

Conserving, protecting, and restoring coldwater fisheries in Montana's Missouri, Little Blackfoot, and Smith River watersheds.

PBMIR NEWS

PAT BARNES MISSOURI RIVER TU • www.patbarnestu.org • FALL 2008



From the President: Fall Is In the Air
Monthly Meetings Replaced by Seasonal Events
Board Endorses Land, Water, Wildlife Campaign
Membership: How to Join and Renew
Impacts of Global Warming on Trout
Smith River Restoration Project Funded
State Council Meeting Reports



PAT BARNES MISSOURI RIVER CHAPTER
Chapter No. 055
PO Box 275
Helena, MT 59624-0275
info@patbarnestu.org

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

Monthly Meetings Replaced by Seasonal Events

This year PBMR TU will sponsor four events to celebrate fly fishing and our mission to conserve, restore, and protect trout and coldwater trout habitat.

FWP BIOLOGIST REPORT

IN JANUARY 2009, the Chapter will host an event where the **Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks biologist will provide a report** on fish counts, conditions, and status for the Smith, Missouri, and Little Blackfoot watersheds. The time and date of this event will be announced when confirmed.

FLY TYING

ON FEBRUARY 12, 2009, Nola Freestone and Friends will host their **annual fly**

tying event. Nola and several fly tyers will provide hands on instruction for dries, nymphs, and streamers.

BANQUET AND AUCTION

ON MARCH 21, 2009, the **annual PBMR TU chapter banquet** will be held at the Helena Civic Center. We have a great caterer for the venue and are excited with the new location.

FLY FISHING AND CASTING CLINIC

IN MAY, 2009, Bob Jacklin and several PBMR TU members will put on a **free fly fishing and casting clinic**. Bob Jacklin is a well known guide, author and fly caster from West Yellowstone. The time and date of this popular event

will be announced when confirmed.

FILM EVENT

IN SUMMER 2009, the Chapter intends to hold **another film event**. This past July, PBMR TU co-sponsored a screening of two films. The showing of "Tarpon" and "Why Fly Fishing" had great energy and the crowd was as raucous as anglers can be. Look for future opportunities to celebrate your passion to fish as we will bring more events to the Myrna Loy Center.

We are always looking for volunteers for the banquet and the fly fishing and casting clinic. If you have interest in donating your time, email me at your convenience jay@mtlandreliance.org.



Membership

[LISA VERZANI, Membership Chair]

How to Join TU or Renew Your Membership

Visit www.tu.org to join or renew your TU membership. Be sure to select Chapter #055, the Pat Barnes Missouri River Chapter.

You may also update your contact information via the web (www.tu.org) by entering the "Member Login" section. If you need assistance, please call 1 800 834 2419 or email trout@tu.org with your full name and address. You may also contact the PBMR TU Membership Chair, Lisa Verzani at 406 449 6702 or verzani@aol.com for assistance with your membership.

As of September 30, 2008, PBMR TU has 410 members representing 43 different zip codes!

WELCOME 13 NEW MEMBERS

- Jason Carnahan
- Tom Galbreath
- Mary Gehbell
- Franklin Han
- Dustin Hemingway
- Joseph Pettigrew
- Glen Roberts
- Larry Roth
- Louis Sheldahl
- David Smith
- Ray Stroman
- Jeanne Walker
- Michelle Wine



Subscribe to E-Alerts

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 event announcements, action alerts, and other important chapter information.

Board Endorses Land, Water, and Wildlife Campaign

At the September board meeting, the PBMR TU board voted to endorse the Lewis and Clark County Land, Water and Wildlife Campaign, and donated \$300 to the effort.

This November, Lewis and Clark County voters will be asked to approve a \$10 million bond to protect clean water, working lands, and wildlife. Funds from the bond will be used to acquire voluntary conservation easements from willing landowners.

The board felt it was beneficial to our mission to start a program in Lewis and Clark County.

