Natural Resources
Owen Sound Area Office
(519)371-6751
shawn.carey@ontario.ca

Please call ahead to make an appointment with our staff.
The local Ministry office is open by appointment only.

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An Honest To God, One of a Kind, Once in a Lifetime, Steelhead Float Rod and Reel

By: Darryl Choronzey

Like I said somewhere in my ramblings; raising steelhead, fixing fishways and tearing down dams costs money. We are creating the best steelhead fishing, but we can always use money. With that in mind, I contacted a few good friends of mine for a little assistance and boy did they come to our aid big time.

It's called the "**Saugeen Steelheader Special**" and you've got a chance to win it and also sell tickets on it. It's an honest to God, one of a kind Steelhead two piece 13 foot Steelhead float rod, with a one of a kind Center Pin reel and it's tied by Canada's finest steelheader. And on top of all that, it's the only one of its kind to ever be made now or forever.

This past autumn I was driving around the continent with the wife. Sort of visiting friends I hadn't seen in years, friends I had worked with for years and friends I respected and looked upon as the best in their trade.

My first stop was to see **Gary Loomis**. Yeah, the same Gary Loomis that started and was president of the world's finest fishing rod company before he decided to sell and retire. Well now he's back in the game and making the world's finest rod blanks with an all new company called North Fork Composites and you can Google him and the company at <http://www.northforkcomposites.com>



Then there was **Barry Stokes**. He's the head honcho over at **Islander Reels**. You know; that Canadian company <http://www.islander.com> on Vancouver Island. The company is the same one that makes the world's finest mooching, fly-fishing and float fishing reels. Once I headed back though northern Ontario I had to stop and see Brendan O Farrell. Some of you may not be familiar with Brendan. He hides away in a little town north of Manitoulin Island called Nairn Center. He's a great steelheader, one of the best. You can feel sorry for him because he lives in the bush, but what the hell, he's surrounded by phenomenal steelhead waters and he's happy.

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Brendan is also in my humble opinion the finest rod builder/tier in the country. Hell, maybe in the whole world. By the way, his wood handled rods are also the best as well. He's even started up a specialty rod business called Twisted and Addicted <http://www.twistedandaddicted.com> Now that he's creating fish rod masterpieces, he's discovered that real work means less fishing!

Anyways, to make a long story short, I went to my three good friends and told them our story about what we are doing on the Saugeen. You could call it mooching or a cry for help. I came up with an idea of getting the world's finest steelhead rod /reel combination created and all three came to my assistance and the assistance of the Ontario Steelheaders. Gary has contributed a special one of a kind North Fork Composite 13 foot, 2 piece, graphite blank. Good old Brendan is going to tie it all up in all its magnificence with a special wood handle included. Barry has even created and donated a one of a kind only (and I mean one of a kind) specially designed and engraved, Saugeen Steelheader Islander Float reel. Did I keep saying one of a kind? Trust me there never has been and ever will be another like it. This rod really is one of a kind.....geez, I said it again.

Take the time to type in the websites of all three sponsors of this fantastic presentation Steelhead outfit. Read their stories and you'll soon discover just who they are and what they are donating to our cause.

Tickets will be sold from spring till fall by the Ontario Steelheaders and tackle shops throughout Southern Ontario. For inquiries e-mail: webmaster@ontariosteelheaders.ca



Please buy some tickets of your own for this great prize. Matter of fact, pick up some books from our directors and sell those tickets and we can get on with making the Saugeen River the finest steelhead stream east of the Rocky Mountains.

'Cronzy'



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Volunteers with the Ontario Steelheaders clean the debris from the inlet of Walkerton's Truax Dam Fishway in October, for the 7th time that season. The trash-boom designed to deflect debris from the intake was not in place. The fishway was upgraded in the fall of 2010. Read the full story on page 5.

Adult Transfer Update:

One Thousand Adults to Get the "Upstream Taxi Ride"

Darryl Choronzey

Geez, it's amazing how some big, brawling steelhead enjoy life. Not only do they get to enjoy a little sex in some of the finest cold, clear spawning water in the country, but they also get to be taxied up to the bedroom to enjoy the nookie as well.

The Ontario Steelheaders have been transporting adult steelhead up into the Otter and Beatty rivers for what seems to be eons. The reason?...getting these big, beautiful fish to spawn in the best water conditions possible, deposit their eggs and have their wild offspring hatch, grow and imprint to these two marvelous streams. When they smolt and drop down to Lake Huron to grow, the Beatty and Otter will always be lurking in their minds.

The Saugeen is one great big, beautiful river, but three or four dams have been preventing the majority of adults from reaching the prime upstream stretches to deposit those valuable eggs. The trailering method for the time being anyways is essential to kick-starting rainbow production in the Saugeen.



This year there's a transfer permit made out and ready to go for 1,000 adult steelhead to be moved upstream. For the time being, these fish need assistance to get past three dams at Walkerton and above to enter prime spawning water.

Remember please, we need your assistance this spring to make this possible and continue this great program. -Cronzy-

Georgian Triangle Anglers' Association Coming On Board

There's no denying that the working arrangement between the Ontario Steelheaders, the Lake Huron Fishing Club is attracting a lot of attention. Well, what can you expect? We're bringing the steelhead back to the Saugeen in phenomenal numbers. Matter of fact, we should be downright proud of ourselves.

But what are we doing differently to reach this dramatic return of steelhead to the Saugeen? I'll give you three good reasons for steelhead survival and steelhead returns with our program.

For starter's we don't remove belly fins when clipping our fish for identification. Our steelhead for the most part now are only identified with the removal of the small adipose fin. Common sense should be simple. Before you put a little kid on the bus for the first day of kindergarten do you amputate the kid's leg? No! Same with a trout! Those pectoral and ventral fins are like baffles on an airplane. They are all important to fish when they go hunting down food. For years the Ministry of Natural Resources demanded one or more belly fins had to be removed from hatchery raised trout and salmon to identify them. Now, think hard about this. Did the brain trust behind the idiotic Atlantic program remove belly fins from their fish? Not on your life. They pulled out all the stops for this creature and its chances for survival. Well, what's good for the goose is good for the gander. We pushed for no fin clipping at all on our trout. We didn't achieve our goal, but gladly settled for just the small adipose to be removed for identification.

Number two, as already noted, the Lake Huron Fishing Club does a great job of raising big, beautiful 7 to 8 inch smolt. Big year-old steelhead are a necessity for maximum survival once the fish are ready for release. Other clubs may talk big numbers, but raising big numbers of fry and small fingerlings may look good on paper, but not on the end of a fishing rod. They just don't survive in the wild and to me are just a waste of money and hatchery space. Spend a little time studying the efforts and results of these clubs and even when the Ministry of Natural Resources stocked fry and small fingerlings and see what's produced....NOT MUCH. Again, our phenomenal success is largely responsible due to the quality size and age of the fish the Lake Huron Fish Club send out the hatchery door.

Then there's that all important imprinting. Again, we release our fish approximately 50 miles upriver from Lake Huron. That's a lot of miles for smolting steelhead to suck up their surroundings as they head down to the lake. Imprinting at its finest!

