



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

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

www.MVFF.org

July

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 September.

President's Corner

David Carmichael



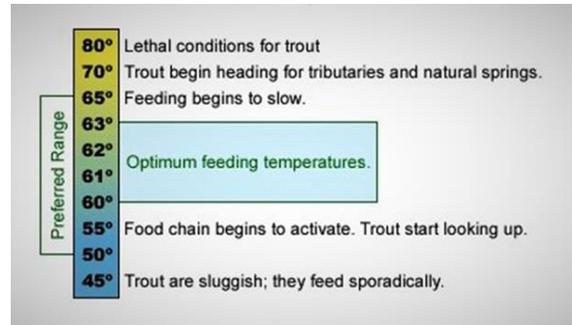
I hope everyone's been getting out and doing some fishing, either on the lease, or on some other mountain stream in the region. We've been experiencing some really warm weather lately, and it is hav-

ing some significant impacts on fish populations and fishing. Although the recent monsoon rains have helped reduce the fire danger, there are still several fires burning in New Mexico, including the Johnson Fire in the Gila National Forest. On June 26th, 350 Gila trout were removed from White and Langstroth creeks and taken to Mora fish hatchery where they will be held for at least a year until the creek flows have stabilized and sediment loads reduced.

Even streams that are not threatened by wildfires may still be experiencing conditions that are tough on fish populations. A couple of weeks ago, Miriam and I spent parts of three days fishing the Peñasco, and the conditions were very challenging. The air temperatures in the 90s, and our

trip coincided with a period of irrigation that left the water levels very low. Early morning water temperatures were about 58 degrees, but in many portions of the river, the temperatures reached 72 degrees by mid-afternoon. There were fish hunkered down in the very deepest holes, and Miriam caught two large rainbows, measuring 18 and 20 inches on a purple and olive wooly bugger. I caught a few smaller trout, in the 12- to 14-inch range on a jig tied 20-incher nymph and a San Juan worm. Most notably, we didn't catch any fish after noon, and that was just as well.

The accompanying chart shows the relationship between water temperature and trout feeding behavior and health. Optimum feeding temperatures are generally between 60 and 63 degrees, and feeding tapers off at 65 degrees. Most trout stop feeding when the water reaches 70 degrees, and sustained temperatures at or above 70 are stressful, or potentially lethal. Gila trout seem to



be able to tolerate slightly higher temperatures than other trout. They will feed in temperatures up to 73 degrees, and they can survive water temperatures up to 80 degrees for short periods of time. Nevertheless, it is a good idea to carry a good stream thermometer and check the water throughout the day. At least for the summer months, it would be a good idea to stop fishing by noon.

It seems as if our summer monsoon has begun, perhaps even a few weeks early, and we are seeing considerable rainfall throughout the state. Nevertheless, the long-term prognosis for rainfall and temperatures in New Mexico is for less precipitation and higher temperatures. Though journalistic treatments of these predictions usually refer to intense drought, or even the worst drought in 1,200 years, ([‘Potentially the worst drought in 1,200 years’: scientists on the scorching US heatwave | Climate crisis in the American west | The Guardian](#)) researchers are beginning to speak of aridification. What this means is that drought conditions may not be temporary, and what we will be seeing is long term changes in vegetation, rainfall, streamflow and other climate parameters. In other words, our streams and fisheries may be changing in ways that could require us to think differently about where and when to fish, how to fish, and how many fish we catch.

After struggling on the Peñasco, it was a pleasure to fish with friends and club members on the Pecos River over the July 4th holiday weekend. Although the drainage was crowded with campers,



Upper Box above Cowles on the Pecos River

most were not anglers, and we had a fun time catching wild rainbows and browns in what is still a stunning high mountain setting. There were brown mayfly and caddis hatches coming off every day, but most of the fish we caught were taken on streamers, including black wooly buggers and both black and red versions of Mayer’s mini-leech. The monsoon rains appeared reliably by noon, so all the angling was in late to mid-morning. The Pecos River is perhaps New Mexico’s most scenic river, and it is the second most popular fishing destination in the state, after the San Juan. If you haven’t yet fished it, I highly recommend you give it a try. It should be fishing well from now through October.

