



NEWS

PAT BARNES MISSOURI RIVER CHAPTER

FREE to
PBMR Members

Feb/Mar 2007
Vol. 27 No. 1

The mission of the Pat Barnes Missouri River Chapter of Trout Unlimited is to conserve, protect, and restore cold-water fisheries in the Missouri, Little Blackfoot, and Smith River watersheds in Montana.

DON'T LET THIS BE YOUR LAST PBMR TU NEWSLETTER!

BEGINNING WITH THE NEXT ISSUE IN MAY, PBMR NEWS WILL BE AVAILABLE EXCLUSIVELY IN ELECTRONIC FORMAT (PDF) FROM OUR WEBSITE AT www.patbarnestu.org.

To receive an email notice that new issues are available with a link directly to the newsletter online, send an email to info@patbarnestu.org with "E-News Subscribe" in the subject line.

If you still wish to receive a printed newsletter in the mail, please email us at info@patbarnestu.org or call PBMR Publications Coordinator, Melissa Brown, at 406/431 7962 and have your membership number handy.



Photo by Jay Erickson

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PAT BARNES MISSOURI RIVER CHAPTER

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PBMR News is a quarterly publication of the Pat Barnes Missouri River Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Chapter 055. It is published by and for the members of the Chapter. © 1980-2007

Articles, letters, and artwork related to conservation, restoration, and preservation of Montana's cold water fisheries are welcome. The editor reserves the right to reject or edit any material submitted. Guidelines for submission format, methods, and deadlines are available upon request by emailing info@patbarnestu.org, or calling newsletter editor Melissa Brown 406/431 7962.

Board of Director Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday of each month from September through April. Non-board members are invited and encouraged to attend.

Get Out and Enjoy the Missouri

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE—by Jay Erickson, Chapter President



Jay Erickson (left) is an avid angler who grew up on the Kootenai River near Libby. He is one of the managing directors at the Montana Land Reliance, a private lands conservation group headquartered in Helena since 1978.

Tim Plaska of Missouri River Outfitters gave a presentation about affordable, fun salt-water fishing for couples at the PBMR Chapter meeting on January 10, 2007. Tim was very entertaining and provided some great photos of big fish and beautiful country. The meeting was well attended.

Our February chapter meeting was a fly-tying extravaganza organized by our meeting coordinator and treasurer, Nola Freestone. Numerous professional fly-tyers gave demonstrations on how to tie various flies. It was an informative and entertaining event for fly-tiers of all ages and experience.

The Pat Barnes Chapter is 460 members strong and seeks to conserve, protect, and restore Montana's cold-water fisheries. We focus our work in the Missouri, Little Blackfoot, and Smith River watersheds. Through our

fundraising efforts, such as the Trout Unlimited Banquet scheduled for April 14, 2007, we are able to fund conservation and restoration projects in these watersheds. PBMR has or is currently participating in projects to improve and enhance flows of upper Little Prickly Pear Creek. The Conservation Committee, headed by Tony Herbert, is also lobbying Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to add a fisheries biologist for the Smith River and to implement a slot limit for brown trout and cutthroat trout on the Little Blackfoot. The most recent bank restoration project on the Missouri is nearly complete. You can see the newly contoured bank from the highway north of Stickney Creek FAS. We are also pleased that the Cascade FAS is going to be completely rebuilt and the Cascade dump is going to be moved to another location.

The Trout-in-the-

Classroom program is in full swing for ten Helena area public schools. We have Trout-in-the-Classroom in both high schools and both Helena middle schools; Smith, Broadwater, Warren, Central and Hawthorne Elementary Schools in Helena; and East Valley Middle School in East Helena. Thousands of trout eggs were delivered in January by program coordinator Geof Ferguson. The kids and teachers love this program. It provides a curriculum of conservation and biology which highlights the importance of cold, clean water to maintain a wild trout fishery.

While the legislature is in session, Montana Trout Unlimited's conservation director, Mark Aagenes, is looking after our interests. Montana TU is pursuing several bills including one to clarify the stream access law at bridges.

