



NEW MEXICO TROUT

Newsletter

Feb 2012

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Greetings,

As I announced at the last general meeting, the New Mexico Trout Conclave will be held a little later than usual this year, on 3 March instead of in February. We have some exciting programs lined up, and we'll give you details in the next newsletter. Also, our annual Fly Tying Symposium will be held in conjunction with Bob Gerding's Hunting and Fishing Show, at the Manual Lujan Center in the NM Expo on 10-12 February. If you want to help out with either of these events, please contact me at pmilesh@swcp.com.

There are also opportunities for you to get involved with our Youth Program, led by Francis Peters, and Project Healing Waters, coordinated by Dave Patton. If you want to help, you can contact Francis and Dave as listed below.

CYa,
Pat Milesosky

Rio Grande Cutthroat Status and Restoration

by Ron Loehman, Conservation Chair

Working Group Meeting:

In November I attended a meeting of the Rio Grande Cutthroat Working Group. They meet quarterly to bring together representatives of public agencies and private organizations and who, by their mission statement, are



"committed to improving the security of Rio Grande Cutthroat Trout (RGCT) in their historic range... to preserve the fish for present and future generations". As most of you know, the RGCT is the native trout in New Mexico in the Rio Grande, Pecos, and

Canadian River watersheds and that it has been reduced to a tiny fraction of its original range by competition from non-natives, habitat loss, drought, fires, and a warming climate. Now, most RGCT are found only in the coldest, cleanest, high-elevation streams in New Mexico, primarily on the National Forests, but also on a few private landholdings (Ted Turner's ranches) and some Indian reservations.

Endangered Species Listing?: The US Fish and Wildlife Service has a 2014 deadline for deciding whether or not to list the RGCT for protection under the US Endangered Species Act. This deadline is a strong motivator for conservation and restoration activities by the NM Department of Game & Fish and the US Forest Service, since listing would severely constrain agency activities in areas where RGCT are found. Some of our NM Trout conservation projects over the past few years have been in support of RGCT conservation, for example on Comanche Creek in the Valle Vidal and on the upper Rio Cebolla in the Jemez Mountains.

RGCT Status in the Jemez: Much of the recent Working Group meeting was devoted to status reports on streams affected by the Las Conchas fire. The RGCT population in Medio Dia Creek was lost. The Peralta Creek population was severely affected by the burn. The Rio del Oso, Rito del Oso, and Rito del Abiquiu were affected by the fire. The status of the population in Canones Creek had not been determined because threats of flash floods made conditions too hazardous for on-ground surveys. On the other hand, the upper Rio Cebolla and the streams in San Pedro Parks are outside the area burned by the Las Conchas fire and, thus, their RGCT populations were unaffected.



Valles Caldera Status: The headwaters of the Rio San Antonio on the Valles Caldera were heavily burned and the late summer rains washed down huge amounts of ash into the stream. Dr. Bob Parmenter, Preserve Chief Scientist, reported an estimate of 95% of the brown trout killed in the upper reaches of the San Antonio. Other fish, such as chubs and dace, and aquatic insects seemed to have been unaffected by the ash runoff. A fish survey of the lower reach of the San Antonio in October revealed more brown trout than before the fire, suggesting that some browns survived by moving downstream.

RGCT in the Valles Caldera?: Dr. Parmenter made an interesting proposal to the Working Group, specifically to remove the few remaining brown trout from the San Antonio and its headwater tributaries, which are all in the Valles Caldera Preserve, and restock it with Rio Grande Cutthroats. Some of us in the meeting thought it is an idea worth pursuing. Mike Sloan and Kirk Patten, who are the NM G&F representatives on the group, were unsupportive. They raised practical and legal issues, such construction of a barrier to prevent brown trout from migrating upstream from outside the Preserve, as well as problems with completely removing all the brown trout from the stream before RGCT stocking. They stated that without such guaranteed removal of the brown trout they

couldn't get credit for any RGCT population in the San Antonio in the decision on whether or not to list it under the Endangered Species Act. I pointed out that the Upper Cebolla contained both brown trout and RGCT and that NM G&F counted it as one of their core populations, but Sloan and Patten didn't have an answer to that observation. I told Dr. Parmenter that NM Trout would support reintroducing Rio Grande Cutthroat trout to the Valles Caldera Preserve and volunteered us to help in any way we can. Stay tuned.