Mayhill News



Mayhill Country Store is open and under new management. On the way to stocking the lease, I noticed that the store had new signs out front, including one that says “Everyone Welcome. This is a significant change from the signage that we’ve seen there for the past few years, so when we went back to fish the Peñasco a couple of weeks ago, I stopped in to see whether things have really changed. The store reopened under new ownership in December, and everyone really is welcome; the new owners are “trying hard to change the negative reputation of the past few years.” In addition to standard snacks, drinks and ice, they are selling homemade fudge, cupcakes, tamales, and some really excellent burritos. They also have freshly made lemonade, and they also carry the famous Sacramento Mts. cherry cider (aka Go-Juice by local mountain bikers). So, if you need

ice or a chocolate fudge fix on your next visit to the lease, stop in and meet the new owners.

Yellowstone Cutthroat Recovery News

For those members who are traveling to Yellowstone country this summer, there is good news. Fisheries biologists report that the invasive lake trout population in Yellowstone Lake has been reduced to 10 percent of the highest numbers observed only 8 years ago. Though the lake trout will probably never be removed completely, the problem may be reduced to the point of control and maintenance of a sustainable, small number of fish by 2024. ([Science panel excited about numbers on Yellowstone Lake | Trout Unlimited](#)) This is great news for the restoration and recovery of Yellowstone cutthroat trout which had been decimated by predation by the lake trout.



Wild roses, hare bells, and cinquefoil along the banks of the Pecos River

Hope to see you on the river soon.



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Gila/Rio Grande Chapter (780) of Trout Unlimited

Jeff Arterburn, President



GRG-TU for MVFF July 2021

The recent rains and lower temperatures have been a blessing for the brave and dedicated fire personnel

battling the Johnson Fire that was raging in the

Gila National Forest and once again threatening critical watersheds containing Gila trout populations. Reaching nearly 90,000 acres the most recent assessments (June 29th) indicate the fire is now at 24% containment, with creeping and smoldering fire still present in the seventy area and identifying lightning as well as the possibility of flash floods as the primary operational concerns, combined with biologists' determination that the potential for fish-killing ash-flows during monsoon season warranted the removal of selected Gila trout populations. Helicopter-assisted teams were successful in removing approximately 350 Gila trout from Langstroth Creek and White Creek and transferring the fish to the USFWS Mora National Fish Hatchery and Technology Center in Mora, New Mexico. Hopefully these summer rains will continue and help to avert the potential for conflagration that has been presented by the exceptional drought conditions that exist in our region.

We submitted a grant proposal for the River Stewardship Program titled "Post-Wildfire Restoration of Little Turkey Creek, Willow Creek Watershed, Southwestern New Mexico" that is based on the work we have been conducting with agency partners in the Willow Creek watershed since 2017 studying the post-fire impacts of the 2012 White-water-Baldy Complex Fire on the watershed and its tributary, Little Turkey Creek. Willow Creek and its headwaters are designated by NMED as a high-quality cold-water stream but currently does not meet standards for total recoverable aluminum and temperature according to the 2020 - 2022 State of New Mexico Clean Water Act 303(d)/305(b) integrated list. The goal of the proposed project is to reduce stream instability and improve water quality and aquatic habitats to support Gila trout for species conservation and recreational angling. The restoration strategy for Little Turkey Creek is to reconnect the stream and floodplain through aggradation of the current stream channel. We will be working with Natural Channel Design, Inc., a civil engineering consulting firm with experience in river and conservation engineering, and a long history of designing

projects that can be built with minimal tools using native materials, a critical concern for the proposed work in designated Wilderness. With the leadership of Jim Brooks, providing the equipment and pack stock to facilitate mobilizing a project of this magnitude in the wilderness and the prior experience in the watershed and our combined expertise, we have a uniquely strong team to implement the project in this proposal. Keep your fingers crossed for the funding to come through!

