



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

P.O. Box 2222
Las Cruces, NM 88004-2222

www.MVFF.org

December

2023

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Meetings	1
President's Corner	1
Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited	2
Fishing for Third Graders	3
Peñasco Fishing Report 1	5
Peñasco Fishing Report 2	5
MVFF Library	5
More Photos of Restoration Work on Little Turkey Creek	6
Minutes of Board of Director's Meeting	6

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

Meetings

The next meeting of the general membership will be on Monday, December 11th, at 7pm at the NMDGF facility at 2715 E. Northrise Drive, Las Cruces. Bob Silver will lead a discussion planning future club fishing trips, planning for the banquet and invitations for members to serve on the board. We will also open the meeting to remote viewing on Zoom.

The next meeting of the MVFF Board of Directors will be on December 18th, at 7pm, via Zoom.

Note: The Lease was stocked with 250 rainbow trout on November 19th.

President's Corner

Bob Silver



I just finished reading the article "Self-Taught" by John Gierach in Trout Unlimited's fall edition of "TROUT" magazine. It took me back to when I was probably 4 years old. My grandfather and I would walk to a local city park that had a pond. I don't remember

much about those days but our return home with a metal bucket of dead sunfish was documented in family black-white photos. We had a wagon and a cane pole. My grandfather was a gardener, so I presume we used worms for bait and the sunfish became fertilizer. But I do remember that going fishing was something I really enjoyed even at that young age.

Fast forward a few years, friends of my parents talked them into taking us kids camping. It must not have gone well as that was the last time my parents ever camped. But camping and being outdoors was added to my list of things that I like to do.

It was during that trip that I saw my first fly fisherman. We lived in New Jersey, and I remember going to Big Flat Brook in Stokes State Park. The Park is still a stunning part of New Jersey even though it is within sight of New York City. It had trout! That was an exotic species for me. I watched intently as they cast the line, rolling forward, landing on the water. I noticed they caught trout on a white artificial fly. The campground store sold packaged snelled-White Miller flies from a card that hung by the cash register. I must have convinced my Mom to buy one for me because I remember how hard it was to cast with a spinning rod. No fly line, my casting was mostly flailing the rod and monofilament line back and forth until the fly landed in the stream. I copied letting the line drift downstream. *I caught three trout that day by myself!* I was "hooked" as the old saying goes.

Gierach's article says he grew up as a bait and lure guy. So did I. He said that it wasn't easy to find someone to show him the ropes. It wasn't easy for me either. I am self-taught. That is why I

appreciate our Club so much. I didn't get better at fly fishing until after meeting Norm Mabie, a mentor and one of the founders of our Club. I spent a lot of time at Norm's 'Angler's Nook' fly shop in his garage.

I am also grateful for the guys who let me fish with them nowadays. In the article, Gierach says, "So, when I now say I'm a self-taught fisherman, what I really mean is that I was taught by a mostly volunteer faculty of strangers...". After reading Gierach's article, I feel that MVFF is that faculty of strangers who are willing to pay forward what we know to others. Take advantage of that.

Club Banquet February 2, 2024

Save the date for the Club Banquet on **February 2, 2024**. It will be held at St. Paul's Methodist Church, 225 W. Griggs Ave, Las Cruces, NM. The Prize Committee has met to discuss raffle prizes. As in past years, we will select prizes that are extra special including a Widgren custom rod and guided trips. The meal will be brisket and enchiladas provided by Sparky's of Hatch, NM. The entertainment will be Flyfishing Film Tour videos from some of the best fly-fishing locales in the world. You will want to go fishing after seeing these films.

Tom Wobbe Passes



I just received word that Tom Wobbe passed away. Tom was my friend and neighbor from across the street. Tom was a long-time member of the MVFF. Tom's start in fly-fishing came when he and his

wife Joyce stopped along the Conejos River for a couple of days on a road trip. He noticed people fly fishing and called me to find out more. He picked up some fishing equipment and a new hobby. I think Tom held every position from President to Board member. He was the kind of person who was willing to help no matter the task. Tom and his wife moved to Rio Rancho several years ago to be closer to family. Our condolences to his family. He will be missed by all of us.

Stay in the Loop.

Bob



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Gila/Rio Grande Chapter (780) of Trout Unlimited



Jeff Arterburn, President

GRG-TU for MVFF December-2023

November was a busy month for Trout Unlimited in southern NM! TU is offering an introductory ½ price deal (\$17.50) for new members to join so take a look at the flyer printed in this MVFF newsletter. This could be a great gift for family and friends and all memberships help support important conservation work and come with the high quality "TROUT" Magazine and its great stories, news, and photos.

Brad and Jeff attended the recent TU-NM State Council meeting held in Ruidoso November 10-12 where NM TU Staff and the four Chapters reported on current activities and made field trips to the Mescalero Fish Hatchery and restoration project sites in the Lincoln NF.

The council elected Marc Space to the Council Chair position and expressed our thanks to Harris Klein who did an excellent job as council chair for several years. Brad serves as our Chapter Treasurer and is the Secretary for the Council. Jeff was re-elected to serve as the NM representative on the TU National Leadership Council (NLC) where he is active in the Native Trout Workgroup and was recently appointed Chair of the Responsible Mining & Energy Workgroup.

Pat Lamb has been very involved in starting Trout in the Classroom (TIC) programs here in southern NM and worked with a team from across NM to submit a \$40K proposal to the NM Outdoor Recreation Program. It's under review and hopefully we'll have positive news to share soon! Pat made a recent visit to an elementary school in Ruidoso and wrote about that visit in this December MVFF newsletter. You can read more from Pat on his website (aero-cordero.com).

The volunteer habitat restoration work on Little Turkey Creek at the Willow Creek Campground in

the Gila National Forest was completed November 3–5, and this work followed a couple of weeks of work preceding that in which Jim Brooks and Eric Head employed a team of Youth Conservation Core workers with funding from the USFS to do a lot of heavy lifting rock work. Our volunteer work included more rock structure construction and maintenance, and willow pole planting and installation of willow bundles to stabilize eroding banks, and new construction and maintenance of rock and wood structures.

The accompanying photographs 1–6 are included to give you more detail about the process used to restore a cutbank. Post-fire flooding and erosion has obviously damaged the stream, and sedimentation created a mid-channel bar, forcing flow to split with one thread against the bank and the other thread through a cutoff chute. To promote formation of a single longer channel with less energy, the cutoff chute was closed with a rock vane at the head and one rock dams with woody debris along its path. The nearly vertical eroded cutbank was flattened with plantings of 6–8' long willow bundles (5–6 poles). The toe was stabilized with rock and grass plugs relocated from the top of the flattened bank. Rock clusters were added along the toe for habitat diversity. The expectation is that a pool or pools will form along the restored bend.



Cutbank restoration using willow bundles (Photo and annotation by Kent Johnjack).

It has been amazing to see the amount of work that has been accomplished over these past two seasons! Now we are hoping for a good winter snowpack that will support vigorous growth of the

willows we planted this Fall. Right now, we are working hard on writing a Phase–2 proposal for funding to continue this restoration effort. If you are interested in joining in with us to help restore this beautiful watershed and other projects for Gila trout please reach out to one of us on the leadership team and we will add you to the list for planning and communications (send an email to **Jeff Arterburn** <jeffgilatu@aol.com>, **Jim Brooks** <arroyodejaime@gmail.com>, and/or **Eric Head** <eric.head@tu.org>).

You can find out about other Trout Unlimited Events happening in our area and around the country using the online TU Events Calendar: <https://www.tu.org/events/>

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




Green logo on ivory



Peanut butter logo on black

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>.

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://gifts.tu.org/member/renew> or call 1–800–834–2419. 

Fishing for Third Graders

by Patrick Lamb

I found a school of them (pardon the pun) at White Mountain Elementary in Ruidoso last Friday.

