

FISHING THE GRAND RIVER

WHY AND HOW TO MAP, INTERPRET,
AND FISH NAVIGABLE RIVER
WATERWAYS

by Chase Klinesteker, CSI

WHY RIVERS? FISHING RIVERS IS FUN

**THEY HAVE A
LONGER SEASON
AND THEY ARE
OFTEN CLOSE BY**

27 LB. FLATHEAD CATFISH
Grand River near the Rogue



RIVERS CAN PRODUCE HEALTHY, ROBUST FISH

that use the current to
put up a great fight

PIKE FROM GRAND RIVER



RIVERS PRODUCE ON COLD FRONT DAYS



Severe cold front, Spring Lake with dark water color

RIVERS ARE FISHABLE IN HIGH WINDS



Minimal waves on windy days

RIVERS ARE VERY SELDOM CROWDED



Grand River Smallmouth Bass, minimal fishing pressure

WITH LOTS OF SPECIES AVAILABLE



Steelhead,
Grand
River

RIVERS ARE A NATURAL FOR WALLEYE--

WITH THEIR TORPEDO
SHAPED BODY

Walleye and Smallmouth from
Grand River



AND TOP FIGHTING SMALLMOUTH



4 POUND SMALLMOUTH, GRAND RIVER

FACTS ABOUT THE GRAND RIVER

- ▣ It is Michigan's longest river at 262 miles
- ▣ It begins at Grand Lake near Jackson and ends in Grand Haven at Lake Michigan
- ▣ It drains 5,572 square miles in 19 counties
- ▣ It provides 13% of the water for the Lake Michigan watershed and flows an average of 3,800 cu ft/sec
- ▣ Spring Lake is just one of many bayous of the Grand River, some others are Lloyd, Dermo, Potawattomie, Millhouse, Sterns, and Bruce
- ▣ Tributaries of the Grand include the Red Cedar, Looking Glass, Flat, Thornapple, and Rogue rivers

SOME SPECIES IN THE GRAND RIVER

- ▣ WALLEYE
- ▣ SMALLMOUTH BASS
- ▣ LARGEMOUTH BASS
- ▣ NORTHERN PIKE
- ▣ KING SALMON
- ▣ COHO SALMON
- ▣ STEELHEAD
- ▣ MUSKIE
- ▣ FLATHEAD CATFISH
- ▣ CHANNEL CATFISH
- ▣ CARP
- ▣ PERCH, BLUEGILL, CRAPPIE, WHITE BASS
- ▣ DRUM
- ▣ GAR PIKE
- ▣ BOWFIN

100 SPECIES IN THE GRAND RIVER ALONE!



5 LB. REDHORSE SUCKER

9 POUND BOWFIN, N. OF ROGUE



Dogfish are great fighters with teeth!

DRUM FROM SPRING LAKE

Casting from an
anchored position



CARP FROM THE GRAND



CHANNEL CAT AT THE MOUTH



Note trolling lure

WHAT IS SPOONPLUGGING?

- ▣ Knowledge about fish discovered by Buck Perry, the “Father of Structure Fishing”
- ▣ A logical concept of fishing that uses facts about fishes’ behavior, the weather, and structure to catch fish.
- ▣ An orderly method of straining the water by casting and trolling to arrive at the fish.
- ▣ A study of structure, the bottom of the lake that is different from the surrounding area, which serves as a pathway for fish migrations.
- ▣ The efficient use and design of fishing tools that control lure depth and speed accurately at the same time.

KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY

SPOONPLUGGING
LOGO



BASIC GUIDELINE

THE BASIC GUIDELINE =
SPOONPLUGGING IN A
NUTSHELL. LEARN AND
REVIEW IT OFTEN.

“Check all depths and all
speeds on structure”
summarizes presentation.

BUCK SEZ

SPOONPLUGGERS BASIC GUIDELINE

The "home" of the fish (where he spends the greater part of his time - a sanctuary from a changing or hostile environment) is somewhere in the deep, or deepest, water in the area being fished. When in the sanctuary depths, the fish are normally so dormant, and/or so deep, they are almost impossible to locate or catch. As fishermen we are saved due to the fact the fish do not stay so dormant, or so deep, all the time. Once or twice on an average fishing day they will become active and *may* move toward shallower water. We are saved again, because when the fish become active and move toward shallower water, they do not go in just any direction. The route they take has bottom features (structure, breaks, breaklines) that show them the way. As the fish move along a bottom feature (structure) they will pause or stop at things (breaks and breaklines) on the bottom. How far they go (along a migration route toward the shallows) and how long they stay (at a "break" or "breakline" before turning back to deep water) is dependent upon (controlled by) the weather and water condition *at that particular time.*

If you and I desire to consistently catch fish whenever or wherever we go fishing, we must control the depth and speed of our lures (or bait) on, and/or around the bottom features (structure, breaks, breaklines) the fish are using in their movements and migrations.

