

Conservation **FLYLINES** Fall 2020

by Bruce Cameron

Well 2020 sure has been a year of challenges for everyone on all fronts . I hope that all MFFA members and their families remain safe and healthy ! While Covid restrictions certainly limited the MFFA's activities for a few months thankfully things managed to lighten up this spring just in time for our planned Whiteshell River Conservation Outing on June 20th . I was very pleased to see 14 eager MFFA members register . With Covid restrictions still limiting car pooling , gathering #'s , sanitary requirements and social distancing it was very nice to see those members who took the time and additional effort to attend this important Conservation Event . While rain came on and off throughout the day it was manageable which allowed all members ample time to enjoy the Whiteshell River , Kingfisher Trail and Hatchery Site .



After all outing members showed up and were given a briefing on the planned events of the day we divided into 3 groups and proceeded to hike the K Trail and wet our flies in high anticipation . While arranging the Outing with Whiteshell Hatchery Manager Kevin Dyck and Whiteshell Parks Senior Interpreter Adam Collicutt I was able to arrange the river stocking a week before the Outing . As luck would have it the stocked trout had enough time to disperse throughout the river . This fact in addition to the usual spring migration of smallmouth bass provided all members with plenty of opportunities to cast to fish . The river was in great condition with many of the fish found holding and feeding among the cover of the new lunkers and deeper pools , riffles and runs created from the FWEF and MFFA funded 2018 Whiteshell River Habitat Enhancement Project . Additionally experienced members , John Dyck , Al Smith , Brian Woods and myself had the opportunity to mentor and instruct some of our novice members in all of the intricacies and enjoyment of flyfishing a small trout stream . The water levels were bank full flows due to recent heavy rains which added many elements for a novice fly fisher to experience . While a River cleanup is usually part of the days itinerary , the higher water flows of the spring had sent much of the annual “ cottage debris “ further downriver . We were still able to remove and fill 2 garbage bags of cardboard , styrofoam , plastic, metal and wood (2x4's , burnt firewood etc.) river debris . Additionally I had recently received from Manitoba Parks final approval for the new MFFA “ KINGFISHER ANGLER ACCESS TRAIL “ signage which was an MFFA 50 TH Anniversary Project . A special Thanks go out to MFFA Executive member Andrew Crozier who designed and arranged for the Artfull design of the new lexan/aluminum signs which now adorn the new Trail . The MFFA has had many compliments on these signs already . I personally enjoyed installing one of the new signs and taking a picture with past MFFA President John Dyck ,one of the original visionary's and drivers of the Whiteshell River Rehabilitation Project initiated over 30 years ago . After all the work was completed members were treated to a Hatchery site tour by Adam Collicutt which included a special acknowledgement of the history of the MFFA's efforts towards this unique site , followed by a presentation of one of the new K/Trail Signs to Parks . Unfortunately due to Covid we were unable to have the day end BBQ but volunteers were able to take in the Hatchery Interpretive Center and enjoy their well deserved self made

lunch . Afterwards myself and 3 other members got in some more fly fishing and I enjoyed the tug of 2 beautiful coloured 18” brook trout which we landed and the thrill of a very large smallie inhaling one of my poppers and streaking under a log lunker and instantly becoming airborne out the other side , spitting my fly back at me ! A big thank you goes out to Kevin , Adam , Andrew, John and all the Outing Volunteers for their efforts ensuring that this longtime MFFA Conservation Initiative continues to be enjoyed by many future Whiteshell Provincial Park visitors and Flyfishers alike .