For more information or to donate to the campaign, visit www.landwaterwildlife.org.

Fall Is In The Air

Wow! A few cool days and fall is in the air! The summer is almost over and PBMR TU has been active in a couple of notable events that fit with the Chapter's aim to improve habitat and natural resource conditions in coldwater fisheries now and in the future, and to raise awareness about the importance of these efforts.

The Chapter took its first swing at sponsoring a film event when we showed two fly fishing movies jointly with the Myrna Loy Center on July 31. Thanks to help from Chapter member and author Dave Ames, and advisors Cathy Ransier and Marcy Chovanak of the Book Mailer, 70 Chapter members and non-members had a fun filled evening at the Myrna enjoying two films:

"Why Fly Fishing" features John Gierach, Joan Wulff, Nick Lyons, Flip Pallot, and James Prosek. This film helped explain why fly fishermen are so passionate about their sport and its history, and was produced by Jeff Pill, who was on hand to introduce the film and take questions.

"Tarpon" was produced in 1974 and featured authors Tom McGuane, Jim Harrison, and the late Richard Brautigan, as well as an original musical score by Jimmy Buffett. The nostalgia of the 1970s Florida Keys, along with smugglers and pirates, provided a charming glimpse into the past, and the film footage of huge tarpon on light tackle entertained everyone at the event.

I want to thank Dave, Cathy, Marcy, and the Myrna Loy for their assistance in making this a successful event. If you missed it, have no fear because members of the board are interested in continuing with an annual film event. So keep a look out for notices on another fun-filled-film evening about our sport. Anyone interested in obtaining copies of these two films should contact Cathy Ransier at cathy@thebookmailer.com, or give Cathy or Marcy a call at 443-7332.

In response to Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' (FWP) request to participate, PBMR TU agreed to contribute \$1,000 to a fencing project on the North Fork of the Smith River. This project was supported by Montana TU (MTU) and was substantially funded by the Future Fisheries Program and the Smith River Corridor Enhancement Fund. We, along with MTU, have been strong supporters of the Corridor Enhancement Fund used by FWP for fisheries related projects (not only Parks related projects) and we are pleased to see this finally come to fruition. For more details about this project see John Wilson's Conservation Report in this newsletter.

Lastly, the board endorsed the 2008/2009 slate of officers with the addition of Art Keeler as our new Vice President. Dan Ellison has been asked to move into the Treasurer position for the MTU State Council, and Dan felt that he needed to step down from the Chapter's vice president role. When you see Dan, be sure to thank him for his tireless work on the Chapter's behalf, and wish him good luck with his new State Council duties—and welcome Art to his new officer's role. I look forward to working with Art, and I know he will bring his usual enthusiasm to Chapter activities.



Tony Herbert is a long time Helena resident and conservation-minded fisherman.

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.

President, Tony Herbert
PO Box 275
Helena MT 59624-0275
www.patbarnestu.org
info@patbarnestu.org
406/449 7252

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. © 1980-2008.

Articles, letters, and artwork related to conservation, restoration, and preservation of Montana's coldwater 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 publications coordinator, Melissa Brown 406/495 2309.

BOARD OFFICERS

President, Tony Herbert
Vice President, Art Keeler
Treasurer, Nola Freestone
Secretary, Lisa Verzani
Past President, Jay Erickson

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Conservation, John Wilson
Membership, Lisa Verzani
Trout-In-The-Classroom,
Lisa Verzani/Geof Ferguson
Banquet, Nola Freestone
Casting Clinic, Lisa Verzani
Programs, Jay Erickson
Publications, Melissa Brown

OTHER DIRECTORS

Mark Aagenes
Tom Burgess
Dennis Cates
Frank Cooper
Todd Damrow
Earl Dorsey
Dan Ellison
Garrett Fawaz
Geof Ferguson
Art Keeler
Jim Stevens
Chris Strainer
Ed Tinsley
Arne Wick

To reach board members by email, send messages with the board member's name in the subject line to info@patbarnestu.org.