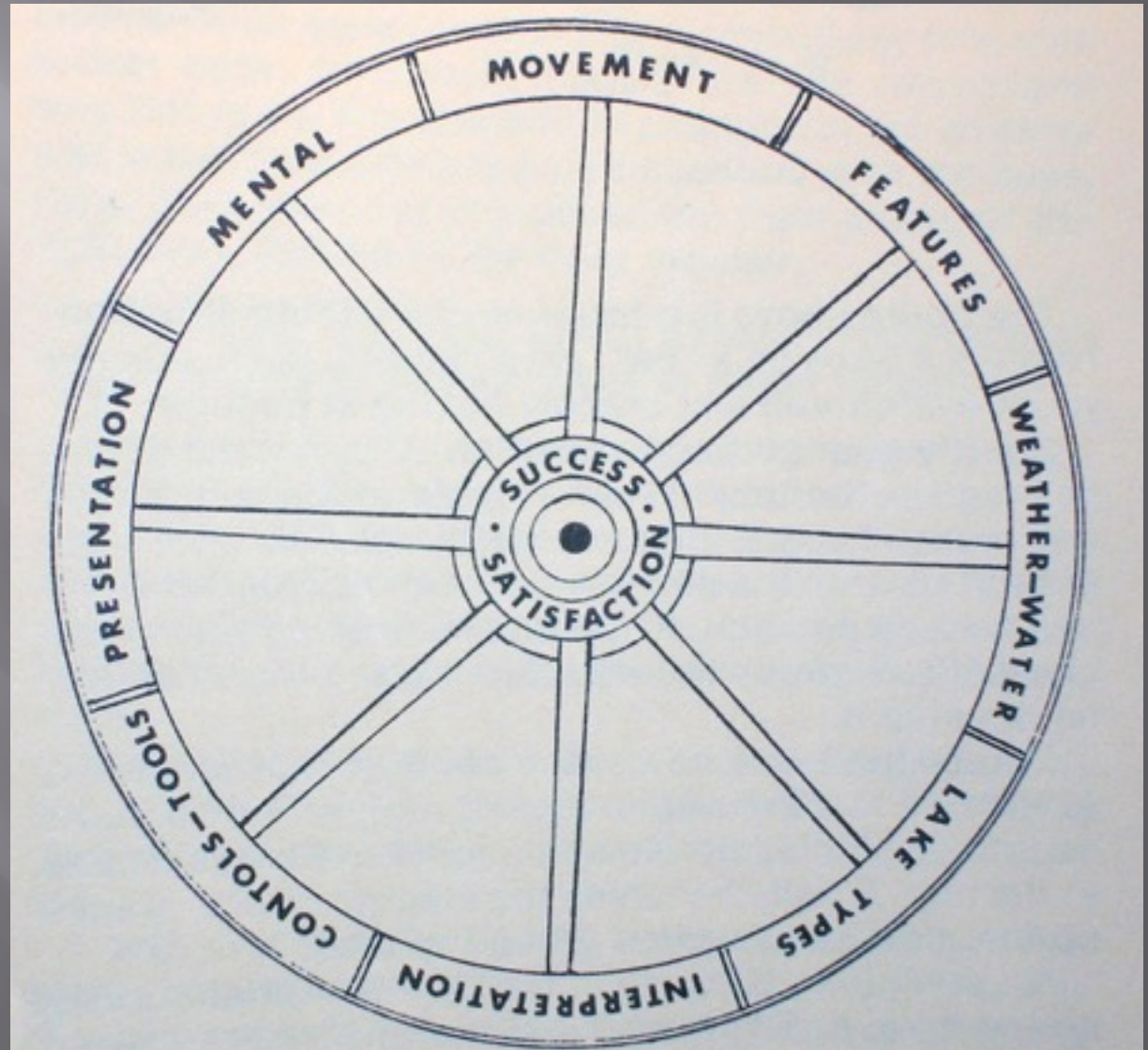
WHAT IS INVOLVED HERE

1. THE MOVEMENT OF THE FISH
2. LAKE FEATURES - STRUCTURE, BREAKS, BREAKLINES
3. WEATHER AND WATER CONDITIONS
4. LAKE TYPES
5. MAPPING AND INTERPRETATION
6. CONTROLS AND TOOLS
7. PRESENTATION OF LURES
8. MENTAL ATTITUDE

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THE KNOWLEDGE: BUCK PERRYS' WHEEL OF FISHING SUCCESS

KNOWLEDGE IS
IMPORTANT IN ALL
EIGHT AREAS



WHO IS BUCK PERRY?



