



Upper Black River Council 2025 Council and River Work Annual Report December 8, 2025

Like so much of northern Michigan, the 2025 work season for the [Upper Black River Council](#) was profoundly affected by the events of the March 2025 Ice Storm. Although the UBRC has spent much of its 32 year history (1993-2025) seeking to improve fishery habitat through the strategic and permitted process of in-stream wood placement, what occurred between March 28 and 30, represented a significant disruption to these past efforts.

Alternatively, the UBRC contractor Ken Reed Contracting, spend nearly all of the summer work season reopening the Main and East Branches of the Upper Black River as well as portions of Canada Creek. These activities were conducted in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and in consideration of current EGLE in-stream habitat improvement permits.



The 2025 Spring meeting of the Council was held on April 10, 2025 at the Canada Creek Ranch clubhouse where over 20 members were in attendance. In addition to the Michigan DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, representatives from Canada Creek Ranch, Black River Ranch, Huron Pines, Trout Unlimited, UBRC board members, our in-stream habitat contractor and numerous anglers and trappers were also in attendance.

The meeting began with a review of the 2024 work season which highlighted the in-stream habitat structures and an erosion control project which were completed together with project partner reports. A discussion of UBRC funding was also provided where it was announced that over \$45,000 had been raised from grants and private donors. As has been the practice in the past, all of those funds were reinvested in river work and with no funds being spent for administration.

As is done annually, Upper Black River Council volunteers, in cooperation with the Fisheries Division of the DNR, began spring activities by deploying water temperature loggers in the Main and East Branches of Upper Black River system. These temp loggers record data every hour throughout the summer. These were retrieved in the fall and the temperature information was downloaded by DNR Fisheries Biologist Neal Godby and added to the 20+ years of historical data. These reports are available from the [UBRC website](#).

In response to the March 2025 Ice Storm and after discussions with DNR Fisheries Biologists, it was decided that where new stream blockages had emerged as a result of this exceptional event, UBRC contractor Ken Reed Contracting, Inc., began the 2025 season continuing in-stream work for our project partner, Canada Creek Ranch (CCR) within the association boundaries.

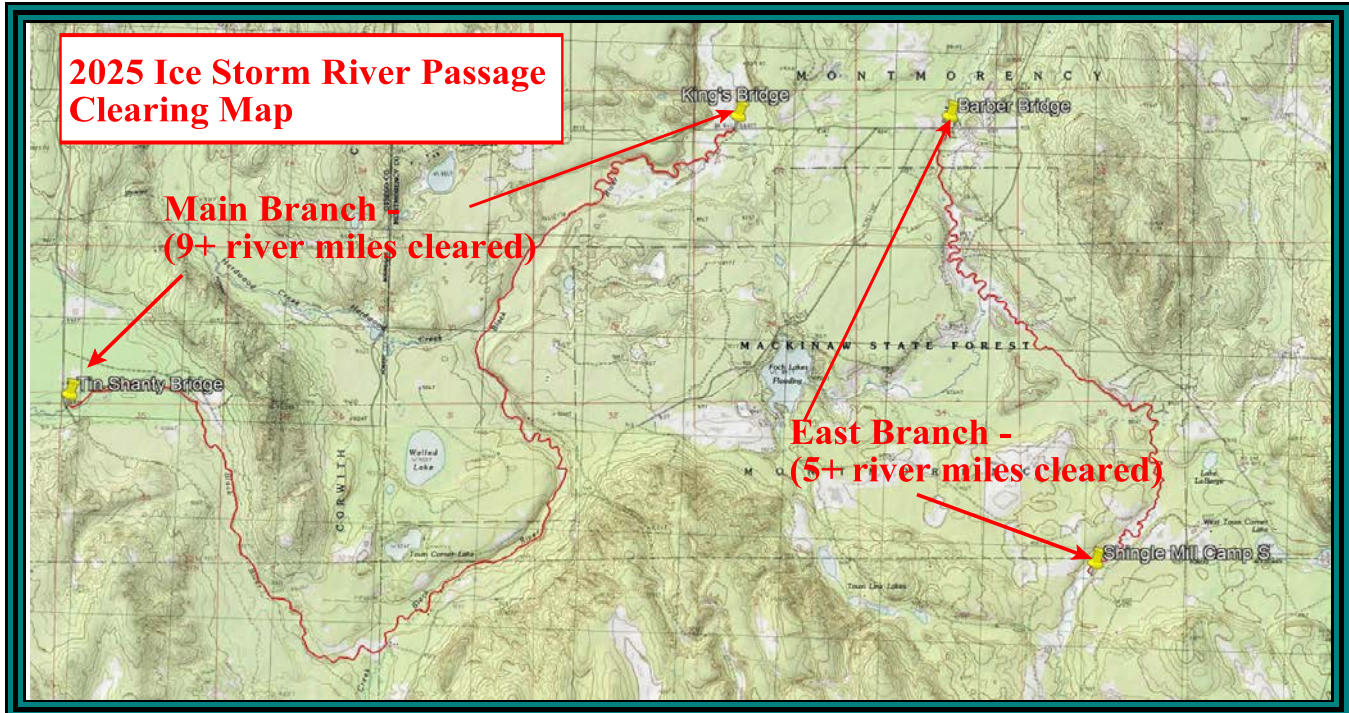
The work within CCR focused on the in-stream tree and wood input resulting from the 2025 Ice Storm. Where entire stream blockages had occurred, Ken Reed removed center portions of these blockages as was necessary to allow for angler and facilitate paddle watercraft passage.



Typical Before & After Photos of Ice Storm Abatement



Upon completion of the Canada Creek work, Ken and his crew began similar clearing operations first on the Main Branch of the Upper Black. This work began at Tin Shanty Bridge and continued downstream for 9+ river miles to King's Bridge at Blue Lakes Road. This work was then followed on the East Branch of the Black River from the Shingle Mill campsite areas downstream to Barber Bridge, also located at Blue Lakes Road.



Permitted Beaver Dam Management Photos



Also in partnership with DNR Fisheries and Wildlife Division personnel, where determined to be appropriate the UBRC continues to identify beaver activity which has become problematic to the management of the cold-water resources represented by the Upper Black River system. Together with these State agencies, the UBRC seeks to coordinate legal in-season harvest with area trappers in an effort to maintain a balance between those watershed benefits provided by beaver activity and those which can be detrimental.

We extend our thanks to our partners which include the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Huron Pines, Headwaters Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Michigan Fly Fishing Club, Montmorency County Conservation Club, the Sheldon Foundation, Canada Creek Ranch, our many individual donors and the UBRC Board of Directors.

We look forward to seeing all of our friends and partners at our Spring meeting which has tentatively been scheduled for 9:30 a.m., April 17, 2025 at the Canada Creek Ranch House. If any of you require more information or details regarding our projects or operational activities, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

PAR

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