



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

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

www.MVFF.org

October

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.

President's Corner

David Carmichael

Club News



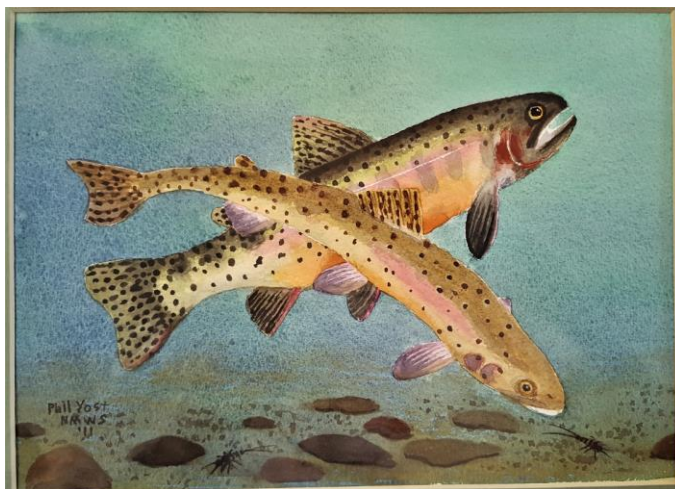
A few weeks ago, I received an email from Phil Yost, a local angler who has been fly fishing and fly tying for 66 years. Unfortunately, bugs got into his fly-tying

materials and destroyed all his feathers, hair and fur. The purpose of Phil's email was to see whether any club members could donate some tying materials to help him restock, so he could tie some flies for a trip to the Gila. Well, as it happens, I still have some of the tying materials that were sold at a discount when the fly shop at Sportsman's Elite in El Paso was shut down, and I

regularly collect wild turkey feathers when fishing the Peñasco. I have also somehow accumulated what looks like a lifetime's supply of dubbing, so it was a simple matter to put together a care package of tying materials for Phil. As it turns out, Phil is also a watercolor artist, and to thank the club, he presented me with this painting of trout he encountered in the Holden Prong in the southeastern portion of the Gila Wilderness. The painting will be included in the raffle at the next MVFF annual banquet, or some other club event. In the meantime, Phil welcomes commissions, and he can work from a photo to create a painting of one of your own favorite catches. He can be contacted at philyost@email.com or by phone at (575)523-7624.

Tax Dollars at Work

Over the summer, when travel and businesses were optimistically reopening on a large scale, I took a trip to visit my daughter in Seattle. As we both are enthusiastic about fish, fishing, and the management of fisheries, she took me to visit the Hiram Chittenden locks and fish ladder (aka Ballard locks). The facility is a very popular tourist destination situated on the Lake Washington ship canal. Constructed in 1912, the locks are part of a system that was devised to connect Lake Washington to Puget Sound, and they now carry more



Holden Prong trout, watercolor by Phil Yost

boat traffic than any other locks in the country. When the ship canal was built, the historic salmon runs in the Duwamish River were destroyed, so a new run was established using stocked salmon from Baker River to the north. As fish ladders go, the Ballard version is unique because it traverses the salt water to fresh water transition, while others are just at dams in fresh water. Fresh water flowing into the embayment below the locks attracts the salmon into the ladder and on their way to Lake Washington and its tributaries.



Ballard locks at right, fish ladder in lower left corner. The woman on the yellow scaffolding is monitoring the movement of harbor seals, releasing noise bombs when seals swim too close to the fish ladder inlet.



Sockeye salmon swimming past the viewing window as they traverse the fish ladder.

The ladder was rebuilt in 1976 to reduce the injury of salmon from the locks, boats, and predators, such as harbor seals and sea lions. Nevertheless, the seals learned to intercept the salmon at the entrance of the fish ladder, with some actually swimming into the first step of the ladder and simply picking off the salmon as they entered

the ladder. Like all marine mammals, the seals are protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, so the U.S. Army COE cannot simply cull the seals. Instead, they are using noise bombs to deter and distract the seals when schools of salmon are observed attempting to access the fish ladder. An interesting, but somewhat “Rube Goldbergesque” approach to fisheries management.



