



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

P.O. Box 2222
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www.MVFF.org

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2021

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Tale Waters Edited by Jim Hulsey — newsletter@mvff.org

Meetings

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Club will hold no in-person meetings until later in the year.



Liars and Tyers

The fly for May is Chuck's Mini-Chub. Chuck Mueller has prepared a video demonstrating the tying of this fly and has placed it on the MVFF Face Book page. To view the video just go to the MVFF web page, click on the link tab and select Like Us on Face Book.

A picture and recipe for this fly can be seen [here](#).

President's Corner

David Carmichael



Mabie Legacy Scholarship

It is my pleasure to announce that Michael Miller is this year's recipient of the Mabie Legacy Scholarship. Michael is a new graduate student at NMSU, pursuing the M.S. degree in Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology. Prior to attending NMSU, he earned an Associates of Science degree from Colorado Mountain College where he also received the

David Allen Outstanding Student Award. He then attended Colorado State University where he graduated *cum laude* in the Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences program, and was named Outstanding Senior. As an undergraduate, he developed and led a research project with Colorado Parks & Wildlife and the American Fisheries Society on the impacts of introducing northern pike into an 80-acre impoundment. At NMSU, he is part of the Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Unit. His research is on the population dynamics of YY-Male brook trout in streams in northern New Mexico and he will begin data collection for his thesis this summer. Michael is motivated by the lives of prominent conservationists such as Aldo Leopold, Teddy Roosevelt and Rachel Carson who shaped environmental philosophy and policy in this country. He aspires to building a career as a fisheries biologist and to contribute to the preservation of our natural resources for future generations. Congratulations Michael, and good luck with your fieldwork this summer.

Watershed Restoration Efforts

Our local Gila/Rio Grande chapter of Trout Unlimited recently conducted a successful stream habitat monitoring session on Willow Creek in the Gila National Forest. See the column by Jeff Arterburn elsewhere in this newsletter for details.

Trout Unlimited has teamed up with River Source, a small Santa Fe company devoted to watershed restoration, to identify streams in northern New Mexico that are good candidates for restoration programs. More specifically, recent fieldwork was focused on identifying places that have habitat appropriate for the reintroduction of beavers. Beavers provide a variety of benefits in small drainages, such as flood control, the filtering of

pollutants, building of new wetlands, and increased fish populations. Here is a link to the Trout Unlimited story and a short accompanying video. ([In New Mexico, beavers and people aren't so different | Trout Unlimited](#)).

Audubon New Mexico is sponsoring a Zoom webinar on May 13, entitled “El Rito Grande: Conserving a Once-Mighty River,” by hydrologist Paul Tashjan. Paul was a hydrologist with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 26 years. He is now part of the Audubon Southwest’s Freshwater Conservation Program, where he has been involved in river restoration projects associated with the Bitter Lake Wildlife Refuge, and Bosque del Apache. You may register by following this link ([Webinar Registration | Audubon New Mexico](#)) where you will also have the opportunity to make an optional donation.

Environmental News

For the second year in a row, New Mexico has received the dubious distinction of seeing a beloved fishery earn a place on American River’s top ten list of the most endangered rivers in the country. Last year, the Gila River was named the #1 most endangered because of the imminent threat of the proposed Gila diversion project. Thankfully, that threat was averted, but this year, the **Pecos River is number five on the most endangered rivers list.** (<https://endangeredrivers.americanrivers.org/pecos-river/>) The main threat to the Pecos River is a proposal for hard rock mining on USFS lands upstream of the town of Pecos, right in the midst of the second most popular trout fishery in the state (after the San Juan). The river is also sacred and culturally important to the Tesuque, Jemez and Pecos Pueblo peoples, and local Hispanic communities who have relied upon it for centuries.

The mining claim is being made by an Australian company through a Mexican subsidiary, so we continue to see our natural resources threatened by foreign interests which will not benefit local populations or contribute to the United States’ strategic needs for rare earth minerals. More extensive discussions of this threat to the Pecos

were presented in the January and October 2020 newsletters, so please check those out for more details. The good news is that the Governor’s Office has opposed the project, and Senator Heinrich has worked with the citizens group, the Upper Pecos Watershed Association to introduce the Pecos Watershed Protection Act, which is working its way through Congress. Unfortunately, the protections it contains would only apply to future projects, not the present proposal. We must hope that the New Mexico Minerals & Mining Division and the USFS use their regulatory authority to prevent this project, and the contamination of the river which will surely follow, as it has after previous mining activities in the watershed.



Pecos River below the Upper Box. A really bad location for a mine.

Fishing Lease Update

Now that COVID restrictions are loosening up a bit, more club members have been getting out to scope out the fishing at the lease and elsewhere. With vaccinations up and infection rates down, it seems to be safe to ease back into quasi-normal activities, especially those involving small groups in the outdoors, such as fishing the lease.

[\(Updated New Mexico COVID-19 map takes effect: What are the new rules? \(msn.com\)\).](#) The water has been quite low on the lease, and the river seems to an overabundance of chubs and rather few trout. The board has been talking informally about stocking the lease, and we will hopefully be making some firm plans this month about when stocking will occur, how many fish, what size, etc. In the meantime, I've been telling members who ask that it will probably be September before we restock. By then, there will hopefully have been some monsoon rains that may serve to flush out the sediment and weed growth that has taken over in some parts of the lease. That is my hope, but as I've written in past newsletters, one of the regional effects of climate change is that our traditional monsoon is occurring later in the year, and it is less reliable than we have come to expect. The forecast for this year is continued and deepening drought all across the Southwest. The U. S. Drought Monitor map shows the Gila Mountains region under Moderate drought, while most of northern and southeastern New Mexico are predicted to experience

Extreme or Exceptional drought, the two most severe levels. Much of the Rio Penasco flow is spring fed, but we may or may not see any supplemental monsoon rainfall this year. Locally, the Gila looks more promising than the Sacramento Mountains. If you can travel this summer, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado are looking pretty good.

Casting Tips

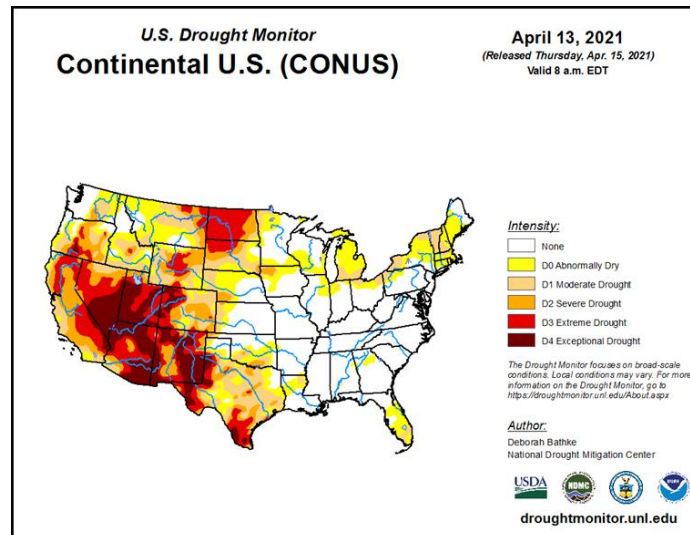
As some of you may know, I've been working on getting Fly Fishers International (FFI) certification as a casting instructor. The pandemic lockdown has interrupted the process, especially limiting travel to one-on-one training sessions with my

instructor. Nevertheless, I've had the pleasure to give some introductory casting lessons over the past year. One of the great things about teaching casting is that we're always looking for effective ways to communicate casting mechanics to those we're trying to help. I recently came across some information that club members might find useful. Many of us were taught to cast by visualizing a clock face, and we were told to keep our casting stroke between 10 and 2 o'clock. This actually may not be a very good way to teach the casting stroke, and many instructor's efforts are focused on helping casters un-learn that image or concept. There are two primary ways in which the 10 and 2 approach is incorrect.

