

U L A O W H I S T L E R

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ULAO CREEK PARTNERSHIP, INC.

FROM THE PRESIDENT...

Partners and Friends,

After a long and cold Wisconsin winter, spring is finally here. With the onset of warm weather comes renewed energy in the Ulao Creek Partnership. Over the past several years, the UCP, watershed landowners, and dozens of volunteers have launched an attack on invasive species, one of the biggest threats to the vitality of the watershed's natural areas. I personally encourage all landowners to be diligent in identifying where these invaders occur and attempt to control them. Every effort both big and small to control these species will improve the ecological and aesthetic integrity of the watershed and your own backyards. Visit the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' website (<http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives/>) for more information.

Recent local and statewide developments further raise concerns over invasives and breathe life into the possibility of preserving our natural areas. The identification of emerald ash borer occurred for the first time in the Newburg area in 2008. With the Ulao Swamp and many forested areas in the watershed dominated by ash trees, there is a very real potential of losing our ash throughout the watershed. Early identification of this species is of utmost importance. If anyone suspects they may have ash borer affecting their ash trees, please visit <http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov/> for more information and guidance.

A new organization, known as the SEWISC (Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Cooperative), was formally initiated last fall. The SEWISC is a Cooperative Weed Management Area and "provides a forum to share information and resources, and to cooperatively execute invasive species management." As a proud member of the organization, the UCP looks forward to work-



Look for signs of the emerald ash borer this spring



Look under loose bark areas for distinctive S-shaped galleries, and D shaped exit holes.

ing with the SEWISC! The collaborative approach being taken by this organization provides an avenue to landowners and organizations alike to join forces in combating invasives in Southeast Wisconsin.

On May 30, the UCP is planning its 3rd annual invasive species control day. While we understand there is a lot going on at this time of the year, we greatly appreciate if you can spare even an hour or two. We'll be starting 7:30am and end by mid afternoon. Details of the meeting location are listed on the back of this newsletter in the calendar of events. Please send me an e-mail (mgrisar@sbcglobal.net) or call me (262-707-2561) by May 13, if you are interested. Drop me a line anytime if you have questions about invasive species, the Ulao Creek Partnership, or anything related to the natural resources in the watershed.

Enjoy the Spring!!!
Mike

CREEK PARTNERSHIP

Fish Passage Barriers Removed on Ulao Creek

By Andy Holschbach

The Ulao Creek Partnership (UCP) removed 4 barriers which likely prevented northern pike from getting upstream to desirable spawning areas in and along Ulao Creek. This group of 6 dedicated volunteers spent a Saturday last fall completing this project.

These barriers consisting of log jams and woody debris were removed from the lower reaches of Ulao Creek on the Elsie Corsentino and Tom Mayer properties close to where the creek outlets into the Milwaukee River.

In early spring, northern pike in the Milwaukee River enter Ulao Creek with the desire to spawn upstream in the many shallow wetlands adjacent to the creek. The eggs are laid on submerged vegetation on which they adhere and hatch in less than 2 weeks.

Tim Kaul, past Ulao Creek Partnership President and landowner in the upper reaches of the creek, indicated it was common years ago to see large northern pike spawning in the shallow wetlands on his farm.

In an effort to provide fish and other aquatic life the ability to more freely move up and downstream, the Ozaukee County Planning, Resources and Land Management Department applied for and received funds from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program to complete an inventory of stream passage impediments on 14 streams, one being Ulao Creek. The inventory completed by Northern Environmental Technologies identified 100 suspected fish passage barriers in the 14 streams.

Fish and other aquatic species to complete their life cycle, must often travel great distances to find suitable habitat for spawning, rearing young, or surviving the winter. Unfortunately, dams, improperly placed culverts, other artificial structures and natural occurring barriers fragment and isolate parts of many rivers and streams.

It is hoped this effort and other projects completed by the Ulao Creek Partnership will further promote a more healthy and diverse Ulao Creek ecosystem. If you have questions regarding fish impediments on your stretch of the creek please contact Andy Holschbach at aholschbach@co.ozaukee.wi.us or call (262) 284-8270



August Hoppe, Secretary of Ulao Creek Partnership, removes a log jam which limited the passage of northern pike and other aquatic life.



Volunteers successfully removed for fish passage barriers on Ulao Creek. Pictured left to right are Geoff Schramm, Richard and Laura Weber, and August Hoppe. Not pictured: Andy Holschbach and Tim Kaul.



Ulao Creek free flowing again.

The Gateway project conservation easement

By August Hoppe

Some of you might notice the new development going up at the southeast corner of interstate 43 and highway 60 in Grafton. This gas station, restaurant and hotel project is known as “The Gateway” and it is located within the Ulao Creek Watershed. The Ulao Creek Partnership, along with American Design Build Inc. are pleased to announce that a 7 acre conservation easement has been granted to the Ulao Creek Partnership. This conservation easement will restrict development of the land, and allow the Ulao Creek Partnership to manage and protect the space. This parcel of land is located along the eastern edge of “The Gateway Project”. The conservation easement grew from discussions the UCP had with Kraig Sadownikow president of American Design Build Inc. Kraig Sadownikow attended the Jan. 26, 2009 UCP meeting to discuss the details of the easement. Later, August Hoppe, secretary of the UCP had a chance to ask him a few questions regarding the easement.

