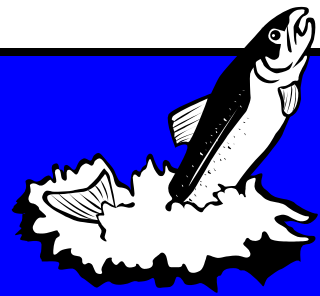


Brule River

Sportsmen's Club, Inc.

OVER 500 MEMBERS DEDICATED TO THE IMPROVEMENT AND PRESERVATION OF THE BRULE



February 2025

Where did Brule Steelhead come from, why a fall run?

by Dennis Pratt and Mike Zicus

Brule River steelhead have a mixed lineage. The first stockings came from eggs collected from several northern California and southern Oregon streams by staff from nearby U.S. Fish Commission (today's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) egg-take facilities. They were transported by train to the U.S. Fish Hatchery in Duluth at the mouth of the Lester River (That building still exists today).

collecting station on the Rogue River in Oregon.

Within a few years, some steelhead had become established in Lake Superior. The State of Wisconsin first stocked steelhead in 1912 from eggs collected from Pikes Creek, which flows into Chequamegon Bay next to Wisconsin's Bayfield Hatchery.

Many more ocean-run strains from west coast streams



The first eggs were collected during April 1896 from Redwood Creek in the Klamath River basin, California. They were hatched in Duluth, and 20,000 fry were stocked in the Brule River that June. Another 5,000 fry were stocked from the same source two years later. In 1899, the next batch of eggs came from the Clackamas River in Oregon's Columbia River basin. From 1900 to 1903, eggs and fry were delivered to the Cedar Island Hatchery on the Brule from the former federal hatchery in Duluth. These eggs originated from a federal egg-

were stocked in the Brule throughout the next decade. Since the 1920's most stocking was from West Coast strains that had established self-sustaining runs in the Great Lakes like the Ganaraska and Chamber's Creek strains.

Steelhead spawn in the spring; however, about 80% of the Brule spawning run ascends the river in the fall despite all the source eggs coming from spring-run populations. The Brule's fall run differs from many other Lake Superior

See "Steelhead" on pg. 3



BRSC Calendar:

The board meeting will be held online
Monday, February 24, at 6:00 p.m.





Brule River Sportsmen's Club Meeting Minutes January 27, 2025



President Dennis Pratt called the online meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

Officers and Directors: Present - Dennis Pratt, Mike Sierszen, Jeff Stollenwerk, Walt Swanson, Dean Wellman, and Mike Zicus.

Minutes of the November Meeting: The minutes as written in the January newsletter were approved by unanimous voice vote.

Treasurer's and Financial Secretary's Reports: Treasurer Jeff Stollenwerk reported that November's beginning balance was \$12,052.57, and December's ending balance was \$14,646.85 with the following expenses: Katie Thompson (November newsletter) \$200; Pro Print (thank you cards) \$367.42; Pro Print (November newsletter) \$28.59. Jeff mentioned that one of our short-term CD's had just matured and suggested that we move an additional \$5,000 into a new CD. This was approved following a motion by Mike Zicus, a second by Dennis Pratt, and a unanimous voice vote. The Treasurer's report was approved following a motion by Mike Zicus, a second by Mike Sierszen, and unanimous approval by voice vote. President Dennis Pratt reported for Financial Secretary Dean Wellman that there were \$2415 in total deposits into the general fund November and December and that the Club had 3 new members and 52 renewals. The Financial Secretary's report was approved following a motion by Dean Wellman, a second by Walt Swanson, and a unanimous voice vote.

Committee Reports

Legislative, Audit, and Membership: Nothing to report.

Habitat: Dennis Pratt – Walt Swanson contacted Scott Anderson with the Winneboujou Club regarding possible gravel add project at the narrows downstream of the Winneboujou boat house. Scott said that he didn't see any issues going forward with a project this summer. Dennis will reach out to Paul at the DNR at this point.

Education: Den Smet – The fish at Northwestern are doing just fine. They have hatched and are down in the rocks. Soon, they will start feeding them.

Den couldn't get a response from Superior Senior High. In the past, their eggs have done just fine.

Scholarship: Mike Sierszen sent out application announcements in mid-January.

Social Media: Mike Zicus/Dennis Pratt – Mike has been busy cleaning up the website. Ken Zivic helped by verifying links to videos and Mike Sierszen is looking for a functioning link for a reference in our reading list.

Other Business

Online Meetings – In-person meetings will resume on March 24 at the Kro Bar.

Membership Drive – Dennis sent a membership renewal reminder in late December to all members with email addresses. As of January 23, we've had 108 members renew their membership. Dennis will send another email reminder at the end of January to those still unpaid.

Fly of the Month – Resumes in our March newsletter

Election Results – All four nominees (Zivic, Sierszen, Waletzko, and Hill) were re-elected to their board positions. A total of 76 members voted.

