

Adams Chapter Trout Unlimited
2008 Membership Survey Results

In September of 2008, the Adams Chapter of Trout Unlimited conducted a survey of their 321 members. The survey covered three issue areas; The fate of the Boardman River Dams, Fish Passage and Quality Regulations. 83 surveys were completed and returned, for a response rate of 26%. The following is a summary of these responses.

The Fate of the Boardman River Dams:

Members were asked to evaluate the alternatives for the dams on the Boardman River using a scale of 1-6 with 1 being the most desirable outcome and 6 being the least desirable. 61% of respondents ranked the option that would: *Remove Brown Bridge, Boardman and Sabin dams and retain/repair Union Street* as their most desirable outcome (ranking of 1). In addition, 59% ranked the *Retain/repair all dams* option as their least desirable option (ranking of 6). The next most desired option was to *modify Brown Bridge, remove Boardman and Sabin Dams and retain Union Street Dam* with 32% of respondents in favor.

Fish Passage:

Members were asked for their thoughts on the passage of steelhead in the Boardman River system, if the dams were removed or modified for fish passage and assuming that salmon would continue to be stopped and harvested at the weir in Traverse City. On the question of if you would *support allowing Steelhead to pass the entire length of the Boardman River*, 67% of respondents were opposed. However, when asked if they would support *steelhead passage to a specific point on the river*, 53% of respondents were in favor. Of those in favor, as an open-ended follow-up question, the survey asked for respondents to indicate *where they would like this upstream migration of steelhead to stop*. The top 2 locations were: The current location of Sabin Dam (37% of respondents in favor) and the Current Location of Brown Bridge Dam (19% in favor). In addition, the survey asked if members would support *modifying the dams to allow for brook and brown trout passage* (if steelhead migration was limited to a certain point on the river) and 88 percent responded that they would support brook and brown trout fish passage modifications.

Quality Regulations:

Finally, members were asked about their thoughts on the application of quality fishing regulations to the Boardman River (or a section of the Boardman River). 85% responded that they would support gear restrictions. Of those in favor, 76% support flies only, 73% support catch and release and 33% support artificial lures only regulations. The survey then asked on what section of the river would you favor quality regulations. 49 percent stated they would like to see some type of quality regulation(s) on the entire river system.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, this survey of the 321 members of the Adams Chapter of Trout Unlimited suggested that the majority of members support the removal of Brown Bridge, Boardman and Sabin Dams. In addition, while members are opposed to un-regulated steelhead passage, the majority of members would be amenable to passage to a specific point in the river system. In addition, if the dams were left in place, members overwhelmingly would support providing fish passage at Sabin, Boardman and Brown Bridge dams for brook and brown trout.