Anyways, I got a phone call from Jody Scheifley the other day and he mentioned that he had made a presentation to the Georgian Triangle Anglers' Association on possibly reviewing and changing some of their fish rearing directions. From there I drove over to meet with Frank De Graff of the hatchery manager for the Georgian Triangle Anglers' Association to talk steelhead and hatcheries.

Now in the past, this club has carried out a heck of a lot of work raising and rearing brown trout, brook trout and steelhead. They've had a lot of success and then again they've also been disappointed with some of their results. Jody mentioned to them how our program has really kick-started the Saugeen into gear in a really big way over the past few years.



Now plans are underway for the Georgian Bay club to reduce the number of brown trout presently being raised, cut back on the stocking of fry and fingerling steelhead and use the additional space to produce big, dynamic yearling steelhead instead of small fingerlings. The yearling steelhead they release next year will also not have any of their belly or bottom fins removed, but instead the small upper adipose in the same manner our fish are identified. Geez, it's nice to see sportsmen and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources are finally on the same page when it comes to location stocking and fish clipping.

Then, there's that vital matter of imprinting. The Georgian Triangle boys will be releasing their yearling steelhead far up the Beaver River next time around to achieve that imprinting.

They're achieving all three important goals and will be seeing their results in a few short years when those big runs of steelhead begin to return.

Again, hats-off to Jody Schiefley and the Owen Sound office of the Ministry of Natural Resources. The MNR and the Georgian Triangle Anglers' Association are making big inroads into putting a very important game fish back on track in Georgian Bay.

Remember...big, quality fish, adipose clips only, and a long way up the river when releasing those fish for proper imprinting. It's imperative!



And for those remaining clubs that haven't got the big streams to deal with; switch over to short period 'pen' rearing to imprint those valuable fish your raising. Close to shore or shoreline dumping really is a waste.

Seriously,

Darryl Choronzey
Fisheries Liaison Officer
Ontario Steelheaders

HELP WANTED:

The **Ontario Steelheaders** are interested in putting your talents to work! If you believe you have a special talent to contribute to the management of this organization, please don't delay!! There are many ways you can contribute as our directors require assistants to compliment their efforts. Please contact a director and we will do our best to put your skills to work to enhance and protect this fishery.

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A Special Thanks To The Toronto Sportsmen's Show

Everyone knows about the **Toronto Sportsman's Show**. It's that humongous outdoors event that's staged every year down near the metro waterfront. You know; the big outdoors extravaganza every March that's been an annual event for something like what seems to have been a thousand years. You went there as kids and now take your kids and even grandkids there every year.

But did you know the **Toronto Sportsmen Show** is a major part of the Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows? Did you know that they started up way, way, way back in 1948? Hell on that subject? I was even started up way, way, way back in 1948. But anyways, did you also know the big shows, especially the Toronto Sportsmen Show is a non-profit corporation that have raised and donated more than 31 million dollars in grants toward outdoor endeavours? Did you know that I know I know Walter Oster the head honcho of the Sportsmen Show?

Now let's see. We all love the Toronto Sportsmen's Show. The Toronto Sportsmen's Show financially assists deserving outdoor groups working to improve the outdoors. The Ontario Steelheaders are definitely a deserving group working their butts off to improve and make the Saugeen River the finest steelhead river east of the Rocky Mountains. I know Walter Oster. Don't forget, I'm as old as the Toronto Sportsmen's Show.

I make a phone call to Walter Oster and explain our accomplishments, our present endeavours and our need for financial assistance. I enquire if Walter can see the importance of something in the way of a five thousand dollar grant. Walter thinks it over for a short period, notes the importance of what we are accomplishing and graciously agrees to assist our efforts with a cheque for **five thousand dollars** to help us out with our goal of making the Saugeen River the finest steelhead stream east of the Rocky Mountains.

Please remember folks that the Canadian National Sportsmen's Shows puts back what they take in. Also remember that we received that five thousand dollars from Walter Oster and the Toronto National Sportsmen's Show when we really needed assistance.

And to Walter Oster, thank you very much for your foundation's assistance.

But, geez, I wish I would have thought a little longer and asked for a little more.

Another great partner comes to assistance of the Ontario Steelheaders!

'Cronzy'



Walter Oster presents Darryl Choronzey with a cheque for 5000.00 to help the Ontario Steelheaders with their fisheries enhancement projects.

STEELHEAD EXPRESS II

Rolls out in style

By: Al Frenette

This project began one day in November when a half dozen or our members literally dug her out from a pile of junk and overgrowth at a local farm where she had been resting for several years. With a quick phone call to the towing company, Dave from Southport towing carefully hoisted and towed it to Denny's Park where the work began. We took measurements and made a shopping list and set to work the following weekend. Again, a half dozen volunteers got to work on her while others cheered us on... We put brand new axles, tires, lights and spare tire on it that weekend and got it rolling again but there was plenty of work still to do. Our work continued in bursts all winter. We rebuilt the aerator pump, cut out the old drain valve and replaced it with a new 4 inch set-up exactly like the #1 tanker. We replaced the old lid clamps with giant wing nuts and Stainless steel hold-down bars like we did with #1 last year. The good folks at the graphics shop did another great job with the decals and with some final assembly, she was ready for paint. Karl Redin and Les Lovegrove painted up the frame on March 19th an epic battle between man and paintbrush to put the final touch on it. The #2 tanker is now ready for loads of chromers and looking for drivers...watch for her this spring... she looks great!!



The Steelhead Express is an important part of our operations at Ontario Steelheaders. It is used to transfer adult steelhead to prime spawning habitat and also used to release yearling smolt from the hatcheries. Many thanks to **South Port Towing** of Southampton and to **Advantage Vinyl & Graphics** of Brantford for another awesome job on the decals! Thanks to Gary at **Transway Systems** of Hamilton, **Rubberline Products** of Brantford and **Standard Axle** in Woodstock for all of their contributions and donations and helping us stretch our dollars. Special thanks to **R & D Fabrication** in Paris for a great job on the welding and fabrication work! We also need to thank the volunteers who spent their weekends working on this project and to the hecklers at Denny's Park for their moral support!

There is still a small amount of work yet to do on Tanker #1 and we will get to that work after the Adult Transfer and smolt-release this spring...Watch for work-day announcements. **-Al**

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Dave MacPherson
C.Tech

Saugeen River Rainbow Trout Enhancement Project

Winter -Spring update



In the spring of 2010:

- 39 volunteers, worked 13 days spanning 3 weeks, and over 1600 work hours between April 1st to the 17th, to capture 1743 adult steelhead at Denny's Dam, more than doubling our count of 786 in the spring of 2009!!
- 309 adults were transported via the Steelhead Express and released upstream to the prime spawning grounds of the Beatty Saugeen, and Otter Creek.
- 329,477 eggs we harvested and fertilized from 60 males and 86 females.
- 131,036 were directed to the LHFC Kincardine Hatchery, and 198,441 were transported to the Mildmay hatchery.
- 57,359 six to eight inch yearling rainbows were released into Otter Creek and the Saugeen River from the 2009 egg collection.

Hard-hats off to all the volunteers who are involved in transforming this fishery. All of our achievements are made possible with your "*HELPING HANDS*"

Work resumes in April 2011

We have a permit to transport up to 1000 adults upstream via the Steelhead Express tankers, and the LHFC will have up to 40 loads of yearlings ready for release. The Egg Collection program will be running as usual and we need to collect an additional 100,000 eggs this year. We need drivers with full size Pick-Ups or SUV's and volunteers to work weekdays at Denny's Dam Fish-way.

