

Dots Comment

**St. Paul Public Meeting**

**Acquisition**

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- 9 Acquire enough easements to provide adequate fishing access.

**Habitat**

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- 4 Improve or maintain good water quality.

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- 2 Instream habitat work for all trout sizes and forage and done in a way to allow fishable habitat for all angler types.

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- 1 Maximizing each streams potential.

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- 1 Education landowners.

**Regulation**

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- 9 Like to see 3-tire approach that included general regulation, slot, and no kill for large trout.

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- 4 No kill in particular for large trout on streams that support large trout.

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- 3 Large trout management on on-designated trout waters.

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- 3 Like to see bigger trout through regulations and better habitat.

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- Maximize stream and resource management - for water quality, flow, trout fishing opportunities.

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- More watersheds with no kill regulations and barbless hooks only.

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- Large trout management on streams that will support large trout but not large numbers of trout with no kill regulation.

**Stocking**

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- 1 Don't stock catchable fish where you have natural reproduction or good growth of fingerlings.

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- 1 No stocking of catchable trout in streams with instream habitat work.

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- DNR develop plan to maximize natural reproduction, minimize stocking except where necessary and tell the public.

**Survey**

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- Use trout stamp sales to survey more of trout anglers.

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- Better communication of survey results.

**Watershed**

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- 11 Focus on big picture, long term problems to maintain stream quality.

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- 5 Increase in education regarding watersheds and public awareness.

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- 2 More high quality watershed management with all partners, other agencies, city planners, businesses and other (include all partners).

Dots Comment

St. Paul Public Meeting

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Groundwater models (more to do).

**Other**

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8 More and better communication from DNR and better leadership over a much longer time frame 50 years that focuses on long-term issues and concerns.

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4 Work with other organizations to establish main goals and partnerships - get to big picture - watersheds, landscape.

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2 Increase education for individual responsibilities such as maintain clean streams (less garbage).

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2 Long-term vision that is articulated to constituents.

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1 DNR become more aware of similar work being done by other groups and to establish partnerships.

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1 Opportunity for all types anglers - put take kids, trophies, wild trout.

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More education directed to community Asian.

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More individual stream management for wild trout.

**Total:            29 comments,            74 dots for    St. Paul Public Meeting**

Dots Comment

**Frontenac Public Meeting**

**Acquisition**

- 
- 6 Promotion of diverse angling opportunities - more fish, large, wild fish, fish to eat, quality habitat improvement.

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  - 1 More public access to streams

**Habitat**

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- 3 More work in streams that are not designated trout streams that support trout.

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  - 2 Work with anglers to design habitat projects, especially woody debris projects.

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  - 1 More streambank stabilization.

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  - 1 More habitat improvement that functions like it's supposed to, long term, doesn't fill in, is fishable.

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Quality habitat work is very important and brings people back to fish them more tangible, can see how money is spent on something worthwhile.

**Regulation**

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- 9 3-tier system with slot limit, no kill, general

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  - 6 More streams placed under C&R only to promote large trout management.

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  - 2 Will regulations force farmers to exclude livestock from the streams.

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  - 2 Put slot limit to provide food to support larger trout.

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Catch and release is very important.

**Stocking**

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- 1 More reintroduction of native brook trout in streams that support them.

**Watershed**

- 
- 7 More partnerships between DNR and Natural Resource Conservation Service, leverage more funding for filter strips.

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  - 6 Fisheries should not focus and be a leader in watershed management. Need to find a way for interested parties to coordinate and cooperate. Watershed efforts need work plan that identifies our limitations.

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  - 4 Better coordination between all agencies involved in resource management. Work together point source and watershed issues.

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  - 4 Limit or guide development in the watersheds.

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  - 3 Good water quality critical for all trout, insects, people.

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  - 2 Divert more funds to CRP.

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  - 1 Need to put forth efforts to bring coldwater fisheries issues to watershed organizations.

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Farm bill for CRP is now through FSA.

Dots Comment

**Frontenac Public Meeting**

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Provide model ordinances to local governments to promote good management practices, buffers, development.

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More time, dollars, effort to farmers for buffer and filter strips.

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Restore watersheds to promote species/invert diversity.

**Other**

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1 More bang for the buck, manage with a purpose, don't go to the extreme, have a good plan and implement it.

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1 Focus on future - 20, 30, 40 years - need vision for that.

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Expand timelines for planning - short term 10 years, long term 50-100.

**Total:            27 comments,            63 dots for    Frontenac Public Meeting**

Dots Comment

**Winona Public Meeting**

**Acquisition**

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2 Access for angling and stream management.

**Habitat**

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6 Traditional HI overhead core, increase depth and make sure it is fishable.

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4 Work with landowners to protect and improve stream banks where you have easement.

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3 Preserve and protect cold water resources.

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2 Stream habitat improvement, maintenance.

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1 Concentrate more efforts on protecting and improving small streams.

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1 Habitat improvement work and in pasture areas where streams are too shallow and don't have enough large rocks and woody brush. Landowner incentives to protect streambanks and habitat.

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Education program that emphasize stream bank protection.

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More bank stabilization instead of cribs.

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Continued habitat impacts from development and urban sprawl.

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**Regulation**

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7 Eliminate catch and release season in March and September.

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5 Diverse angling regulations for more people to protect stream - tier approach - trophy, wild, traditional.

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3 On specially managed water have artificial lures only, winter season, early catch and release, experimental regs.

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3 Large trout management on streams that support trout but not large number, C&R, barbless only. Designated and non-designated waters.

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2 Are we promoting good ethics with pure catch and release?

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2 Maintain current harvest regs.

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2 Concerned about catch and release season and impacts to trout, limit number of streams with catch and release.

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2 Limits are too high.

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1 Is a slot size limit really helping for bigger fish?

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1 More streams designated catch and release.

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1 Barbless hooks mandatory especially on catch and release streams.

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Too many regulations, extra pressure on streams without regulations.

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Open all streams to winter angling in 5-10 years.

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Dots Comment

**Winona Public Meeting**

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More management for trophy trout with catch and release and artificials only.

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Keep regulations as simple as possible.

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Special streams set aside only for catch and release - know populations ahead of time and study impacts of hooking mortality on population, artificial lures only.

**Stocking**

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3 In favor of full stocking.

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2 Consider raising forage fish and stock in fall as overwinter food for trout.

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1 Stock wild trout from healthy genetic strains.

**Survey**

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1 Benchmark or look for best practices in other states with coldwater resources.

**Watershed**

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8 Fisheries spend dollars on fisheries, watershed work should be done by other agencies.

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7 More CRP, form coalition, TU, Pheasants, DNR to work together.

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4 Keep the coldwater stream cold.

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3 Work with the farmer to improve land use for trout habitat.

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1 More watershed activities that enhance infiltration for good ground water.

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1 Long-term strategies to keep water on land, runoff does not carry pollutants.

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1 Water from upstream watershed critical, keep mud and pollutants out.

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Flood control on streams.

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Other agencies have water plans, DNR should be consistent with those plans, pay farmers for conservation, CREP.

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Too few watershed activities to affect land and streams, a few bad cases negate the good.

**Other**

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7 Regulate ATV use along streams - public lands.

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3 Emphasize ecosystem management. More diversity. Do not focus on single species management.

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2 More brook trout fisheries.

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1 Promote farm or ag programs that are more compatible with landscape in SE Minnesota.

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1 Maintain diverse sizes of trout, ex., take some big ones to keep some small ones.

Dots Comment

*Winona Public Meeting*

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1 Grazing should be maintained along streams but carefully controlled.

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1 Protect and improve habitat for invertebrates.

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Education - natural resources are a privilege and not a right.

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Concern about effects to farmer/landowner.

**Total:            49 comments,            96 dots for    Winona Public Meeting**

Dots Comment

**Rochester Public Meeting**

**Acquisition**

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- 11 Aggressive pursuit of continuous blocks of land under easements for access and opportunities for habitat restoration.

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  - 1 Increase efforts to acquire easements and/or fee title acquisition.

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  - 1 Make sure future easements are not landlocked.

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  - 1 On-line version of easement book that is continually updated - tiers, handicap access, winter reaches, access paths, etc.

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  - More acquisition on streams as method of watershed management.

**Habitat**

- 
- 11 More aggressive work in trout habitat area - in stream, washouts and open land areas with slow moving water.

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  - 2 HI work for forage diversity.

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  - 2 Promote habitat improvement through partnerships - include env. Review, SWCDs, MnDOT, culverts.

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  - Buffer zones - what are the regulations?

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  - Work should be for the fish and anglers using all fishing methods.

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  - Provide cover for all sizes of trout.

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  - Use multidisciplinary approach to HI like Canfield Creek project.

**Regulation**

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- 40 3 tier management scheme - general reg, slot, no-kill.

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  - 5 More trophy trout, large trout management program on a few rivers that support large trout, but not large numbers - designated and non-designated, no kill on trophy fish.

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  - 3 3-tier management for increased opportunity to catch fish 18+ inches.