Chattanooga Spoonplugging Jamboree, 1989, Buck Perry on right

Elwood L. "Buck" Perry

BORN 1915
HICKORY, NORTH CAROLINA

A SON OF THE SOUTH AND THE FATHER OF STRUCTURE FISHING, HE TAUGHT AN ENTIRE CONTINENT THE FUNDAMENTALS OF SUCCESSFUL ANGLING. HE WAS THE ONE WHO MADE POSSIBLE THE MODERN ERA OF FRESHWATER SPORT FISHING. HIS DISCOVERIES AND TEACHINGS HAVE BROUGHT PLEASURE AND SUCCESS TO MILLIONS OF ANGLERS, MANY OF WHOM DO NOT EVEN KNOW HIS NAME.

HE IS THE CREATOR OF SPOONPLUGGING - THE TOTAL CONCEPT FOR SUCCESSFUL FISHING. HE IS THE INVENTOR OF SPOONPLUGS - LURES WHICH WERE DESIGNED TO ALLOW SPOONPLUGGING KNOWLEDGE TO BE UTILIZED TO FULL ADVANTAGE.

DEDICATED IN HONOR OF OUR TEACHER AND FRIEND BY A PRIVILEGED FEW OF THE SPOONPLUGGERS OF AMERICA.

JULY 10, 1993



VISIONARY - PIONEER - SCIENTIST
TEACHER - GENIUS

Plaque honoring Mr Perry in the Freshwater Fishing Hall of Fame

BUCKS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS

(SOME OF)

- ▣ The father of structure fishing
- ▣ Studied math, science, chemistry, and physics
- ▣ College star quarterback; physics professor
- ▣ Used the scientific method to extensively study fish behavior in the 1930s' and 1940s' and beyond
- ▣ Fished in all major waters of all states except 1
- ▣ Pioneer in depth sounder development
- ▣ Wrote numerous articles , books etc, on fish behavior that were way ahead of his time
- ▣ The Education Editor of Fishing Facts magazine
- ▣ Considered by some to be the most successful fisherman of all time

VISIONARY, TEACHER, FRIEND



Buck Perry, 1915-2005

STUDY MATERIAL TO HELP

buckperry.com



Green Book

Study Guide

Newsletter

RIVERS, HOW TO FISH THEM

1) STRUCTURE IN RIVERS

2) EQUIPMENT, TOOLS USED

3) PRESENTATION METHODS

4) MAPPING RIVER STRUCTURES

1) STRUCTURE IN RIVERS

- ▣ ISLANDS, HUMPS, BENDS
- ▣ BREAKLINES, BASE BREAKLINES
- ▣ CURRENT BREAKLINES, EDDYS
- ▣ WATER COLOR BREAKLINES
- ▣ FEEDER STREAM CUTS
- ▣ BREAKS (rocks, wood)
- ▣ BARS
- ▣ DEEP HOLES
- ▣ MANMADE: bridges, wingdams, walls
- ▣ BOTTOM TRANSITION

BARS (MOST COMMON STRUCTURE)

Walleye caught on a wide-sweeping bar in Spring lake (byou of Grand River)



9 pound walleye, Spring Lake

ISOLATED HOLE



Northern Pike from a small hole, 8 foot deep

TROLLING TOP BREAKLINES



Small lures trolled in shallow water

CASTING DEEP HOLES

Baitcasting from an anchored position
1/2 ounce bladebait



Flathead catfish, Grand River

FEEDER STREAM CUTS

Steelhead caught
trolling at mouth
of the Rogue
River



CURRENT BREAKLINE

Grand River
walleye caught
where fast water
meets slow



RIVER BENDS

Pike from
a bend in
the Grand
River



2) EQUIPMENT USED IN RIVERS

Trolling + casting rods and reels

No-Bo Trolling Line, Braid Casting Line

Flasher Depth Sounder

Anchor, $\frac{3}{4}$ " Rope, Large Net

Boat and Motor, Smaller but Safe

Crankbaits, Jump, Topwater, Weedless

Lure Knocker (Auto-Trieve)

