

# Manistee River Currents

From The Banks At Chippewa Landing



## **Newsletter #21**

What a nice winter we are having here at the canoe livery this year. The snow is only up to the seats of the picnic tables, instead of over the top of the tables like last year. The river has not frozen over and my boat is still in the river. At this time last year the deer were walking over the ice and finding food they haven't been able to get to in years.

In mid January during a warm weekend Bill, Roland and I took advantage of a sunny day to float the boat downstream past the US-131 Bridge where the extended season trout fishing begins. We caught a few nice Brown Trout and put them right back in the river (unusually Roland got skunked). Later on we pulled over in a nice little cedar forest for a shore lunch with the deer. It was just a beautiful day on the river. This time of year the river runs super clear with the ground frozen and no soil sediment washing into the water. As the sun set a little lower we motored back upstream to the landing. We finished up at the house in front of the fireplace with a couple cold ones and told fishing lies the rest of the evening.

The deer really take over the livery in the winter time with their main hangout being the Downstream Point Campsite. They have quite a path going thru the Top Bluff, down the one way road the wrong way to the office where the path leads right thru the parking lot to the Downstream Point Campsite. At the office the path splits and goes by the two seater privy and thru the Wooded Pavilion Campsite. The only plowing I do is past the Front Entrance Campsite so I can get to my house, and the deer love to walk on that plowed road.

As always we look forward to the first group of campers in April. To the group of old timers that set up in the wooded pavilion with all the comforts of home, what is it, your 18<sup>th</sup> year? They have some great stories, like getting snowed in and having to shovel a path up the road to get out. And the fraternity from a certain college that has an initiation at the livery that I cannot expose to the general public. Let's hope for a warm night with plenty of stars to help them find their way.

The first kayakers and canoers of the season always get to see first the subtle changes the winter has caused in the river, and I can't wait to investigate them all out. A sandbar shift here, a new tree down there, gravels beds that have moved, it's always a little bit different each year. I do know that the heavy snow we had to start the winter in November has caused a few new tree sweepers to show up in the river, something for the early kayakers to discover.

Last Saturday in April is when the trout fishing season starts. Two years ago I caught my whopper Rainbow Trout with Bill and Roland on opening Saturday afternoon. It's a tradition I wouldn't miss regardless of the weather. Sometimes those openers are on nice sunny warm weekends, and other times the wind and rain or snow can rip that fishing pole right out of your hands. Bill's sons, Jesse and Abe can tell you about those openers. Regardless of the weather, we're always looking forward to April's trout opener.

The canoe livery always has plenty of room on opening weekend if you would like to wake up right on the banks of the river. Or how about an over night trip on opening weekend with the only agenda is to eat, sleep, fish? Manton also has great trout fishing right in town with tagged trout that if caught will win the lucky fisherman prizes, including free canoe rentals at Chippewa Landing.

The activity at the new bridge has been slow once the temperature started to dip in the minus at night, and the snow depths got above the knees, go figure. But as the picture on the left shows it won't be long before traffic will once again cross the mighty Manistee River at that point.

## **Chippewa Landing**

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