Please contact Rod Jones and Al Frenette at: al_frenette@rogers.com if you can help.

Let's hope for great weather and water conditions for another great year.

Have fun and work safe!!

Spring Stocking Goes on Without a Hitch-

Where do all these fish come from? No one can deny that steelhead are coming back to the Saugeen in big numbers, if not record numbers. Visit Steelheaders Park from mid-September and all the way around till late May and it's pretty obvious that an awesome number of trout are being pulled out of the waters from Denny's Dam downstream to below the Graveyard Hole. If an accurate census was taken, it's pretty clear that the big river is the finest trout stream in the province.

Yea, we get some Yankee strays and the river is kicking out a large number of wild fish thanks to the transfer program, but look at those missing fin clips from stocked fish...our fish. When you are looking for those missing fins, pay close attention to the absence of the adipose fin. It amazes me, just how many anglers think they've caught a 'wild' fish, when in fact, it's a stocked fish, missing that small 'adipose' fin.



Every spring for the past five years, the members of the Lake Huron and Ontario Steelheaders are pulling fish tankers back and forth from the Kincardine hatchery to Lobies Park in beautiful downtown Walkerton. The reason is simple. You need two important factors to successfully stock fish. Fish in prime condition are a must. They have to be big and robust and when it comes to yearling steelhead they have to be bang on at the smolting stage. The boys from the Lake Huron Fishing Club make certain the trout yearlings are big, strong and ready to smolt. The second factor is a proper release site. These fish may be at the perfect size and stage of life, but they have to be allowed to imprint to their release location. Dumping them below Denny's Dam is a useless practice of the past.

The release site in Walkerton is just perfect. It's a long 50 miles of winding river down to Lake Huron and on their way downstream the smolt get to sniff out the characteristics of the Saugeen and imprint these characteristics into their brains so they remember where and when to come home in a few years to not only spawn, but create angling mayhem.

That's why we stock our steelhead fingerlings every spring all the way upstream at Lobies Park in Walkerton, Ontario. And that's the reason for the recent success of our joint program.

Last spring and again this spring, we have and will be releasing close to, or more than, 65,000 prime yearling steelhead to the upstream waters of the Saugeen. The work is fun, but the work is also tedious, especially for some of us old guys. I would like to thank everyone that has helped out in the past and are helping out again this spring and hopefully for the springs to come. I could name names, especially some of those park members that have been doing this for years. They never seem to miss a shift and can always be counted on no matter rain or shine. I'm not going to name names, because at my age I'll miss one or two and then I'll find myself in big crap. But, thanks everyone for your past efforts and I hope we can count on everyone again in the coming weeks to get out and give a hand, get a little wet and have all that fun keeping the fishery improving on the Saugeen.

We should be moving those 65,000 yearlings up to Lobies by the middle of April. Once again, the release of fish up in the waters around Walkerton is essential for successful returns of adults back to the river. Imprinting these robust little guys is all important.

Many thanks again to the volunteers.

Darryl Choronzey
Fisheries Liaison Officer
Ontario Steelheaders

The guy at the Flat Rock

"Hmmm, Ok where do I start? Started fishing for "Rainbows" somewhere around the late 70's. I was 14 or 15 years old and I still remember not catching anything, while all around me guys were catching fish. At last some fellow came over and suggested I take off the steel leader I was using while drifting a worm in gin clear water. Well, what did I know? That was at the "Ganny". A few years later (more than a few) I was trying my hand at this new "float-fishing" thing.

I had to build my own rod because you couldn't buy them then. All the guys at the top end of the flat rock at the Sauble were catching fish while I was wasting my time farther down. There were lots of fishermen and I was intimidated and did not want to barge in. After about the third time past me with a fish on, a guy came over and grabbed my arm and dragged me upriver. He squeezed everyone over a bit and put me in beside him. He gave me a couple of flies and we proceeded to catch fish. I never forgot him. I don't know who he was but he had an "Ontario Steelheaders" patch on his vest. I joined right away.

I had a trailer at Denny's park around the mid 90's for 8 or 10 years or so and was lucky enough to fish a lot and meet a few good guys. I did OK I guess. I have been away for a number of years now. I went on the Steelheaders website recently and read the article by Cronzy and I see the comments by Rod regarding needing newer members and persons interested in the fishery and the need to help and encourage the younger and newer folks. I will send off my membership application and re-join the Steelheaders. It has been far too long. I am reminded of that guy at the flat rock so long ago. I can't help but feel a bit sorry for newcomers to the sport who may never meet someone like "the guy at the Flat Rock".



I sure don't want to come across as preaching and don't want to offend or insult anyone but I can't help but feel a bit sorry for newcomers to the sport who may never meet someone like "the guy at the Flat Rock", and the more I ponder it; I think I would like to be remembered the same as " the guy at the flat rock ".

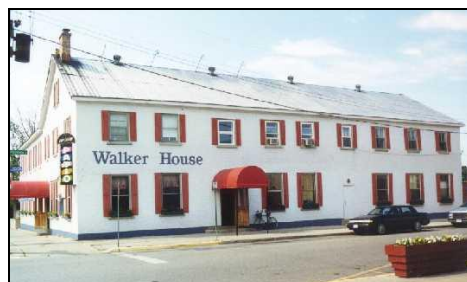
Please folks, when you go down on the Saugeen remember to take a youngster fishing. Introduce him or her to the greatest sport we have in this country of ours. When a new arrival drives into the parking lot, welcome him, her or them. Just as important, take the time to sign them up as members of the Ontario Steelheaders.

That sums it all up I guess... I was proud to be a member and tried to help the fishery, and everyone I could. Kids too! Looking forward to starting again!

Jim Woodruff

Prospect Steelheader

03/29/2011



Walker House Restaurant
146 High St. Southampton,
519-797-2772

Enforcement



Report a Violation

All Ontarians can play a part in protecting our natural resources from waste, abuse and depletion. If you are witness to a resource violation within Ontario, please call the Ministry of Natural Resources TIPS line at:

1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667)

In order to investigate an occurrence, it will assist an officer to know the following information:

- Nature of violation (see list in right column)
- Vehicle information
- Location of violation (address, county, township, municipality, lot, concession)
- Particulars of violation, other relevant information

The TIPS-MNR reporting line is not an emergency response telephone number. If you are calling to report public safety matters please call 911 or the police.

The TIPS line is designed to provide everyone in Ontario with a toll-free telephone line that they can call, any time of the year, day or night, to report natural resources violations directly to the Ministry of Natural Resources. This allows the public to report suspected natural resources violations that the Ministry may not otherwise be aware of. TIPS-MNR is not an anonymous program. Calls may be recorded and you will be asked to provide your name and contact information so that an officer may get in touch with you during the investigation and to assist them in any related prosecution.

All reports to the TIPS line are reviewed by a Conservation Officer and those requiring action are assigned for follow-up in the most appropriate manner. Depending upon their other duties and priorities there may not be an immediate or on-scene attendance by a Conservation Officer.

The intelligence and field operations sections of the Ministry's Enforcement Branch use all of the information collected to help focus Conservation Officer efforts on areas where there are high numbers of reported violations.