While the legislator and lobbyists are busy at the capitol, you should take advantage of the Missouri. As the days get longer and warmer, the crowds are gone and fishing can be terrific. Midges and tight lines will bring a smile to you.

Verzani and Keeler Join PBMR Board of Directors

The PBMR Chapter of TU is pleased to welcome two quality individuals to our prestigious board of directors.

Helena native Lisa Verzani joined the board in November 2006. Lisa jumped

in with both feet, taking an active role in the Trout-in-the-Classroom program and agreeing to organize the Fly-fishing Clinic on April 14. You may know Lisa from CrossCurrents flyfishing shop in downtown Helena,

where she works.

Art Keeler joined the board in January. Another Helena native and avid angler, Art is part owner of Capital Sports and Western.

A Special Thanks to Our Program Presenters

MONTHLY PROGRAM REPORT—by *Nola Freestone, Program Chair*

A SPECIAL THANK YOU GOES OUT TO THE FINE SPEAKERS WE HAVE ENJOYED AT OUR PAST FEW MEETINGS.

NOVEMBER—**Mike Geary**, owner of Lewis and Clark Expeditions, gave us an update on the 2006 guided Smith River trip for disabled veterans who served recently in Iraq. For more information on Lewis and Clark Expeditions and how you can help sponsor the next veteran's Smith River trip, please visit www.lcexp.com.

DECEMBER—Critically acclaimed author, **Dave Ames**, who has spent the last thirty years traveling the world as an itinerant fly-fishing guide presented his latest slide show, "Einstein's Trout: a look at how fish think, and whether they're really smarter than fisherman, or just seem that way." As always, Ames entertained as well as informed. His latest book, "Dances With Sharks," has been likened to "riding shotgun on a magical journey to the angling soul."

JANUARY—Helena resident, **Tim Plaska**, has 32 years of experience fly fishing on the Missouri and other rivers in Montana. He presented a slide show focusing on great fishing opportunities for couples going to saltwater fly fishing destinations. His presentation on fly fishing for bonefish, permit, and tarpon made us all want to take a trip south!

FEBRUARY—About 80 avid fly-fishers packed a small meeting room at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel on Monday, February 12, 2007, for a demonstration on fly-tying techniques. Participants—some taking notes of their observations—crowded around a half dozen tables where professional fly tyers demonstrated their skills and shared some tips. There were six professional fly tyers participating, including **Bob Brent, Nola Freestone, Dan Gard, Terry O'Connor and Geoff Ferguson**. Also participating was **Hoke Bell**, a young and upcoming tyer.

Thanks to all those tyers for making it such a successful event! There were a lot of prizes donated by **The Trout Shop, Cross Currents and Montana Fly Goods** so many people went home with new tying materials. Thanks again to everyone for making this such a great program.

MARCH—March's program will be announced via the web site (www.patbarnestu.org) and an e-mail notice so stay tuned. Please mark your calendar now for March 14 at 7:00 PM at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel so you can join us for the next chapter meeting. Remember it is always open to the public, free of charge, and refreshments are served. We look forward to seeing you again in March.

If you would like to sponsor or volunteer to help with the monthly chapter meeting and speaker series, please contact Nola Freestone at nolafreestone@yahoo.com or 406/495 2675.

Conservation Committee Requests New Little Blackfoot Regulations

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT—by *Tony Herbert, Conservation Chair*

The PBMR TU Conservation Committee has been actively working with its members and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) to define appropriate conservation projects within the Missouri, Smith, and Little Blackfoot watersheds. Working with Region 4 personnel headquartered in Great Falls, we have defined a short list of projects that can improve stream flows and habitat within the Missouri River drainages of Sheep Creek, Little Prickly Pear Creek, and the Dearborn River. All of these projects are in the planning phase, with research being done to determine appropriate next steps.

Discussions have been held with FWP about the need for increased personnel, namely in the form of additional fisheries biologists to manage fishing resources on the Smith River. Members of the committee were surprised to learn that

this important stream does not receive the attention it should in terms of on-the-ground biological study of the overall resource. Department management is willing to take our request into consideration.