When it Rains, it Sometimes Pours

As I noted in last month’s newsletter, we are experiencing one of the wettest monsoon seasons on record, and it doesn’t seem to be over yet. One of the results of climate change is that monsoons are becoming less predictable in terms of rainfall from year to year, and they are also starting and ending later in the year than was the case in the past. We’ll see what happens this month, and the board will be discussing when we might stock the lease this fall, after the monsoon and its resulting flood events.

Heavy rains in other parts of the Southwest have been pretty remarkable this year too. One of the places Miriam and I have fished for years is the

Roaring Fork valley in central Colorado. The most heavily traveled access route to that region is via Interstate 70, from Denver or Minturn, west to Glenwood Springs, then upstream towards Carbonade and Aspen. The section of I-70 east of Glenwood Springs was the last portion of our initial interstate highway system to be completed, and it was a chal-



Flood waters caused a landslide across I-70, and reconfigured the Colorado River east of Glenwood Springs

lenging engineering project. The highway is tucked into the cliffs along the north side of the Colorado River, and sections of it go through tunnels or have concrete overhangs to fend off boulders falling down the cliffs. Well, runoff from the monsoon rains this year were so massive that they produced landslides and mudslides that closed the highway and altered the course of a portion of the Colorado River.

There is a lot of hue and cry in Washington D.C. at the moment about whether “infrastructure” includes things besides roads and bridges, but I think everyone can agree that infrastructure includes road and bridges at the very least. One hopes that our legislators will see fit to authorize the funding needed to update aging highway structures that are critical to the outdoor recreation economy of one of the best fishing destinations in the region. [Mudslide on scenic Colorado highway tests limits of aging infrastructure amid climate change \(msn.com\)](#)

Diversions, the Good Kind

Last week (September 25) we celebrated National Hunting & Fishing Day. Here is the link to a short video clip by Trout Unlimited that reminds us of the importance of maintaining access to public lands, and the quality of clean, cold water, if our

angling opportunities are to continue into the future. ([National Hunting & Fishing Day on Vimeo](#))

There are links on that page that lead to other videos and stories about fisheries conservation and restoration. So, even while our freedom of travel is still somewhat constrained by concerns for public health and safety, we can explore opportunities to

support fisheries conservation while making plans for future adventures on the water. Stay engaged, and stay tuned.



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

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



GRG-TU for MVFF October 2021

State of the Trout.

If you had chance to tune in for any of the events of the first “Trout Week” that was held September 25th – October 2nd you will have seen some of the work on conservation, community engagement and the promotion of trout fishing that Trout Unlimited has been involved with this past year, and our ongoing work to keep their waters healthy. You can find the links to watch recordings of these events at: [tu.org/troutweek](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8Nmhvbb1NKahlfLtkDKZsnGGyU); or go directly to the Trout Unlimited YouTube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8Nmhvbb1NKahlfLtkDKZsnGGyU>

We are working to identify and prioritize our southern NM watersheds to help focus our work and collaboration with partners on projects involving native and wild trout over the next 5 years as part of the new Trout Unlimited National Strategic Plan. **We have begun the process and are initiating conversations to identify priorities across the Gila River Headwaters and would appreciate hearing your input and ideas about those waters that you think are the most important for New Mexico.** This local knowledge, community interests, and promising opportunities will be part of our state-wide plan that will use 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? We hope that you will get involved, and we would greatly appreciate your initial feedback and suggestions and participation in the process!

We have a stream habitat monitoring project at Willow Creek scheduled for November 8-10. We will be mapping pool/riffle, residual pool depths, discharge and substrate along with cross section measurements and participate in training from experts at Natural Channel Design to learn about some new methods that we will be implementing. Please let me know if you are interested in joining the group and I'll give you more details.

Contact Jeff Arterburn for more info and to sign up for the next volunteer event or be more involved in our conservation efforts: jeffgilatu@aol.com.

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.



