

Private angling clubs become more prevalent in Ontario

The adage that a few rotten apples can spoil things for the majority certainly applies in the outdoors.

In angling, a few individuals have ruined things for the majority of angling enthusiasts in southern Ontario. Instances of vandalism and littering on private property have resulted in an increase amongst landowners of denying or limiting access to anglers wanting to wet a line on their property.

While the immediate reaction is for the angling public to be upset in having one less place to fish, it can produce some positive results.

One such example occurs just north of Port Hope on the Ganaraska River where seven landowners banded together to form the Ganaraska Valley Fishing Club.

Conceived by landowner Dan Thomey in 1984 the club occupies some 5 1/2 miles of river and plays host to some of the top rainbow and brown trout angling in southern Ontario.

Holding a belief at one time that anglers should not be denied access to a watershed, Thomey's thought processes changed one day after his maple sugar lines were vandalized and after hearing numerous complaints from fellow landowners that their property was filled with litter during the trout season.

"The whole idea (of the club) is to keep the numbers of anglers down and to keep the quality of fish-



Outdoors

Mike Hayakawa

landowners. Vandalism and littering has subsided, he cites. And for the serious angler, some great fishing can be had.

"Everything is under control now and the anglers are enjoying themselves. There's no problems with landowners and we now have ethical anglers. Every angler in our club is a serious angler."

Thomey pointed out that members come from across the province and as far away as the United States and Europe. He noted that club memberships are usually filled to capacity by opening day and waiting lists are the norm.

With this year's opening day (the last Saturday in April) just a week away, Thomey cited he's at close to 75 per cent of capacity already.

The Ganaraska Valley Fishing Club is not the only private angling organization on the river. Thomey notes there's four or five other clubs that limit angling access. This privatization trend, he hints, could be a sign of things to come down the road on other provincial watersheds.

Those wishing to join the club can do so by calling Thomey at (705) 885-9844.

ing good for people. And the landowners don't get run off their own property," Thomey explained in creating the club.

Since the club was created, Thomey said things could not be any better for his fellow



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- 6 Too busy training for the 2002 Olympic Snowboarding team.
- 5 Gregorian Chant fad ended two years ago.
- 4 If you wanted to be in a large building all by yourself, you'd go to a Raptors' game.
- 3 Gave at the office.
- 2 Currently stuck in line for "Titanic".
- 1 If you wanted to know how bad you are, you'd organize a family reunion.

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