The Conservation Committee and FWP also discussed new fishing regulations on the Little Blackfoot River. Members of the committee and accomplished anglers who have fished the Little Blackfoot for more than a decade report a dramatic decline in the number of brown trout greater than 12 inches and particularly over 15 inches and believe these populations are at historic lows.

Our proposal to the department is to move to catch-and-release regulations for westslope cutthroat trout on the entire reach of the Little Blackfoot. Additionally, we have proposed that a slot limit for



Photo by Dave Ames

brown trout be introduced between Elliston and the Highway 12 high bridge. Coupled with this we recommended that data be collected to better understand the status of the resource and the effects that these limits are having on the fishery. Any changes in regulations through this process would be implemented by FWP in 2008.

The Conservation Committee members include: Dave Ames, Dennis Cates, Rob Creel, Dan Ellison, Tony Herbert, Brooks Morin, Chris Strainer, Jim Summers, and John Wilson. PBMR TU members who wish to join the Conservation Committee should contact Tony Herbert at 449-7252.

New Bridge in Craig Will Bear Name of Late Montana Governor

—Adapted from MARTIN J. KIDSTON's article in the *Helena Independent Record*, 02/08/07

Lewis and Clark County commissioners signed a proclamation Tuesday naming the new \$3.5 million bridge over the Missouri River in Craig after Forrest Howard Anderson, one of Helena's foremost political stars.

County Commissioner Ed Tinsley said the commission signed off on the name earlier this week and will now go before the Montana Highway Commission to get the name approved.

Anderson began his career as a Democrat and member of the House of Representatives in 1943. He was elected as the Lewis and Clark County attorney in 1945 and won a seat on the Montana Supreme Court in 1953.

The husband and father continued his political ascension to become the attorney general in 1957. He reached the peak of his career when elected governor at the age of 53, a position he held for four years.

In their proclamation, county commissioners also remembered Anderson as an outdoorsman who helped preserve fishing access within the country.

The Forrest Howard Anderson Bridge replaced the historic Craig Bridge last year. The old bridge made a high-profile move across Helena and now sits west of town at the former State Nursery, where it waits for its new owners to put it to use.



Photo by Dennis Cates

The Tractor Hole Conservation Project

PROJECT UPDATE—George Liknes, *Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks*



Photo courtesy of G Liknes

Stream Works Inc. backsloping along the Missouri River in early September.

It has been a long time in coming, but on-site work near the Tractor Hole on the Missouri River started in late August. Stream Works, Inc. of Lincoln moved in an excavator and started sloping back the bank of the river as part of an effort to enhance the riparian habitat for more than half a mile. The Tractor Hole Project starts just downstream of Spite Hill Fishing Access Site on the other side of the river, and ends about a half a mile above the mouth of the Dearborn River. It gets its name from a tractor, which along with much scattered debris, was dumped in the river channel at the upper end of the project area. A couple of years ago, a man from Wisconsin removed the tractor with plans to restore it.

The project was born back in 2004 when Chris Strainer, then President of PBMR TU suggested working on the reach. We approached the Juedeman family who operates the Canyon Cattle Company about the project and explained that we wanted to rehabilitate the bank and fence it off to aid in reducing erosion and to develop a healthy vegetative cover that will be used by aquatic insects and provide cover and velocity breaks during high flows for fish. Buck Juedeman was supportive of the project, but also still needed to provide 200 cow-calf pairs with water, which had historically been obtained from the Missouri. We were surprised to learn that the upper 720 feet of the project area was public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management as a power reservation for a potential dam site!

So the project grew to include off-site water for Juedeman's cattle as well as rehabilitating the bank. In addition to sloping the bank and moving excess soil to cover gravel and rocky areas that have been dominated by weeds in the middle of the reach, most of the area has been covered with straw, seeded, and we are in the process of installing erosion control fabric along the entire reach. Most of the debris in the river was removed including old implements, engines, pipe, truck frames, and a stove! We still need to build the fence, and next spring we will have a Montana Conservation Corps crew plant some of the 3,000 shrubs ordered from the State Nursery.