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  - 2 Make sure regs don't drive fisherman away, make sure kids stay involved, make sure all fishermen are heard.

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  - 2 More regulation enforcement otherwise regs. will not work.

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  - 2 3-tier - won't promote more diversity - more regs, less diversity, result in diff. user groups concentrated on different streams.

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  - 1 Stay focused on the goal of a regulation, don't try to accommodate every angler interest on every body of water; 3 tier system supports this.

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  - 1 ATVs are causing stream and bank degradation and nobody is doing anything about it.

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  - 1 Create more diverse opportunities with/by using the tiered reg. approach.

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  - 1 Offer equitable/diverse opportunities, large trout, wild trout, put and take.

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  - Can we limit anglers to harvesting only 1 trout over 20 inches per year? Possibly a tagging system?

Dots Comment

**Rochester Public Meeting**

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Best bang for buck is on regulations.

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Ok to catch and keep if trout populations are ok. Is C&R big concern?

**Stocking**

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3 Reintroduction of native species.

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1 No catchable rainbow stocking where there is habitat improvement or regulations where the goal is to improve the size structure of trout populations. Stock them in Chester Woods, Foster Arends, Zumbro River, Bear Creek and on streams under traditional management in the tiered regs. approach.

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Continued management of wild trout versus put and take - let streams manage themselves.

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How does Fisheries determine which streams to stock?

**Survey**

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Talk to other states about what they are doing.

**Watershed**

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6 Greater partnerships between DNR and SWCD especially on farms getting subsidies.

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5 More emphasis on managing the watersheds vs. managing the streams.

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4 Long-term solutions to watershed problems. CREP for southeast Minnesota.

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2 Protect streambanks w/buffers - farming and development impacts.

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1 Maximum amount of riparian land in CRP or CREP program.

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How are we educating the public about programs available? CRP and other programs (especially landowners awareness).

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Watershed should be priority.

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Stick to the fish, stocking, habitat, and regulations is where the angler's money should be spent.

**Other**

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5 Program to help landowners ID other problems and help resolve them.

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4 Spend money on fisheries mission vs. land management. Coalition w/other agencies to help them with their missions.

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1 Limit inner tubes on trout streams and require reusable containers w/users name and address.

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1 Use GIS and other databases to correlate trout populations to land use, land cover and other watershed info.

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1 Concerned about pollution, too much trash, pick it up, more enforcement.

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1 Establish an adopt a stream program to clean up trash.

Dots Comment

**Rochester Public Meeting**

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1 Increase children friendly fishing sites, access and information.

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1 Education should be a separate piece of pie. Easement book good example.

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1 ID trout streams by name on bridges/roads.

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1 Better definition of how to measure fish in regulations.

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Better education on why regs have been implemented.

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Analyze cost: benefits of all Fisheries programs.

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Educate anglers on how old and long it takes to grow large fish.

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Fish health and control of exotic species is critical.

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Provide opportunities for people to get involved.

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Bulletin board on DNR web site to help identify problems on streams, better information exchange.

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Study stream ecosystem as educational opportunity for kids.

**Total:            55 comments,    126 dots for    Rochester Public Meeting**

Dots Comment

Lanesboro Public Meeting

**Acquisition**

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- 3 Continue to work on improving access and posting of signs.

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  - 3 Continued and aggressive policy towards acquisition.

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  - 3 Support holistic approach, understanding where money comes from, get the most bang for the buck - acquisition and habitat.

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  - 3 Fisheries should stick to mission - very little Fisheries money is general fund, spend dollars on traditional fisheries work.

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  - 2 Better education on size and age and how long it takes to grow a large trout.

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  - 1 Use various types of acquisition - easements, fee title, to protect habitat.

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  - 1 Make it easy for people to fish and improve habitat without changing the lay of the land.

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  - 1 Give equal weight to all parties for any proposal change - waterways are public.

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  - 1 Trails and waterways pay more attention to impacts to stream from their activities.

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  - 1 Fisheries have greater emphasis on being people managers, sell programs before they are implemented, use news releases, web sites, be ready to respond to complaints.

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  - 1 More involvement with universities, get students involved working in the field.

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  - 1 Make sure brook trout remain plentiful.

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  - Tap lottery dollars for acquisition.

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  - Comment on 3-tier program.

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  - More recognition for landowners, newspapers, brochures, literature.

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  - Where have all the brook trout gone.

**Habitat**

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- 2 Focus on maintaining what has already been done.

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  - 1 Concentrate management of habitat for a wide diversity of species and not just fish.

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  - 1 Improve habitat that has deteriorated over the years.

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  - 1 Return streams and habitat to most natural condition possible - look at everything, not narrowly at trout and sport - I wish it was 1800 again.

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  - Develop manual for best management practices and techniques for habitat improvement.

**Regulation**

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- 11 3-tier approach - general regulation, slot, no kill for larger trout, stocking for kids fishing.

Dots Comment

Lanesboro Public Meeting

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- 5 Regulations should be biologically correct rather than what some group wants to be done.
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- 4 Do not put regulations on any trout streams that discriminate against any trout fishing men or women.
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- 4 More stable regulations, less changes.
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- 3 3-tier to protect streams, better access handicapped fishermen, variety opportunities, does not discriminate.
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- 3 Large trout management program on designated and non-designated streams that hold large trout - would require less stocking, fish already there - protect them.
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- 2 Support 3-tier concept, eliminate all special regulations not supported by biological data.
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- 2 Majority of streams brook trout are catch and release only.
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- 1 3-tier system would be redundant and discriminate against some fishermen - the more regs the more people we force away.
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- 1 Main Branch Root from Rushford to confluence between Whalen and Lanesboro made catch and release for trout.
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- Too many regulations now, leave up to DNR to cut down on regulations, don't listen to public so much.
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- Protect larger fish both above and below the dam at Lanesboro.
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- Smaller bag limits, slot restrictions.

**Stocking**

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- 3 Keep up stocking so people will pay money to fish, step up stocking except where harms natural reproduction.
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- 1 Reduce stocking by promoting successful natural reproduction with more acquisition and habitat.
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- Would like to see more quality fish.

**Survey**

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- More volunteer workers (e.g., aquatic insect group).
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- Get Boy Scouts involved in volunteer work.

**Watershed**

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- 12 More comprehensive land use planning and management - better incentives for landowners.
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- 6 SE MN CREP program should be supported.
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- 3 Establish coalition conservation agencies working/meeting together and working w/citizens to get good programs in place. Pass legislation - citizens key.
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- 2 Protection of watersheds very important.
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- 2 Good water resource management to reduce runoff, pollutants is good for stream - look at whole watershed, increase infiltration to maintain base flows and springs important for trout.

Dots Comment

Lanesboro Public Meeting

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1 Look ahead 50 years, what are we going to leave our grandkids, coalitions work together.

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All organizations need to fight harder to keep CRP intact, TU, Nat. Turkey Fed., etc.

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Fishermen, DNR, landowners cooperate w/partnerships to promote education and opportunities for technical assistance.

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Get more federal dollars for watershed work.

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Limit the amount of sedimentation in small streams.

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Prevent erosion in streams.

**Total:            50 comments,            92 dots for    Lanesboro Public Meeting**

Dots CommentDNR Web, E-mail, U.S. Mail

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44 I am writing this letter to voice my opinion over the DNR's Southeast Trout Management Plan. There are several management areas that I am in favor of and several things I am not in favor of. I fully support the implementation of the three-tiered management plan that was proposed by the DNR Fisheries to SEMTAG, Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group. I am also in favor of wise spending as it pertains to habitat improvement projects, specifically the implementation of "traditional" habitat improvement that will provide cover for trout of all year classes and is fishable by anglers using a variety of methods. This also ties into the use of woody debris as a form of habitat improvement, a tactic that I am not in favor of as it does little more than plug up our streams and creates an un-fishable area. Anglers are funding the work, the finished trout habitat project should create good trout habitat and be easy to fish for trout. Additionally I strongly support DNR efforts to secure more easements for anglers. Creating more fishing opportunities for anglers is essential. With the expansion of urban development and intense agricultural land use practices it is critical they act now. There are also several specific things I am not in favor of, specifically DNR's use of watershed management as a "trout" management plan for southeast Minnesota. While I support watershed management I do not feel it is DNR Fisheries job or position to be the agency to attempt watershed management under a trout management plan. The Department of Fisheries is funded by dedicated angler dollars. Fisheries first job should be to manage fish for anglers. The Commissioner is an appointed position so therefore he has to answer to politically powerful agriculture community. Watershed Management needs to be handled by the DNR Division of Waters, local Soil and Water Boards and volunteer organizations such as Trout Unlimited. As well, I would like to see the DNR reconsider the area where they place stocked or catchable sized trout. There needs to be more opportunities for our younger persons, disabled, and the elderly. These groups can be accommodated easily with a few minor changes, specifically stocking more accessible stream reaches, non-designated streams and streams in urban settings, even streams that only seasonally support trout should be considered if they will provide more trout angling opportunities for kids. Streams that boast sustainable natural reproduction and cover to support populations of wild catchable size trout do not need to be stocked with fingerlings or catchable sized trout from hatcheries. Why have wild complete for food and cover with catchable trout that are reared to be caught? In closing, I am in favor of securing more land easements, the three-tiered approach, and the use of traditional habitat improvement. These three things are essential for the management of southeast Minnesota trout streams.