TU Letter of Support Request – Chris Collier of TU – Great Lakes has requested a letter of support for continuing funding for their removal of barriers on Lake Superior tributaries. The letter was approved following a motion by Dennis Pratt, a second by Mike Zicus, and a unanimous voice vote.

Upcoming Events – Please check our [Club Calendar](https://bruleriversportsmensclub.com/category/club-calendar/) at <https://bruleriversportsmensclub.com/category/club-calendar/> for the latest events.

The business meeting adjourned at 6:33 p.m.

Recorded by Walt Swanson



"Steelhead" from pg. 3

tributaries where spring runs predominate.

How did this happen? The river's many deep holes provide over-winter habitat, which allows over-wintering fish to often lay eggs before the spring snowmelt. Most spring-run fish don't enter the river until the lower river has lost its ice cover so their reproductive chronology can be somewhat later. A fall run propensity likely developed over time because a number of different factors favored the survival of the progeny from early spawning fish.

Their eggs may have higher hatch rates and the fry and fingerlings better growth and survival than those of later spawning fish. There can be a population advantage to

two run types because all the eggs aren't in "one basket" should a catastrophic event affect one part of the run.

Some anglers think that there are two unique strains, spring and fall runs. Tagging done in the 1990s revealed that there is only one Brule steelhead strain. The research revealed that some fish tagged ascending the river in the fall had entered the Brule in spring the previous year and vice versa. Whether a fish enters in the fall or not seems to depend, in part, on whether they can rebuild enough body reserves before fall to meet the rigors of their next spawning run. There's flexibility in the steelhead life cycle, which is an overall benefit to the population's long-term survival.

2025 Scholarship Application Announcement

The Club is again offering our annual one-time scholarship of \$5,000 designed for advanced undergraduate and graduate students preparing for careers in natural resources.

Eligibility requirements can be found on the club website at <https://bruleriversportsmensclub.com/club-scholarship/college-scholarship-information/>

Congratulations to the re-elected board members:

*Ken Zivic * Mike Sierszen
Jim Waletzko * Glen Hill*

Their tenures run from 2025–2028.

For details about your board members, visit <https://bruleriversportsmensclub.com/the-board/>

Time to Renew Your Dues for 2025

Help our Club fund this year's projects. Your annual dues make up a large share of the monetary resources that allow us to continue our very important work of protecting, enhancing, and maintaining the Bois Brule River fishery. You can send them in by mail with the form in this newsletter or pay for them online in our Club's web page:

<https://bruleriversportsmensclub.com/contact-us/join-the-club/>

Not sure if you have already paid your dues? Feel free to contact Dennis Pratt at prattd@charter.net.

BRSC Gift Store Order Form (prices include shipping & handling)			
#	Item	Cost	Total
	Lower river map poster of Brule (36"x24")	\$50	
	Women's baseball hat	\$30	
	Lower Brule River map	\$10	
	Upper Brule River map	\$10	
	Men's baseball cap (mesh back)	\$30	
	Limited edition brook trout print	\$40	
<i>The Brule River Sportsmen's Club, Inc. is a tax-exempt organization defined by Chapter 501 (C) (3) of the IRS Tax Code.</i> https://brulerriversportsmensclub.com/contact-us/join-the-club/			



What We Do:

Fisheries Habitat Projects — Club members and others volunteer during the summer months to restore features necessary for fish spawning, growing, and feeding.

Clean-ups — Keep the Brule clean and beautiful.

Monthly Membership Meetings — Frequently include guest speakers.

Monthly Newsletter — Helps generate understanding of fisheries and water quality, and keeps members and others informed about Club activities.

Scholarship Program — Provides financial support to students.

Newsletter editor: Katie Thompson (goirish@cheqnet.net)

BRSC Membership Form

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
 e-mail _____

Membership Type: Renewal (due January 1st) New Membership

Email newsletter only: \$20 – Individual \$25 – Household

Paper newsletter only: \$30 – Individual \$35 – Household

Donations

College Scholarship \$ _____ Education \$ _____
 High School Scholarship \$ _____ Habitat \$ _____
 General \$ _____ Multiple \$ _____

Visit us online at www.brulerriversportsmensclub.com

All information contained herein is confidential.
 All but \$1.00 of your membership dues is tax deductible.
 Donations are 100 percent tax deductible.

Officers	Board of Directors
President — Dennis Pratt — prattd@charter.net	Ken Lundberg
Vice President — Ed Chaplinski	Paul Helbach
Financial Secretary — Dean Wellman	Courtney Johnson
Recording Secretary — Walt Swanson	Mick Killoren
Treasurer — Jeff Stollenwerk	Glen Hill
	Dennis Smet
	Jim Waletzko
	Mike Sierszen
	Mike Zicus
	Ken Zivic