If you are, or if you have family and friends who serve as military and first responders, including medical, law enforcement, fire and other critical service members in our communities, please let them know about the exciting new TU Service Partnership Program.

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.

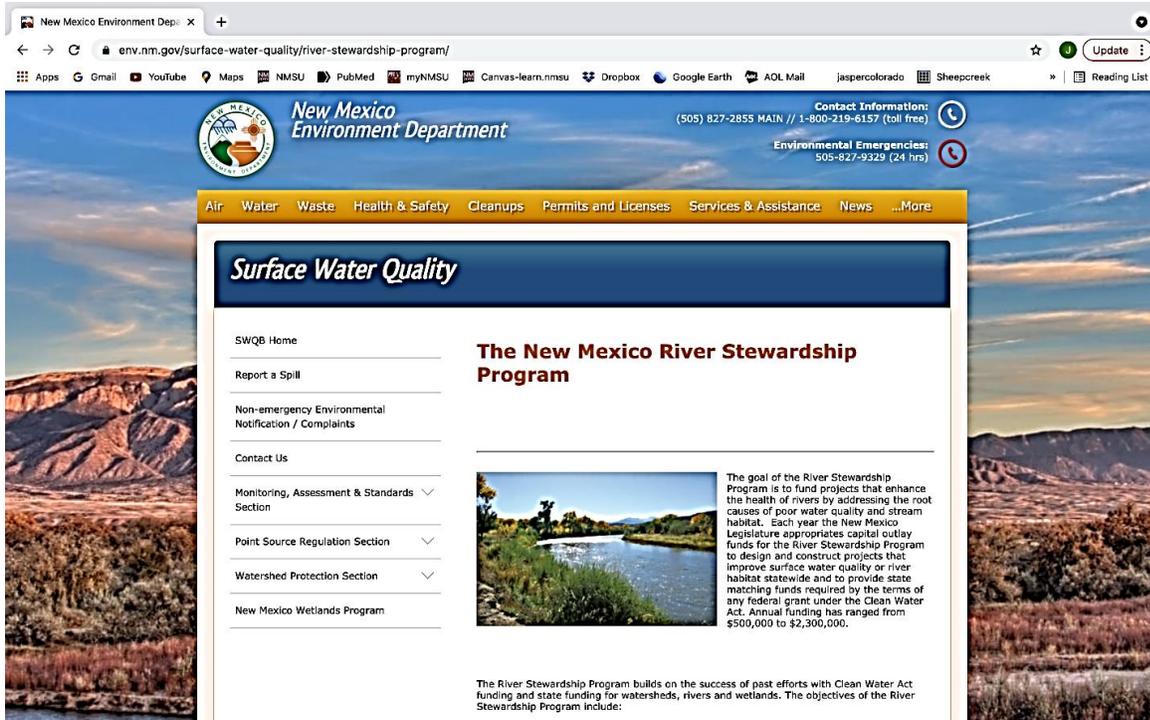
A list of the books can be found in the November 2019 issue of *Tale Waters*.