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34 Minnesota Trout Unlimited Trout Management Position. Background: The purpose of the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources'; Division of Fisheries (DNR Fisheries) is to manage fish population in a manner that supports diverse recreational angling opportunities within the boundary of protecting the long-term health of the fish populations. Funding for this work comes primarily from dedicated license dollars. Regarding the DNR's coldwater fisheries program, much of the funding is from the Trout and Salmon Stamp. While TU strongly supports watershed management, we do not believe that DNR Fisheries should be the lead agency when it comes to watershed management on SE Minnesota trout streams. Because agriculture and urban development interests have great influence on the political process in MN (and the fact the DNR Commissioner is a politically appointed position), the Division of Fisheries will never have the political power needed to be effective in watershed management. We believe strongly that watershed management is best coordinated by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, with support from a coalition of conservation organizations like the Audubon Society, The Izaak Walton League, and the Minnesota Trout Association, as well as other regulatory agencies like the DNR Division of Waters, the MPCA, and city and county planners. If the Division of Fisheries efficiently and effectively manages the trout resource, Trout Unlimited will be free to tackle the larger political issues affecting clean water like watershed protection and enhancement. Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, we support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEMTAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. TU agrees that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, we believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, we believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for

Dots CommentDNR Web, E-mail, U.S. Mail

all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion. 3. We fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, TU believes many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction. I (name), Address: City State Zip fully support these suggested recommendations be implemented as the priority items in the long range Southeast Minnesota Trout Management Plan.

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- 25 We support the three tier long range plan for the trout streams of S.E. Minnesota. To make these plans a reality will require strict regulations, high quality fishable Habitat Improvement work, quality water shed management and proper stocking (i.e. catchable fish should not be stocked in streams with good natural reproduction). It will require hard work by the DNR professionals and thoughtful input by the stake holders.
- 
- 2 Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, I fully support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEMTAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. I believe that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, I believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, I believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion. 3. I fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, I believe many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, such as Rush Creek, the stocking of catchable trout should absolutely be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction. Although I live in Duluth, I travel down SE Mn at least monthly from January through September because the fishing down there is so much better than anything we have in this area. Adopting the items above would, in my view, turn an excellent fishery into a spectacular fishery. I'm absolutely certain that trout fishers from all over the U.S. would make SE MN a travel destination.
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- 2 (Two persons talking on same e-mail.)  
 -- In lieu of attending the meetings this week it is clear that there is truly a need for a coalition focused on watershed management/funding/education any help/participation would be greatly appreciated as all interests will benefit now and in the future. I feel that it is of great importance but not necessarily the entire responsibility of fisheries to tackle alone. I have already met the Jon Leighton President of Tri-County Pheasants Forever on this and he is eager to get involved.  
 -- I am talking with Larry Barnhart from the Hiawatha chapter of Trout Unlimited and he is talking about forming a coalition where TU, PF, Deer Hunters, DNR, SWCD, etc... get together and focus some effort and dollars towards watershed improvements, ie.. focus CRP funding in these areas, focus farm subsidies towards improving these areas, focus future WMA purchases in watershed areas, etc.... Larry is looking for names that we could contact to have a meeting on this to see if forming this coalition would be worthwhile. I would think we would need someone like you from the DNR and also a fisheries person. We would need someone from the Soil & Water Conservation Dept, PF, & TU members and anyone else we can think of that would be interested in investing some effort and dollars into this. I

Dots CommentDNR Web, E-mail, U.S. Mail

think this is a good idea if we can combine some efforts between some of the wildlife organizations, the DNR, and land owners to improve watersheds. If you think this is a good idea, please send me some names that you can think of that we should contact for a meeting on this.

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Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, we support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEMTAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. TU agrees that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, we believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, we believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion. 3. We fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, TU believes many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction. I (name), Address: City State Zip fully support these suggested recommendations be implemented as the priority items in the long range Southeast Minnesota Trout Management Plan.

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I have my reasons and they have been well thought out for years. They are too numerous to enumerate so I'll just give you my input. 1. Use only barbless hooks. No exceptions. Crimped down or barbless from the factory. 2. Release ALL trout as soon as possible. Zero creel limit. 3. Use Fly Fishing equipment. Spinning equipment acceptable. 4. All flies and lures, spinners, crankbaits must have barbless hooks. 5. No live bait permitted. Includes but not limited to worms, crawlers, chubs, sunfish, larva etc. 6. Concentrate stream management on trout size as follows: 8 inches to 20 inches. I am not in favor of stream management for trophies or big fish. 7. Increase checking for valid licenses.

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I'm writing in lieu of appearing at a public meeting on the trout management plan. It's much easier to organize my thoughts here at the computer than thinking on my feet at a public meeting. I'm 59, retired, and love to flyfish. I never kill a trout, but that's my practice and I don't consider myself morally superior to other on that account. I occasionally fish the S. Fork Root R., Wiesel Cr., Trout Run, Pine Cr., Camp Cr. and maybe a few others, but I consider the S. Branch Root R. my "home water." I believe the S. Branch is potentially one of the best streams in the Midwest. Minimum flows seem to be adequate to avoid summer kill, there is a (barely) adequate amount of cover and deep water, and it's a soup of good trout forage. Giant stoneflies, mayflies, caddis, minnows abound. There are lots of trout, but they are small. Last September I stood and caught (and released) at least 30 trout without moving my feet. The smallest was 9" and the biggest 11. Five years and more ago there was a good scattering of fish above 14". Nowadays the fish seem to top out at 10-11. As to why this is, I am all questions and very few answers. I know some races of Rainbows have a very short life span. Is that true of the browns in MN? Are the fish being killed by anglers as soon as they achieve 12"? Are the FEEDLOTS or other agriculture putting something in the water that kills them before they get to an interesting size? Am I too poor a fisherman to catch the bigger fish or do the bigger fish have different habits that make them less vulnerable, such as eating bigger prey or becoming nocturnal? Does the DNR ever make electrofishing censuses? I'd be deeply interested if you did. You guys are the biologists, and I can only guess, although I may take up water sampling analysis as a hobby. One thing I do know is that in other States, in water that is inferior to the S. Branch, there are a lot of very nice fish. The difference is stretches of catch-and-release or slot-limit water. Specifically I refer to Rapid Creek in S D and the Big Green, West Fork Kickapoo, and Timber Coulee Cr in WI. You'd probably have to label it "temporary" or "experimental", but I think that trying a few miles of c&r water somewhere between the park and Isinours would really be worth a try. I've got tons of other ideas, but this is probably more than enough for my share of

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input. Thanks for your attention.

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I would like to express my dissatisfaction with the present catch and release trout fishing season in SE MN (Sept 15-30). With stream populations at all time highs I think the fishery can stand to let us take home a few fish to eat over the extended no trout season following. It is my understanding that the present system was established at the request of local sporting groups (whose freezers are probably full of trout by this time) concerned over outsiders depleting the stock of large trout - I guess they are supposedly more vulnerable then. If this is really the concern, I see no harm in letting us keep a few 10-12" fish. We pay \$8.50 for a trout stamp - how about giving us a weekend in the fall as well as a couple in spring. Thanks for accepting my input.

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I am writing in response to the trout stream management process I am a Minnesota resident and annual holder of fishing license and trout stamp. I support the basic concept of three categories for streams, with one condition -- I would not want to see any one of the three categories be designated "catch and release only." This designation should be used, I believe, only in limited sections of streams where there is strong local support or pressure for the designation, or an overwhelming ecological need. To close entire streams to the segment of the fishing public that likes to keep an occasional trout is unfair to purchasers of trout stamps. That said, I definitely support updating the antiquated bag and size limits. Ideally, it would be nice to see stream-by-stream management, but I expect this exceeds your budget, especially right now. In place of that, I would be very supportive of slot limits and reduced bag limits is at least 1). It would be best if slots and bag numbers were set based on the characteristics of the stream (as in Wisconsin -- for example, larger streams that hold larger fish would have a higher slot. Other changes that I would like to see would be: (1) increased enforcement, (2) more studies of individual streams for improved management, (3) management that aims at reducing the need for stocking, (4) restoration of native brook trout stocks, and (5) improved land use practices in watershed. All of these things are costly, and may not be possible at all right now, but I think they are worth mentioning. Thanks for all the great work of the DNR Fisheries. You folks deserve more support!