All information is valuable and appreciated, the most important thing the public can do is provide the information to an enforcement officer, and we'll take it from there.

Please Note: This is not an information line. For general inquiries please call 1-800 667-1940.

Crime Stoppers

To make an **anonymous** violation report, please call Crime Stoppers at **1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**.

Denny's Park Project

Your parking-fees at work:

During the winter months, park management committed \$2000.00 to our partners in the Lake Huron Fishing Club to cover costs associated with rearing an additional 100,000 rainbow trout to fall fingerling stage. This new initiative is yet another example of your dollars working to improve the fishery.

Monies generated by our activities at Denny's Park, are from time to time earmarked for fisheries enhancement projects. Our management team work diligently to collect the funds and to run the park efficiently, in order to make these ventures possible. The Ontario Steelheaders would like to thank everyone for their timely payments which make these and other improvements to our park and our fishery possible. Thank you!

Welcome to Campers & Day-Use Users.

It has been a long winter and we are sure that everyone is more than ready for another year at camp to renew old friendships and create new ones. As you are aware, a new committee was formed and has been working hard over the winter in conjunction with the fisheries section of the Ontario Steelheaders.

You will notice there have been a few new rules added this year, it is not our intent to over regulate this property that we are all so privileged to have but to make it enjoyable for the majority including our neighbours and partners in the community. When asked to abide by these regulations, it is for the betterment of all, for example, loud noise after hours, generators bothering other, site clean-up etc.

We ask all of our patrons and park users to be mindful of the environment in the conservation area. We ask all visitors to refrain from littering and to clean up after themselves when they leave. The Ontario Steelheaders are committed to the protection of our fishery and therefore ask all guests to abide by the regulations in the Ontario Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act. The Conservation area, the river, and the park grounds are patrolled by the Enforcement branch of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.

We look forward to your support in the management of your conservation area. Any questions, or concerns, please direct them to a committee member.

Thank You,

Gary Sherman

Project Chair

Camp Committee Members:

Rod Jones, Doug Swan, Carol Turner, Pete Gilles, Darek Czarnota

Spring clean-up at the park:

Management at Denny's park would like to thank everyone in advance for their help in the clean-up that will take place this spring as a result of the ice Dam that entered the park grounds in the winter. There's always some spring cleaning to do but this year it will be a much bigger job. Please do everything possible to assist in the clean-up efforts and restore the grounds to its pristine condition. Please work safely and consult with park management for instruction. Please do not cut trees or limbs without permission from Park Management.

A Special and Much Needed Injection of Steelhead for the Saugeen

I wasn't planning on mentioning this latest news to club members in this newsletter, but what the hell, if it happens, it happens and it more than likely will happen.

About six months ago I approached the Ministry of Natural Resources Area Supervisor Shawn Carey with a question and a suggestion.

The question was, "Why not have the Ministry of Natural Resources compliment the work of our two clubs?"

The suggestion was "Match our annual fish stocking efforts of 50-65,000 Steelhead for the Saugeen."

Shawn must have thought it was a fair question and fair suggestion, seeing as how he took it back to his bosses. They studied the proposal and the feedback has been pretty positive.

The major problem facing this suggestion for this year is hatchery space. The Ministry of Natural Resources has no space available 'this' year. It seems Normandale is overflowing with Atlantic salmon and there's no room there for any new tenants. But, it's a very good chance that we will see a Ministry of Natural Resources injection of steelhead yearlings for 2012.

Also, the Ministry of Natural Resources came back with the suggestion that we could, in conjunction with the Lake Huron Fishing Club collect an additional 100,000 steelhead eggs this year and raise them to advanced fall fingerling size and release them this autumn in late October or early November. After confirming and negotiating with the Lake Huron Fishing Club and our directors, the Ontario Steelheaders have committed to financially supporting the project. As I sit here, it seems that we only have to cross the T's and dot the I's with the Ministry of Natural Resources to get this program underway. If we proceed, which I believe we will, it is on the understanding that it is only a one year program. Again, funding is never easy to come by and that includes projects such as this, but we will proceed if the T's are crossed and the I's are dotted.



As for an annual MNR stocking of steelhead into the Saugeen; why not? Look back over the past few decades and the Saugeen steelhead fishery has only been assisted by clubs such as the Ontario Steelheaders and the Lake Huron Fishing Club for the most part. All government steelhead stocking has been geared toward Lake Ontario. At the same time we have the largest streams, the least problems associated with urban encroachment and some of the cleanest waters found anywhere on the Great Lakes. The Saugeen has also become a magnet for anglers from the Golden Horseshoe and even the United States. The regions surrounding the Saugeen need the tourist dollars to boost their economy.

It really is time for the government to step up to the table and make the Saugeen the finest steelhead trout destination east of the Rocky Mountains.

I have to add one thing....I hope the Ontario Steelheaders and the Lake Huron Fishing Club continue their excellent partnership on making this Saugeen steelhead fishery what it is. We must continue to work together no matter what. There's a lot of work still to be carried out to bring this big, beautiful river to its full potential.

Darryl Choronzey
Fisheries Liaison Officer
Ontario Steelheaders

Memorial wreath collection a success!!

Ken Heath & Ron Dollar's, annual memorial wreath collection went very well last fall. They collected a total of \$310 which allowed them to place a wreath and donate \$ 250.00 to the Southampton Royal Canadian Legion's Poppy Fund. Special thanks to Carol Turner for collecting the vast majority of the donations from Denny's park patrons and to Ken and Ron themselves for the continuance of a very important gesture. Perhaps we could convince Ken and Ron to join our membership roster... we could use a couple of good guys!

Ken, Ron, and the Ontario Steelheaders thank you!

From Madeline's Membership Desk

We are coming up to our one year anniversary since taking over as Interim Membership Chair and subsequently being voted in as Membership Director for the Ontario Steelheaders. Our membership roster continues to grow and presently we are well over 180 members strong. Things have been relatively quiet over the winter but we are gearing up for the Spring/Opening season and expect to be quite busy over the ensuing months. We will be offering Membership renewals at the upcoming Spring Derby, through the mail and via any or our directors. **Please find membership application and renewal forms at the front and back of this newsletter. Please forward your newsletter copy to someone you know.**

The fall Derby of 2010 was a huge success with record number of participants. The Ontario Steelheaders success is directly related to the strength of its membership, so I urge you all to continue to support our efforts by renewing your membership, and promoting the Ontario Steelheaders to your friends and fellow sportsmen.

I strongly believe that many of you will be quite pleased with the efforts of all the volunteer's steadfast work and like they say "The proof is in the pudding" – I think we can all expect another banner fishing season, as well as, for many years to come. This club is back on its feet and moving forward like never before. I am proud to be a part of it and I hope you are too!

On a somber note, it is with great sadness to report the passing of one of our members, Mr. Dave Bartholomew. Dave passed away suddenly and unexpectedly on October 19, 2010. Dave was fishing with his brother Len, and his best friend Lance Crawford along with some other fishing friends at the Cattaraugus River in New York. Dave was an avid fisherman and I'm sure many of you have stories to share with your time spent on the Saugeen River with Dave. On behalf of the Ontario Steelheaders, I express our condolences to his family and friends.

