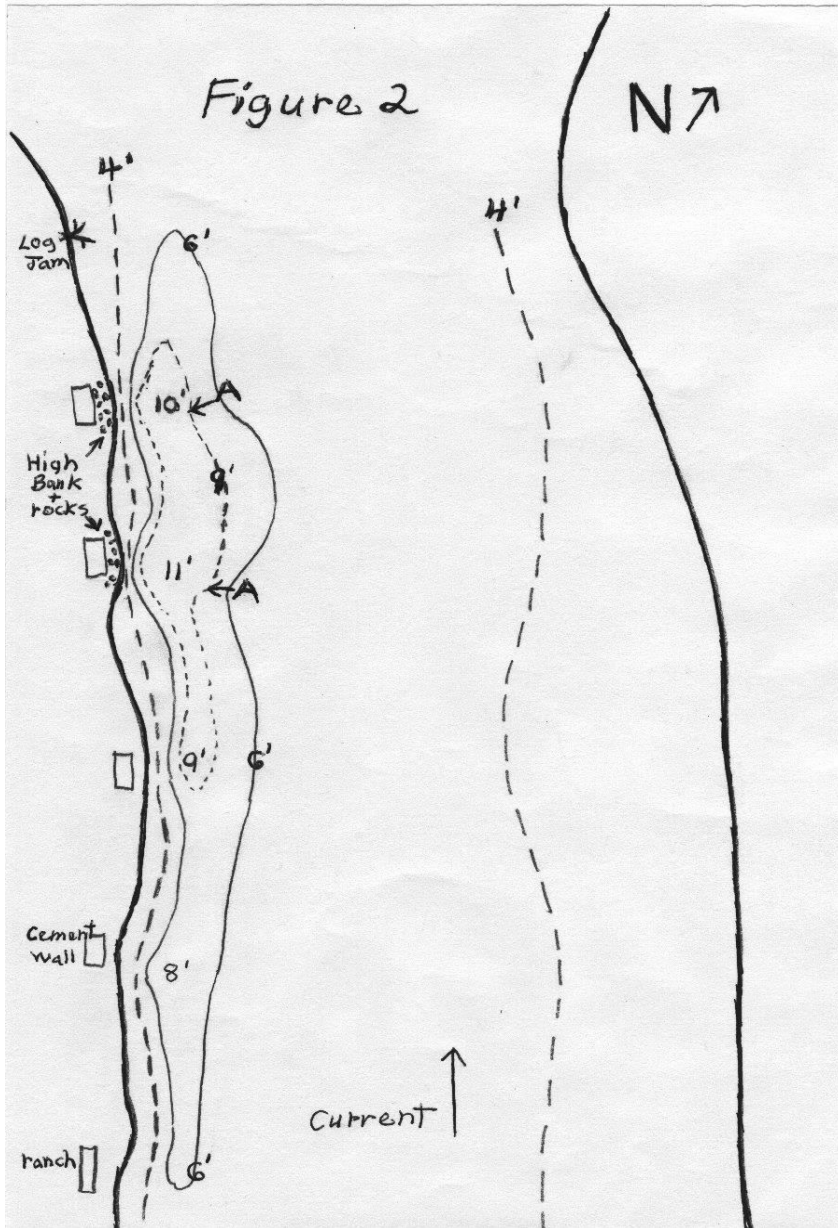


## “ONLY SPEED CONTROL?”



Drawn Map of Deeper “run” hole in Grand River

Last fall ( October 2006) I wrote a fishing report describing how **steelhead were caught** in the Grand River using **slow working crankbaits on the troll**. It was stated that the fish were caught Spoonplugging because Buck Perrys’ Guideline to check all depths and speeds was being followed, which is true, but **there is more to the story than was told**. A **primary reason the fish were caught** was due to the **knowledge of the structures**, which included several holes in a 3 mile stretch of the Grand River. This knowledge was acquired over a period of time, mostly in warmer weather, **using Spoonplugs to map and interpret these structures**. Slow crankbaits are not efficient or effective tools to gain this necessary preliminary knowledge. Spoonplugs **are much more accurate in depth control** and will work at faster speeds to **gain the information quickly**. With knowledge of the different structures, it was a simple matter to check different depths and speeds on this trip.

I have made **a drawing of a hole where one steelhead was caught** and will **describe the mapping process used** to gain information about the structural details. This process was completed and the map was **drawn on a**

**trip prior** to when the steelhead was caught. Fish caught on that trip included bass and walleye. **Once details** of the structure **were known**, likely areas were trolled and cast with **much greater chance of connecting with fish**, and future trips became much easier.

The mapping process is begun by **studying the terrain and currents**, then using the depth sounder to **find the breaklines** and their **relationship to the deepest water** in the area. In a hole or slot in the river with **depths no greater than 11 feet**, this process does not take much time. We **begin trolling** the structure with the **#500 Spoonplug** (2-4 feet), and find that with 60 feet of 17 pound No-Bo line out, the **#500 runs about 2 feet going upstream**, and about **4 feet going downstream**. This allows us to check different depths depending on which direction we go. Both the No-Bo line and the Spoonplug are important for **giving us exact depths as we change our speeds**. The **feel of the lure** ticking on and off the bottom **tells us the depth, hardness, and outline of the structure** we are fishing. We find that passes with this lure pretty much follow the NE and SW shorelines of the river and that the **deepest water is along the SW shoreline**. We run as many passes with this sized lure as needed to get a good picture of what is present in the 2-4 foot depths, checking different speeds at the same time.

**Next we troll the #400 Spoonplug (4-6 feet)** around this same hole. We find that this lure runs about **4 feet going upstream and 6 feet going downstream**. Passes with this lure begin to **tell us about the breakline** of the structure (hole), especially going downstream **at the 6 foot depth**. If the hole is fairly large, it is best to **begin an outline sketch** in pencil of its form and breakline. With some practice drawing, this may only **take 30 seconds to a minute**. The **next sized lure run** is the **#250 Spoonplug**, which covers **6-9 foot depths** and gives us even **more information**. **Finally**, we put on a **#200 Spoonplug (9-12 feet)** and make some **straight line passes through the deepest section**, noting details. With these details fresh in our mind, now is the time to **add them to our drawing**. From this, we can **interpret this structure** and answer questions like: **“Which are the best features to anchor and cast?”** (A), **“Where would I troll it?”** (SW bank off the hole), and **“What depths should I concentrate on?”** (6-9 feet is the major breakline). **All the time** we were trolling Spoonplugs and mapping this structure, **we had a chance to catch a fish**. Often this process is interrupted (by catching a fish) and the answer to the question “Where are the fish?” is found! **These fishing/mapping procedures can be effective in lakes and reservoirs also**, and they exist in Buck Perrys’ book “Spoonplugging—Your Guide to Lunker Catches” pages 235-268.

**Slow crankbaits caught the steelhead**. We were checking slower trolling speeds due to the very cold temperatures. We must not forget, however, that **the knowledge necessary to present those lures** in the proper place and manner to get the best results **was acquired** through the correct use of Spoonplugs in the **mapping process**.

Chase Klinesteker