When asked how he got involved with the granting of the easement, Sadownikow responded; *“The previous land owner, Paul Weise, made a commitment to the Partnership to provide the easement once the Commercial Development proceeded. When we purchased the property I felt as though we should honor the prior understanding.”*

Do you feel that the granting of the 7 acre easement is a positive thing? *Absolutely a positive relationship. I think this will be a great example of how multiple uses & environments can be compatible on a relatively small site. As you know, we have a narrow strip of land bordered by Interstate 43 to the West and a Rail Line to the East. I think the Village of Grafton, the State of Wisconsin DNR, Army Corps, FEMA, and our design & engineering team should all be commended for the hard work, brainstorming, creativity, and integrity it took to make this site acceptable for all entities. The result will be a high quality, multi-use commercial development whose direct neighbor is a textbook example of how a watershed can be preserved when private individuals unite for a common cause. I know the commercial use of the site has improved and I'm very confident the Ulao Creek will benefit as well.*

Could this partnership between a developer and a conservation group such as the Ulao Creek be used as an example for future projects within sensitive areas? *I sure think this could be used as a case study on how a potentially adversarial relationship can do a complete 180 degree turn when open communication, understanding, and common sense are used. Very often projects like this never have a positive end result because they don't start off on the right foot. I think many projects get bogged down in the Developer vs Conservation Group stage and don't get a chance to look at the 'big picture'. In most cases, if both groups agree up-front to respect and recognize each other's agenda(s), they can spend time making progress rather than slinging mud. To me, The Gateway project is an example of a development home run where everyone involved wins....Grafton & Ozaukee County have new and exciting facilities to use, a blighted corner is improved, and the environment wins thanks to the Ulao Creek Partnership and their focus.*

The gateway project conservation easement will be a good opportunity for the Ulao Creek Partnership to further its mission of protecting and improving the quality of the Ulao Creek and its surrounding watershed. This spring the UCP will be conducting an on site inspection of the land to get an accurate picture of what the property is like. Once the survey is complete the UCP will start creating a management plan for the property. The plan will most likely contain invasive plant removals along with replacement with native plantings. With this high visibility area, the Ulao Creek Partnership will have great opportunities to showcase the potential beauty of the area and outreach and educate new people about the Ulao Creek Watershed cause.

With all of the new development going on it is more important than ever for our voices to be heard. The UCP has an important job of being an environmental watchdog, who can offer simple and smart ideas to developers and governmental officials to make sure that development that occurs within the watershed is sensitive to the land, those that live and work there, and creates the least amount of environmental impact. There are places where development makes sense, and areas and places where it does not. We can only hope that there can be more communication between developmental planners, and environmental groups and concerned citizens. Improvements to our natural world can be made if we can find common ground together.



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

The Ulaocreek Partnership, Inc. (UCP) is a grassroots, community-based 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization comprised of concerned citizens, landowners, and public and private organizations aligned to protect and improve the water quality and natural habitats in the Ulaocreek Watershed.

2009 Calendar of Events

May 30th, 2009 7:30am Invasive plant removal- Please join us in removing garlic mustard at various locations throughout the watershed. We will be meeting at The Gateway. This is the new development is at the southeast corner of I43 and Hwy 60. We will be in the parking lot near the BP gas station. From this meeting place we will branch out to 3-4 separate locations to remove invasive garlic mustard. We need as many volunteers as possible. Garbage bags and refreshments will be provided, but it is advised to bring a your own pair of good work gloves. Refreshments and garbage bags will be provided. Please RSVP for this event to Mike Grisar 262-707-2561 or mgrisar@sbcglobal.net. Dress for the weather, as this event is rain or shine.

Water quality monitoring– Throughout this year the Ulaocreek Partnership will be conducting water quality testing of the Ulaocreek. We have picked strategic locations up and down the creek to monitor on a regular basis. Our testing will help us judge improvements in the water in the creek. We will be able to compare testing results to those from previous years, and this will allow us to set a base line for the future. This information will also allow the UCP valuable insight into the health of the creek and where management efforts should be concentrated in the future. If you are interested in volunteering for a testing site, or just interested in how the process works, please contact August Hoppe at 414-640-8714 or august-hoppe@wi.rr.com. Testing will be occurring regularly throughout the season. We will be posting our information on the UCP website, so please check it out throughout the season.

October 17th 2009 8:00am Fish impediment removal. Back by popular demand. Andy Holschbach will once again lead a time of volunteers into the creek. We will be removing log jams and other obstacles that block the flow of water and stop fish from moving up and down the stream. This important task makes a big difference for the fish that are a vibrant part of the ecosystem. Be prepared to get a little wet. Equipment needed include waders, work gloves, ropes and perhaps bring a saw if you can. Lets get the water flowing! Please RSVP to Andy Holschbach: aholschbach@co.ozaukee.wi.us