

Madison-Gallatin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

On The Line



A newsletter for and by the members.

YOUR BOARD AT WORK

The winter season is upon us, though not in its usual fashion of snow and cold. There is some fishing around for the hearty. In the meantime, the MGTU board has been busy.

Many items have been presented and discussed. Some have been tabled for a later time and some have already been implemented.

To keep you informed, a shortened version of the board meeting minutes is presented here. Please read and feel free to comment as you wish.

Madison-Gallatin Chapter Trout Unlimited

Board Meeting Minutes

December 7, 2006

In attendance are Rick Arnold, Bob Ritter, Mark Fuchs, Toby Swank, Tom Ehlert and Travis Morris.

Absent are Bill Mealer and Bob Frey.

Rick Arnold holds a proxy vote for Bill Mealer and Bob Frey.

Alan Wanderer was in attendance as a candidate for an open Board position.

Rick presented the Treasurer's Report with a current balance of \$4,799 and a money market account balance of \$38,045 which includes a \$12,000 reserve fund.

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THE WEST MADISON CANAL

Fish live in the rivers and streams. Irrigation ditches get their water from the rivers and streams. Where the water goes, there goes the fish.

For several years now, the Madison River Foundation, based in Ennis, has done a fish rescue in the irrigation canal at Valley Garden. Sometimes, the number of fish can exceed the one thousand mark. A large one may occasionally get collected and returned to the main stem of the river.

There has been talk, even at your board's meetings, about installing a new head gate at the top of the canal.

Recently, several organizations got together to discuss this topic and how to resolve the apparent loss of fish down the canal. Here are the minutes from that meeting.

West Madison Canal Meeting Notes

January 30, 2007

Ennis

In attendance: FWP: Bruce Rich, R3 Fish Manager, Mike Vaughn, Madison Gallatin Management Biologist, Pat Clancey, PPL Montana Mitigation Project Biologist

TU: Bruce Farling - MTU Executive Director, Michael Gibson - MTU Outreach Coordinator,, Bruce Rehwinkel - TU

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The Gallatin River designation as an Outstanding Water Resource was discussed. The history show we have partnered with the American Wildlands and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. The EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) is totally incorrect. Rick says we met with GYC and American Wildlands and think there is enough momentum in Helena to defeat our efforts for the designation. The DEQ will be coming down to help us with voicing our opinion. Currently, we are sharing a newspaper ad with GYC set for the December 12th edition. We will be sharing the cost.

Board of Directors

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| President: | Rick Arnold rarnold@resslermotors.com 586-7561 (h) 539-7561 (c) |
| Vice-President: | Open |
| Secretary: | Mark Fuchs greymidge@earthlink.net 556-1183 (h) 581-2369 (c) |
| Treasurer: | Bob Frey Bob.pfm@bridgeband.com 585-9235 (h) 587-1604 (w) |
| Projects Coordinator: | Tom Ehlert kkehlert@earthlink.net 388-9723 (h) |
| Banquet Chair: | Travis Morris bonefish@bresnan.net 586-8145 (h) 587-9111 (w) |
| Newsletter: | Mark Fuchs greymidge@earthlink.net 556-1183 (h) 581-2369 (c) |
| Membership: | Open |
| MSU Liaison: | Toby Swank toby@mcn.net 586-2188 (w) 570-4118 (c) |
| Members-at-Large: | Bill Mealer Dan Lohmiller |

In Bill's absence, Rick states we currently have 8 of the 11 board members required by the By-Laws. A slate of candidates was not complete and the December vote by the general membership will be postponed.

There will be no changes in the current executive positions.

Rick hands out the Agenda for the Montana Trout Unlimited December meeting and summarizes, for example, Wyoming wants to reduce the flows on the Big Horn River to maintain a higher lake level for the boats which the private owners have marooned there. Montana objects and wants to maintain a 1500 cfs flow.

An important topic was the public access laws and should TU be involved. There is some land on Mitchell Slough, a once side channel of the Bitterroot River before it moved during high flood waters. Huey Lewis and Charles Schwab, current land owners, want to make the slough private water allowing no one access in accordance with the current "high water level" laws of Montana. This will be going to the Supreme Court. With this action, Trout Unlimited has once again stated TU will not participate in the stream access problems. The exception will be if a chapter makes a specific proposal in writing to the State TU, State approves and then passes it along to National who will have a committee to decide if the local chapter may or may not participate in a stream access situation.

