



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of

Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

P.O. Box 2222

Las Cruces, NM 88004-2222

www.MVFF.org

July

2020



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

Meetings

Editor:—Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Club held no meetings in June and since we don't meet in July or August I'll see you in September (hopefully).

President's Corner

David Carmichael



Greetings everyone. Summer is definitely upon us, with temperatures in the 90s and 100s, high winds, and smoke from wildfires, not to mention the increasing rate of COVID-19 infections as people across the Southwest venture out

with reduced concern for social distancing. I hope you are all staying safe and finding a way to indulge your interests in fly fishing while avoiding non-essential travel.

Environmental News

The Gila River has been in the news lately, this time for the right kinds of reasons. The **Gila Diversion Proposal** has been defeated, and that is very good news for the future of the river. On June 18, the New Mexico Interstate Stream Commission voted to discontinue funding for the Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed diversion, thus ending the state's involvement, and potentially the entire project itself. You may recall that as part of the settlement of a water rights lawsuit with the Central Arizona Project

(CAP), Congress gave New Mexico ten years to do the environmental and financial planning to initiate a project to divert water from the Gila and San Francisco Rivers. After 15 years and \$15 million, the state still had not been able to identify and design a project that was financially feasible and which would benefit more than a handful of private property owners. The New Mexico commission missed several deadlines and last year the Governor vetoed state funding for the diversion project. In April, the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation released a draft EIS for the proposed diversion project, along with the agency's opinion that the project is not feasible. Now that funding for the EIS process has been discontinued, it seems that the diversion project may be dead in the water, so to speak.

If true, it will now be possible to go forward with other, previously proposed actions that will enhance the long-term health of the Gila watershed. On May 12, New Mexico Senators Udall and Heinrich introduced a bill entitled the **M.H. Dutch Salmon Greater Gila Wild and Scenic River Act**. If passed, the bill will designate nearly 450 miles of the Gila and San Francisco Rivers, and their headwater tributaries, as Wild and Scenic, thereby permanently protecting the free-flowing character of those segments of the watershed. The action follows years of discussion with and support from local governments, businesses, private landowners, tribes and sportsmen's groups, including MVFF and the Gila/Rio Grande chapter of Trout Unlimited. The communities of Silver City, Bayard, and Hurley are supportive of the designation, as is the Grant County Commission (www.nmwild.org).

The Act will protect the recreational values of the Gila watershed, including hunting, fishing, camping and hiking, among others. It will protect the unique habitats of a number of native species, including the Gila trout, loach minnow, spikedace, and Gila chub. It will also protect the cultural and historical values of the landscape, including thousands of archaeological

sites related to Mogollon peoples, Mimbrenos, Apaches, and Buffalo Soldiers. The Act will protect current land uses such as livestock grazing and irrigation, and it will not condemn private lands or change how private landowners use their own lands (www.tomudall.senate.gov/gila).



Gila River Riparian Preserve (Nature Conservancy photo)

The MVFF and our local Gila/Rio Grande chapter of TU have supported the efforts to have the upper portions of the Gila watershed designated as a Wild and Scenic (see MVFF newsletter, August, 2019). I also saw a recent letter to the editor from club member Brad Schuster in support of Gila watershed conservation. These sorts of efforts to engage community members about environmental conservation issues, and your calls, letters and emails to elected officials really have made a difference, and they will continue to do so as we encourage our elected officials to pass the necessary legislation. Thanks for your efforts!

The current issue (May/June 2020) of *Southwest Fly Fishing* (www.matchthehatch.com) includes an article by Ron Dungan on fishing for **Gila trout in Whitewater and Mineral Creeks**. The article features Cinda Howard, a fishing guide based in Arizona. Indeed, it seems many visitors to the southern Gila National Forest are coming from Arizona for a chance to add Gila trout to their life lists. When I fished Whitewater Creek last year, many of the people I encountered had driven over from Arizona, and I have read that many campgrounds and creeks have been crowded over the past few weeks. Although many of our club members are very familiar with the Catwalk area, Dungan's article provides reliable and useful information for those who want to venture further



Fifteen-inch Gila trout caught and released in Whitewater Creek

upstream, or try fishing Mineral Creek. Additional information is available in a previous MVFF newsletter as well (August, 2019).