In mid-September, Boland Drilling drilled the livestock well on the opposite side of the BNSF railroad tracks from the river. A solar pump system and water tanks have been installed to provide the new water supply for cattle, eliminating their need to access the river. Fall rains have provided good germination and grasses are quickly establishing throughout much of the project area. Hopefully in ten years, we will not be able to recognize this part of the Missouri!

So far the project has cost almost \$30,000. PBMR TU sponsored the project and provided funding for a controller for the livestock water pump. The Missouri River thanks you! Along with PBMR TU, Missouri River Fly Fishers, PPL-MT (Fisheries and Wildlife Mitigation Funds), and MFWP's Future Fisheries Improvement Program helped to fund the project.



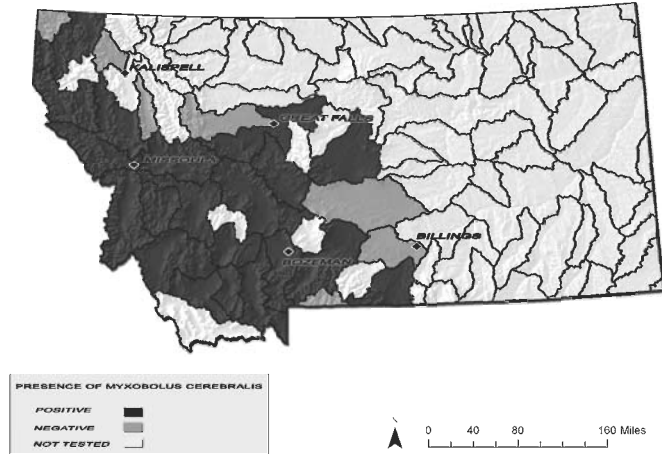
Photo courtesy of G Liknes

Boland Construction drilling the livestock well.

Aquatic Nuisance Species Management in Montana

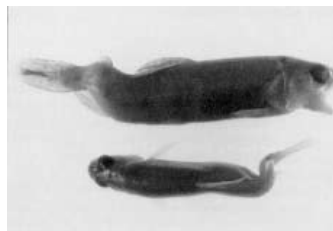
LEARN AND LEND A HAND—by Eileen K.N. Ryce: Montana Aquatic Nuisance Species Coordinator, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

FEATURE SPECIES PROFILE – Whirling Disease (*Myxobolus cerebralis*)

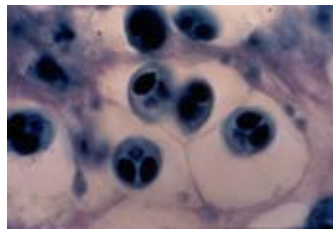


2005 Distribution of Whirling Disease in Montana Watersheds. Whirling Disease Initiative map www.whirlingdisease.montana.edu

Whirling disease is caused by a metazoan parasite that infects cartilage tissue of most salmonid species. The whirling disease parasite was first introduced to the United States from Europe in the 1950s probably through trout infected in Europe. The disease is known to occur in over 20 states. Whirling disease has become a major problem in some western states, and has caused major declines in some wild rainbow trout populations. Currently whirling disease has been found in over 167 bodies of water in Montana with severe infections in the Madison River, mid-Missouri River, Rock Creek, and Big Blackfoot River. The illegal stocking of fish ponds is thought to be one of the main vectors for spreading whirling disease as well as other fish pathogens. At least one case of whirling disease being introduced into a new sub-basin has been traced to the illegal stocking of a fish pond with infected fish.



Whirling disease in young fish (above). Whirling disease parasite, *Myxobolus cerebralis*, (below).



Aquatic nuisance species are the cause of significant ecological and socio-economic problems throughout North America. Invasive species, such as zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, Asian carp, New Zealand mudsnails and whirling disease are being introduced into new locations at an alarming rate. After introduction, populations often grow quickly and spread rapidly due to lack of natural controls. Once established, they often displace native species, clog waterways, impact municipal and industrial irrigation and power systems, degrade ecosystems, reduce or threaten recreational and commercial fishing opportunities, and can cause wildlife and public health problems.