Discussion from the MTU agenda about the Kid's Camp began a decision making topic. At MTU meeting, Rob Robertson will not be hosting next year's camp and no decision was made by the State to continue the camp. We believe the Kid's Camp is good and we support it as well as paying the fee for two local kids to attend. The whole camp event requires funding of \$4,500 plus man-hours to function. Since our bank accounts Rick suggested we front the money and some volunteer time for next year. Bob is not in favor of supporting other chapters at

AROUND THE SHOPS

The Bozeman Angler

On February 18th, we will be having Ron Steinberg as a guest fly tyer at the shop. And on February 25th, we will have Dan Delekta.

Also, beginning Feb. 15th, our beginner fly tying class begins and lasts for 5 Thursdays. There is a fee so call the shop at 587-9111 for details and availability.

And don't forget to visit our web site at www.bozemanangler.com.

Montana Troutfitters

Starting in February, we will be offering our fly tying classes. This class is a 6 week, evening class. There is a fee. So please call the shop at 587-4707 for more information.

And every Thursday at the shop, feel free to come in and swap lies and stories. The staff will be glad to answer any question.

And don't forget to visit our web site at www.troutfitters.com.

The Rivers Edge

An intermediate fly tying class will be offered at the shop. This 5 week class starts 2/15 and runs thru 3/33. There is a fee for attending. Please call the shop at 586-5373 for updates.

And don't forget to visit our web site at www.theriversedge.com.

Greater Yellowstone Fly Fishers

We currently have no programs to offer at this time. Please call the shop at 586-5373 for updates.

And don't forget to visit our web site at www.gyflyfishers.com.

Fins and Feathers

We are currently hold a guest tyer program at the shop on Saturday mornings. A complete list of our guest can be found on the web site. Please call the shop at 585-9217 for information regarding our sales and programs.

And don't forget to visit our web site at www.finsandfeathersonline.com.



On The Line is a periodic publication of the Madison-Gallatin Chapter of Trout Unlimited. It is published by and for the members of the Chapter.

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Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of the month (unless announced otherwise) at The Gran Tree Inn. Meetings start at 7:00 PM. Meetings will not be held during the summer months (June thru August) and will start again in the fall (September thru May). Watch for notices in the Bozeman Daily Chronicle or on our website www.MGTU.org.

this event. A mention of increasing our contribution of \$175 per attendant could be increased to include some overhead expenses. No final decision was made. Rick passed out our working budget from last year showing what monies were not spent which brings our bank account to such a high balance. Also, a list of programs and projects was passed out for review. Much discussion went around as to where and how much I should spend. A proposal from Chris Riley, biologist for the USFS, on Elk Creek was presented. Chris needs \$5000 to get the study going for building a barrier and turning Elk Creek into a cutthroat trout fishery. A total of \$10,000 will be needed to make the work start. Rick was in favor of our funding the total money for this project. Such a large amount was debated. The issue of "what about someone else requesting funds" for a project. If we fund \$10,000 for one and other money to some others, we may not have enough to last the year. Bob noted so-be-it. We need to deny some request. No final decision was made on funding any programs

Madison-Gallatin Chapter

Trout Unlimited

Board Meeting Minutes

January 4, 2007

In attendance are Rick Arnold, Travis Morris, Mark Fuchs, Bill Mealer, Bob Frey and Tom Ehlert

Absent it Toby Swank.

In attendance is Dan Lohmiller.

Rick says the minutes from December need to be corrected as follows:

We voted to give Chris Riley a \$10,000 check

ject Coordinator, Rick Arnold - MGTU chapter president

Dan & Nancy Delekta - Madison Valley residents, MGTU members

MRF: John Duncan - MRF

Meeting opened with John Duncan providing information about the Madison River Foundation (MRF) and its role & capabilities. John could not remain for the rest of the meeting.

Items discussed by the remainder of the group focused on what we are trying to accomplish in the canal and how to do so.

- Assess timing of fish entrainment into the canal, distribution of fish relative to two upstream barriers in the canal, and assessing effectiveness of incremental shutdown in stimulating fish to move back up the canal into river in the fall.
 - Electro fishing to capture fish and collect statistics
 - Possibly mark/tag fish to assess movements within canal
 - Can fall shutdown occur earlier in season to avoid ice-cover?
 - Alternatives to provide late season stock-water rather than maintaining canal operation.
 - Sampling/enumerating fish population in Madison River side-channel near headgate
- Discussion of the effect that any action will have on the river population if entrainment was eliminated or seriously reduced. What is the cost benefit? Will there be a real benefit

for the Elk River project with a stipulation that the money is earmarked for him but will be retained by us. Chris still needs to get some approvals, especially to poison the river.

