



TALE WATERS

A Monthly Publication of
Mesilla Valley Flyfishers, Inc.

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

www.MVFF.org

February

2022

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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 2022.

President's Corner

David Carmichael

Stocking Day



January 30 was bracingly brisk at the pre-dawn outset; 23 degrees in the bottom of the Tularosa Basin near White Sands National Park. Thirty-

eight degrees in Cloudcroft on a still, gray morning, with a frozen waterfall hanging off the cliff beneath High Rolls Cave, just east of the tunnel on NM Hwy 82. The seed heads of tall, yellow wild grasses were silhouetted against the dark green of pinon, pine and fir, and elk and deer were feeding in the meadows,

unbothered by the limited early morning traffic. By the time the stocking truck arrived at the lease about 9:30, the clouds lifted a bit, but it was still

overcast, and air temperatures were in the forties. About a dozen members showed up to help with the stocking, and we made short work of releasing 200 trout, all in the upper half of the lease. Water levels were low, because ranchers are irrigating right now, but the water quality is great. Cold and clear, with enough aquatic vegetation to give the water a pleasing green tinge, but not so much that it interferes with placing a fly where you want it. There are also new gravel bars, newly scoured banks, uprooted and relocated trees, and other changes that will make for interesting fishing. In fact, in some ways, club members have a new river to explore following the major floods from last summer and fall.

After the stocking was finished and everyone else left for home, I stayed to do some exploring and fishing in some of the reconfigured reaches of the stream. A substantial BWO hatch came off about 12:30, and it lasted for a couple of hours, perhaps lengthened by the gentle rain that fell about 1:30 or so. A less profuse but significant midge hatch



Stocking in Cave Hole and vicinity.

was also in progress, and the trout were really turned on to my RS2 emerger patterns, both the sparkle wing and foam wing versions in sizes 16 and 18. After loading up for the trip home, I drove through a gentle and picturesque snow storm enveloping the Sacramento Mountains above 7000 ft. elevation.

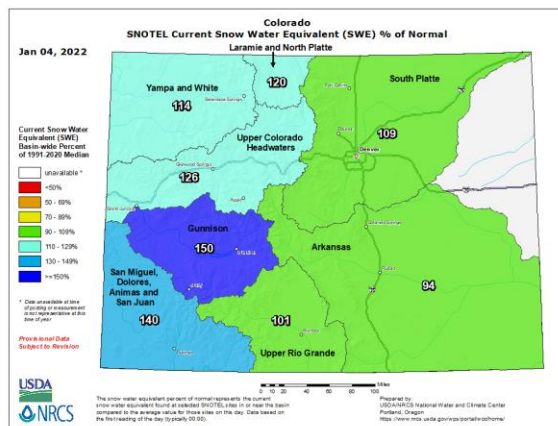
I also saw a dozen or more herds of mule deer, a few elk, and I got a really good look at a

stunning light morph Ferruginous Hawk feeding near the Peñasco. All in all, a great day outdoors. I got a short note from Charlie Mulcock yesterday, who noted, "it's a pretty special fishery to have hatches and responding fish in January." It is indeed.

To everyone who made the trip to the lease to help us maintain that fishery, thanks for your participation. I've begun keeping a new notebook to record participation in club events, and whenever we have our next annual banquet, or other raffle, those on the list will get tickets for the participation prize drawing. Check out the photos and video of the stocking elsewhere in this newsletter. I plan to set up a Zoom meeting later this month, in which we will show a PowerPoint with some more photos of the lease, and discuss the changes to the stream, and their effects on where to fish and where we stocked. Watch your email for the link.