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I noticed on the DNR website that you requested public input regarding future management of SE Minnesota trout streams. I am an avid flyfisherman. I have the following comments re trout stream management: 1) Manage streams to produce wild trout including the protection of stream banks and watersheds from development. I think that fishing a stream with wild trout is the most enjoyable trout fishing; not just stocking of streams for put and take fishing. Also, this approach saves the streams for future generations to enjoy. 2) Restrictions on some streams limiting fishing to artificial flies or lures only. Other states have this type of restrictions on some streams including Colorado, New Mexico, Maine & North Carolina. I don't know why Minnesota doesn't. 3) Is it possible that land trusts be used to protect and develop some of the streams. I'm thinking of the Kinnikinnic Land Trust in Wisconsin as an example. It seems to be quite successful and has the support of anglers as well as many of the residents of Thief River Falls. As far as I know, this approach isn't being used in Minnesota. I would be willing to support a trust in Minnesota used to protect a trout stream.

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I am writing in regard to trout fishing. I am a 77 year old who has enjoyed trout fishing for many years. I definitely am not in favor of extending catch and release. I've heard stories about fishermen catching as many as twenty to thirty fish. Surley some of these fish die from stress or mishandling. It is no different from the 3 or 4 I take during the season for eating. What's to stop some people from taking fish out of season. Its almost impossible to watch all creeks for violations. One of my favorite fishing spots is where a good friend farms. I park in his yard as do many other people. He tolerates this for six months during the regular season, but said if catch 7 release is extended year around, he would stop parking. I appreciate the work that has been done to restore many creeks some have been shocked and have many trophy fish. Keep up the good work.

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Having read the article on "input of trout stream management & future of" I felt inclined to respond. Being a trout fisherman, farmer, and lover of outdoors, I feel the real issue here is not so much the stream restoration as ladders, cribs, riprap and planting of fish, but is the watershed above the stream. As the streams watershed is what determines the stream's effectiveness to keep trout thriving. One doesn't fix the floor of the barn if the roof leaks. The potential for stream pollution in the watershed is increasing daily. The states (MDA) proposal for "livestock friendly counties" is truly not conducive to trout. This is an unlimited cap of livestock, earthen basins and the likelihood of a spill is increased. Where does the DNR stand on such an issue (silent?). I farm above West Indian Creek and have 5 ponds, contour strips, rotation, trying to minimize the amount of runoff to the streams which trout inhabit. More taxpayers would rather pay for progress of conservation rather than subsidize corn & beans with their erosion and siltation, chem

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runoff etc. into streams. I think the watershed above streams should be addressed first. The DNR Fisheries should be involved in programs as CRP, CSP, etc. Keeping soil on land. Let's move forward!

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While I am not up to date on all the positions taken by various groups on catch and release, daily limits and other aspects of trout management I do believe there are more serious concerns. Trying to please each segment of anglers will be an exercise in futility and will only lead to more fragmentation of resource management. Catering to those who dream of trophy size fish should not be a priority. Freud may have more answers for those folks than the DNR can provide. Concern yourselves with the health of the ribbon of water that flows at the low point in each watershed. Everything we dump, spread, spray or build on that watershed warrants more attention than the size of a brown trout. We should consider what makes a 8" brook trout happy. A five pound brown trout can be yanked out of tub at a sports show with a kernel of corn. My family has long association with some of the streams in Wabasha County. Long, West Indian, Middle, Gorman and Snake Creeks are all familiar. We still own long along West Indian, Middle and Snake Creeks. I have seen Snake Creek literally sterilized in the late 1970's. The fish kill on West Indian is well known. The growth in intensive row cropping is ongoing. Road construction, bulldozing for sport and haphazard planning has destroyed the the landscape features of West Indian Creek. The streams that I am familiar with are healthier now than when I first encountered them forty years ago. Much of that credit goes to DNR employees and management and I thank you. But state owned and managed lands should be the finest examples of watershed and stream management. From what I have observed the DNR can do better. Enclosed are a couple pictures taken this spring. No. 1 shows a large washout on West Indian Creek. DNR has an easement on this section of stream. Why is this an ongoing problem in this area? Enforce the terms of the easement. No. 2 shows a rapidly growing ditch that runs directly into Snake Creek. The field shown is DNR owned. Acres of silt and chemical runoff flow directly into the creek in this spot. No buffer, no grass waterways. This is disgraceful management of public lands and waters. I and others (including DNR personal) have requested buffer strips here for years. Does Fisheries ever communicate with Forestry? I have shown this area to nearly a hundred people and none can believe the DNR allows this to continue. In another area in Snake Creek, nearly six acres of state forest land was illegally bulldozed. The DNR then rented the land to the trespasser for \$40 per acre. Continuous corn grows on this land now and erosion rates are heavy. This land is classified as highly erodible and borders a tributary of Snake Creek. Any DNR employee should be disgusted by such management failures and question the circumstances of such a give away of a public resource. This land must be restored to forest cover. Not one dollar need be spent to correct the above situations but the DNR has much to loose if nothing is done. Fisheries must communicate with all the various divisions of the DNR on stream protection. DNR must reconsider its role in resource protection and management. DNR must partner with those who look at the "whole" of a resource issue. To manage the total resource to produce a certain size of one species of fish or a large rack on a deer would be an abdication of responsibility.

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I would like to register a vote for the three tier system. Also would like to express a vote for the protection ("no kill") on watersheds that sustain large trout.

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On the LRMP and TTTM subjects, I read Jeff Broberg's dissertation on the plan in the special MTA newsletter he wrote in March when I was gone. Thank God he did that so I won't have to write one so soon. I already have had to clear up some of the membership stuff as few seem to renew unless they are reminded. I want to pretty much endorse what Jeff stated under the heading "Long Range Management Plan Update". I assume that you received a copy of that newsletter. If you didn't, I will send you one. His statement about stopping all of the fruitless studies and ending the worn out notion of individual stream regulations is especially important. There have been surplus people down here doing unneeded studies for more than 15 years now so you should either retire them or transfer them to positions in this state to study other waters which haven't even had 10% as much studying or monitoring effort spent on them. Then get some people back down here in exchange who want to do traditional trout habitat improvement. I hate to have to say it but your whole trout stream habitat improvement program here has gone to the dogs since Wagner became the area manager and removed himself from on the site supervision of that program. Who is going to step up to the plate and do good work like we used to see and also do it efficiently at a reasonable cost ? Obviously, your main effort here for at least the next decade should be spent on trout habitat improvement, Age 0 trout stocking, quality fishing regulations and public access, in that order. Forget about DNR trying to do watershed work because these people here just won't buy into it when it comes down from the DNR. That effort must come from local watershed folks like SWCD. On TTTM don't forget to keep it as simple as possible, otherwise it will surely fail to work. Without compliance, it will be worthless. I hope some wild trout streams, ones that have as much reproduction as the streams will support but only

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if 100 % catch and release becomes the plan in these waters, then Age 0 stocking should be reduced to about 25 % of the current stocking quota. Don't be timid about going ahead with a mandatory C & R/Artificial Lures program in Class 3 waters in spite of threats of land posting because most of it would have public access and those who have voiced threats to post their land in retaliation already have their land posted. When I get caught up on other things I will send you a listing of streams broken down into which of the three categories each one should be put in.

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I fully support these suggested recommendations be implemented as the priority items in the long range Southeast Minnesota Trout Management Plan.

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I am for the three tier trout management plan

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1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEM TAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. TU agrees that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, we believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, we believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion. 3. We fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, TU believes many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction.

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I support the 3-tier regulation system that is being touted by MNTU and MTA. This seems to be a good start to a new management plan.

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1) Controlling run-off from farms & homes to prevent silting the stream bed & pestaside herbaside into streams. Keeping a buffer zone between the stream and lawn or farm field. 2) Keeping 4 wheelers and 4 wheel drives out of stream beds (silt & dirt).

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I suport the three tiered regulation and feel that stocking should be done in streams that are put and take. that habitat done in streams should have better suport, and that better education be given on how long it will take to grow large trout in the wild!

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Minnesota should adopt the three tier managment plan. The reason many Minnesota anglers fish for trout in Wisconsin is because they have better habitat and better regulations. Minnesota needs to come out of the dark ages when it comes to trout stream regulations.

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I would venture to guess that most trout are killed between the dates of 4/15 (trout opener) and the opening of the general fishing season than at any other time of the year. The little stream I fish near Kenyon, Mn, if it is stocked at all, is usually wiped out come the general fishing opener. I propose a catch-and-release program from March 1st, each year, to the general, statewide, fishing season opener. That would allow for more trout to stay in a stream longer to be able to be enjoyed throughout the season. Also, I would extend the general stream trout fishing season to coincide with the lake, trout fishing season through the end of October with catch-and-release only. This would give people a chance to enjoy streams further into a generally beautiful fall season. People seen at streamside after the April 15th stream trout fishing opener are usually only there because they are waiting for the general season to open. They are not regular trout fishing folks. I never see them on the streams I fish again after the general fishing season opener.

The "large, wild, traditional" scheme of the DNR is absolutely horseshit! We don't need more spreading of the annual dollars as it is. Purely nothing more than "make-work" schemes. Runoff problems would most readily curtail if the DNR took some extra shots of testosterone and prosecuted individual farmers for allowing chemical runoff into streams. I'm sure, then, you would see berms and lagoons erected in short order to head off runoff.