EDITORS NOTE: *The following article is adapted from an excerpt used with permission from an issue paper produced by Natural Resource Defense Council and Montana Trout Unlimited. We recommend that you go to www.montanatu.org for a complete detailed version of the issue paper.*

Principal Author: Steven Kinsella; **Contributing Authors:** Theo Spencer, Natural Resources Defense Council, Bruce Farling, Montana Trout Unlimited

Adapted by: John Wilson

TROUT IN TROUBLE

IMPACTS OF GLOBAL WARMING ON TROUT IN THE INTERIOR WEST



The Big Hole River contains the last population of native stream-dwelling arctic grayling in the lower 48 states. Many believe that the Big Hole river system will likely feel the greatest impacts due to global warming.

GLOBAL WARMING IS THE SINGLE GREATEST THREAT TO THE SURVIVAL OF TROUT IN AMERICA'S INTERIOR WEST. IF NOTHING IS DONE TO REDUCE HUMAN-PRODUCED GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS—THE PRIMARY CULPRIT BEHIND GLOBAL WARMING—TROUT HABITAT THROUGHOUT THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN REGION COULD BE REDUCED BY 50 PERCENT OR MORE BY THE END OF THE CENTURY. The loss of habitat would bring fewer opportunities for anglers to enjoy sportfishing, resulting in serious economic consequences for those who depend on the fishing, recreation, and tourism industry for their livelihoods. Although we are already seeing declines in trout populations and habitat throughout the West, it is not too late to avoid the most serious impacts of global warming on these important species.

Global Warming Is Hitting the West Hard

Climate models predicting future temperature trends and weather patterns are showing continued hot and dry weather well into the future. During the 20th century, the average annual temperature in the western United States rose by 1.7 degrees Fahrenheit, which is 70 percent more warming than the planet as a whole during the same time period. Global climate models show that average annual temperatures could increase anywhere from 3 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit during the next hundred years if nothing is done to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the primary cause of global warming. Regional average temperatures could be even higher, especially in higher latitudes where scientists predict the most dramatic climate changes will occur.

Scientists project that for trout and other cold-water aquatic species, the combined effects of a 1.5 degree Fahrenheit increase in average air temperatures could result in a 7 to 16 percent loss of trout habitat in the continental United States. And a 4.8 degree Fahrenheit increase could reduce habitat by a staggering 42 to 54 percent.

For more information about the impacts of global warming in the West, visit www.nrdc.org/policy to read the March 2008 report Hotter and Drier: The West's Changed Climate.

Global Warming Will Cause Serious Damage to Trout Habitat

Native trout have existed in much of the interior West since the Pleistocene Era—the time of the great ice ages. The loss of these trout because of human-caused global warming would be a tremendous loss to the region and a harbinger of future trouble. Trout are viewed by many as an indicator of healthy river ecosystems. Their inability to survive due to environmental conditions could be a glimpse of the

challenges that lay ahead for humans in places like the West.

Global warming is already changing the climate and affecting trout populations throughout the West. Through a combination of diminished snowpacks feeding cool water to rivers and streams, higher temperatures of the air and water, more frequent and larger wildfires, and the proliferation of disease that can accompany these changes, global warming will transform trout habitat. In some locations where the trout populations are particularly vulnerable, suitable habitat for trout could decline by 70 percent or more over the next 50 to 100 years. The famous recreational trout fishery on the Bighorn River in Montana, for example, has struggled in recent years due to drought, declining reservoir levels, record setting high temperatures, and reduced snowpack—all common impacts of global warming. Even tailwater fisheries once thought immune to warming because of their location below immense dams that discharge cold water from far below the surface will be affected.