Suggested Gear and Information for New Fly Anglers



David Carmichael
MVFF Education Committee

Over the past year or so, largely during the pandemic period of growth in club membership, several new or prospective club members have asked for help getting started in fly fishing. Some of the requests have been answered via phone calls or emails, while others

involved in-person casting instruction, demos on setting up fishing gear, and fly selection. It seemed to me that perhaps there are other new members who haven't yet asked, but who might be interested in receiving help getting started, so here is a summary of some of the suggestions I've been providing to new members. If you have further questions, feel free to contact me or other members of the Education Committee; we're listed on the club webpage.

Basic Tackle

- Fly rod; best choice is a 9ft 5wt (9 ft long, 5 weight; the rod length and line rating) for general, all-around conditions. Perhaps a slightly smaller rod if you plan to fish mostly very small streams (8'6" 4 wt). Medium fast action works well for most people, but you may find a different action more to your liking as you progress in your casting. So, don't buy an expensive rod when just starting out; wait until you're sure you like fly fishing, and you have some idea about the sort of casting stroke that feels most comfortable. If you can, try out several rods at a fly shop, or ask us to try a selection of our personal rods before making a purchase.
- Reel, line and backing. Fly line should be matched to the weight rating of the rod. Backing goes on the reel before the fly line. For starters, and for most common fishing situations, choose a weight forward, floating line. The reel specifications will indicate how much backing you'll need for lines of various weights. Specs are often available online if you don't have the original papers for the reel.
- Leaders of several sizes (weights). Start with tapered leaders with loops for attachment to fly line, in sizes 4X, 5X, and 6X. Monofilament is cheaper. Fluorocarbon is better (limper and less visible in water, stronger for a given weight) but pricey. As you progress, you may want to dispense with loop-to-loop connections and use a nail knot, but loops are easier when starting out. Furled leaders are also useful, but probably not the best choice for beginners, as the use of the associated tippet rings is a bit complicated.
- Tippet material. Tippet is used to connect the flies to the leader. When a leader is fresh out of the package, the flies can be tied directly to the leader. However, as you change flies, or break off sections of leader on obstacles, it will be necessary to add tippet in order to maintain the taper and length of the original leader. Spools of 4X, 5X, 6X to match and/or taper the leaders.
- Assortment of flies. Should include, at the very least, patterns of both wet and dry flies that imitate the sorts of aquatic and terrestrial insects found in or near the waters you are fishing. Throughout most of western U.S., that will include mayflies, caddis flies, stoneflies, midges, grasshoppers, beetles, ants and aquatic worms. Get a fly box to carry them; better if it's waterproof, as you will drop it in the river at some point. Buy barbless, or press barbs down with hemostat/pliers.
- Some way to conveniently carry the fly box(es) and other gear that isn't part of the rod setup. Vests are traditional, but they can be warm, bulky, and may encourage over-loading with gadgets. Some anglers like back packs, sling packs, or lumbar packs, but they may interfere with casting, and can be awkward to access during fly changes, etc. Don't spend \$\$\$ until you have some experience with where you'll be fishing (how brushy, how far from the road, etc.) and how the products might affect casting and all-day comfort. Lots of pockets might be sufficient to start.

Most Necessary and/or Useful Accessories:

- Polarizing sunglasses
- Hat with brim, to work with sunglasses to enhance visibility into the water
- Nippers for trimming leader and tippet material
- Floatant. Dry powder or waxy or oily liquid or gel applied to dry flies to help them float longer.

- Strike indicators. These are attached on the leader above your flies to maintain the depth at which the fly is being fished, and to indicate when a fish has eaten the fly. There are many types. Keep it simple, and maybe carry two kinds: Thingamabobber, a plastic orb with an attachment ring, and poly fiber indicators that can be trimmed to size. Add floatant gel to the latter.
- Split shot. Small weights that can be attached to your leader to sink nymph fly patterns. Non-lead is preferable
- Landing net, to minimize handling of fish you intend to release (release is required on club lease)
- Hemostat. Fine-nosed, precision “pliers” that will be used to press down barbs on flies, compress split shot, remove hooks from the mouths of fish, etc. Many people clip the jaws on some part of their vest or shirt, but I’ve found several pairs that others lost while fishing, so I suggest getting a “zinger” or some other sort of retractable tether for them.
- Thermometer. Used to check the water temperatures, to see that they are within the range where fish will be actively feeding. Also used to tell whether the water is so warm that cold water fish such as trout are under stress, and should not be pursued.
- Waders and boots. Not necessary in many parts of the country in the summer, when “wading wet” will provide a respite from the hot summer air temperatures. A necessity in the winter, and in large, cold rivers, especially when bottom conditions make for slippery footing. They need to be cleaned after every use, to prevent moving invasive species from one watershed to another. Felt soles are traditional, and preferred in some fisheries, because of slick rocks on river bottoms, but they are not allowed in some regions and states because they are more likely to transfer invasive species from one fishery to another. If there is a particular region where you will be fishing the most, check the rules there before purchasing boots.