Also with a heavy heart, I report the passing of John Campbell's mother. John is a very active and supporting member who enjoys fishing at the Saugeen. John spoke highly of his mother, and how she would visit with him at Denny's Park while he fished. He explained that she enjoyed being outdoors and listening to all the fishermen and women come in and tell their stories of triumph or woes. It was quite obvious in speaking with John that his mother's time at Denny's Park was a happy memory for him and brought him a sense of comfort during this time of grief. Again on behalf of the Ontario Steelheaders we wish to express our condolences to Mr. John Campbell and his family for their loss.

The Ontario Steelheaders is a relatively small community but a growing one. We all have a genuine interest in supporting our sport and the best way we can continue with our success is through our membership. We will be having a membership drive during the Spring Derby and throughout the season, so **please renew your membership and keep us strong and growing!** Members are reminded that renewal is due May 1st 2011. Please offer your continued support at this very important time in our evolution.

Keep those E-mail addresses coming!!

Madeline Walker

Membership Director
Ontario Steelheaders

membership@ontariosteelheaders.ca

The Old Hydro Dam Is Getting a Facelift ...Or Some Teeth Pulled

Well, with the work getting done on the Walkerton Fishway, it seemed time to look at the old Hydro Dam a few miles upstream. Actually, the study work and meetings have been going on for more than a year and it looks like our labours are coming to fruition.



Meetings have been held with the Saugeen Conservation Authority and the Ministry of Natural Resources to breach the Hydro Dam in one specific location about midway across the structure to allow proper fish passage. Plans were presented that call for a pie shaped cut measuring 30 feet across the top and 15 feet down below at the apron. With this completed, upstream steelhead will find passage over the dam not only easier at the location of the old mill, but also through the new cut.

Again, working with Shawn Carey, the Ministry of Natural Resources and also the Saugeen Conservation Authority it appears we are making some headway. Hopefully, a plan will be in the works this summer during low water conditions.

If we get the go ahead, I know the members will be available to carry out a little labour.

...Again, thanks Shawn and here's hoping we can get it done!

Darryl Choronzey
Fisheries Liaison Officer
Ontario Steelheaders

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Treasurer's report

Following the General Election in October, I met with Harold Curtis, the Treasurer-Elect, to pass the torch. We first met at the bank where Harold was registered as a signing authority and was issued a debit card. In a later meeting I surrendered the banking records & statements, cheques, mailbox keys, etc. Harold and I both carefully reviewed the financial statements and concluded that everything was in balance and that all expenditures while I was acting secretary were appropriate and properly accounted. We collaboratively issued a letter to the President, Mr. Karl Redin indicating our findings.

We are currently in sound financial shape. Revenues from membership, draws and raffles and other fundraising activities have been very strong and should continue in 2011. Expenses over the winter have included web hosting, decal printing, and most significantly; repairs and upgrades to the Steelhead Express #2 tanker. This project came in well under budget and will leave room for other projects in the future. Upcoming expenses will include Derby costs, Merchandise ventures, Fundraising investments and newsletter expenses. We have also committed to matching a \$2000.00 contribution from Denny's Park Project Funds to the Lake Huron Fishing Club for a new stocking initiative.

A very special thank-you to Lance Crawford and the Bartholomew family for designating the O.S. as beneficiaries to donation's on David's memory, as well as to our own John Campbell for asking friends and loved ones to support the O.S. in his mother's memory. Our thoughts are with you always.

Please keep up the tremendous support of our fundraising activities and please remember to renew your membership so we can continue to support our fisheries enhancement projects. Harold, while unable to report for this newsletter is committed to managing our finances wisely and transparently, in support of our objectives.



*Yours Truly,
Al Frenette*

For: **Harold Curtis**
Secretary - Treasurer
Ontario Steelheaders

FEED THE FISH!!!

Chances are you've been approached by one of our members or someone from the Lake Huron fishing Club with draw tickets for prizes, 50/50's, merchandise and so on. The proceeds from these draws go directly to fund the hatchery operations and are used to purchase fish feed, pay for electricity and other expenses. Many thanks, to the folks who have been working hard to sell the tickets and raise funds. This work, and your generosity, is critical to the enhancement of this fishery, and a vital lifeline to the fish!

Please support these and other very important fundraising activities now and in the future!



**1572 Victoria St. N
Kitchener, ON
1-888-MAX-FISH**

www.naturalsports.ca

O.S. fundraising project going strong!

The storefront Supporter Decal Program designed by Darryl Choronzey is a real hit with tackle retailers, restaurants and other businesses. These supporting businesses donate 200 dollars towards our Fisheries Enhancement Fund. In return the Ontario Steelheaders are supplying the stores and businesses with a storefront "Supporter" decal to display, as well as an advertisement spot in this newsletter. The funding generated from this project will go a long way to improve our fishery. Every member of the Ontario Steelheaders is encouraged to present the program to someone they know. **Please do your part and keep the program and our fishery moving forward.**



The license plate sized Supporter Decal can be seen on storefront windows across SW Ontario. "If you know of a business who would like to make a contribution, and advertise with us in this newsletter, please contact Don Power at: webmaster@ontariosteelheaders.ca

Please thank our partners for their support !!

Merchandise report

Happy Spring, fellow anglers! I hope you fared well over the winter. I am glad you liked the new merchandise we promoted last season and are looking forward to see what's new this season.

This year's **new offerings** will consist of hats, long sleeve t-shirts, hoodies & more to add to our regular inventory of T-shirts, jackets, decals, crests and coffee mugs etc... all top quality, at bottom dollar prices. We have plenty of short sleeve commemorative T-shirts ready for the hot summer months too! I'll be displaying all current and new merchandise at the Spring Derby on May 7th so be sure to check it out and get yours before they're gone!

Regrettably, we lost our jacket supplier over the winter; they just closed down, out of business, without notice. This put us in a spot for our spring orders for jackets. Have no fear, all you customers out there who have pre-ordered jackets, I am working with a new supplier for these jackets and I am sure they can provide what we need to meet our current and future commitments. Please feel free to see me for all your merchandise enquiries, or E-mail: webmaster@ontariosteelheaders.ca

Thank you for your past and future support. See you at the Spring Derby!

Best Regards,

Carlo Baldassarra
Director of Merchandise
Ontario Steelheaders



Hats



Long Sleeve Tees



Hoodies

Carlo will be taking orders and selling merchandise at the Spring Derby on May 7th so be sure to bring your cash or cheques to the derby and get yours while it's hot...It won't last long!! Carlo is also very motivated to continue bringing you exciting new merchandise and is always working on new and exciting projects. Merchandise is sold at a minimal profit margin and proceeds are used to fund conservation projects.

Ontario Steelheaders 2011 Annual Spring Steelhead Derby

Please join us on **Saturday May 7th 2011** at **Denny's Conservation Area (Denny's Park)** for our annual **Spring Steelhead Derby & River Appreciation Day**.

**Cash Prizes +++ Great Food+++ Draw Prizes +++
Trophies+++Camping**

DERBY NEWS: Well folks it is fishing season again. Time to dust off the old rod, put on some new line, and hook up with a LUNKER, for the fight of a lifetime!!

Come out and join us for your ANNAUL FALL FISHING DERBY May 7, 2011 at the Saugeen River (Denny's Park). There will be plenty of fishing, food and friends, so come have some fun. **To register for the derby just find Dave Munro (that's me)**. I will also be weighing in the fish. Fish can be released, kept, or donated for a fish boil with our meal.