MONTANA'S ANS PROGRAM

The federal Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990 amended by the National Invasive Species Act of 1996, calls for the development of state and regional management plans to control aquatic nuisance species. The Montana Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan was finalized in October of 2002 and a full time Aquatic Nuisance Species Program Coordinator was hired by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in February of 2004. The goal of the Montana ANS Management Plan is to minimize the harmful ecological, economic, and social impact of ANS through prevention and management of introduction, population growth, and dispersal into, within, and from Montana. The emphasis of the Montana ANS Program is on coordination, education, control and prevention of spread, monitoring and detection, and rapid response.

The species of highest concern within Montana are zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, Asian carp, New Zealand mudsnails, and *Myxobolus cerebralis* (the whirling disease parasite). Information about the origin, status, and impacts of each species are presented here, as well as tips for how you can help to prevent the introduction and spread of aquatic nuisance species. Zebra mussels were highlighted in the November issue of PBMR News. Whirling disease is the topic of this issue.

Visit www.fwp.gov for more information about Montana's Aquatic Nuisance Species program.

TIPS FOR PREVENTING INTRODUCTION & SPREAD OF AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES

Once aquatic nuisance species become established they are very difficult if not impossible to eradicate and even control measures can be costly if at all possible. The best management strategy for all Aquatic Nuisance Species is preventing spread and introduction.

- REMOVE all sediment and vegetation from boats, trailers and equipment.
- WASH all boats, trailers and equipment. High pressure hot water is best.
- DISINFECT equipment with 20% bleach for 10 minutes, 5% bleach for 1 hour.
- DRY all equipment thoroughly.
- DO NOT transfer any water, vegetation or animals between sites.
- Learn to identify know aquatic nuisance species in your area.

Thank You For Your Continued Support!

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***WELCOME
NEW PBMR TU
MEMBERS!
(as of February 9, 2007)**

**THANKS FOR
JOINING TU!**

Come Support TU: Annual Banquet and Free Clinic

SPECIAL EVENTS—*Rob Creel, Vice President and Banquet Chair*

ANNUAL BANQUET – APRIL 14

Join us on April 14, 2007 at the Red Lion Colonial Hotel in Helena for PBMR TU's 26th annual banquet. The banquet is the Chapter's only fund-raiser to support our conservation, outreach, and education efforts for our local trout fisheries.

Keeping with tradition the Chapter is hosting a whole gamut of raffle prize opportunities including new/renewed membership drawings, bucket raffle, grand raffle, and much more. This year's grand raffle is an Orvis **Limited Edition Zero Gravity Rod** with matching reel, full day guided float on the Missouri or Blackfoot River, and a great selection of flies that can be used on any of a number of Montana's great rivers.

Your banquet ticket not only gets you in the door, but includes a delicious buffet dinner, silent and live auctions, and a chance at fantastic door prizes. Buy your tickets early! Banquet tickets are available for \$35 from The Trout Shop, Montana Fly Goods, CrossCurrents, and Capital Sports and Western. If you can't attend the banquet and still want to support PBMR, become a banquet sponsor, purchase a Gold Table, donate auction items, or volunteer to help with the fly fishing clinic or banquet preparations!

Cocktail hour and silent auction begin at 6 PM and dinner will be served at 7 PM.

This year's Grand Raffle prize is an Orvis Limited Edition Zero Gravity Rod with reel



FREE FLY FISHING CLINIC

Before the banquet, bring the whole family to our popular "Fly Fishing Clinic" at Capital High School beginning at 9:00 AM. All ages and skill levels can learn something from instructor Bob Jacklin, from technical cast to selecting the right gear. Stick around for a complimentary lunch and a chance at door prizes.



Photo courtesy of Christine Mandiloff

PBMR Board member Tony Herbert provides casting tips at the free fly fishing clinic put on by the chapter last spring.