First, the pivot point for the cast doesn't stay in the same place. The casting action should include

pulling the hand back to a stop, then pushing forward to a stop. Joan Wulff uses the image of pulling and pushing the handle of a screen door to visualize this. So, there will be two pivot points, one at the end of the backstroke, and another at the end of the forward push. The second problem with the

clock face model is that the angle of the casting stroke (the distance between the rod's forward and backward angle) changes with the amount of line out, and the length of the cast. On very short casts, the angle might be 11 to 12 o'clock, while on long casts it might almost reach 9 to 3 o'clock. Here is a short article that provides some further explanation. ([It's time to stop teaching '10 o'clock and 2 o'clock' fly casting | Hatch Magazine - Fly Fishing, etc.](#)) It's been very windy lately, so now would be a good time to practice casting before heading to the river and trying to cope with strong winds as well as a clock face that doesn't work.



Tight Lines. They're much better than the alternative.



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Gila/Rio Grande Chapter (780) of Trout Unlimited
Jeff Arterburn, President



GRG-TU for MVFF May 2021

The first in-person GRG-TU event of the year, our annual Spring Volunteer Stream Habitat Survey at Willow Creek, was held the weekend of April 30 - May 2, 2021. We had a great group of volunteers, beautiful weather, clear night skies and a chorus of nearby wolves howling Friday night. The data we have collected since 2017 has established a baseline from which the next stage of habitat restoration work can begin to mark progress. There is a very long way to go with restoring the degraded habitat, and we are committed to the long game that will ultimately provide excellent habitat for Gila trout. With another exceptionally dry winter this year, all we can do is hope for more benevolent summer Monsoons and a pass to make it through fire season.

We were completely surprised when the Southwest Regional Fish Program Leader at US Forest Service, Yvette Pá

roz, presented our Willow Creek Volunteer Habitat Monitoring project team leaders with the USFS Group Innovation Award "Thinking Outside the Box". Our group includes the incredible Jim Brooks (USFWS retired), and Chris Cavanaugh (NMED retired) who have developed, adapted and refined



USFS Group Innovation Award "Thinking Outside the Box"

the methodology, and all of the volunteers from the Mesilla Valley Fly Fishers



Jeff Arterburn and Jim Brooks with USFS Group Innovation Awards for the Willow Creek project.

who have participated were also recognized with an accompanying award. We are all so appreciative of this honor and the beautiful mementos, and sincerely thank the USFS Southwest Region Biologists. We are all looking forward to a continuing partnership in the restoration work ahead at Willow Creek and other streams supporting native trout. If you are interested in these activities and would like to participate please let us know.



The Aldo Leopold Kid's Fishing Clinic at Lake Roberts has unfortunately been canceled for 2021. The 17th annual Gila River Festival has been

scheduled for the weekend of September 17 – 19, 2021 and the agenda is under development. The Western Regional Trout Unlimited Meeting will be rescheduled for 2022 in Taos.

We have had some interest in the exciting new TU Service Partnership Program that has been expanded to include military and first responders and their families, including medical, law enforcement, fire and other critical service members in our communities. TU is offering free annual memberships, and you can read more about the program at this link: <https://www.tu.org/conservation/outreach-education/trout-unlimited-service-partnership/>

If you would like to be involved in initiating and leading a program for southern NM through our chapter, or just want to participate please come forward and get involved.

GRG-TU Logo T-shirts to support local trout restoration and conservation efforts.

Our beautiful T-shirts with the GRG-TU logo in colors: green-on-ivory, and peanut-butter-on-black are sold as part of our fund-raising for trout restoration and conservation efforts. These are great looking, well-made shirts for a great cause at only \$20 each. Please include \$5 for shipping if you want the shirt(s) mailed. Contact Jeff Arterburn to get yours, and to sign up for the next volunteer event: <mailto:jeffgilatu@aol.com>.



Green logo on ivory



Peanut butter logo on black

If you are a current or former TU member looking to renew your membership please use the standard renewal form on the TU website: <https://www.tu.org/trout-unlimited-3/> or call 1-800-834-2419.



MVFF Library

MVFF has a considerable library which is now in the custody of Club member Mark Dankel. Mark would like to make these books available to members. If you wish to borrow any of these books let Mark know and he will bring them to the next membership meeting. Mark can be contacted at mpdankel@msn.com.


A list of the books can be found in the November 2019 issue of *Tale Waters*.



Chuck's Mini-Chub



- **Bead**—Slotted Tungsten, size 4mm, Gold
- **Hook**—Daiichi 2546, size 8
- **Thread**—70 denier, Cream
- **Tail**—Marabou, Tan
- **Flash**—Pearl tinsel
- **Body**—Streamer Brush, 1/2 inch in Tan and Natural
- Brown magic marker for highlights

For a heavier version use a size 4.5 mm gold bead on a size #6 hook and use a 1-inch Streamer Brush. Then overall length is about 1/4- to 3/8-inch longer. 

For Sale — Fly Fishing Rods & Reels

With my eyesight getting worse, I am getting rid of all my fly fishing paraphernalia. I have sold all the fly tying materials but, still have an assortment of 5 rods and 7 reels and a lot of flies. If you have a need for such give me a call and we can discuss your requirements. I'll get them together in the garage so we won't be cooped up in the house, and you can look them over.

Call me at (575) 644-1427 — Karen Erickson

Quick Look Contact Information

2021 Officers of the Club	
Officers	
• President:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• V-Pres.:	Unfilled
• Secretary:	Jeff Arterburn (575) 649-9729
• Treasurer:	Chuck Mueller (575) 647-4045
Board Members	
• Position 1:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• Position 2:	Helen Zagona (575) 532-5668
• Position 3:	Jeff Arterburn (575) 649-9729
• Position 4:	Jim Hulsey (575) 524-1880
• Position 5:	Robert Ardovino (575) 589-0653
• Position 6:	Chuck Mueller (575) 647-4045
• Position 7:	George Sanders (575) 527-5536
• Position 8:	Dillen Martinez (505) 401-3640
Newsletter & Web Page Editor	
• Jim Hulsey (575) 524-1880	newsletter@mvff.org
Membership Committee Chairman	
• Bob Silver (575) 642-5865	membership@mvff.org

Mabie Legacy Scholarship Fund

The Mabie Legacy Scholarship Fund is an endowed fund at New Mexico State University which is funded by MVFF member donations. Earnings from the fund are used to provide scholarships for students at NMSU majoring in fisheries or related fields.

The scholarship recipient is selected each April by the faculty members of the NMSU Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Ecology.

Even though the fund is endowed additions can be made to it at any time. The larger the fund, the more earnings are available for award. If you are interested in contributing please make checks out to the **NMSU Foundation** and on the "for" line of the check, identify "Mabie Legacy Scholarship Fund, for deposit only." All contributions are tax deductible. For any questions please contact one of the MVFF Officers or Board members. If you have not made a donation to the fund please give it consideration and help honor Norm and Donna Mabie.

Current Email Addresses Needed

Many of the email addresses in our files are not current as members change to other internet providers. These addresses will not be distributed, but will only be used to relay club information or reminders for club meetings and other club events. Please send your address changes to membership@mvff.org.

Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout Print

Help support the MVFF Habitat Restoration Projects and purchase a limited edition "Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout" print. This beautiful printing of an original watercolor of our native state fish is a limited series of 150 high quality 12 x 18 prints that are numbered and signed by New Mexico artist Michelle Arterburn. The cost of each individual print is \$25.00, with the proceeds dedicated towards habitat restoration projects. If you live out of town and wish the print mailed to you please add \$5 for postage. See the MVFF website for purchase.



******* REMEMBER *******
MVFF MEMBERSHIPS & NM FISHING
LICENSES EXPIRE ON 31 MARCH

Membership Information

Membership is open to anyone who supports the activities of the club. Membership fees are shown below. Members are provided with the opportunity to attend informational monthly meetings, to purchase fishing access permits to the MVFF leased waters on the Rio Peñasco and to participate in other Club activities such as an annual awards banquet, casting clinics, fly tying classes, and Club sponsored fishing trips.

There are several options for the payment of dues. A family is defined as a club member, their spouse and all children 17 years of age or under.

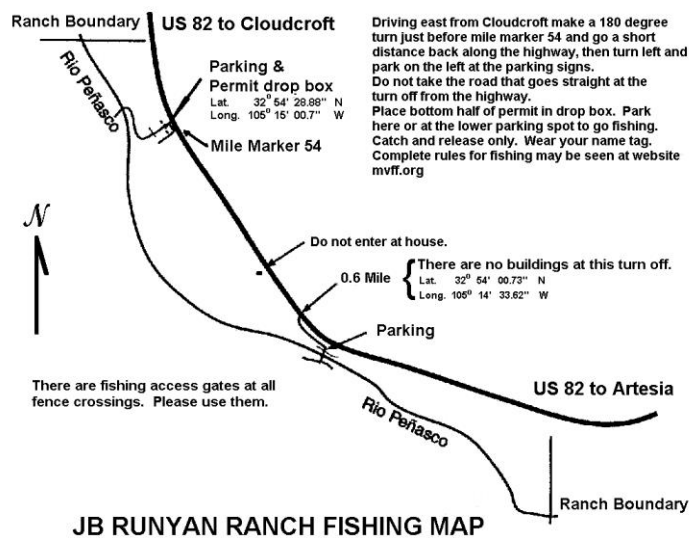
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

Lease Information

Permits to fish the Club leased waters on the Rio Peñasco can be obtained from Jim Hulsey (575-524-1880) or Bob Silver (575-522-6325) in Las Cruces. Permits can be obtained from the land owner, but you should phone (575-687-3362) the night before to ensure someone will be there to sell them to you. Permits can be ordered through the club web page (mvff.org) by filling out the form and mailing as directed or, if you had rather, you may pay through PayPal. Cost is \$25.00 per day. Kids under 18 fish free but must be accompanied by an adult club member with a permit. You must be a current member (current dues have been paid) of MVFF to fish the lease. Please wear your MVFF identification badge while on the property. New or replacement badges can be obtained by contacting Bob Silver. In addition, members may purchase 1-day, 1-time permits for up to 2 guests per trip. Each guest must have a permit. One-time means a person can go as a guest one time only and must be a member to ever go again.

Directions to the Lease:

Follow NM 82 east from Cloudcroft, NM or west from Artesia, NM. The turn off to the lease is located on the right side of the road about 100 yards before mile marker 54 coming from Cloudcroft or 100 yards on the left past mile marker 54 coming from Artesia.



MESILLA VALLEY FLYFISHERS, INC.

PO Box 2222

Las Cruces, NM 88004-2222

Membership and/or Permit Application

(Please Print Clearly)

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Work/Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____ email: _____

Are you a current member? _____ Yes _____ No

Do you need a name badge? _____ Yes _____ No

New Membership _____ or renewal _____?

Membership Categories: Individual Family Circle the one desired.

1 Year \$20 \$25

3 Years \$50 \$60

Life \$400 \$500

For family membership: Name of spouse _____ No. of children _____

Note: All memberships expire on 31 March. New memberships received on or after 1 January will expire on 31 March of the following year.

Membership fee if applicable \$ _____
Adult Permits @ \$25 per permit = \$ _____

Total =\$ _____

Send remittance with this form to the address shown at top of page.