Anyone wishing to donate prizes to the DERBY please see Dave or Dar Munro at Denny's Park, or call at home 519-260-1059. All Prizes Welcome!

Bring the kids!! Join us for a fun day on the river. Take in the sights and sounds of the Saugeen River and join us for **dinner** and a get together afterwards. Registration is available at Denny's Park. Look for the signs..!! Dinner will be served at the Rod Jones Pavilion, where we will have **draw prizes, merchandise, club updates**, and the derby **prizes and trophies** will be awarded. Please join us for a great day of socializing with members, important information updates and a cozy campfire afterwards. Overnight camping and day use at Denny's Park is available for appreciation day participants and their families. **Membership** applications are also taken at the ceremonies.

- **Entry fee: \$10.00 adults -- \$7.00 junior**
 - **Weigh-in deadline: 5:00 PM**
 - **Everyone Welcome!**
- **Please observe all Ontario Fishing Regulations!**



See you May 7th!

**Dave Munro,
Social Events Director
Ontario Steelheaders**

Lake Huron Fishing Club Update

Busy, busy, busy!

Now that the sun is getting stronger, the snow and ice are quickly disappearing and the rivers and streams are flowing fast. This is the time of year that the Lake Huron Fishing Club must kick into high gear. All winter long our members have been going to meetings and planning projects. Now we have to start putting all that planning into actions. We have a major fishing derby coming quickly. We have docks to repair and put in Kincardine. We have trees that are going to be planted on the Penetangore River. We have raffles and fundraising draws to get going. We have a major fundraising fish fry to prepare for. We have several club member events to set into motion. Busy, busy, busy! Of course the main activity for Spring is the release of the fish from our two fish hatcheries. Our members have been working all winter caring for these fish, and now is the time to see them off. In the Port Elgin Chinook hatchery we have 70,000 young Chinook salmon and 12,000 healthy rainbow trout yearlings to be released. In our Kincardine Trout hatchery we have 8,000 sixteen month old brown trout and 45,000 healthy yearling rainbow trout ready to be put out. Altogether it will take 40 trailer loads to get all of these fish into the water. One of our stocking trailers needs some repairs and modifications (copying some ideas from the new Ontario Steelheader's Fish Transport) before we start putting fish into it. Hopefully, the Ontario Steelheaders will be helping us with some of this stocking. The more people helping and the more trailers on the road, the quicker these fish can get into their new homes. In Kincardine we also have another 60,000 brown trout fry that need to be counted and moved to bigger tanks. This will allow us to set up the egg trays to receive the 250,000 rainbow trout eggs that the Ontario Steelheaders will be helping collect for us at Denny's Dam in April. Without the moral support, financial support and the physical help from the Ontario Steelheaders, the Lake Huron Fishing Club would not be able to complete all of these early Spring fisheries activities. Together we are stronger than each of us apart and we should share the credit for the great work that we do.

Al Wilkins

President
Lake Huron Fishing Club

“The rainbow trout program is an excellent example of what cooperation between 2 fishing clubs can accomplish. The Ontario Steelheaders provide the eggs, help with fin clipping and assist with stocking. Ontario Steelheaders also provide some financial assistance to help pay feed and electrical costs. The Lake Huron Fishing Club provides hatchery space and day to day fish culture duties to grow the fish. Both clubs (and every other fisherman) enjoy the increased numbers of rainbow trout in the lake and river.”





1606 16th Street East
Owen Sound, ON N4K 5N3
(519) 370-2003

Take out & Delivery

+++++

Remember the 2010 Fall Fishing Derby? I Do...

By Ron Plaskett

Wow! I thought, “Sure, I’ll go to the Fall Fishing Derby and General Meeting” when I heard about it. “Sounds like fun!” I thought to myself. Then, I got thinking. (A bad thing for me to do, according to my wife who can cite many examples without blinking an eye). Being a recent addition to the membership of the Ontario Steelheaders, I did not know anyone. Ok, they were anglers just like me, but I am intimidated by attending a function – large or small - by myself when I don’t know anyone there. Of course, I have done it in the past but with limited positive reinforcement to do it again. Besides, I did not want to embarrass myself in front of all those ‘unknown experts’ in my new club. You know how I mean –by multiple hookings of the bottom with no chance of getting loose, tangled lines or birds’ nest reels, awful and ugly casting attempts, hooking myself, falling in, etc. I would be laughed at and talked about for years. It is all right if I am alone on a river where other fishermen would not know me or ever see me again but I would be fishing with the “Ontario Steelheaders”! Wait! I could bring my nephew, Mike, who has delved religiously into the mysteries of fly fishing in the last few years. I complemented myself on this idea.

When I asked him, he said yes. Bonus! I would know someone! He also informed me that he, too, had recently the Ontario Steelheaders. Another bonus! Why? I don’t know but it felt like a bonus.

Last October 16 was a bright sunny day with only a slight breeze. When we got to the dam, the mist was still rising off the Saugeen River. It was a scenic start for the day.

We arrived at Denny’s Dam in time for the scheduled fish lift but either we were too early or we were too late as it did not happen while we waited there for a while. I was not too concerned as I’d already helped out of late at several fish lifts/ egg harvesting at Denny’s Dam and the Mill Dam in Owen Sound. These were done by the Ontario Steelheaders and the Lake Huron Fishing Club members. Ministry officials were on site as well.

So... we went fishing.

Mike and I parted ways and I tried to separate myself from the rest of the anglers so I could keep my screw-ups from being seen. However, since I was fishing in odd spots, other anglers must have deduced that I knew something that they didn’t, as gradually, one by one, they slowly invaded my fishing spots. Both upstream and down from me. Constantly watching me. Learning what not to do or revelling in my self-conscious misery.

Oh, we chatted as anglers do. Cheerfully asking what you were using, how do you patch holes in your waders, had you fished here before, have you caught any, how their wife/girlfriend or both didn’t like going fishing, how slippery the stones were, and so on. However, I knew what they were doing – they were checking me out to see if I was worthy of being a member of the Ontario Steelheaders organization.

After a morning of fishing, sunshine and fresh air, I needed a break to relax from the excitement. In truth, other than the bottom and a stick fish, I caught nothing, nada, bummer all, zero, a big goose egg. In spite of being fishless, I was having fun and as I heard later – “We’re not about success, we’re going fishing!” Well, I certainly could live up to that motto.

Mike and I drove over to Fisherman’s Park as I was too chicken to wade across the fast flowing current of the Saugeen River and it would have been difficult for me to carry my lunch and my fishing stuff without falling in. Again, with all eyes on me, I presumed.

Upon arrival at the Park, we found a place to locate our base of operations. Finally, this was my first real trip to Fisherman’s Park.

As we were relaxing in comfortable chairs, listening to music and snacking on sandwiches (that my lovely wife had made for us), I focused on our surroundings.

There were campfires, people sitting in circles, laughter, others renewing old friendships and people sharing knowledge with others. There were people getting to know each other for the first time, friendly dogs walking about, and a general feeling of contentment. You could hear anglers bringing up funny/ embarrassing stories from the past that always seemed to involve one of those present in the group. Maybe a few tall stories were floating around too. It was a time and place to remember forever.