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I like everyone would like to see the quality of fishing stay as it is or improve. We need stream side setbacks for cattle. I hate going to a stream and seeing a cow laying in the middle. I have been fishing and caught terrible manure odors. This can not be good. Watersheds need to be protected. Create a program where farmers who participate in protecting the watersheds near them an incentive to make them proud of what they are doing for themselves and future generations. Maybe name the watershed/valley after the farmer. We have to keep the water cold and clean. It needs to start with land owners. The DNR should also create a list of critical lands that should be a priority for acquisition. This must be done before people think about selling. The DNR should almost get an option to buy any lands sold in these critical areas. The last thing I want to see is a big mansion being built along a stream. Good Luck and I hope to enjoy SE strams for the next 50 years.

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I strongly support the three tier trout management regulation. I want to see more catch and release for large trout. I would also like to see no trout killed on non designated trout water.

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I strongly support the three tier trout management regulation.

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I strongly support the three tier trout management regulation. All trout protected in non designated streams rivers.

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I strongly support the three tier trout management regulation. streams that support large trout be managed by protecting the large trout through no kill regulations and barbless hooks, artificial lures only.

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I would like to see the DNR put more emphasis on water quality. Without that, the trout can't live. The "three-tier" plan sounds like another attempt by some TU folks to get there way. DNR should not force anglers to have more regulations if they don't work.

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As an elementary classroom teacher in Winona, I enjoy the opportunity given to me by Crystal Springs trout hatchery personnel to take my class on field trips through their facility. They do a wonderful job of showing off their hatchery and getting the kids introduced to the importance of watersheds and good land use practices. They always try to make their presentations meaningful to the age group they speak to. (They always begin their presentation by saying their goal is to "work themselves out of a job." They are a wonderful resource...especially in these days of highly urbanized kids.

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Size of mature fish

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he most important issues to my as a SEMN trout angler are the following in order of preference. 1. Provide a diversity of coldwater angling opportunities ranging from Catch and Release, Trophy or Quality Angling and consumptive management. More specifically I strongly support the proposed 3-Tier management system and I believe to will cater to a wide variety of angling interests. A simliar system was adopted in WI in the early 1990s and it has been proven successful. 2. Other important issues are habitat protection by way of land and easement acquisition of critical riparian habitat with public access for fishing. 3. Wild trout program; Eliminate domestic trout stocking and convert stocking strategies towards wild trout. 4. Watershed Mangement.

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Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, I fully support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEMTAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. I believe that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, I believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, I believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion.

3. I fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, I believe many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, the stocking of catchable trout should absolutely be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction.

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I believe that catch and release should be the rule after a certain length to be determined by the DNR. Some streams need the population controled but most do not. If we want big fish to catch, we must start releasing them. The policy of stocking fish is a good thing but does not replace natural breeding. If we manage our steams properly we could get away from stocking.

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#1 is Habitat improvement. Both in stream habitat improvement and watershed habitat improvement are keys to the future of quality trout fishing and also upland hunting.

#2 is Regulations. I am in favor of streams that are catch and release only, streams that have slot limits, and streams with similar regs as we have today.

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The DNR needs to manage these streams to produce large fish by catch and release. Most streams are overstocked and the small fish take away from the possible thropies. People fish now days for recreation not food. Catch and release in all streams except for the ones that need the population cleaned out!

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I support the three-tier trout management system.

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I believe the management of Southeastern Minnesota streams has been exellant. I do not see any need for, and strongly oppose, any wide use of restrive regulations on popular streams as a mnagement tool. Based on my experience, and that of other trout anglers I know, large trout can be caught on nearly all trout streams by applying the following: 1) Become knowledgable about the science; 2) Walk to areas off the beaten path; 3) Fish at the right time of day and under proper weather conditions.

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I believe the proposed 3-tier system is essential to the trout management system..

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Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, I fully support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEMTAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. I believe that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, I believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, I believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion.

3. I fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, I believe many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, such as Rush Creek, the stocking of catchable trout should absolutely be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction.

Although I live in Duluth, I travel down SE Mn at least monthly from January through September because the fishing down there is so much better than anything we have in this area. Adopting the items above would, in my view, turn an excellent fishery into a spectacular fishery. I'm absolutely certain that trout fishers from all over the U.S. would make SE MN a travel destination.

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I support the 3 tier trout managemnet system and include more protection of large trout.

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The most important thing to me regarding stream management is to eliminate or limit the use of restrictive regulations. I do not believe that restrictive regulations will increase the angler's catch of large trout. Large trout can be caught on most streams without restrictive regulations by fishing at the right time and in the areas which hold large trout. As serious anglers already know, restrictive regulations are not going to magically put large trout on angler's lines and are not going to change these essential elements. If some restrictive regulation is going to be considered, the slot limit of 12 to 16 inches being used on experimental streams is over-inclusive. This effectively leaves a one inch slot of fish (11-12 inches) to keep and protects a four inch slot of fish. This is not reasonable. A slot limit would be more acceptable if it was moved up to 13 or 14 inches. Further, the slot limit is under-inclusinve in allowing one fish over 16 inches. These fish are sufficiently rare that they should be protected. It makes little sense to protect a 12 or 13 inch fish, but not a 17 inch fish.

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This letter is in regard to the recent coldwater fisheries input meetings held in Rochester, Winona, Frontenanc, and Lanesboro. I have been following this trout stream debate since I responded to the Minnesota Outdoor News in an editorial comment. Please take the time to read my letter to the editor I submitted on February 13th, 2003 to Editor Drielsein: "Don't be infuriated with my view" We should not change the trout regulations in Southeastern Minnesota. I am a landowner in Southeast Minnesota and have property intersected by a beautiful trout stream. For 37 years I have fished this and other area streams along with hundreds of youngsters to older fishing veterans. We have used live bait, spinners, flies, and other successful baits and lures. We have caught some large trout, we have caught some small trout as well as an occasional shiner, chub, or sucker. We have co-existed together as a group of people that love to fish trout. We have kept some fish, we have released some fish. But most of all, we have enjoyed the experience! We should never get hung up on how many fish we catch or how large the fish are. We should continue to enjoy the experience with people of all ages and techniques and proclivity to keep or release fish. We should not discriminate against anyone fishing trout on any state stream. Changing current regulations would be another step closer to catering to special interest fishing groups, when truly, this wonderful resource belongs to all of us to enjoy equally. After

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attending the Lanesboro meeting, and reading the April 4th Outdoor News, I could see the meetings were well attended by the trout fishing groups that would benefit from the change in regulations. If I were solely a trout fisherman that wanted to control the trout streams in southern Minnesota as my own personal fishery, I would be very excited about the proposed three tiered system or any change that helps my constituents but limits others. I personally don't believe a person fishing with flies, or minnows, or spinners, or worms is any more or any less important to the future of the fishery. We all are important. We all buy trout stamps, and licenses which help fund trout stream activities. We buy fishing rods, reels, tackle, and bait that are taxed to help out our state with a variety of fishing programs. Some of us are landowners that plant hundreds of trees yearly to help stabilize soil and improve wildlife habitat. As we mature, we get as much satisfaction about releasing a large trout versus keeping it. We all are important to the future of the fishery. Please keep all the wonderful fishing opportunities that we have fishing stream trout in southeastern Minnesota. Changes to the regulations will keep many trout organizations happy at the expense of the rest of the fishing public

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I support the 3 tier trout management system and would like to see large trout protected.

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Access- On streams and rivers where it is difficult to gain easements and such, Can we just make these streams more wadeable. I think that this would be easier less expensive and within the law.

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Although I live on the North Shore, I really enjoy the great trout fishing and scenery of southeastern Minnesota, and try to get down there every spring. I fully support the idea of a tiered management plan for these trout streams, in order to provide a variety of angling opportunities, especially for larger trout. Catch and release should be the law on some of the better wild trout waters. I fully believe the future of trout angling on southeastern Minnesota streams will depend on the following: 1. The idlement of erosion-prone croplands. 2. Strict land-use zoning with large setbacks and minimum lot sizes for housing developments. 3. Public acquisition of ecologically sensitive lands to be added to the Richard Dorer State Forest. 4. Accelerated purchasing of streamside easements along trout streams. 5. Development of public-private partnerships to work together to preserve these streams, especially including the DNR, county zoning boards, The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, and The Trust for Public Lands.

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I am very much against any more regulations and restrictions. I do practice alot of catch and release but like the freedom of choice. It has been an ongoing goal by a small percentage of the fisherman to constantly try new regulations to catch the perfect size fish. Although the DNR has published that information will be gathered why are there plans from the Semtag group which also represents just a few opinions. There is more to fishing than catching a certain size or number and more laws would especially hurt young and elderly people. I don't buy the newest twist where you designate certain streams. What if you don't live anywhere near what you prefer or if the stream runs through your own land? I have never been in favor of winter fishing which landowners despise and more fish and eggs are killed. How can you be sure what the water will be like years from now, we have had concerns twenty years ago and now everthing is in great shape as far as numbers and size. There is alot more to fishing than planning to catch a 16" trout every time you go. Most of the media publications interview the same people for their information whenever another round of ideas come up. I wish more people would send in their input and attend meetings because I am positive that a majority of the fishing public does not agree with the latest ideas being floated and it would be a disaster for all Minnesotans to follow down another path of unneeded and restrictive ideas.