Support Trout-in-the-Classroom by Sponsoring a Gold Table



Students participating in the Trout-In-The-Classroom program attend the banquet each year where they give presentations about their experiences with the program. PBMR TU hosts these students and their teachers through the help of Gold Table sponsorship.

Please call Rob Creel, Banquet Chair, at 406/461 8713, if you would like to sponsor the Trout-In-The-Classroom table.

Your Donation to PBMR Can Help Disabled Veterans

PBMR TU is currently supporting Lewis and Clark Expeditions' efforts in helping injured veterans with therapy. Mike Geary and other TU supporters take a group of veterans on a week long trip down the Smith River annually. If you are interested in helping with this effort you can earmark a donation to our chapter for LC Expeditions and this trip. Send your donations to PBMR TU at PO Box 4404, Helena, MT 59604.

Thank You—Rob Creel

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING ADVERTISEMENTS

AD SIZES AND RATES:

LOW INTRODUCTORY RATES!

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 Non-Members - \$0.20 per word
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 1/4 page - \$50/issue
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 Full page - \$100/issue
 NOTE: Ad design services are available for an additional fee.

AD COPY:

Camera-ready PDF or JPG by email to patbarnestu@hotmail.com, or Scan-ready by mail to PBMR Ads, PO Box 4404, Helena, MT 59604. Electronic newsletter is in color, and print version is black and white. Please design your ads accordingly.

DEADLINES:

Feb. artwork due Jan.1
 May artwork due Apr. 1
 Aug. artwork due Jul. 1
 Nov. artwork due Oct. 1

PAYMENT:

Due with ad copy/artwork. Ads will not be run without payment! Make checks payable to PBMR TU. Mail to PBMR TU Ads, c/o Treasurer, at PO Box 4404, Helena, MT 59604.
 *Membership number must be included for free classified listing.

Get Legislative Updates Online

—Mark Aagenes, Montana TU Conservation Director



The Montana legislative session is underway and Montana TU continues to have a prominent voice on the hill. We are following a number of important issues related to the rivers we love—in

particular, a number of bills related to unchecked water appropriation, access to our rivers and streams at bridges, and long term protection for some of our more outstanding places. Please visit Montana TU's website for legislative updates (www.montanatu.org). If you have questions please call me, Mark Aagenes, Montana TU Conservation Director, at 449-9933 or email me at mark@montanatu.org.

Send an email to info@patbarnestu.org with "E-Alert Subscribe" in the subject line, and we will add you to our email list for meeting announcements, action alerts, and other important chapter information.

CALENDAR



[Mar 14] Chapter Meeting, Red Lion Colonial Hotel, 7-9 PM

[Apr 14] FREE Fly fishing Clinic, Capital High School, 9 AM

[Apr 14] Annual Banquet and Auction, Red Lion Colonial Hotel, 6 PM

Visit www.patbarnestu.org for details on upcoming presentations.

ARE YOU OVERDUE? CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL.

– Thank you for your continued support of the Pat Barnes Missouri River Chapter of Trout Unlimited. –

PAT BARNES MISSOURI RIVER CHAPTER

(#055)

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Telephone (Day): _____ (Evening): _____
 E-mail address: _____ Fax#: _____
 Occupation: _____

Enclosed is my employer's matching gift form, plus my membership application and payment.

SEND TO: PBMR TU MEMBERSHIP
 PO BOX 4404
 HELENA, MT 59604

Check One: [] NEW MEMBERSHIP [] MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Please check membership category*:

- Special Introductory Rate (\$17.50)
- Youth (\$20)
- Senior (\$20)
- Regular (\$35)
- Family/Contributor (\$50)
- Sponsor (\$100)
- Conservator (\$250)

For Business (\$200), Life (\$1,000) and Family Life (\$1,100) memberships, call 1-800-834-2419.

Payment Method

- Check (Make checks payable to TROUT UNLIMITED) VISA M/C DISCOVER

Card# _____ Exp. Date _____

Name as it appears on card _____

* Canadian membership please add \$5 per year, all other countries, add \$20 per year. Membership contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Code: