



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

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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. See the President's column for more details.

President's Corner

David Carmichael

Club News



The club board is working on plans to restart meetings of the general membership in September. Details are still being discussed, but I expect we will have a catered

Sunday BBQ meeting with the option to participate in a bronze level FFI casting challenge event. The casting challenge is not a competition, but rather, a chance to knock off the rust and practice casting for accuracy over the distances usually encountered on small to medium size streams. For new members, it will be a good chance to get some assistance from experienced club members. It is likely that we will return to Monday evening meetings in October, and I'm corresponding with Taylor Streit about making a presentation at that meeting. Please watch your email for updated information on both events.

In recent months, Trout Unlimited, Fly Fishers International, and several other well-informed sources have reported a significant increase in the number of fly anglers on the water since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The growth has occurred all across the US, and we have seen it here in southern New Mexico too. The club's paid membership has grown to more than 300, and new members have continued to join every month so far this year. Just a few years ago, we heard about concerns from sportsmen's groups and merchandizers about the lack of growth in the sport, or the lack of recruitment of younger participants. Now, some folks are worried about the spike in new anglers who don't know the traditional ethics of our sport, or who might find our "secret spot" on our favorite water. Well, we can't have it both ways. Personally, I think the growth in the number and diversity of fly anglers is good for our sport. In addition to providing a catalyst to get more people off the couch and out into nature, the growth in numbers will likely expand the constituency that will help maintain public lands access, water quality conservation, and ecosystem health, among other angler priorities.

So, let's welcome our new members, and help them navigate the learning curve in our challenging sport. I'm not just referring to casting techniques or fishing knots; we have many options about where and how to fish, but they also come with responsibilities. As we have not been having regular club meetings for more than a year, new fly anglers have largely been on their own when it comes to obtaining "how-to" information from other club members. We're not alone in this either.

Trout Unlimited has provided a useful discussion of some of these ethical issues ([A quick guide for fly fishing newbies | Trout Unlimited](#)) which may provide a useful refresher for seasoned anglers as well. How many of us have been annoyed by another angler wading across, or fishing the stream immediately above us, muddying the water where we are fishing? This is a common enough occurrence that there is a name for those who do it: “high-holers.” Not what we want any of our members to be. New members should also be sure to read the rules for fishing on the club lease. They may be found in your new member packets, but they are also posted on the club website; the link is located in the Fishing Permits tab. Barbless hooks are the rule on the lease, so if your flies were not tied on barbless hooks, use your forceps to press the barbs down before hitting the water. This rule is intended to facilitate safe release of all fish caught on the lease, but catch and release (C&R) rules and/or ethics are common throughout the western US. Here is a link to more information on why this practice is important, and how to do it effectively (www.keepfishwet.org). Let’s help new members appreciate the process of fly angling, rather than getting fixated on the body count.

Now, here’s a tip for everyone, newbies and old guys (like me) included. I hadn’t really thought about this, but folks in the spinner and crankbait fishing communities have. There are various products out there that are designed to be sprayed, dunked, or molded onto hooks and lures in order to mask the scent of human anglers. I guess I’ve had decent enough success with fly angling that I haven’t given much thought to modifying my flies to mask unnatural scents. But TU’s Chris Hunt has shared a story about burying his streamer in the mud while fishing for bonefish, in order to remove human odors ([Bury your fly to rid it of unnatural odors | Trout Unlimited](#)). This seems like a pretty reasonable suggestion when fishing streamers and nymphs in trout waters too. I wouldn’t recommend it for your dry flies though, at least not if you want them to float and be

visible. Maybe someone needs to invent a floatant with caddis extract or tincture of scud.

Environmental News

First, some good news. The Bristol Bay sockeye salmon runs continue to demonstrate the resilience and profitability of the world’s most productive salmon fishery, located in a region targeted by those who would destroy it to develop the world’s largest open pit mine. As reported by Dillingham Public Radio (KDLG), 63.2 million sockeye salmon returned to spawn in the waters surrounding Bristol Bay, breaking the previous record set in 2018 ([Bristol Bay’s sockeye run of 63.2 million is the largest on record | KDLG](#)). The runs of other species of salmon, and of sockeye in other parts of Alaska have not fared so well in recent years. This would seem to suggest that the Bristol Bay fishery is being very well managed, and that policy makers should try to apply those management procedures to other fisheries, rather than trying to kill the Bristol Bay fishery by allowing mining.

In April of this year, the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) presented the Wild Salmon Center with its Barry M. Fitzpatrick Conservation Award, in recognition of the Center’s work to stop the proposed Pebble Mine in the headwaters of Bristol Bay. Late last year, the Army COE denied the federal permit for the mine, but the company behind the proposal is appealing that decision.



Wild-caught Bristol Bay sockeye with fresh basil pesto. Home cooked, delicious, healthy and sustainable, if we’re attentive to fisheries conservation.

Therefore, the Bristol Bay fishery is safe for the moment, but permanent protection is still being

sought from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

In the Alaskan panhandle, there are positive changes being made to the management of the Tongass National Forest and its own salmon runs. As is the case with Bristol Bay, the fishery in the Tongass is the foundation of the regional economy, with the local extractive industry (in this case, logging) contributing only a minor fraction of the jobs.

While the timber industry provides less than 1% of jobs in southeastern Alaska, the group said, the Tongass is "the linchpin of Southeast Alaska's economy, with fishing and tourism each generating an annual \$1 billion economic benefit." (Andy Moderow, Alaska Wilderness League)

It is unclear why destructive industries that enrich the few are so often prioritized over sustainable industries that benefit the many, but perhaps we are turning a corner on this issue. The USFS will reinstate the roadless rule that was overturned by the previous administration, and will also employ forest management techniques to implement the priorities of regional stakeholders, including watershed improvement, wildlife conservation, recreation, and commercial salmon fishing ([TRCP Applauds Tongass Roadless Rule Breakthrough | Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership](#)).

Now for the not-so-good news. It has always struck me as somewhat odd that some of our largest western cities are located in the middle of deserts with severely limited water sources. And while the infrastructure that moves water from places that have it to those which don't are pretty

impressive feats of engineering, one wonders whether those population centers might have been better situated somewhere else. I was reminded of this incongruence this month when Miriam and I drove to Las Vegas to visit family. Along the way, we got a great view of the Hoover Dam, and a portion of Lake Mead. The turquoise-colored water was highlighted by the light-colored "bath tub ring" indicating where the surrounding cliffs and hills were formerly under water. Lake Mead now sits at an all time low, filled to only 36% of its capacity. ([A Severe Drought Is Threatening the Hoover Dam Reservoir—and Water Throughout the West – Mother Jones](#)) In fact, according to the Western Regional Climate Center climatologist, 90% of the western US is experiencing drought. Further upstream, Lake Powell is down 152 feet, and is currently at its lowest level since it was filled 50 years ago. Great Salt Lake, which is a natural lake, not an impoundment, is also at the lowest level ever recorded, eclipsing the previous low in 1963, and jeopardizing the tourism and brine shrimp industries.

I knew all those things on paper, and they seemed bad enough, but the high temperatures we experienced in Las Vegas were a stark reminder of where we're heading. We had several days that reached 116 degrees or higher, and those temperatures were recorded in the shade. When we packed up to drive back to the more comfortable southern New Mexico desert, we learned that the

heat had killed the battery while the car sat in sun for three or four days. I had never heard of such a thing, but it is apparently a regular occurrence in Las Vegas. Hope you're finding a cooler place to wet a hook!



Record low water level in Lake Mead behind Hoover Dam (Ethan Miller [Getty] for Mother Jones)



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Gila/Rio Grande Chapter (780) of Trout Unlimited

Jeff Arterburn, President



GRG-TU for MVFF August 2021

Identification of priority waters for native and wild trout for TU's new strategic plan.

Trout Unlimited is preparing to launch a new National Strategic Plan, with one of the central components focusing on the development of a network of shared priority waters for native and wild trout. This will help us focus resources, research and on the ground efforts on the fisheries and watersheds that matter most. **We need your input and ideas to identify those waters that you think are the most important for New Mexico.** This local knowledge, community interests, and promising opportunities will be processed within each state using a science-based approach that engages our grassroots, councils and chapters, agency partners, and staff to generate NM's list of priority waters. There are two overarching questions for each of us to consider: 1) Which native and wild trout waters matter most to you? and 2) What difference can TU make for the health of our fisheries, watersheds, and communities in these places? Our GRG-TU Chapter will be gathering your input, coordinating with the other chapters in NM, and we'll be working NM's TU staff member Dan Roper, New Mexico Coordinator for Angler Conservation Program (dan.roper@tu.org; (541-841-0946)). The goal is to identify a set of priority waters for New Mexico with broad support from our members, partners, and staff during the next ~ six months. Then we will look at specific watersheds, streams, conservation actions, and measurable objectives to guide our future work. We hope that many of you will get involved, and we would greatly appreciate your initial feedback and suggestions and participation in the process!

Contact Jeff Arterburn for more info and to sign up for the next volunteer event or be more

involved in our conservation efforts: jeffglatu@aol.com.

GRG-TU Field Trip for Gila River Festival Sunday, September 19th, 2021

This year we will be hosting a field trip to Willow Creek Campground, Gila National Forest as part of the 2021 Gila River Festival. This will be different than the introduction to fly fishing trip we have given for several years and will instead be focused on the stream habitat conditions and plans for restoration work in the Willow Creek watershed to improve habitat for native Gila trout. We would welcome volunteers to help out hosting the trip, it will be a lot of fun!

This year's festival theme is "(Re)Connect with the River," and our field trip will address the GRF objective to: Educate and engage participants about the connections between humans and the natural world. Large scale wildfires have severe impacts on watersheds that include stream bank erosion, channel migration, loss of riparian vegetation providing canopy cover, and loss of pool habitats due to sediment transport and concomitant low flows. These greatly affect the resident fish populations, including the rare and threatened native Gila trout. We believe that engaged volunteers can help identify the problems, contribute to the development of plans for mitigation and restoration, and connect with other conservationists to improve stream habitat for the fish that we love!

We are planning to depart from Silver City at 8am, driving to Willow Creek Campground via the Bursum Road through Mogollon. It's an all-day trip and vehicles must have good tires that are appropriate for this rocky forest road.

Free annual TU memberships through the Service Partnership Program

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 July and, so, no minutes. The Board will probably meet in the near future via a ZOOM meeting. Discussions are on-going.



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.

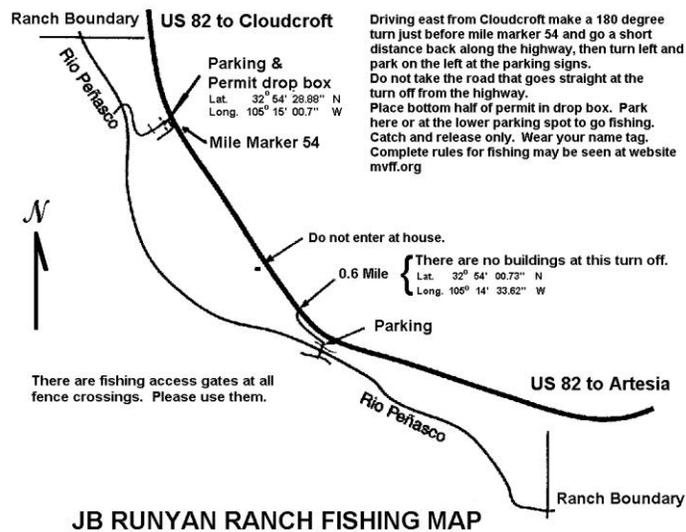
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

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.