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Maintaining and improving existing fisheries in SE MN is of utmost importance. Preserving this natural resource and maintaining the integrity and purity of angling is something I hold in great importance. Concentrated efforts, both physically and financially are paramount to maniting and creating fisheries for the generations to follow.

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The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEMTAG) is a good idea. Management needs to address all needs, most importantly protecting habitat. The DNR needs to be sure to include citizen groups(Trout Unlimited, Izaak Walton etc) in the management loop. Habitat improvement needs to be the primary focus of stream trout management and stocking of catchable trout for put and take fishing needs to be minimized to those areas that can't support wild fish and/or that are accessed by children and the handicapped. High standard catch and release fishing only needs to be implemented in some areas in order to provide those looking to catch big fish the chance to do so. Increased efforts to purchase angling easements to additional mileage on SE streams need to be pursued. Quality fishing = Management = Habitat Improvement. Take money out of stocking and put it into habitat improvement. For fishing throughout the state, I would like to see a two tier

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fee for angling. One at the current fee level that would provide a status similar to the Ontario conservation license, that is very strict limits on all species when killing fish (ie. two walleyes, one pike, six panfish, two trout, etc). The second tier would be the current catch limits but increase the cost of the license. Trout stamp would remain the same. I think this would better represent a cost for your impact on the fisherie, given that an increasing number of anglers are like me and keep very few fish in a season.

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I feel that barbless hooks should be used at all times on all designated trout streams. At one time I thought it would be very difficult to catch a trout on a barbless hook until I tried it. Now I use barbless all the time. To release a trout as quickly as possible, will obviously reduce mortality and barbless allows for a quick release. I also feel that the cost to fish on trout streams should be increased substantially and anyone, any age, should be required to have a trout liscense. I am not wealthy by any means but doubling the fee would not be out of line. The additional funds could be used to develop more fishable streams, help with landowner/farmer relations, ect.. There is to much fishing pressure on some streams so more fishable streams would help. The only way to do this is having more funds.

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Number one is protect the streams, from farm and feedlot runoff, ATVs, development, ect. Number two is high quality fishing, wild fish that are allowed to grow, catch and release. Catch and release streams are a must, slot limits are limited because to many slob are out there that wont put back fish in the slot. They can't stop themselves. These slob usually don't go to catch and release areas.

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Regarding the DNR's coldwater fisheries program, much of the funding is from the Trout and Salmon Stamp. While TU strongly supports watershed management, we do not believe that DNR Fisheries should be the lead agency when it comes to watershed management on SE Minnesota trout streams. Because agriculture and urban development interests have great influence on the political process in MN (and the fact the DNR Commissioner is a politically appointed position), the Division of Fisheries will never have the political power needed to be effective in watershed management. We believe strongly that watershed management is best coordinated by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, with support from a coalition of conservation organizations like the Audubon Society, The Izaak Walton League, and the Minnesota Trout Association, as well as other regulatory agencies like the DNR Division of Waters, the MPCA, and city and county planners. If the Division of Fisheries efficiently and effectively manages the trout resource, Trout Unlimited will be free to tackle the larger political issues affecting clean water like watershed protection and enhancement. Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, we support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEM TAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. TU agrees that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, we believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, we believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion. 3. We fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, TU believes many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stockin catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction. I Kelly Larson, Address: 176 Tyler Rd. S., Red Wing, MN, 55066, fully support these suggested recommendations be implemented as the priority items in the long range Southeast Minnesota Trout Management Plan.

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I like trout! To catch and to eat. I don't stock my freezer or take more than a meal for 3 or 4 persons at a time. I have been trout fishing for 30 years and the streams are still in good shape. I am OK with barbless hooks. I've seen out of

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slot fish floating past me belly up. Please don't forget us non-trout/org anglers. I take maybe 10-12 trout a year and treasure them. I've seen plenty of wasted dead trout from catch & release mortality.

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Consistent management. It gets a bit ridiculous and confusing when one part of a stream is catch and release and the other is not but is only artificial lures and further down stream you can use live bait but only with barbless hooks...etc. Perhaps some streams can be designated as trophy waters and have some special regulations. I think the majority of streams should allow you to fish with whatever bait (live or artificial) you desire, keep a few fish if you desire (many people practice catch and release), and maybe require barbless or bent-down barbs. I used to trout fish just about every other weekend throughout the season, but some of my water's regs changed and then another changed and it wasn't the same. If I wanted to fish a location that I had in the past and wanted to bring a few fish home, I couldn't do it on this stream anymore. On another stream there were different size restrictions. It wasn't the relaxing adventure I had known in the past. I always found myself checking regs and wondering if I had wandered into a different section of the stream that was managed differently. I spent more time worrying if I was breaking any rules than I did concentrating on my next cast. Now, I only make it out a couple times a year and only for a couple hours. I've been overregulated!

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Important to restrict the kinds of rural residential development that removes/destroys natural vegetation along shorelines, and restricts angler access up and down trout streams.

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I am a catch and Kill troutfisherman. Fish 12" and over are what I'm after. I like to take home a 5 fish limit. In other words why change anything, but this is Minnesota, the state where nothing is allowed. So go ahead, make it illegal to keep fish. People like me can go to hell! or Wisconsin.

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I am in support of the Trout Unlimited proposal for a three tiered stream management system. Personally, I mostly fish the "general" regulations streams. But, I think Catch & Release streams and Large Trout Management streams are important for a well rounded trout stream management program. Please support and implement the Trout Unlimited proposal.

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I fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. --More catch and release only designated areas to improve overall size and quality of fish --Prevention of urban expansion, in particular industrial site proposals near any rivers --Increase or maintain current funding for trout stream restoration, mainly to enhance fisheries and create new designated trout stream. Thanks for listening,

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I have fished near Rushford, MN. with my dad, grandpa, and uncle over the past 40 plus years. We have enjoyed the trout opener as a family with a big dinner and celebration at the end of the day. Our family has enjoyed catching and eating fresh trout and we hope to be able to continue to do so in the future. We catch what we can eat fresh and have learned over the years not to freeze trout. After the opener I fish four or five more times during the season while my dad goes more often. I would not like to see changes to the regulations...such as a rule promoting bigger fish or more catch and release. We are happy with our 10-12 inch fish. We don't always keep everything we catch but believe that a lot of trout released will die. The fly fisherman who catch and release 50 fish a day are still killing trout. We see them on the bottom of the stream when we start the season...after the two week catch and release period. The dnr is doing a good job along with clubs and groups restoring streams. We have many great opportunities for trout fishing in SE Mn. Lets leave the regulations alone and continue with the programs that are in place now.

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Sorry I can't make one of the open houses. I think the Mn. DNR has done a tremendous job in managing our SE MN trout streams. I am now 50, have been fishing in SE Mn since I was a kid & have fly fished down there now for over 25 years. Every spring & summer I spend about 2 weeks of my vacation time down there in local motels and probably have fished almost every stream down there over the years. The steady improvements since the 70's have been thrilling to watch. Clearly the number one priority must continue to be habitat/stream improvement plus watershed protection. With Minnesota's ongoing booming population, we are going to need more & more miles of good trout water. I'm in favor of special regulations, esp. with the goal of increasing the size of fish, but this takes a distant 2nd place to habitat improvement. I wish all trout anglers could see the "before & after" pictures & data on a stream that has been improved... many streams come to mind such as Pine Creek, Rush creek, Crow spring branch of Middle Br. Whitewater, etc:: the transformation in terms of trout numbers, beauty of the stream (and increased value of the land) is astonishing and is very long lasting. The main observations I have made regarding stream improvements over the years is that they

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protect our precious native brook trout as much as we can.

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I would like to have more opportunities at catching larger trout in southern MN. Too many of the streams have stunted sized trout. Streams should be managed so that smaller trout are harvested, and big trout have to be released. I like to keep some trout for dinner, but some streams should be only catch and release, and big trout should only be catch and release. I support the opinion that some streams should be catch and release so trout grow larger. too many trout get killed before they can grow larger. Also I think that 5 trout to keep is too many. 2 or 3 is better in my opinion. Is it possible so that the rainbow trout get stocked in areas where the stream is not as good, and let the better quality streams have natural wild trout. I know the dirt road with the bridges near Whitewater State Park has good quality stream work and good wild trout numbers, but the rainbow trout keep getting stocked there. Isn't it better if these trout get stocked somewhere that doesn't have as good of stream quality?

