

July 19, 2008, Van Slyke Creek Work Day - REPORT

On Saturday July 19, 2008, 38 volunteers from the Blackhawk and Southeast Chapters of Trout Unlimited along with local volunteers from the Village of Fontana and the Elementary School staff, met for a work day on Van Slyke Creek in Fontana, Wisconsin. Volunteers worked with chain saws, hand saws, and pry bars to remove woody debris, and an assortment of tires, pipes, cans, and trash from the stream and carry away fallen trees.

The goals for the day included removing 3 dam sites and 8 woody debris restrictions, but we went far beyond our goal and were able to remove all of the obstructions from the beginning of the stream in Headwaters Park to well beyond the middle of the Hildebrand Conservancy. It is hoped that this work, along with future projects, will help to clean up the stream and provide cooler water and better habitat for brown trout and an endangered forage fish in the Darter family known to reside in Van Slyke Creek. Future plans for the creek include modifying a culvert to improve fish and darter passage, additional clean up work, and more volunteer work as approved by the DNR and the USDA.

Many thanks to all who participated for all of your hard work. A special thanks to the Southeast Chapter of T.U. for the lunch after the work day at the home of Wes Milner and Jill Wegner. Also, a special thanks to DNR Senior Fisheries Biologist Doug Welch who not only advised us but also dragged branches along side of us.

By: Jill Wegner