They're excited and ready to watch tiny trout hatch and grow in their classroom this coming spring semester and then be transplanted as fingerlings into rivers or lakes near them in the Lincoln National Forest.

Here's what's happening:

Because of my lifelong interest in fly fishing and long-time membership in Trout Unlimited (TU), Gila/Rio Grande Chapter, I'm helping head up a project by TU called "Trout in the Classroom" at a school in my alma mater in Ruidoso. (Well actually, my elementary school back in the Dark Ages when I attended was only named Ruidoso Elementary and later Nob Hill Elementary that's since been torn down, but that's beside the point.)



I had to blur the cute faces of the kids. Michelle Thurston, their teacher is in the back on the right and that's me on the left. The tank that will be used to raise the trout is in the background.

My good friend Ken (from the Trout Unlimited Bosque Chapter in Albuquerque) and I helped set up the fish tank in the third-grade classroom of teacher Michelle Thurston at White Mountain Elementary. It was a Friday, the first snowstorm of the season, a couple of strange men setting up weird equipment in the classroom and a hot cocoa award event, so you could expect the kids to be especially wild (I actually liked that). But all of the kids seemed really interested in the program. Ken and I will be back in a few weeks to get the equipment fully prepared and then I will be back in early January to bring about 35 rainbow trout fry or eggs from a nearby hatchery in Mescalero to put in the tank. The project will be shared among all

four third grade classes at White Mountain Elementary. Michelle is exactly the kind of enthusiastic teacher that you need to spearhead the project, and I know she'll do a great job.

The program provides teachers in third and fourth grades with an opportunity to raise trout either as eggs or as fry in a 55-gallon tank in the classroom and watch them grow into fish that can be transplanted into local waters. Students record data on such things as water temperature, Ph balance of the water, feeding schedules and estimated growth during the four months they'll have the fish swimming around in their classroom tank. Toward the end of the semester, the students will take a field trip to a local fresh cold-water river or lake to release the trout into the wild.



My good friend Ken setting up the tank for the classroom. Each tank has a chiller to keep water at 48 degrees, a filtration system and aerator

I think it will be similar to FFA or 4H kids who raise animals for the county fair, then sell them at auction to a bidder who will likely turn them into tomorrow's steak, bacon or chicken nuggets. The fish that will be raised at White Mountain Elementary may eventually be caught by local anglers and consumed. Like a lot of the kids who raise livestock and see them sold at the fair, I suspect there will be tears when the tiny fish (many of whom may be named) will be released back into the wild for an uncertain future.

The point of the project is to teach kids about responsibility of caring for living things and the importance and protection of clean, cold-water streams and lakes in our country. My hope is that

they will become fishermen and fisherwomen (like my own wife, son, daughter and grandchildren) and appreciate the great outdoors as much as my wife and I have over the years.

I'll keep you updated over the coming months. I think it will be a fun project.

It's a great program, and if you'd like to learn more go to this website:

<https://www.tu.org/conservation/outreach-education/headwaters-youth-program/explore-watersheds/trout-in-the-classroom/>



Peñasco Fishing Report

Reported by David Carmichael
November 19, 2023



After the stocking, I spent an hour or so cutting some of the apricot wood to bring home. After that, I fished for a little and it was better than I expected. 5 trout, including 15- and 16-inch male bows above the upper waterfall. Both from the same run, one on a pegged egg and the other on a Mayer's Mini-leech. Below the new bulldozer cut (in what I call Willow Hole), caught 2 female rainbows, each 16 in. In the middle waterfall, caught one brightly colored small rainbow, ca. 7-8 inches; not a stocker. Probably a holdover from Mulcock Ranch, where he's producing some wild spawned rainbows. Even though the water was very clear (or maybe because the water was so clear), I didn't see any of the fish before hooking them. Didn't see any of the ones we stocked today either. Three were caught on the Mini-leech, and one each on the egg pattern and a San Juan Worm.