We Can Act Now to Save Trout and Combat Global Warming

It is not too late to avoid the most severe projected impacts of global warming on trout and their habitat. We must act now to reduce our emissions of global warming pollution and adopt other policies that appropriately value healthy rivers, lakes, and streams. The following are a few areas where changes can be made on a national, regional, and individual level.

COMPREHENSIVE FEDERAL ACTION IS NEEDED

On the national level, strong federal action to reduce emissions of global warming pollutants at least 80 percent below current levels by the year 2050 is a necessary step to limit warming below dangerous levels, and to give businesses the certainty they need to plan large capital and investment

projects. A growing chorus of leaders across the spectrum is calling for immediate action to reduce the lasting and potentially irreversible effects of global warming. In June 2008, a majority of Senators supported moving forward with “America’s Climate Security Act” (S. 3036), also referred to as the Lieberman-Warner bill. In 2009, Congress will consider a variety of new global warming bills. We urge senators from Western states to support a bill that is at least as strong as the bipartisan Lieberman-Warner bill.

REGIONAL INITIATIVES ARE PART OF THE SOLUTION

While federal action is crucial to combating global warming, state officials should also act now to adopt their own binding policies and to reduce emissions in a similar fashion. This challenge can be met through improvements in building, vehicle, and industrial efficiency; increased investment in renewable energy and low carbon fuel; and deployment of technologies to capture and store carbon emissions.

To date, the governors of Arizona, California, Montana, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, and Washington have signed the Western Climate Initiative (WCI), an agreement to reduce global warming pollution through a market-based system. Governors of these states, and others that join the Western Regional Climate Initiative, should insist that a range of comprehensive policies be implemented to ensure the WCI’s targets of reducing carbon emissions 15 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 are achieved either on or ahead of schedule. Additionally, the WCI states must agree to the firm target of reducing emissions of global warming pollution at least 80 percent below current levels by mid-century.

INVESTMENTS IN ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SOURCES ARE OVERDUE

Solving the global warming problem can be done, and it can be done with little or no harm to our economy. Recent studies conducted by the respected consulting

—“Trout in Trouble” (cont. on page 6)

firm McKinsey & Company and by the International Monetary Fund make this point clear.

The cost of inaction for trout, angling, and the culture and economies that depend on this treasured western resource will be significant. Avoiding this cost will require elected officials to make tough, forward-thinking decisions. The sooner and the more decisively we act to usher in the next generations of buildings, vehicles, fuels and energy, the greater our chances will be of avoiding the most dangerous effects of human-caused global warming and preserving the West we know and love.

Elected officials should also work on securing larger investments in alternative energy sources such as wind, solar, geothermal, and energy efficiency to reduce the nation’s—and eventually the world’s—dependence on fossil fuels. With its abundance of solar, wind, and geothermal energy potential, the western United States is uniquely suited to be a major player in a clean energy economy that could bring tremendous economic development to the region.

What Individuals Can Do

For trout to endure in the interior American West, anglers must consider the impacts of global warming and help lead the effort to save this treasured resource. It is possible to avoid the worst impacts of global warming, but we must act soon. Here are a few tips for what individuals can do to reduce carbon emissions, reduce water demand, and reduce direct impacts on trout while fishing.

REDUCE EMISSIONS

When making lifestyle decisions you have the power to make choices that contribute either to the problem of global warming or its solution. Planting a tree, buying a fuel-efficient car or truck, driving less, getting an energy audit for your home, buying efficient

appliances and lighting can all save energy and reduce emission of global warming pollution. It is estimated that if every household in the United States replaced one regular light bulb with an energy-saving model, the result would be the same as taking 6.3 million cars off the road.

Further, your choices can boost demand for more efficient products and send a signal to manufacturers that efficiency matters. Go to www.nrdc.org/globalwarming/gsteps.asp to learn what else you can do to make your own contribution toward reducing global warming.

REDUCE DEMAND FOR WATER

You can do your part to conserve water by installing water-saving devices throughout your home. Also consider encouraging the installation of similar devices at your office, school, and house of worship where the water and cost savings could be even greater.