I was amazed at the seemingly large number of trailers in the camp. Hey, these Ontario Steelheaders are into some serious fishing, I realized. No fair weather fishermen here.

I was also amazed at the large number of men (not the number of large men) who were sporting beards and goatees. They all looked so distinguished. I have a goatee too so I have to include myself in this group.

After my nephew left to go fishing again, I resorted to putting my hat over my eyes while sitting back, taking in the sounds and the warmth of the sun. And more importantly – a snooze.

During the afternoon, I was awakened by the sound of a motor. When I looked around, I saw what appeared to be a light green mini-Vespa being ridden around in the parking lot. All of a sudden the motorbike (?) and the rider crashed in the parking lot. As people gathered around, it appeared that the rider was righteously injured by all the laughter both from himself and those around him. The mini-Vespa seemed unscathed, thank goodness. “Is this a yearly tradition?” I wondered. Also, during the afternoon, there was talk of an ATV playing around in the river and along the riverbank. Then I heard it got stuck in the mud and they (whoever they are) were trying to get it out without much success. I felt sorry that their afternoon of fun caused them some headaches but whoever thought trolling for steelhead with an ATV would work? What type of fishing is that? What type of lure do you use? It is a “thinking outside the box” type of concept at best. However, does it work?

According to Harold Curtis there were 84 entrants and 3 junior entrants in the Fall Derby. The heaviest steelhead was 7.3 pounds, followed by 5.7 pounds and finally 5.5 pounds to wrap up the top three steelhead caught. In the junior division, I believe a young man by the name of Alex won top honours with a 1.4 pound steelhead. I think I won the Snag Award for catching the bottom more than anyone else.

The evening meal was amazing and nearly 150 were served an appetizing buffet/ BBQ that more than satisfied the palate. I heard that fish pieces eaten for supper were donated by those who caught the fish during the derby that day. My stomach thanks you for your donations.

The seller of the draw tickets, who shall remain nameless because I can't remember their name, had a huge smile and continuously gave a chuckle to those waiting in line for tickets.

Jody Schiefeley. from the Ministry was very informative in his talk. Al Frenette was a good M.C. keeping things moving along. The Merchandise-meister, Carlo was very helpful in fitting and selling jackets, etc.

Congratulations to the new and returning executive. May you have a good, productive year.

The draw at the end of the evening was an event not to be missed. The number of prizes up for grabs was amazing. Thank you to the donors of such a wealth of prizes.

The main thing that I remember about the draw, other than winning something near the end, was the chant: **“Take the turnip! Take the turnip! Take the turnip!”**



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www.ontariosteelheaders.ca

Lake Huron's Blue Zone Fishery...Is It Really There?

By Darryl Choronzey

Most of you by now realize that steelhead are not just a fish for the river angler. Look down on Lake Ontario and just see what's happening. It's called the BLUE ZONE.

Ontario anglers on that little lake south of Toronto have been following a guy by the name of Randy Scott who has discovered an entirely new way of fishing open water steelhead. This guy not only catches fish, but catches steelhead big time. On an average day Randy can hook and conquer as many as 50 "chromers" a day.

His technique is simple. He motors out on to Lake Ontario approximately 10 to 15 miles from shore over approximately 350 to 500 feet of water and that's where the Blue Zone is. He may be over deep water, but Scott seldom sets his downrigger cannonballs more than 50 feet beneath his boat. Most days, he sets-up down little more than 25 feet.



The secret with the Blue Zone is cold water close to the surface. Because of the depth of the lake, water temperature seldom varies with wind direction. In fact, for the most part it's stabilized. In fact, for the most part that all-important 50-60 degree band of steelhead 'heaven' is close to the boat and full of fish.

I'm certain the Blue Zone is only a few miles out from the shores of Southampton. I also think we are going to find it. Look across the lake and you'll see the Yankees are stocking big numbers of hatchery raised steelhead. Those fish are out there feeding on bugs close to the surface and a little bit of bait fish. Trust me. They're just waiting for your lure!

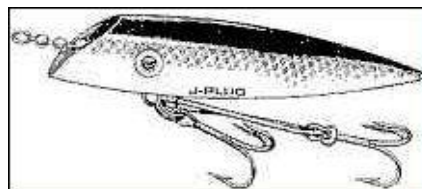
This could be just another style of steelhead fishing just waiting for you. And again, it's another reason why we need a little more assistance from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

'Cronzy'

"The Ontario Steelheaders along with their counterparts are changing the Saugeen. Those changes will probably create the best fishery this side of the Rockies. Those changes will require dedication. Get your friends to join the Ontario Steelheaders. We need young people not only in the Steelheaders, but in the fishery as a whole. Please consider a membership with the Ontario Steelheaders today!"

Watson's Tackle House

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Ontario Steelheaders 2010 Annual Fall Steelhead Derby & River Appreciation Day Results & Recap

Many thanks to the participants and volunteers who made this A HUGE success! This was one of the biggest turn-outs in a very long time!!.... "Like it was in the 90's"

1st Prize	Tom Hamilton	7.3 lb
2nd Prize	Brian Zettler	5.7 lb
3rd Prize	Pete Munro	5.5 lb
Junior Award	Alex Murin	1.4 lb
Live Release	Will Stewardson	12.5" X 23"

Tommy Hamilton, a recent graduate from Junior-High and voted "most improved" put on a clinic for us, took first place with a 7.3 Lb Whopper, and generously donated his winnings back to the O.S. Conservation Fund. Brian Zettler is a 2 time, back to back winner in the event, and Pete Munro came out of the "old woodwork" to show his son David how it's done. David, who is just learning how to fish, is a quick learner and will do well if he watches his father closely. Nice going Pete! Congratulations to Alex Murin for his big win in the Junior Category. Way to Go Alex!! Will Stewardson measured-up a very nice steelhead to break Jeff Byrne's legacy and take the live release trophy.



The chefs put on a great roast beef dinner complete with a fish boil. The meeting and ceremonies featured all kinds of club updates, a general election, updates, new merchandise, and an MNR guest Speaker. **This was the biggest turn-out in well over a decade!** 84 participants in the derby and in excess of 150 people turned out to show their support for the Ontario Steelheaders!!! Membership renewal and draw ticket support was staggering!! It's very encouraging to see such a huge outpouring of support. Thanks again to the event organisers, speakers, and our guests for "a very big day for the O.S."

Thanks again to everyone for making it a great day... Simply awesome!!!!



Dam It All !

By Ron Plaskett

Just when the weather warms a little and you start to think about the fishing season ahead, Mother Nature reminds you that she is still in control with an icy fist. The pictures are evidence of that fact.

The first wave of ice and flooding came in February this year when the water and ice level of the Saugeen River rose high enough to cover our camping areas due to ice dams down river from us and the breaking up of ice dams up stream.