How-To Books

- Tom Rosenbauer (2007) *The Orvis Fly-Fishing Guide*. Lyons Press. — Provides good discussions of gear setup, knots, casting, fly selection and fishing tactics.
- The Freshwater Angler (1998) *Fly Fishing for Trout in Streams*. Creative Publishing International. — Especially good discussions and photos about rigging and maintaining gear, selecting and rigging flies, and specialty casts for challenging situations.
- Joan Salvato Wulff (2012) *Joan Wulff’s New Fly-Casting Techniques*. Lyons Press. — Clearly illustrated casting instruction from one of the best fly casters of our time.
- Dave Hughes (2000) *Essential Trout Flies*. Stackpole Books. — For those wishing to try tying their own flies, professional entomologist and fly tyer provides well illustrated, step by step instructions for 31 proven patterns that will catch trout pretty much wherever you find them. Even if you don’t want to tie them yourself, you’ll still get good advice about a great selection of go-to fly patterns.



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 September, and so, no minutes. The Board will probably meet in October, again via a ZOOM meeting. Discussions are ongoing.



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.

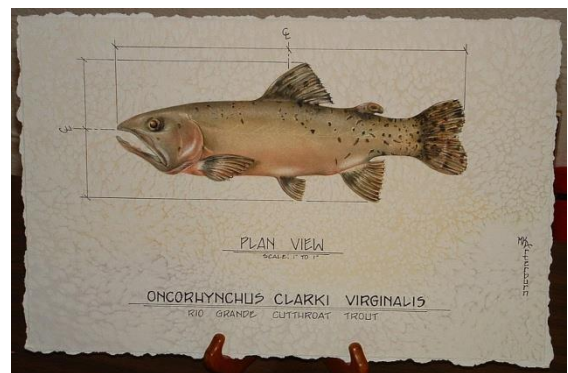
Even though the fund is endowed additions can be made to it at any time. The larger the fund, the more earnings are available for award. If you are interested in contributing please make checks out to the **NMSU Foundation** and on the "for" line of the check, identify "Mabie Legacy Scholarship Fund, 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.

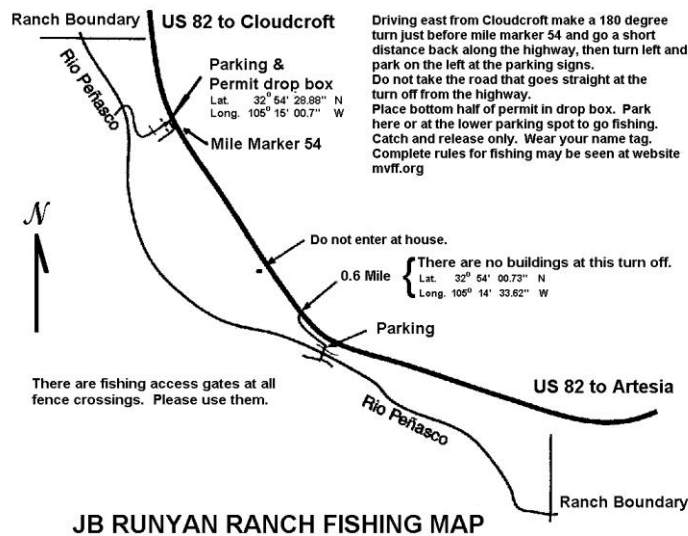
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

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.