Oar, Hydrofin, Extra Prop, High Overboots

Pencil and Pad for Drawing Maps

TOOLS AND AIDS



RIVER BOAT AND MOTOR

- ▣ Wide and stable, 14-15 feet
- ▣ 15-25 Horsepower
- ▣ Tiller control, comfortable seating
- ▣ Manual tilt, motor kicks up
- ▣ Lighter weight (Aluminum)
- ▣ Rod and other storage, keep it simple
- ▣ Vinyl, not carpeted, floor
- ▣ Cleats on bow, sides, and stern
- ▣ Keels to track well in trolling
- ▣ High sides, safe and keeps line out of prop

Ultracraft 14-CT, 72 inch beam



LURES USED IN RIVERS

- ▣ Spoonplugs, first 3-5 sizes, trolling and casting
- ▣ Jump Baits, casting
- ▣ Bladebaits, 1/2 and 3/4 ounce
- ▣ Jigs, 1/16th to 1 ounce and plastic
- ▣ Tubes
- ▣ Spoons
- ▣ Weedless, Jig, Spinnerbait, or add pin spinner
- ▣ Topwater, one or 2 poppers or floating cranks
- ▣ Steelhead crankbaits (cold water)
- ▣ Keep selection simple, learn each well

KNOW YOUR TOOLS

SPOONPLUGGING:
Thorough Fishing
Both Casting and Trolling

BOTTOM BUMPING,
Free Running

PRECISE
DEPTH AND
SPEED
CONTROL

FOR MORE
INFORMATION

2-4 Ft.

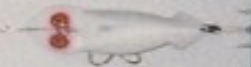


4-6 Ft.

Light Colors



6-9 Ft.



9-12 Ft.



12-15 Ft.

Neutral
Colors



15-20 Ft.

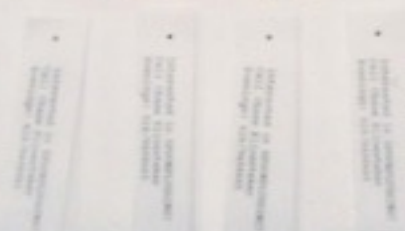


20-25 Ft.

Dark
Colors



Double Depth with Wire Line



SPOONPLUGS 500, 400, and 250 200 and 100 sometimes



CASTING, JUMP LURES



STEELHEAD



Trolling

Casting

Cleo spoon

Flatfish, Tadpolly, Hottentot

ARE SNAGS A BIG PROBLEM?

- ▣ Usually not. Most areas are clean and hard
- ▣ Spoonplugs will flip over or drop off a snag
- ▣ Bladebaits can be used in most areas
- ▣ Depths often shallow, so rod can push off snag
- ▣ Use 20 pound line and thin wire hooks
- ▣ Don't set hook hard in wood
- ▣ Go straight back to snag
- ▣ Get over lure, pop rod vigorously with slack
- ▣ Occasionally need to get lure knocker out
- ▣ Use weedless lures if necessary

LOW WATER

- ▣ 1 ½ to 2 feet minimal to launch
- ▣ Be familiar with the area you fish
- ▣ Go upstream from launch
- ▣ Read the water: Watch water surface closely
- ▣ Use tilt on motor if necessary
- ▣ Need 3-4 foot depths to plane out
- ▣ Hydrofin gets up quicker and planes slower
- ▣ Bring an oar

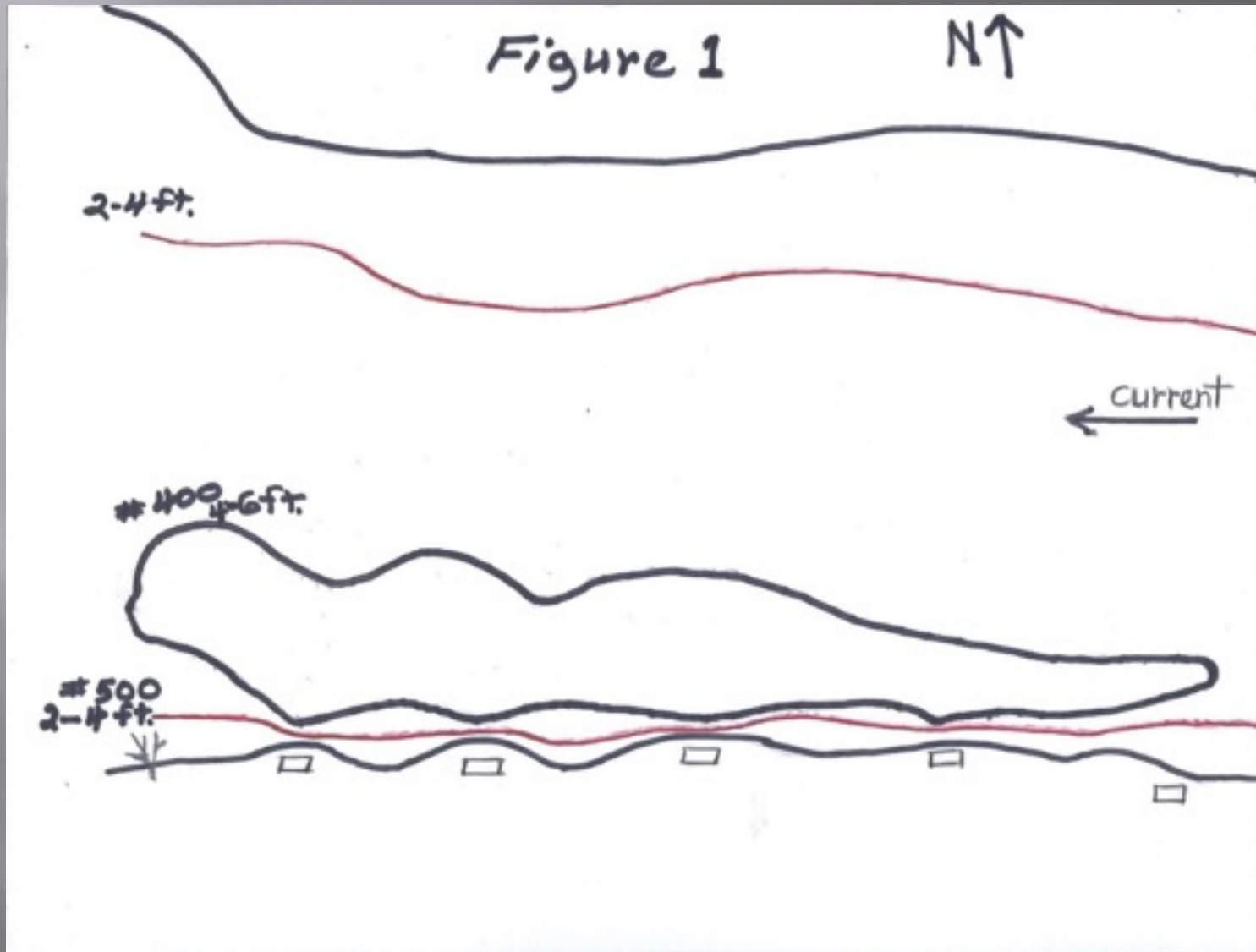
RIVER FISH LOCATION (AREAS TO CHECK)

- ▣ More active fish may be found at the head of islands, humps, breaks, holes, and slots. Less active fish may be at the tail end of these structures. The least active fish often are found in the deepest holes or under the cover of logs or the bank.

3) PRESENTATION IN RIVERS

- ▣ 2 ways: Casting and Trolling. Do both.
- ▣ Wind and Current have an effect
- ▣ Wind, hang a bow anchor
- ▣ Heavy current, troll diagonal
- ▣ Speed and depth control most important
- ▣ Trolled Spoonplugs have widest range
- ▣ Troll upstream slower, downstream faster
- ▣ Slower speeds, casting
- ▣ Slowest speeds, drift with current, vert. jig
- ▣ Trolling is our Teacher (of Structure)

FIRST FIND STRUCTURE

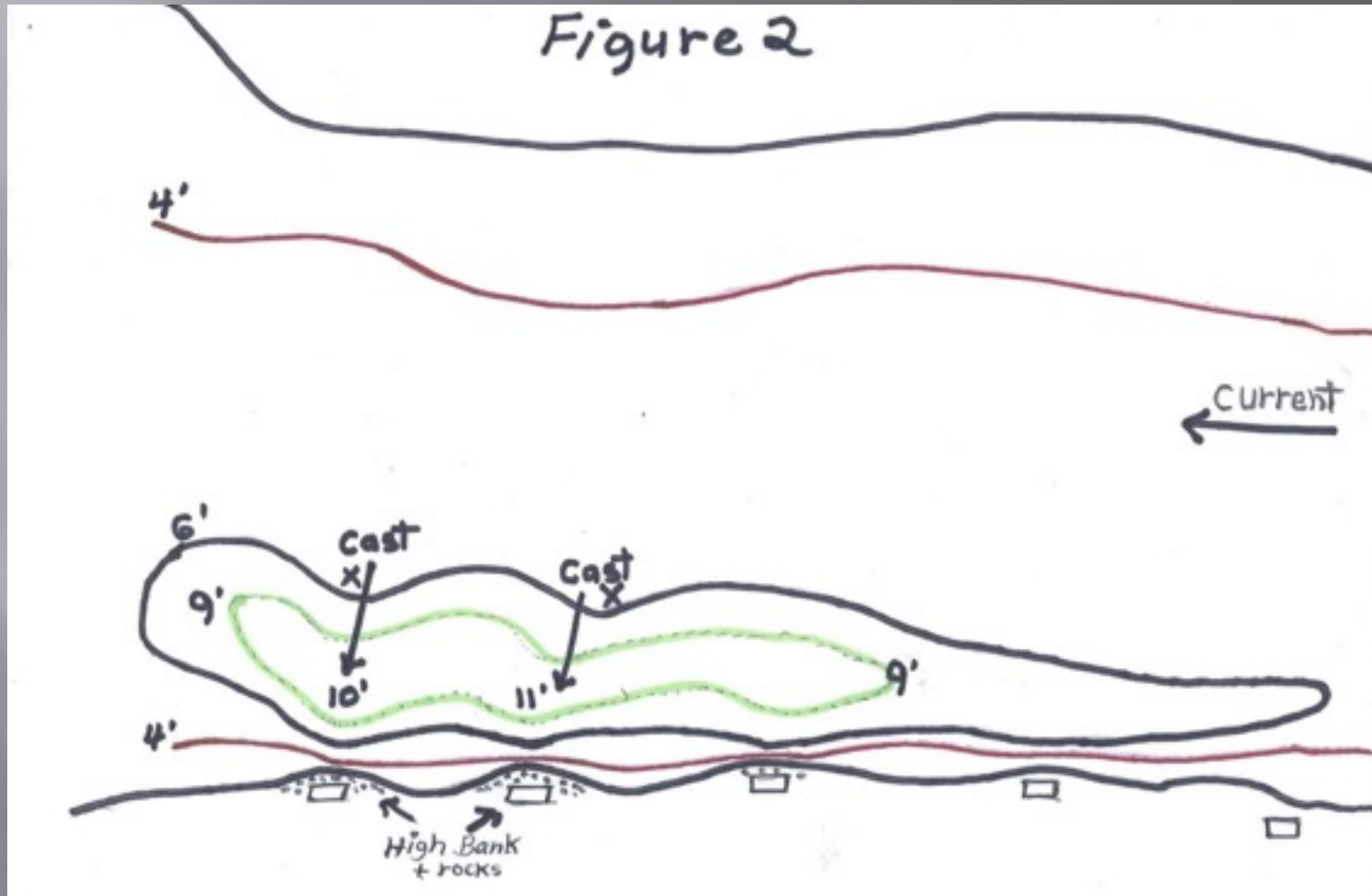


THEN LEARN IT!

4) MAPPING RIVER STRUCTURES

- ▣ Structure is related to deep holes
- ▣ The Spoonplug is the best mapping tool
- ▣ Start shallow and work deeper
- ▣ Troll down and up current
- ▣ Cover structure thoroughly
- ▣ Draw a map

TROLL, MAP, AND DRAW



Terry O'Malley: "If you can't draw it, you don't know it"

REMEMBER, BE PERSISTENT--



USE LARGE ENOUGH LURES--



HELP CLEAN THE ENVIRONMENT--



GIVE HAPPINESS TO OTHERS--



KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY--



AND BELIEVE IN FISHING!



BECAUSE, WE LOVE BIG FISH!



www.chasesfishes.com

OTHER SOURCES

- ▣ BUCKSSPOONPLUGS.COM--lures, Spoonplugging equipment, study material
- ▣ NSOA.INFO--newsletter, videos, articles
- ▣ SPOONPLUGGER.NET--online forum
- JOHNNYB-LURES.COM--JB lures, blades
- ▣ STRUCTUREFISHING.COM--TV, videos, education
- ▣ CHASESFISHES.COM – History, articles
- ▣ DONDICKSONFISHING.COM, Utube videos