Club member Mary Hoffman reports that the June issue of *New Mexico Magazine* (the Summer Splash issue) contains a non-technical article on the restoration of Gila trout, which includes

some great photographs of the fish and the landscape. If you can't find the print edition on the newsstands, it is available in digital format at www.discountmags.com for \$4.95.

On June 17, the U.S. Senate passed the **Great American Outdoors Act**, and New Mexico Senator Heinrich played a leading role in the bipartisan effort to usher this bill through the Senate. The Act is important because it permanently funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at the level that was always intended, to the tune of about \$900 million per year. Some of the funds could be used to purchase new public lands from willing sellers, but most will be

used to enhance access to public lands and parks, and address the backlog of infrastructure maintenance in our existing parks. According to American Forests, the anticipated expenditures

will slow deforestation, improve public health, and generate between 15,000 and 27,800 jobs per year (https://www.americanforests.org/af-news/victory-for-the-land-and-water-conservation-fund/?gclid=EAlaIqObChMlpJShwZ656gIvEPDACH1CRQ_KEAAYAvA_AEgltRfD_BwE). Now would be the time to encourage elected members in the House of Representatives to follow the lead of their Senate colleagues and pass the bill.

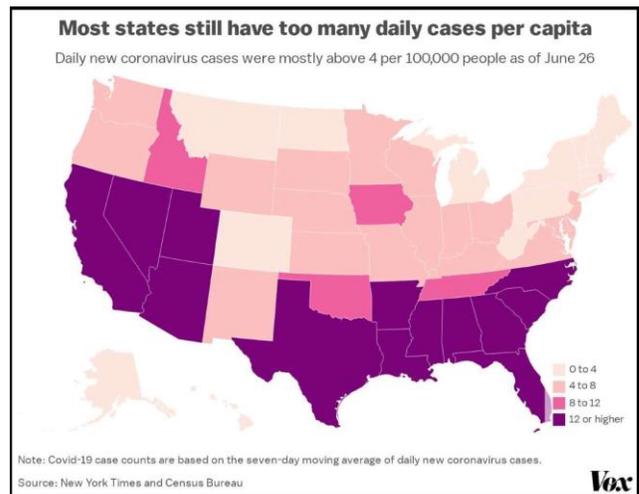
The **Roadless Area Conservation Act of 2019** was introduced last year by Washington Senator Maria Cantwell, and co-sponsored by Senator Martin Heinrich of New Mexico. According to recent letter I received from Senator Heinrich, the bill would permanently protect 58.5 million acres of forest lands, including the undeveloped portions of the **Tongass National Forest**, from logging, road-building, mining and oil and gas development. The bill was introduced in response to the current administration's effort to remove the protection of roadless areas within the Tongass NF, apparently to facilitate mining. The impacts would be devastating to the salmon runs in the Tongass, the largest such runs in National Forest lands. The comment period for the proposed rule change (cancelling roadless protections) expired last spring, and the public comments are overwhelmingly in favor of keeping the protections in place. The USFS received 248,520 public comments, but the agency only analyzed 15,909 of them (that were not form letters). Of those, 96% were in favor of keeping the current protections. Only about 1% of the comments were in favor of dropping the roadless protections (<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/environment-and-energy/public-rebuts-alaska-rainforest-logging-roadless-exemption-plan>), but that seems to be the direction the agency is leaning. That is, the tail is once again wagging the dog, and as is the case elsewhere in Alaska, the tail is comprised of a small group of miners. If you are interested in seeing the salmon runs and other environmental values of the Tongass National Forest protected, I invite you to encourage our elected officials to advance the Roadless Act.

COVID-19 Notes

In case you haven't heard, the state of New Mexico has issued a severe COVID-19 alert. The risk of virus transmission and spread is extremely high, and we are all directed to stay home, including over the July 4th holiday weekend. If you must go out, wearing a mask is now required when in public. In the latest installment of The NMDGF Weekly Digest Bulletin, we are urged to respect the stay home order that is still in place (<https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/NMDGF/bulletins/292398b>). However, check out the Bulletin for some fun educational materials we can enjoy while staying at home.

COVID-19 cases in Arizona and Texas are now spiking, and officials in both states have admitted that reopening too early is to blame, along with many peoples' unwillingness to wear masks in public. The rapid rise in number of cases is not due to increased testing, but rather, to community spread. Additionally, a growing body of research indicates that the mutated COVID-19 strain prevalent in Houston is more contagious than the one that originated in China.