Volunteer Opportunities

Youth Programs. Like any sport, fly-fishing's future depends on our youth to remain viable well into the future. New Mexico Trout is pleased to welcome and involve youth at all its activities, whether that young one is a family member, a friend, or a neighbor. This year, we will continue our program with fly tying and fishing instruction for youth and adults in the Valles Caldera, with monthly events through the summer starting on 26 May. These events occur with youth instruction on Saturday and Adult instruction on Sunday. If you are interested in helping or attending, contact Francis Peters at fepeter@comcast.net. More information is on the calendar for Valles Caldera, <http://www.vallescaldera.gov/calendar/ViewCal.html>, and at <http://newmexicotrout.org/outreach-projects/youth>.



Project Healing Waters. New Mexico Trout (NMT) in conjunction with the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Albuquerque, NM leads a Project Healing Waters (PHW) Chapter dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active duty personnel and veterans through sharing the world of fly fishing. Our program runs from February thorough December and includes instruction in fly tying and casting, and stream outings. Folks interested in supporting or learning more about Project Healing Waters and the NMT program can contact Dave Patton at pattondj1@hotmail.com. More information is at <http://newmexicotrout.org/outreach-projects/healing-waters>.

Our Visit to the Denver Fly Fishing Show (or, A Road trip with the Guys)

by Mark Kalin

When you go on a road trip with 70-year old guys, you learn where all the rest stops are.

In early January, a number of NMT members went to Denver for a big fly fishing (and fly fishing only, no hunting, bait fishing, etc.) show. It was a great fun winter diversion. We doubled up in rooms at a hotel adjacent to the huge building which housed the exhibits, casting and fly tying demonstrations, presentations, lectures, and vendor booths. The hotel provided a pretty good breakfast (included with price of rooms) and we walked to a nearby restaurant for evening meals.

We attended for two full days. There were eight or nine concurrent presentations throughout each day, approximately 30 fly tyers in action, and casting demos by top-notch throwers. My son, Andy, was a first time attendee, and he was impressed with the ease of approaching and interacting with the fly fishing gurus in attendance, a few of whom were Steve Rajeff, John Gierach, Rick Hafele, Dave Whitlock, Dave Hughes, Gary Borger, George Daniel, A.K. Best, and Jim Schollmeyer. We attended presentations of fishing in locations throughout the West and also some saltwater destinations by knowledgeable fly shop owners and guides. All of who cordially responded to questions from the audiences.



There were vendors galore - rods (including a number of bamboo rod builders) - and you could test cast them, reels, flies, other equipment, clothing, floatcraft, books - it was like a giant flyshop.

I especially enjoyed two casting demonstrations. One by Steve Rajeff (holder of 30+ national and international accuracy and distance casting records). He threw it clear to Littleton and made it look effortless. The other was a very nice handcast (without using a rod) of about 65 - 70 feet made by Michael Mauri. I had seen videos of such casting, but in person it was really impressive. He may be able to throw further by hand than I can with a rod.

Also two way cool displays. One was a history of fly rods, with examples dating back several centuries. The other was a display of bamboo rod build equipment and its use - from a bamboo cane to a finished six-sider.

All in all it was an awesome trip - great camaraderie, good food, and plenty to drink. I encourage anyone interested to attend, or join us next year on our road trip. More information on the show is <http://www.flyfishingshow.com/>.

TIP - be sure to ask Mike M. to demonstrate his elk call.

Members at the Fly Show

Brian Beaudoin, Pete Gordinier, Pat Harrington, Andy Kalin, Ron Kubica (who traveled from Vermont), Mike Maurer, Walt Ratcliff, Tom Roth, Noel Savignac, Steve Weiss, and Mark Kalin

Them or Us

by Pat Milesosky
NMT President

As many of you might know by now there is a concerted effort to start a new Trout Unlimited chapter based in Albuquerque. Some members of New Mexico Trout, if they are members of TU, may have received postcards announcing the first public organizational meeting later this month. When this meeting takes place it will be the fourth meeting held with the purpose of establishing a TU chapter. I attended the first two meetings and will attend the third on January 12. Confessing this, let me

provide some background.