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1.) stream easement acquisition 2.) stop stocking catchables in areas with H.I. 3.) intensive habitat improvement (not woody debris) 4.) implementation of the three tiered approach 5.) discontinuation of watershed management 6.) brook trout reintroduction

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Regarding the DNR's coldwater fisheries program, much of the funding is from the Trout and Salmon Stamp. While TU strongly supports watershed management, we do not believe that DNR Fisheries should be the lead agency when it comes to watershed management on SE Minnesota trout streams. Because agriculture and urban development interests have great influence on the political process in MN (and the fact the DNR Commissioner is a politically appointed position), the Division of Fisheries will never have the political power needed to be effective in watershed management. We believe strongly that watershed management is best coordinated by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts, with support from a coalition of conservation organizations like the Audubon Society, The Izaak Walton League, and the Minnesota Trout Association, as well as other regulatory agencies like the DNR Division of Waters, the MPCA, and city and county planners. If the Division of Fisheries efficiently and effectively manages the trout resource, Trout Unlimited will be free to tackle the larger political issues affecting clean water like watershed protection and enhancement. Regarding specific SE MN trout management priorities, we support and suggest that DNR Fisheries make the following items their top priorities. 1. The three tier trout regulation management plan that DNR Fisheries recently proposed to the Southeast Minnesota Trout Advisory Group (SEM TAG) should be implemented as soon as possible. TU agrees that the plan addresses the majority of trout anglers fishing preferences. Based on the recent University of Minnesota SE MN Angler Study, we believe that the majority of trout anglers want diverse opportunities when fishing for trout. The majority of SE MN trout anglers specifically stated they wanted increased opportunities to fish for more and larger trout while using different angling methods. They also stated they want to fish in open stream corridors that are easy to fish and aesthetically pleasing. 2. Regarding stream restoration and instream habitat improvement projects, we believe that DNR Fisheries must do a vastly improved job of successfully completing quality habitat work. Quality trout stream restoration work must address the habitat needs of all sizes of trout and trout forage species and must be designed to be fishable for all trout anglers using all legal angling methods. Habitat work must also be done cost effectively and designed (and maintained) to be functional for 30 years or more while protecting the stream corridor from excessive erosion. 3. We fully support and encourage DNR Fisheries efforts to aggressively pursue additional angling easements for expanded trout angler access to as many SE MN trout streams as possible. 4. Finally, TU believes many dollars are currently being wasted on rearing and stocking catchable sized trout in locations where they are not needed. Where habitat improvement has been completed, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. In

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streams with naturally reproducing populations of wild trout, the stocking of catchable trout should be discontinued. Catchable trout should be stocked in locations that promote angling opportunities for kids, the elderly, the physically challenged and in those lakes and streams that will not support natural reproduction. I support that these suggested recommendations be implemented as the priority items in the long range Southeast Minnesota Trout Management Plan.

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First and fundamentally, the watershed must be managed for the benefit of the trout in perpetuity. This means changes in farming practices that educate farmers and encourage their participation in managing this vital resource. This means buying up access where appropriate so that all may have a chance to enjoy this watershed. This means promoting trout sensitive tactics like primarily catch and release fishing, barbless hooks and some dry fly fishing only sections on vital streams. This also means very limited stocking of streams and encouragement of natural fish reproduction. This also means funding to build habitat that encourages wild trout. My thanks for listening to a concerned citizen.

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I am a trout fisherman that has fished the southeastern trout streams on the opener for the last 30 years. I have shared this beautiful element of nature with a few close friends and it is a very special time in mid-April when we travel together on out one weekend together. We keep a few fish this one time to savor nature's beauty and bounty. I think the streams are in very good shape and would regret the thought of just catch and release for this one weekend a year. The fisherman I see are very conscious of preserving this resource for years to come. Please use good judgement and patience in reserving this resource for years to come. If it goes to catch and release only I will have to pass on this tradition and will no longer support this with a trout stamp.

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I would like to see the DNR get rid of all the beaver and beaver dams on our trout streams because they ruining our streams by silting in the pools and riffles and this kills the trouts food base and warms the stream making it unfit for trout. I also like this three tried regulation idea i've read about in the Outdoors News. I think I heard the Regulation changes would consist of the current regulation a slot limit, and a No kill regulation. I think this is a wonderful idea and would be fair to all trout fishermen. I think the DNR needs to have more waters with brook trout. Reintroduction of brook trout to more streams that can hold them would be nice. The streams I fish north of I 90 that have had this new woody debris habitat work done to them are not very easy to fish. I don't like this kind of habitat work because you can't fish it and it is ugly looking to boot. I think the work done by those trout groups and the DNR on the Middle Branch of the Whitewater River by Quincy Bridges and some of the work done South of I 90 are good projects and hope the DNR does more habitat projects like these. I fish using all methods of angling but I would like to see all the streams that are specially managed for catch and release have artificial lures only restrictions placed on them enough if means I can't fish them with worms any more. I heard less trout die when you catch and release them when your using lures or flies. I wish the DNR could do something about all these dam feed lots and titling of our wetlands this is killing our trout streams. It would be nice if the DNR could work with these trout groups and some of the other conservation organizations to these problems by getting some legislation passed that would make programs available to farmers so we can cure the problems our watershed now have. I hope the you consider what I said useful. Thanks, for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

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Controlling run-off from farms and roads. Keeping the water cold and clean - Stocking the streams- more stream access

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On your maps for trout streams what are the regulations for the parts of streams that posted for habitat improvement?

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Trout Fishing in the Lanesboro area is about all the fishing that my two sons and I do. We enjoy catching and eating trout. It would be a shame if this were to go away. We do use night crawlers that we catch at night in the yard at our farm (in Lanesboro) it is as much fun catching them as it is trout fishing. We are willing to help in whatever way that we can. So, please keep this available to us. Thank you.

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Making sure streams continue to be stocked with Brook and Brown trout while also maintaining or improving environmental conditions of streams. Also patrolling streams during trout season to minimize over limits and netting done by cultures who are not familiar with trout fishing rules and laws. Maybe provide rules and regulations in other languages and make readily available to Hmong fisherpeople and other cultures who live in communities with trout streams. Education - is what I was trying to say, educating the public and the new diversity of public of Minnesota fisherpeople.

Dots Comment

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To catch keeper size trout and to eat them.

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I would like to see better water and if that means funding for grants, so farmers and landowners can stop tilling and mowing right up to the waters edge, then so be it. I would also like to see more stream accessibility. I have also noticed an increase in trout fishermen in the last 10 years, that alone has put a lot of pressure on streams. There are so many anglers on these streams they are leaving goat paths all along the streams edge creating even more runoff problems. Maybe it is time to limit the amount of trout stamps in S.E. Minnesota. Thank you.

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To keep fish to eat and stock fish with brown trout and rainbow trout keep limit same and keep improving the streams.

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control access by property owner for a fee on some streams or tax relief for donating access

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As an avid SE MN trout fisherman--flyfishing only--I applaud your efforts to preserve our precious streams and the beautiful trout that inhabit these waters. And I speak not only for myself but for my own children and grandchildren and for the generations of those who will also enjoy these streams as I have the past 25 years. So, here are some thoughts I have: 1. I fully support efforts to obtain increased stream easements to allow greater fishing access. Along with that, I agree with Tom Helgeson that more must be done to persuade farmers to allow a buffer between their cattle fields and the streams--there is way too much runoff on some of our streams and it is degrading many of them to a significant extent. 2. Yes, I support efforts to allow a variety of methods of fishing to accommodate all types of fishermen. I am 64 years old and I can foresee the time when I will not be able to walk the streams and will want to just sit on a bank and plunk a nightcrawler in a deep pool or, if I am in a wheelchair, want to find a spot where I can fish. 3. I also like the three-tier idea. Wisconsin has a 5-tier system, as you know, and that works well for them. However, I do not agree with Wisconsin's size limit system--they set a minimum size which means that too many big fish are caught and kept. I prefer the MN system which restricts the number of big fish that can be kept. That way we protect the spawning fish and leave greater numbers of large fish to challenge us. 4. Since I now have little grandchildren I want to take to the streams, I also support your efforts to stock more areas with catchable size trout, and I especially would like to see more fish stocked in urban areas in streams such as the Vermillion River or Eagle Creek. This would also give the disabled and elderly more opportunities, as you suggest. In the end, I support most of your efforts and would emphasize again the need to do everything possible to keep giant feedlots away from our streams and to do more to encourage existing farmers to fence in their cattle at least 30 or more feet away from streams. Thanks for allowing me to share my thoughts and best of luck with your initiatives.

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I think that is very important for us to preserve what we have. I like the idea of the three tier management. If this idea is adopted the LTM is not what is most important to me, but what is most important is that our wild streams stay healthy. I think that on these streams there should be a slot limit and a maximum of three fish taken. Some of these streams should even be managed as catch and release. Let the people take their fish on the traditional waters. Speaking of traditional waters. I like the idea of heavy stocking in these. This would be a great place for children to fish and it would provide a meal for the fishermen who like that sort of fishing. All that I am asking you to do is to preserve the few wild and beautiful places where we can catch those wild and beautiful brown and brook trout. Just one more comment. I love the idea of brook trout restoration in streams that can support them.