Peñasco Fishing Report

Reported by Tim Mack
November 19, 2023



With all the fish we stocked and my nephew catches a natural reproduced trout.



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*.



Photos of Restoration Work on Little Turkey Creek



Some of the volunteer crew including NMSU & WNMU students, Dr. Amanda Jost (WNMU), Kent Johnejack (AZ TU Old Pueblo Chapter), Eric Head (TU Staff Gila trout Project Manager) and Jeff Arterburn (GRG-TU President). (Photo by Eric Head)



Panorama view of the problem cutbank and split channel in lower Turkey Creek with YCC Team Members starting rock work. (Photo by Eric Head)



Panorama view of the TU and WNMU Student volunteers installing willow bundles to repair the problem cutbank and split channel in lower Turkey Creek. (Photo by Eric Head)



TU and WNMU Student volunteers after installing 13 willow bundles to repair the problem cutbank and split channel in lower Turkey Creek. (Photo by Eric Head)



Downstream view of repairs on cutbank and split channel in lower Turkey Creek. (Photo by Eric Head)



MVFF Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, November 20, 2023

Submitted by Jeff Arterburn

The Board meeting was called to order via Zoom by Bob Silver at 7:30pm. Board members present were Robert Ardivino, Jeff Arterburn, Jeremiah Blount, David Brown, Chuck Mueller, George Sanders, Bob Silver and

Helen Zagona. Not present: Jim Hulsey.

1. **Approval of minutes:** The minutes from the Board meeting held October 23, 2023, were accepted as published in the November newsletter.

2. **Treasurer's Report.** Chuck Mueller presented the Treasurer's report and current available balance of club accounts is \$7,578.05. The report was accepted as presented. The finances of the recent San Juan trip were reviewed and showed the net costs to the club were \$206. It was noted that Trip B had available spots remaining. The participants had a great trip and high praise was given to Evan Classen for providing outstanding guiding of the group.
3. **Membership:** Bob reported that seven new members have joined. The attempt to broadcast the October meeting presentation by Zoom was thwarted due to technical issues, but these should be resolved to enable the next scheduled presentation. Several new members and members coming from Carlsbad helped with the recent lease stocking, and the board discussed options for increasing involvement of those members in the club.
4. **Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited:** Jeff gave a brief update on the volunteer habitat restoration work completed on Little Turkey Creek at the Willow Creek Campground in the Gila National Forest on November 3–5. The work included willow pole planting and installation of willow bundles to stabilize eroding banks, and new construction and maintenance of rock and wood structures.
 Brad and Jeff attended the recent TU–NM State Council meeting held in Ruidoso November 10–12 where TU Staff and Chapters reported on current activities and visited the Mescalero Fish Hatchery and project sites in the Lincoln NF. The council elected Marc Space to the Council Chair position, and Jeff was re-elected to serve as the NM representative on the TU National Leadership Council (NLC).
 Pat Lamb has been very involved in starting Trout in the Classroom (TIC) programs in regional elementary schools and will have an article in the December newsletter.
 TU is offering a ½ price (\$17.50) for new members to join; a flyer will be emailed to the board and included in the MVFF newsletter.
5. **Old Business:** Bob and Jeff recently completed the 2nd part of an introductory fly fishing class for the NMSU students and will be scheduling on-stream sessions. They are also planning to offer more women's fly fishing classes after the holidays.
 There was a good turnout for the lease

stocking held on November 19th, with ~20 volunteers helping to release 250 fish.

The recent San Juan trip was discussed and the board expressed strong enthusiasm for scheduling more club trips in the future. David Brown suggested a tiered-approach to organizing trip planning based on distance within the region, ranging from day-trips, 1-day drives (CO/AZ), 2-day drives (WY/MT/UT, and beyond (AK). The discussion covered examples of previous trips, and Helen highlighted the Three Rivers Resort in Almont CO as an outstanding site where the women's fly fishing group had great experiences.

6. **New Business.** The planning for the 2024 MVFF Banquet was discussed and the recommendation is to recapitulate the food orders from the previous event (Sparky's meats, sides, beverages, Chachi's enchiladas, Ardovino's desserts.) Helen will discuss the Sparky's order with Teko. Bob will contact the church regarding the available dates (Note added after the meeting that the previously suggested date of Jan 27th is NOT available). Issues with the plans for showing the F3T films were identified and need to be addressed. The banquet prize selection committee was identified (Bob, Jeff, Brad, George, Jeremiah) and authorized with a budget up to \$3,000. Chuck made the recommendation to purchase a guided trip that would take place during a future club trip. Jeff asked Chuck to provide more details. Bob will initiate printing of raffle tickets.

Bob discussed a suggestion from Dave Lucoski to consider scheduling a Spring Picnic at the Rio Peñasco lease with the opportunity for on-stream fly fishing instruction. The board agreed that this is a good idea and will work to plan and schedule the event. The portable bathrooms need to be serviced.

The next general club meeting will be held on Monday December 11th. Bob will lead a discussion planning future club fishing trips, planning for the banquet and invitations for members to serve on the board.

The next MVFF Board Meeting is scheduled for Monday December 18th.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:07pm.



Quick Look Contact Information

2023 Officers of the Club		
Officers		
• President:	Bob Silver	(575) 642-5865
• V-Pres.:	Jeremiah Blount	
• Secretary:	Jeff Arterburn	(575) 649-9729
• Treasurer:	Chuck Mueller	(575) 647-4045
Board Members		
• Position 1:	Dave Brown	(915) 206-0626
• Position 2:	Helen Zagona	(575) 532-5668
• Position 3:	Jeff Arterburn	(575) 649-9729
• Position 4:	Bob Silver	(575) 642-5865
• Position 5:	Robert Ardovino	(575) 589-0653
• Position 6:	Chuck Mueller	(575) 647-4045
• Position 7:	George Sanders	(575) 527-5536
• Position 8:	Jeremiah Blount	
• Position 9:	Robert Kopczyk	
Newsletter & Web Page Editor		
• Jim Hulsey	(575) 635-5381	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 donated 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.

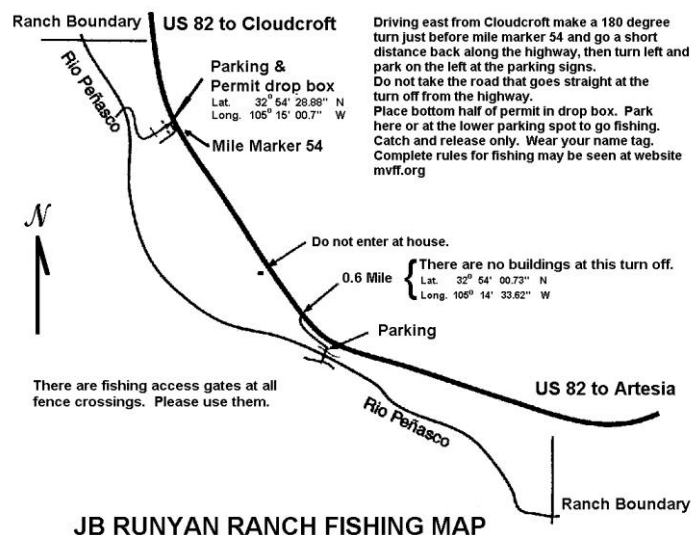
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

Lease Information

Permits to fish the Club leased waters on the Rio Peñasco can be obtained from Jim Hulsey (575-635-5381) 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 (preferred method). 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. If you do not place a signed/dated permit in the proper receptacle before fishing, then you have not agreed to the terms stipulated on the permit and will be trespassing on private property.

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
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3 Years	\$50	\$60
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Life	\$400	\$500
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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	\$_____
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_____ Adult Permits @ \$25 per permit =	\$_____
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Total =\$_____

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