REDUCE YOUR IMPACT ON TROUT WHILE FISHING

First, and most important, respect fishing closures. Closures are put into place to help trout survive high stream temperatures caused by drought, water use, and high air temperature. Even when stream closures are not in place, there are a few things you should do if fishing when streamflows are low and temperatures warm:

- fish in the morning hours when temperatures are cooler
- limit the length of time you play a fish
- use barbless hooks
- minimize the fish’s exposure to the air
- release the fish as quickly as possible

Alternatively, you can fish high-elevation streams and lakes that remain cool in summer.

CASE STUDY PREVIEW

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE, WE WILL PRESENT CASE STUDIES FROM TWO MONTANA RIVERS THAT ARE FEELING THE HEAT OF GLOBAL WARMING—THE BIG HOLE AND THE BIGHORN RIVERS.

Big Hole River



BIG SKY FISHING [www.bigskyfishing.com]

TROUT AT RISK: Brown trout, rainbow trout, brook trout, westslope cutthroat

OTHER COLDWATER FISH OF CONCERN: The river also contains the last remaining population of native fluvial grayling in the lower 48 states

WORST GLOBAL WARMING THREATS: Altered snowpack, high air temperatures

Bighorn River



BIG SKY FISHING [www.bigskyfishing.com]

TROUT AT RISK: Brown trout, rainbow trout

WORST GLOBAL WARMING THREATS: Drought and altered snowpack

COMPLICATING FACTORS: A tailwater, the Bighorn River’s trout population is dependent on the Bureau of Reclamation’s operation of the Bighorn reservoir

Smith River Restoration Project Receives Funding—PBMR TU Contributing Partner

A restoration project on the North Fork of the Smith River recently received funding from multiple sources, including PBMR TU. The project is designed to improve fish habitat by restoring river bank integrity and vegetation and restricting cattle from the majority of the stream corridor, while providing off stream livestock watering. The project entails installing 2.12 miles of fencing, restoring four highly eroded bank sites, and establishing two off site livestock watering tanks. The estimated total cost of the project is \$59,163.01. Funding for the project came from multiple sources: \$23,500 from Montana Future Fisheries; \$32,662 from Smith River Corridor Enhancement Account, and \$1,000 each from PBMR TU, Montana TU, and Missouri River Flyfishers.

Rainbow trout, brown trout, and eastern brook trout reside in this section of river. In May 2008, while conducting evaluations at the project site, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) biologists identified several rainbow trout spawning redds in this section of river and observed two paired rainbows (over 15 inches long) in the process of spawning.

This project will benefit trout and trout anglers by:

- providing habitat for brown trout, rainbow trout, and brook trout in the form of overhanging cover from riparian vegetation
- reducing sediment delivery to the river
- increasing shade on the river during critical times of the year and reducing solar influences on the water (lowering water temperatures and reducing stress to trout)
- improving the quality of fishing opportunities as the riparian vegetation matures
- serving as a showcase project to adjacent landowners and hopefully creating a snowball effect for future habitat projects that individually may be limited in benefits, but cumulatively would have dramatic benefits to the water quality in the Smith River drainage (these changes would ultimately benefit trout populations in the Smith River, while also having beneficial impact to the agriculture industry and livestock producers in the Smith River valley)
- maintaining public access for fishing on the property (the lessee/manager has expressed an interest in maintaining public access).

The project will be completed by FWP staff this fall if weather permits.

PROJECT REPRESENTS A NEW BEGINNING FOR THE SMITH RIVER

This project represents an important tangible step in setting a new direction for the Smith River. PBMR TU and Montana TU have been actively seeking a more proactive fisheries management regime for the Smith River by FWP. Fisheries Division Administrator, Chris Hunter and Fisheries Biologist Grant Grisak (among others) have recognized the need and responded. We thank them for their leadership.