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1. Conservation of the remaining streams we have. 2. Perhaps limiting the harvest by requiring artificial bait and single non barbed hooks on many more streams in SE MN. 3. Stay on course with the fisheries we have now in SE MN. 4. Develop more trophy Brook trout waters.

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I fish the southeast and have notice as of late a true let down of habitat that was worked on years ago. There is some question as to how the money is spent from the stamp funds. Habitat improvement is a good tool that is successful if it is maintained. Some DNR personnel & birdwatchers continue to cry about the look of these projects, but after all isn't it the funds of the fishermen that pay for this and it is helping the trout? I support increased funding for easements, but want assurances that none of those funds are being spent on items other than coldwater projects. I wonder if an outside investigation would help to better manage the use of the funds.

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I want to urge MN DNR to consider two approaches to guide their efforts in managing trout streams in Minnesota. The

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division of MN DNR. 1) Manage the whole watershed: I have seen the results of a watershed event on a trout stream first hand. I've done bird survey work for the DNR along East Beaver Creek in Beaver Creek Valley State Park since the spring of 1998. One of the data points I keep track of is water clarity. East Beaver gets most of its flow from springs. In early July of 1998, heavy rains caused run-off from the uplands above the park. Clear water from Big Springs was mixing with the silt laden water that was coming down the usually dry stream bed which leads down from the fields above. The water below Big Springs was very cloudy because of the silt load. In 2000, before the latest habitat improvement work on Canfield Creek in Forestville State Park, major flooding caused heavy damage to the stream valley. Large trees acted like earth movers clearing swaths of forest and stream bed. As you well know, that portion of Canfield Creek is fed by an underground stream so events and practices far upstream shaped the flood event. To protect trout streams and the expensive habitat improvement work performed on them, the focus needs to be on managing the watershed, not just the stream in isolation. Also, please partner with the Basin Alliance for the Lower Mississippi in Minnesota (BALMM) to get a Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program established in SE Minnesota. The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) combines the Federal Conservation Reserve Program with the state's Reinvest in Minnesota (RIM) Reserve Program. Through CREP, the state offers to purchase voluntary easements of varying duration from farmers who put cultivated farmland into permanent vegetative cover. The United States Department of Agriculture provides approximately \$4.00 in funding for every \$1.00 the state puts into CREP. 2) Involve ALL divisions of MN DNR: In my opinion, the best habitat improvement project, was the recent work done on Canfield Creek. The reason for this is the multidisciplinary effort by DNR staff members representing the following key interests: fish, birds, plants, trails, archeology, aesthetics, and park users. It also involved talking to the various stakeholders and the public. Through this effort, compromises were reached which protected high quality plant areas, bird habitat, in-stream amphibian habitat and archeological sites. This effort was a systems approach that benefited all the constituents living in and using the stream. I hope that this process will continue to be used in future projects.

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Thank you for hosting this trout stream forum. I appreciated the meeting and was glad to have the opportunity to give my feedback. I am of the opinion that I would not like to see any changes in current trout regulations. I believe that more regulations restrict some individuals from fishing. I always hope that we don't discriminate against anyone that wishes to fish our streams. I hope we will always honor all techniques and proclivity to keep or release fish. Let us all enjoy this great resource without additional restrictions. Thanks again for your meeting.

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our streams have seen a gradual decline in quality, such as average depth and fishable holes. Streams that were fantastic 20 years ago are now shallow and not worth fishing. EXAMPLES; Gribben, Diamond, Daley, Pine, Rush Why has this been occurring? I think that habitat work must be increased and maintained in the future. If habitat is there trout numbers will follow.

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My main concern is that we maintain stocks of wild trout that can grow to the limit of their environment. Because of this, I support the ABC Tier level for special management regulations on SE Mn. trout streams as outlined by DNR Fisheries Div. I feel that the area biologists and the central office personnel have a good understanding of the streams and what will be required to improve the quality of trout angling in this area. I also feel that this issue should be taken further in that there should be single barbless hook requirement on the most stringent classification of water. I speak for the membership of The Smallmouth Alliance as a founding member.

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It is very important to me that land management and use practices in and around the trout streams is done to keep the streams capable of sustained, native reproduction. The SE MN trout streams are an amazing watershed and fishery, and with the right management should be capable of being holding a self-sustaining population of brown trout and brook trout. I think that the DNR should promote activities that help eliminate the need for stocking and provide stream improvements where land use practices have degraded the quality of the streams. We are fortunate to have this resource, and should do everything in our power to maintain and enhance it.

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Controlling run-off from farms and roads. Keeping the water cold and clean - Stocking the streams- more stream access

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I'm trying to find stream surveys for trout streams in the SE MN area. Is there such a thing available? If so, how do I go about retrieving such information?

[Dots](#) [Comment](#)

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This letter is in regard to the recent coldwater fisheries input meetings held in Rochester, Winona, Frontenac, and Lanesboro. I have been following this trout stream debate since I responded to the Minnesota Outdoor News in an editorial comment. Please take the time to read my letter to the editor I submitted on February 13th, 2003 to Editor Drielsein: "Don't be infuriated with my view" We should not change the trout regulations in Southeastern Minnesota. I am a landowner in Southeast Minnesota and have property intersected by a beautiful trout stream. For 37 years I have fished this and other area streams along with hundreds of youngsters to older fishing veterans. We have used live bait, spinners, flies, and other successful baits and lures. We have caught some large trout, we have caught some small trout as well as an occasional shiner, chub, or sucker. We have co-existed together as a group of people that love to fish trout. We have kept some fish, we have released some fish. But most of all, we have enjoyed the experience! We should never get hung up on how many fish we catch or how large the fish are. We should continue to enjoy the experience with people of all ages and techniques and proclivity to keep or release fish. We should not discriminate against anyone fishing trout on any state stream. Changing current regulations would be another step closer to catering to special interest fishing groups, when truly, this wonderful resource belongs to all of us to enjoy equally. Sincerely, Steve Majors Spring Valley, MN After attending the Lanesboro meeting, and reading the April 4th Outdoor News, I could see the meetings were well attended by the trout fishing groups that would benefit from the change in regulations. If I were solely a trout fisherman that wanted to control the trout streams in southern Minnesota as my own personal fishery, I would be very excited about the proposed three tiered system or any change that helps my constituents but limits others. I personally don't believe a person fishing with flies, or minnows, or spinners, or worms is any more or any less important to the future of the fishery. We all are important. We all buy trout stamps, and licenses which help fund trout stream activities. We buy fishing rods, reels, tackle, and bait that are taxed to help out our state with a variety of fishing programs. Some of us are landowners that plant hundreds of trees yearly to help stabilize soil and improve wildlife habitat. As we mature, we get as much satisfaction about releasing a large trout versus keeping it. We all are important to the future of the fishery. Please keep all the wonderful fishing opportunities that we have fishing stream trout in southeastern Minnesota. Changes to the regulations will keep many trout organizations happy at the expense of the rest of the fishing public. Thank you for your time.

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The most important thing to me regarding stream management is to eliminate or limit the use of restrictive regulations. I do not believe that restrictive regulations will increase the angler's catch of large trout. Large trout can be caught on most streams without restrictive regulations by fishing at the right time and in the areas which hold large trout. As serious anglers already know, restrictive regulations are not going to magically put large trout on angler's lines and are not going to change these essential elements. If some restrictive regulation is going to be considered, the slot limit of 12 to 16 inches being used on experimental streams is over-inclusive. This effectively leaves a one inch slot of fish (11-12 inches) to keep and protects a four inch slot of fish. This is not reasonable. A slot limit would be more acceptable if it was moved up to 13 or 14 inches. Further, the slot limit is under-inclusive in allowing one fish over 16 inches. These fish are sufficiently rare that they should be protected. It makes little sense to protect a 12 or 13 inch fish, but not a 17 inch fish.

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I support the 3 tier trout management system and include more protection of large trout.

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1) Preventing housing developments in areas near trout streams. Streamside and lakeshore development has gotten out of control not only in the southeast, but statewide. It seems as if every new house has to be built on a previously forested lot directly on the banks of a stream or shore of a lake. Such development makes these natural resources much less attractive and has only either a neutral or negative impact on the resource itself. The state could use a moratorium on streamside and lakeshore development. I would like to see the Brainerdization of Minnesota stop. 2) Add more detail concerning stream access laws in DNR stream information material. For example, where public roads cross streams in private land areas without easements is it legal to enter the stream and wade the course of the stream surrounded by private land as long as the angler stays in the water. In Wisconsin DNR materials the above scenario is specifically described as being legal. The Minnesota DNR publications imply that such access is legal but it left rather vague. 3) Clarify the Good, Fair, Poor ratings for stream sections on the trout stream maps. Does Poor mean those sections are a waste of time to fish? Or does it simply mean there is no natural reproduction but there is decent fishing for stocked trout? I could go on but I'll leave it at three.

Dots Comment

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Total:            90 comments,    107 dots for    DNR Web, E-mail, U.S. Mail

Dots Comment

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Note: "Dots" for e-mail, web, and mail comments represents numbers of identical comments submitted. This would include form letters and duplicate e-mails.