Ice dams: "If this high water continues while the river ice is too thick, large packs will accumulate, particularly around bridges and river bends. These ice packs form dams, which create a reservoir and back-flooding." (Ron Wiebe)

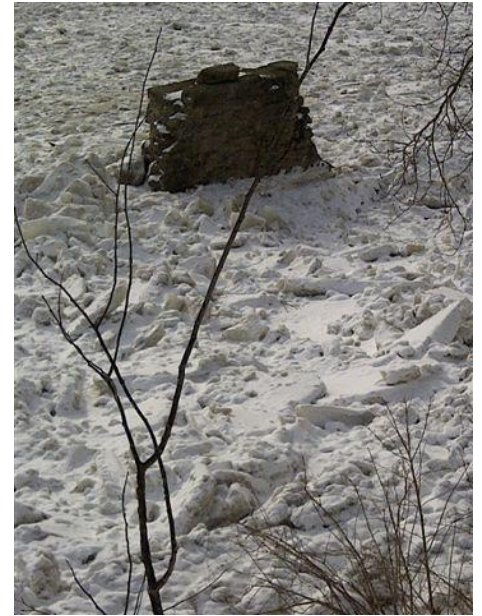
Ice jammed in these dams may come from miles upstream and can pile up many feet high. Ice dams can also occur at the mouth of the Saugeen River due to lake ice being blown into shore as it breaks up.

Denny's Dam acts as a man-made catchment for upstream ice and when the pressure from the backed up ice and water finally breaks the ice dam, severe flooding often results downstream on the river's flood plains.

One thing that is rarely considered is that this rapid release of water from behind an ice dam and its subsequent turbulent flow down the river can and often does change the river bed topography. We all can testify to this when we return to our favourite fishing areas when fishing season opens.

Just when the Saugeen River ice dams are going to break up depends on warmer weather, the pressure of the stored up water and ice and perhaps some human intervention (if necessary).

The owners of Thorncrest Outfitters in Southampton, Tim and Janette Thorne, say that the ice dam at Denny's Dam broke up on Wednesday May 9th with a wild rumble that shook the ground and rattled the windows at their nearby home. Janette said that the sight was amazing and surprisingly quick. She was also surprised that there were fishermen in the river the very next day.



Like a glacier in the Rockies: The view from "the Bus" at Denny's Park looking towards the dam (left). View from the top of the hill near the cemetery (center). The top of the north-west side abutment below the dam at right. Photos taken in February 2011.

Hydrology experts from the S.V.C.A. and the Ministry monitor the river's flow and conditions all year round. They advise the public of water flow, levels and potential dangers like flooding.

As we fish and hike along the Saugeen River or any river or stream in the early Spring, we must keep in mind the potential dangers of our situation. We must use caution so as to not place ourselves in a hazardous situation for the sake of potentially catching a fish. Climbing over unstable river ice to a stretch of open water is risky.

In addition, debris such as chunks of ice, trees, parts of docks and even picnic tables are caught in this rapid flow of water so that is something else to watch out for.

Have productive time fishing but remember to be careful. You don't want to mess with Mother Nature.

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News and Media Update

Where do I start? Well, you've all seen the newsletters, so that's pretty self-explanatory and I hope you like this one. Minor health issues this winter set me back a little, and I've been busy with other projects like the tanker repairs, insurance, and revising our constitution so I really haven't accomplished what I would have liked to, but hopefully I will find more time in the near future to spend on projects in my own area or responsibility.

In the winter I was asked to come up with a logo for a sign to be erected at the Walkerton fishway, which would illustrate the co-operation between the agencies involved in that project. Next time you're in Walkerton, take a minute to slip over to Fishway Park and see the sign. I hope you like it... **The tagline says it all.**



...Improving access & habitat since 1979

I have kept our website updated but I hope to begin refreshing some of its core content over the summer when things slow down again... this newsletter stuff is full time work! I would also like to review our web strategy with the directors and make a plan that fits well for us. We have generated a lot of interest in the O.S from various media releases, our website, newsletters and social networking, and the membership numbers are very encouraging!

I would like to thank all of the contributing sponsors, writers and the directors for sending in their reports and articles. I've download a good deal of work since elections last fall and we now have some directors submitting their reports and I hope we can continue to bring you the most current and relevant information possible. My department realizes how valuable this information is to our members and the angling public, and is committed to delivering it to the best of our ability.

I would also like to thank the Interim Directors of 2010 who worked so very hard to re-ignite this organization. In the face of adversity; those who believed, persevered. It was a distinct pleasure to work with them and they should be commended for their efforts. I should also take time to thank those who helped us restore the 2 transfer trailers over the past 2 years; it has been a lot of work, but they look awesome!

On a more personal note, my hopes and prayers are with friends who taught me so much over the years.

It's really great to see what's being accomplished by the Ontario Steelheaders working together with groups like the Lake Huron Fishing Club, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and our many valued corporate sponsors. I believe in this organization, the things it stands for, and the objectives at hand. I am hopeful that all directors and committees will continue to work in unison and in the pursuit of common objectives and goals. I am proud to be a part of it and I hope you can be too. Please join the Ontario Steelheaders today!

Tight Lines!

Al Frenette

News and Media Director
Ontario Steelheaders
al_frenette@rogers.com
www.ontariosteelheaders.ca

Membership

The Ontario Steelheaders needs the support of persons having concerns similar to our own with regard to our fisheries resources. Membership in the Ontario Steelheaders provides a vehicle to support the rehabilitation, stocking programs, egg collection, adult fish transfer, smolt release, and to have input to the decision making processes which effects positive change.

Individuals alone are hard pressed to do much to correct the deficiencies which contribute the decline in our fisheries unless they form groups which, through affiliation with other organizations can not only have their concerns heard, but in many cases obtain the necessary support to bring about the changes required.

For more information about membership and how you can help the Ontario Steelheaders:

Please visit our website at: www.ontariosteelheaders.ca

Or, write a letter to:

**ONTARIO STEELHEADERS
P.O. BOX 604
BRANTFORD, ONTARIO
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I wish to opt out of receiving newsletters and other communications by mail (paper copy). I prefer to receive communications by E-mail only

Please Circle the Type of Membership Required Below:

Regular 1 Year = \$25.00 Regular 3 Year = \$60.00 Family 1 Year = \$30.00

Junior 1 Year (16 years or under) = 10.00 Senior 1 Year (age 65 and over) = \$20.00

List all Names for Family Membership

New

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NOTE: For Family Membership, all correspondence will be addressed to the person first named above.

I am interested in the following:

Stream Rehabilitation _____ Egg Collection/Adult Transfer _____ Smolt Release _____ Hatchery Work _____

Committee / Director Work _____ News and Media Work _____ Other _____

I have enclosed a cheque/money order for \$ _____ with this membership application, payable to:

The Ontario Steelheaders
Box 604, Brantford, On.
N3T 5P9

Please allow 3 weeks from time of receipt of this application, for mailing of Membership Cards, crests and decals.

www.ontariosteelheaders.ca

Protect our Fisheries

Report a violation

All Ontarians can play a part in protecting our natural resources from waste, abuse and depletion. If you are witness to a resource violation within Ontario, please call the Ministry of Natural Resources TIPS line at:

1-877-TIPS-MNR (847-7667)



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WRITERS WANTED

The Ontario Steelheaders are relentlessly in search of writers, columnists, photographers and editors. If you would like to cover a story, submit an article or get involved with the editing, commentary or publishing of this newsletter, please contact us at the address on the front cover, or e-mail us at: webmaster@ontariosteelheaders.ca The future success of this newsletter depends on the input from people like you! Please consider contributing to it.

Please send questions, comments & concerns regarding this newsletter to: "Newsletter Editor" at the address on front cover.

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