With this change, the minutes from December were approved as corrected.

Dan Lohmiller, owner of River's Edge, has experience with conservation boards, i.e., MT Bowhunter Association. Rick thinks this is good for us. An official vote by the board is required and we will wait to Bob Frey and Tom Ehlert arrives.

Rick also states we need a Vice President and a program manager for the monthly general meetings. Historically, this has been one and the same person.

Bob Frey gives a financial report noting we have approximately \$4200 in checking account and \$38,000 in a money market account.

With all in attendance, a motion was made to accept Dan Lohmiller as a board member. It was voted and approved.

Suggestions for general meeting speakers were brought up. Travis to follow up to see if Denver Bryan is available for the March meeting to discuss photography.

We have 695 members on the TU National mailing list. We have about 450 email addresses.

Rick and Tom to put together a projects list for the March board meeting.

It's mentioned that member Volney Steel is trying to start a handicapped Vets flyfishing program. He wants us to address this issue and consider being a part of it. Bill say Volney used to be a pathologist for the hospital. Bob Frey volunteers to the contact on this program.

Mike Garcia, Northern Lights and the Barn owner, paid for last year's dinner and never got fed. Rick makes a motion to give him four tickets. The board approves

• Within a month FWP will develop a sampling scheme for the canal and possibly for the side channel. Sampling techniques might include live channel electro fishing (use of volunteer labor would be minimal due to safety considerations) and basic documentation of fish species/numbers/length/size in ditch after shut-off (possibly as part of, or in addition to salvage effort(s).

- Group recommends that MRF be the 'face' that coordinates with West Madison Canal users. Possibly involve Madison Valley Ranchlands Group.

The Montana Stream Legacy Act

From Rick Arnold to the Madison-Gallatin Board:

With the legislative session going strong now, our chapter will often receive requests from Montana TU regarding specific bills being addressed in Helena. Unfortunately, with the speed at which these bills come up, quite often there will be little time for us to ponder over many of MTU's requests.

Please review the enclosed document. MTU has asked for our sign-on as a chapter. They need our feedback. In reviewing the enclosed documents, I believe our chapter should stand behind their purpose. Please let me know if

Stream Legacy Sign-On Letter

Dear Senator/Representative:

We, the undersigned sportsmen organizations representing (*insert total # of members here*) hunters and anglers from across Montana, are writing to express our enthusiastic support for (*insert bill number here*), the Montana Stream Legacy Act. This measure establishes minimum development setbacks for new development along our state's most cherished rivers and streams. We strongly urge you to also support (*insert bill number here*).

As you know, hunting and fishing are central to Montana's cultural heritage and pump millions of dollars a year into the state's economy. A larger percentage of Montana's population hunts and fishes than in any other state in the country, even Alaska. According to the most recent figures from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, hunting and fishing had a total economic effect of over \$680 million in 20001 and sustained close to 10,000 jobs. In short, hunting and fishing mean serious business to Montanans.

A fundamental reason why Montana is blessed with some of the best hunting and fishing in the United States is our abundance of intact wildlife habitat and clean water. No fish land wildlife habitat is more important than our riparian areas. These ribbons of life provide crucial habitat for fish, waterfowl, upland birds and big game animals like deer, elk and moose. Unfortunately, these same areas face unprecedented threats from new residential development. As Governor Schweitzer said last summer, "Development along rivers and streams that destroys protective riparian areas is possibly the single most urgent ecosystem threat facing Montana today."

The good news is there is still time to save our most valuable riparian areas from being overrun by new subdivisions and trophy homes. By passing the Montana Stream Legacy Act, we can get ahead of the curve and maintain our world-class hunting and fishing while also allowing streamside property owners to continue reasonable use of their land. But time is running out. If we want our children and grandchildren to enjoy the same opportunities to hunt and fish that we have, we must act now.

As our elected leaders, you have a golden opportunity to leave a legacy that future generations will forever be thankful for. As the leading sportsmen organizations in Montana, we urge you to seize it. Vote for (*insert bill number here*), the Montana Stream Legacy Act.

Sincerely,

Your name here

DON'T FORGET

Public Meeting:

**There is no public meeting this month due to our
Annual banquet being held on
Saturday, February 17th
At the GranTree**

you feel differently.

Editor: A copy of this sign-on letter can be found in this newsletter as a separate sheet for your review and comments to the MADISON-GALLATIN Trout Unlimited Board of Directors.



**Madison-Gallatin
Chapter of Trout**

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