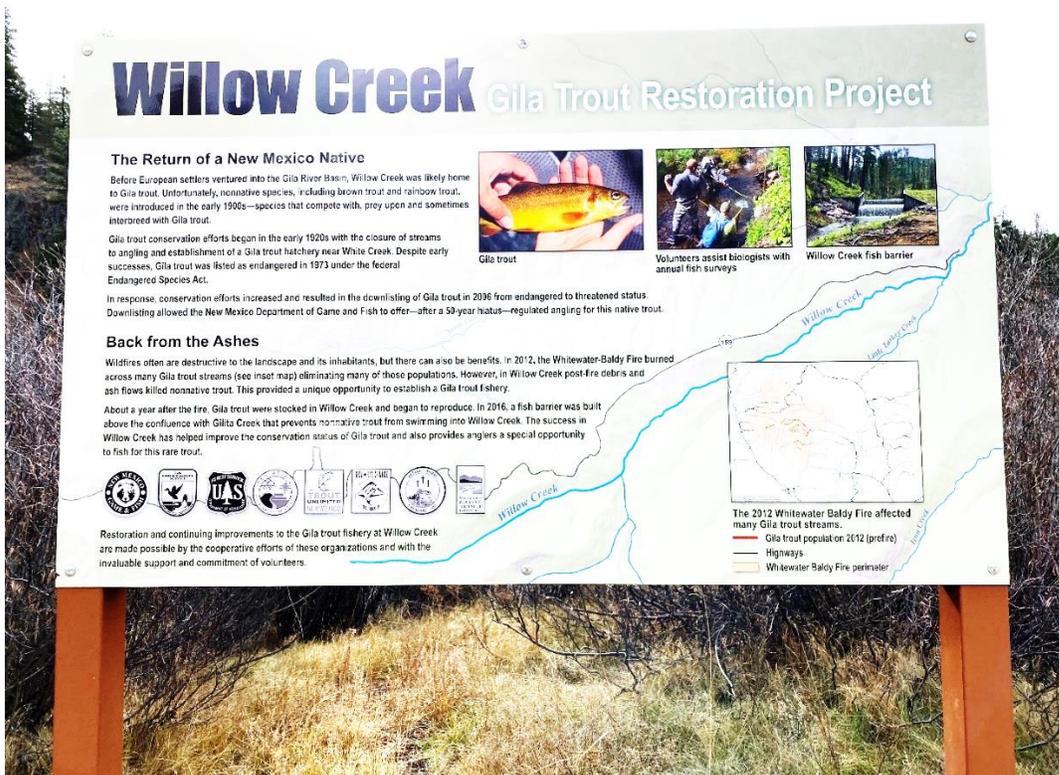
Board of Directors Meeting

There was no Board Meeting in June and, so, no minutes. The Board will not meet in the near future but may arrange a ZOOM meeting. Discussions are ongoing.





A GRG-TU proposal for habitat restoration work on the Willow Creek watershed in the Gila National Forest was submitted in June 2021 to the NM River Stewardship Program.



Funding will provide resources for important work to restore habitat for Gila trout with work in designated Wilderness.

Quick Look Contact Information

2021 Officers of the Club	
Officers	
• President:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• V-Pres.:	Taylor Gobble
• 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.

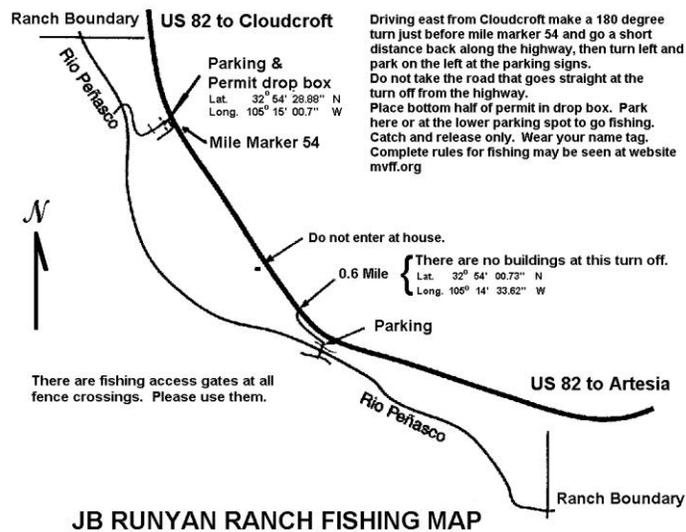
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

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.