Several months ago, I was approached by Garrett Veneklasen asking about the possibility of addressing the NM Trout regarding the start up of a new TU chapter. I saw no harm in listening, so Garrett along with Dave Propst and Frank Weissbarth were invited to the June 2011 NM Trout Board of Directors (BoD) meeting where they informed us of the formulation of a new TU chapter to be based in Albuquerque along with the requisite whys and wherefores. Garrett spoke of the hard feelings that



existed between NM Trout and TU in the past and wanted make sure those were laid to rest. It was decided that representatives from both organizations would be welcome to attend and/or address the others BoDs and clubs when necessary. What might be the necessity? How about conservation programs in New Mexico where both clubs can join together for a better outcome? Maybe political issues where a larger presence swings a bigger stick? How about better fisheries in New Mexico which is the underlying reason for both clubs?

In attending the TU meeting I was somewhat surprised to find other members of NM Trout in attendance. They spoke to the "them or us" thinking. It was made clear to them that that issue was laid to rest months earlier at the June NM Trout BoD meeting and both organizations would be working together to advance the betterment of the fisheries in New Mexico.



So what is the bottom line for New Mexico Trout with respect to the start up of a TU chapter in Albuquerque? The answer is easy... what choice does NM Trout have in the matter? TU will start when and where it wants. We have absolutely no control or input whatsoever. That being said, why not make it an amicable alliance? I have always heard that it is easier to get things done with honey rather than with vinegar. I've also heard that one should keep his friends close and his enemies closer. Needless to say, in this case I will go with the former and dismiss the latter. For those who will belong to either NM Trout or TU there is nothing I can say. Your mind is made up. I would suggest to the other folks, why not both? Both clubs are striving for the same ends, which is the betterment of the waters and fisheries in New Mexico. In the end there is one winner... the fish.

So you know and if you care, which I am sure you do, I will be unable to attend the TU meeting at the Chama River Brewing Company on January 24. I will be away on business... chasing the wily Bonefish in the Bahamas for two weeks.

Fly of the Month - Depth Charge Midge

Photograph and Notes by Tim Barker
Used by permission

HOOK: Daiichi 1250, or TMC 206 BL, #18-#20, TMC 200R, #18-#22

THREAD: Tiemco 16/0, White

RIB: Lagartun, x-Fine, Copper

WINGLETS: Mirage Opal Tinsel, SM

THORAX: Ice Dub, UV Brown

BEAD # 1.: Black Tungsten, sized to hook

BEAD # 2.: Killer Caddis, Diamond, 15/0



So I wanted to play around with a new Midge pattern for late Fall and Winter Fly Fishing on two of the tail waters we visit when the snow flies in the Eastern Sierras and it's time for a hand numbing experience...

This pattern comes from the [Spirit River](#) collection of flies for 2012...I do not know who first came up with it but the monicker "depth charge" I would have to attribute to Greg Vinci since he has created versions that cover the "Bird's Nest", Stone Flies and Caddis (X-Ray larvae and Pupae)...

This pattern may also be tied in Brown, Gray, Olive, Black or Red using Gordon Griffith 14/0 thread or other Tiemco colors...the bead, and rib colors may also be changed for what works in a particular area. For #20 and #22, the thorax dubbing may be omitted...

More flies and anecdotes by Tim are at <http://planettrout.wordpress.com/>

More NM Trout patterns at <http://newmexicotrout.org/archives/category/fly-patterns>

Latest San Juan Project to Limit Silt, Improve Fishing

By Karl F. Moffatt
excerpt reprinted by permission

San Juan Fisheries Biologist for the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, Marc Wethington, helps direct the placement of boulders for another taxpayer funded fish habitat improvement project on the trophy trout stream.

The Braids area features many small islands interspersed by channels where the water is shallow and the trout have only a limited number of places to live. "Improvements to the habitat there



should increase the area's trout holding capacity and angling success", Wethington said.



This island will be filled to help direct more river flow into the Braids area above where numerous pools are being created to provide more habitat for trout. The foundation of a berm designed to redirect more of the river's flow into the Braids area will be backfilled and planted with native vegetation to appear more natural. A mid-stream island is being built up and further out into the river's flow to redirect more water into the Braids area and increase the depth. Some side channels will be shut off and filled in

while several existing islands will also be consolidated to implement the plan. Numerous deep holes will then be dug out of the bedrock to provide future homes for fish and willows and other natural vegetation will be planted to return the area to a natural appearance. "In a few years you shouldn't even be able to notice the work we've done," Wethington said.

You can read more about these and other improvements at

<http://karlfmoffatt.blogspot.com/2011/11/latest-san-juan-project-to-limit-silt.html>

Colorado Fishing Report

From John Gordon, as reported by Mark Kalin

On a recent trip to Colorado, I visited with former NMT member John Gordon, who now lives, raises his family, and works in Colorado Springs. Besides his day job, John, as congenial and generous as ever, is on the staff at Angler's Covey in Colorado Springs. He graciously submitted the following fishing report as of RIGHT NOW.

"Regarding fishing this time of year: In the Colorado Springs area we are pretty much limited to tail water fisheries. Normally all the lakes are frozen over by now.

South Platte River: We have three sections that fish pretty decent in the winter. All of which are roughly 45 minutes to a one-hour drive from Colorado Springs. Please keep in mind that the South Platte River is several hundred miles and is basically a series of reservoirs and rivers. It flows into one reservoir and back out as a river and then into another reservoir. This is repeated several times before it leaves the state and flows into Nebraska.

11 Mile Canyon is the tail water section below 11 Mile reservoir. This is very beautiful and very much your ideal Colorado scenic river. Mountains, pine trees, and the river is about twice the size of the Jemez as it flows through the canyon. The lower section freezes over and this pushes the fish and the fisherman (It gets crowded...similar to the San Juan) into the upper mile and

half below the dam. This is a typical midge and small mayfly fishery. In the winter size #20 and #22 are most common. There is a great Trico hatch (Spinner fall actually) in the summer but that's for another time.

Dream Stream section lies between two reservoirs. 11 Mile Reservoir and Spinney (pronounced SpinEE). This is about 2-3 miles as the crow flies and is a meandering river located in a large meadow area. It gets very windy and very cold here. It has a smaller population of resident Rainbows, Cutthroat, Cutbows, and browns. It is most famous for the large fish caught in the very early spring and the fall. The fish that reside in the lake move up into the stream and any pictures you see of trout 7-10 lbs probably came from here. Browns in the fall and Rainbows in the early spring. Water is open year round and the best fishing is related to stream flows. When the flows rise the fish will move out of the lake and into the river. So the first big increase in water flow rates as early as late February or early March signal the start.



Cheeseman Canyon is tail water below Cheeseman reservoir. This is another pretty canyon know for it's large challenging trout. It has large deep clear pools and some boulders the size of a small house. The hike in will thin out some of the crowds. Beautiful area with nice fish. Just a little further downstream is the small town of Deckers which also has some winter fishing. Most of which is just upstream of the bridge as it crosses the South Platte in Deckers.

Calendar

NMT Fly Tying Symposium / Bob Gerding Fishing and Hunting Show

10-12 Feb 2012

Manual Lujan Building, NM Expo

<http://bobsoutadv.com/>

New Mexico Trout Conclave

3 March 2012

Sandia Prep School

An class on fly tying will be held following the conclave on 4 March.

NMT General Meeting

10 April 2012, 7:30pm

Sandia Prep Commons Room

Steve Sweitzer will be talking about his new book on Fly Fishing the Rocky Mountain National Parks.

<http://newmexicotrout.org/get-involved/meetings>

Fly Tyer's Roundtable

Every Monday, 7:00pm excluding holidays

Sandia Prep Lab classroom

The Flytyer's Roundtable brings new and experienced tyers together to exchange ideas, techniques and materials.

"It has always been my private conviction that any man who pits his intelligence against a fish and loses has it coming."

~John Steinbeck~



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Yearly business membership entails the sponsor to a link on the NMT Newsletter. Contact the membership chair for more information if you or a business owner you know would like to become a sponsor.

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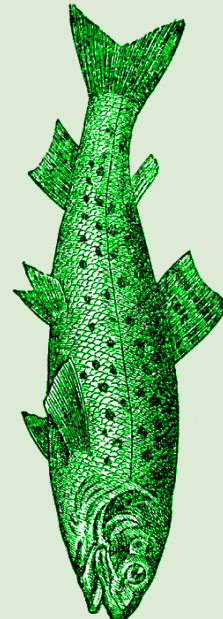
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About Us

New Mexico Trout is dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of trout fishing in New Mexico's waters through restoration of riparian habitats and through education of the public about trout fishing and the value of trout habitats. New Mexico Trout is a 501 (c)3 non-profit organization, and we welcome your tax deductible contributions.



Comments/Suggestions

If you have comments or suggestions about the Newsletter, or an article you would like to submit, please email to newmexicotrout@gmail.com. Articles will be considered based on suitability, general interest and succinctness (please limit content to approximately 500 words). Deadline for the next issue is 31 Jan.