Environmental News

Although snowpack and rainfall predictions for the Southwest have been pretty grim for this year,



recent storms in many of the regions that contribute moisture to our regional fisheries have



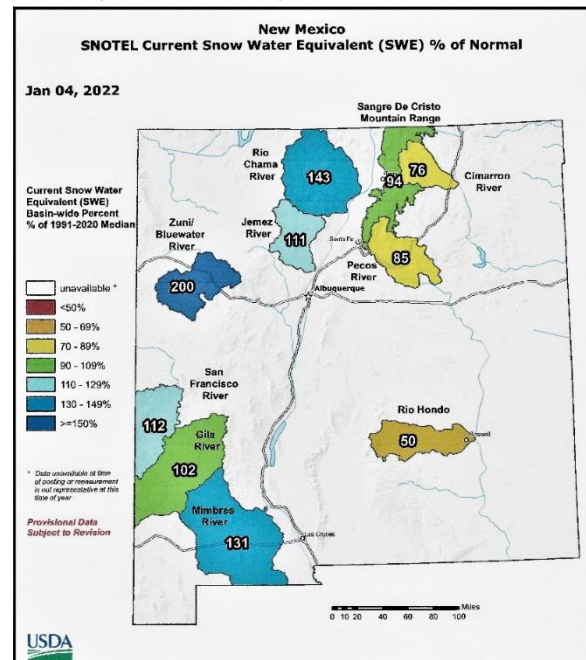
Flood flow last fall at the location of the former lower bridge (photo by Jim Ellett)

exceeded expectations. As a result, the National Water and Climate Center of the USDA reports that the SNOTEL Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) for Colorado and New Mexico is at or above normal in most areas. The accompanying two maps show

the SWE percentage for individual basins, including most of those where we typically fish (except for the Peñasco). As you can see, the headwaters of the Rio Grande and the San Juan look to be in good shape, at 101 and 140% of the 1991-2021 median for this time of year.

Patterns in New Mexico are more complicated. Basins in the northwestern and south-

western parts of the state are above the median, but those in the eastern half of the state are not. The Sangre de Cristo range is a little below the median, but the Pecos, Cimarron and Rio Hondo



basins are significantly behind in terms of current SWE. I'm hearing from friends and family in Santa

Fe and Pecos that the snow they've received has generally been melting pretty quickly, and that's what I've observed in the Sacramento Mountains too. It may be worthwhile keeping an eye on the conditions in the Gila; if snow continues to be retained longer there than in the eastern half of the state, there could be some pretty decent fishing this spring.

Here's an interesting opportunity to get out of town, do some fishing, and perhaps pay for the trip. The Glen Canyon National Recreation Area is continuing its creative approach to reducing brown trout numbers in the Colorado River. Anglers are being paid at least \$25 for every brown trout over 6 inches that they catch and harvest. The head, guts, and data card are deposited in a freezer at the Navajo Bridge Interpretive Center, and the Glen Canyon Conservancy sends a payment to anglers. At some times of year, additional incentives are provided; last fall, they paid out an additional \$300 for each tagged fish. The US Park Service would like to see more browns caught, like four times as many as they've been seeing each month. Sounds like a great road trip opportunity. [Angling for Cash · National Parks Conservation Association \(npca.org\)](#)

Thousands of members of hunting, fishing and conservation groups are celebrating the cancellation of two hardrock mining permits in the watersheds surrounding the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. The Boundary Waters is the most popular, most visited wilderness area in the country, and the regional economy is heavily dependent on the pristine conditions that support world class canoeing, camping, fishing, and hunting activities. More than a quarter million citizens submitted public comments calling for preservation of the water quality and wilderness characteristics of the region. Click here for details. [Interior Cancels Hardrock Mining Leases in the Boundary Waters | Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership \(trcp.org\)](#)

Leaders and Tippets

Last month, a few club members got together to move the club's stuff to a smaller storage unit,

thereby saving the club about \$30–40 per month.



If you look carefully at the photo of the new unit, you can see quite a few fly rods that we've received as donations over the years. In fact, there are 23 rods and 6 reels in storage; six of the rods and two of the reels are

what might be considered premium, or moderate to high-end models that might allow many club members to upgrade their gear. The board has been thinking about what to do with all this equipment. In the past, we have raffled off a couple of rods, most notably at the Fly-Fishing Film Tour event at Ardivino's Desert Crossing, but that may not be the only or best way to make them available to club members. So, if you have any suggestions about what to do with them, please contact me or another board member. We could auction some of them off, use some as loaners for students, or something else. What do you think?



Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited

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



GRG-TU for MVFF February 2022

Roll up your sleeves to help GRG-TU with habitat restoration in 2022

The Gila/Rio Grande Chapter of Trout Unlimited has finalized the contract for habitat restoration on the Little Turkey Creek tributary of Willow Creek in the Gila National Forest with >\$130K funding from the NM

Environment Department “River Stewards” program. We are working with the U.S. Forest Service on the associated permits and planning to get started as soon as possible. This project involves hand-built construction using natural materials and requires a vigorous volunteer base to make it all happen. We are planning to provide delicious camp cooking in a beautiful part of the Gila, and a great opportunity for you to help restore critical habitat for Gila trout.

If you would like more information and to volunteer, please contact Jeff Arterburn: jeffgilatu@aol.com

Additional Federal and State funds for habitat restoration work on the Willow Creek watershed are lining up to make major improvements, including a major investment from the Habitat Stamp Program of the NM Department of Game and Fish. With increased revenues from the \$10.00 habitat stamp fee you pay when you purchase your annual fishing and hunting licenses, and a legislative change that now requires allocation of 50% of the funds to fisheries projects, we can all look forward to projects across the state that benefit fish and fishing!

We are extremely pleased that the NM-TU State Council steering committee for the TU National Strategic Plan for Watershed Prioritization has selected the Gila River Headwaters as a NM priority! This region is truly an incredible place but there are urgent conservation needs at hand for our native Gila trout. Several NM-TU leaders participated in the recent Gila trout Recovery team virtual meeting where updates from 2021 and plans for 2022 were discussed. The USFWS is revising the Gila trout Recovery Plan, and they expressed appreciation for the helpful comments received from TU and the input and peer-review from the



Volunteers needed for habitat restoration on Little Turkey Creek, Gila NF with GRG-TU.

TU National Science Team during the public comment phase last August. We can look forward to seeing this 4th revision of the plan and hope to be active in the implementation team. The NMDGF is developing a monitoring plan and schedule which we hope will enable increased the participation of TU. The major reconstruction of the hatchery at Glenwood is well underway and will hopefully begin

raising Gila trout in 2023 that will support increased angling opportunities.

There is a lot to look forward to in the coming year, and we hope to see you at one of our volunteer projects or elsewhere on the water!

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.

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 January and, so, no minutes. The Board will probably meet in the near future via a ZOOM meeting. Discussions are ongoing.



Stocking the Lease 1/30/2022

For a video see <https://youtube.com/watch?v=ILlh6avhgk&feature=share>



Quick Look Contact Information

2022 Officers of the Club	
Officers	
• President:	David Carmichael (915) 204-7558
• V-Pres.:	
• 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:	
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.

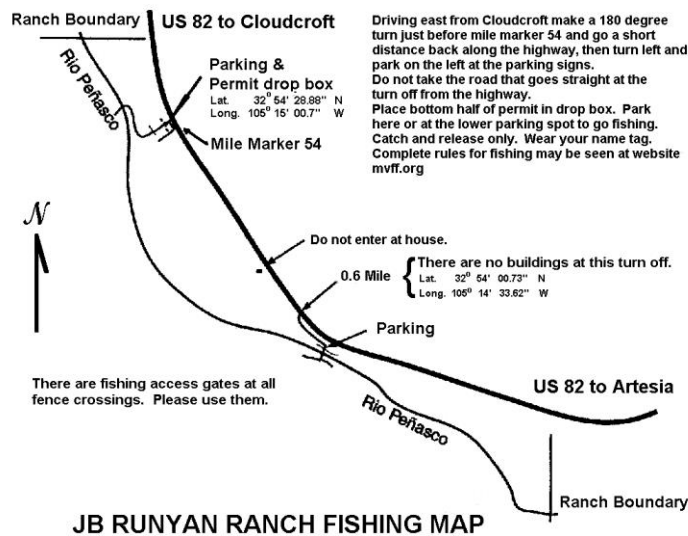
1 Year	\$20	Individual
	\$25	Family
3 Years	\$50	Individual
	\$60	Family
Life	\$400	Individual
	\$500	Family

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.