Texas Governor Abbott has reversed course on reopening the economy, applying new restrictions to bars, river rafting businesses, and imposing tighter limits on restaurants and large gatherings. On June 26 he issued statewide stay at home orders; on July 2, he instituted a requirement to wear masks in public indoors and outdoors, an order which will be enforced with the threat of fines. The El Paso County stay at home orders are still in effect. For those club members living in Texas, please heed these orders and do not access the club lease at this time. Most states didn't flatten their curve enough to warrant reopening, and it looks like we're on the verge of surge status at some hospitals in Texas and Arizona. Please, let's not make things worse by traveling long distances across state lines. Thanks for your help.



Diversions, the Good Kind

Increasing numbers of U. S. fly anglers are giving **Euro Style Nymphing (ESN)** a try. You may remember that we hosted Bob Widgren at one of our meetings a year or so ago, and he provided some basic instruction about the technique. In case you are interested in trying ESN, the online Orvis Guide to Fly Fishing has a

very informative, detailed instructional video on the topic, called “Euro Nymphing How-To with George Daniel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6JY1x1EUoE>). The series is hosted by Tom Rosenbauer, whom I find to be an accomplished yet accessible, self-effacing instructor and host. In this video, he readily admits that he’s not very good at ESN, and we learn the technique along with him. Although ESN can be accomplished with a standard flyrod, it works better with a longer rod with a more sensitive tip, and with an in-line sighter tied into the leader. Getting started is not that expensive, and if you’re interested, the Madison River Fishing Company has a short video that shows how to rig up for ESN (<https://www.mrfc.com/blogs/news/rigging-for-euro-nymphing?>).

In road bicycling, we often say that “the wind is your friend,” as it provides a challenge that will help us develop better technique on the bike and make us stronger cyclists. The same could be said with regard to **fly casting**: the wind is your friend. We should embrace the wind and appreciate the opportunity it provides to improve our casting techniques, clean up those tailing loops, and practice various casts before

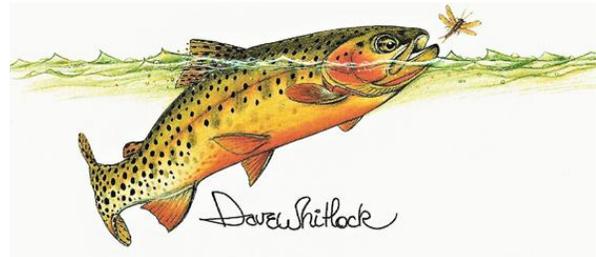


It might be a good time to work on curing that tailing loop.

we find ourselves on the water during a blustery day. To that end, Fly Fishers International invites you to log in to their Weekly Zooms covering a variety of topics related to fly fishing. On July 2, the featured Zoom was “A Better Cast Catches More Fish,” and you can view it and other past Zoom meetings by accessing this web page and scrolling to the bottom where there are links to the recorded sessions (https://flyfishersinternational.org/FFI-Online?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=FFIOnline) Upcoming events include three sessions (July 7, 14, and 21) with Al and Gretchen Beatty on tying woven body fly patterns.

Outside Magazine recently posted a short but interesting video entitled “The Beauty of Finding Your Own Food” (www.outsideonline.com/2403892/two-anglers-reconnect-their-food). The video features professional chef and fly angler Eduardo Garcia who catches and cooks fresh-caught redfish and speckled sea trout from the gulf coast of Laguna Madre, Texas. Trout Unlimited has posted links to five of their favorite **fly-fishing films** from last year, films that they either produced or supported (<https://www.tu.org/blog/tus-top-videos-of-2019/>).

I don’t know when we will be able to hold club meetings in person again, but in anticipation of that eventuality, I’ve been thinking about who we might invite as guest speakers. I would appreciate it if club members give some thought to whom we should invite, or what topics you would like to see discussed. Please email me with your ideas and interests so I can make good use of the time in quarantine. As you watch videos, practice casting, peruse fishing artwork, and think about future speakers, please do what you can to stay safe and healthy.



Cool fish art available as prints, license plates, on mugs, etc. from the artist at davewhitlock.com



Should You Fish the Lease During the Pandemic?

By bob Silver



I’ve noticed quite a few new memberships from Texas recently. Members of the Board have received a number of calls from El Paso, the Panhandle, Midland, Odessa, Ballinger, Lubbock, and even as far away as Houston, asking whether the lease is open for fishing. We also have had many new members from New Mexico as well. I certainly understand the motivation of getting out of the house and retreating to the Rio Penasco. The COVID-19 situation is even more urgent now than it was a month

ago. COVID-19 cases are soaring in Texas, including El Paso, Amarillo, Midland and Lubbock. Even Governor Abbott has halted the reopening of businesses, and has told Texans to stay home. Despite the best efforts by the State of New Mexico, the COVID-19 virus here has continued to spread. The Governor of New Mexico issued an emergency order on July 1, 2020 that directs persons who have arrived in New Mexico from an outside location to self-quarantine for 14-days or for the duration of their visit whichever is shorter. That is saying something. Given these events, I recommend members be prudent and stay home for everyone's sake until the infection rate declines and it is safer for everyone to travel. Be safe.



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Gila/Rio Grande Chapter (780) of Trout Unlimited

Jeff Arterburn, President



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

You can help support our native trout conservation/restoration and outreach/education efforts by purchasing one of our beautiful T-shirts with the GRG-TU logo. We have two colors available: green-on-ivory, and peanut-butter-on black. 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: jeffgilatu@aol.com.



Green logo on ivory



Peanut butter logo on black



Club Outings Planned

The board is now discussing possible future outings and would welcome suggestions from members. Where do you want to go? Let them know. If you have comments or suggestions for additional trips pass them to any of the Board members.

After many years of organizing trips, Chuck Mueller is stepping aside, and we really need other volunteers to step up and take on these projects. Maybe you have a trip you would like to head up. Please think about it and let David or Chuck know if you can help out. No trips are currently being planned.



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.



Board Meeting Minutes

There was no Board Meeting in June and, so, no minutes. The Board will not meet until August at the earliest.



Quick Look Contact Information

2020 Officers of the Club	
Officers	
• President:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• V-Pres.:	Jim Sorenson (505) 710-4264
• Secretary:	Jeff Arterburn (575) 649-9729
• Treasurer:	Chuck Mueller (575) 647-4045
Board Members	
• Position 1:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• Position 2:	Ron Bellerose (575) 680-5516
• 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:	Bob Silver (575) 642-5865
• Position 8:	Jim Sorenson (505) 710-4264
• Position 9:	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
Lady Anglers	
• Mary Hoffman (505) 710-5229	

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.

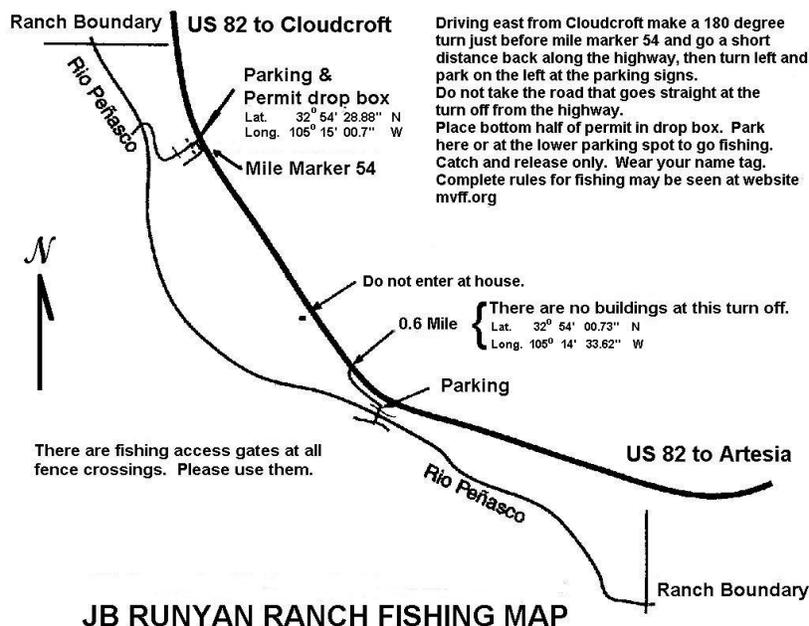
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

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.