FWP has stepped up it's commitment to the Smith River fishery by (1) dedicating one-half of the time of a Future Fisheries Improvement Program biologist to address the fish habitat problems in the Smith River drainage, and (2) providing approximately \$207,000 for a two-year study to investigate trout life history, identify fish passage barriers and identify trout losses in the upper Smith River drainage. FWP set short term goals for the Smith River Habitat Improvement Program, which includes implementing programs to decrease water temperature and increase water flow during critical times of the year.

This is the first use of the Smith River Corridor Enhancement Account established some twenty years ago. A portion of Smith floaters fees is deposited in the account for specific non-administrative uses. In 2005, Montana TU led a legislative effort to delineate the uses of the account in law, ensuring fisheries restoration and stream flow enhancement were top priorities. Funding this project is the culmination of a multi-year TU effort and access to an important resource for maintaining and enhancing the world-class Smith River coldwater fishery.



The restoration project on the North Fork of the Smith River will benefit trout and trout anglers (Photo by Trey Coon).

MTU State Council

Summer

[BY DAN ELLISON]

The Montana Trout Unlimited (MTU) Executive Committee held their annual budget meeting near Dearborn this past August and much of the discussion focused on a plan for dealing with a revenue shortfall during 2008 while formulating a balanced budget for the next fiscal year.

Executive Director Bruce Farling provided his usual comprehensive summary of the State Council's financial situation through June, noting that several donors of long standing had not been able to contribute to their usual amounts this year. Projections showed revenue would end the year somewhere above 80% of projections. As a consequence, adjustments were made in a few of the expense line items and expectations were that expenses would end the year at about 88% of planned figures. He also explained that with one-quarter of the year remaining there were several potential revenue generating activities that could positively impact the final income numbers before October.

While concerned over the financial situation, the council explored a number of options for maintaining a stable budget, and expressed support for a September fund-raising event – a 100+ mile Float-a-Thon on the Yellowstone River – expected to attract donors and sponsors while highlighting cold water conservation on one of Montana's blue ribbon waters. In addition, the financial plans for fiscal year 2009 were carefully reviewed and the council approved a draft budget that will be within 2% of this year's program for both income and expenses.

Staffing changes were another topic of interest as several positions on the executive committee will transition in December, and the MTU Program Assistant – Sara McComas – is moving out of state. Earlier this month a hiring decision was made and Kate Grant will return to that position within a few weeks. Chapter members will recall that Kate filled the position once previously and will bring with her solid knowledge of and a strong commitment to the MTU mission. Succession planning for state council officers is also underway due to the normal two-year rotation policy, and the National Leadership Team

representative having moved to California. State Council vacancies are anticipated in the Vice Chairman and Secretary positions.

The executive committee also discussed the challenges related to chapter attendance at state council meetings. Time and distance are often cited as being problematic, especially for the more distant chapters given the size of Montana and the escalating cost of fuel. It was noted that certain chapters routinely attend the quarterly state council meetings, while others rarely have a representative present. Council Chairman Tom Anacker reiterated his goal to increase chapter participation while resolving to do all he could to ensure that meetings sites are widely dispersed. The MTU staff indicated they are always willing to attend chapter meetings and look forward to the opportunity to interact directly with chapter members.

Other discussions touched on the upcoming legislative session, status of the bridge access court case in Madison County, the Plum Creek road easement agreement with the Forest Service, and strategic planning including how MTU will participate with other conservation organizations in the BLM oil and gas leasing approval process. Details on these and other issues of concern to MTU chapters and members can be found on the web site at <http://www.montanatu.org>, or through contact with the staff in Missoula.

Fall

[BY TONY HERBERT]

All Montana TU Chapters were represented at the fall meeting of the Montana TU State Council held at Fairmont Hot Springs on September 20. Mary Sexton, Director of the Department of Natural Resources, led an active discussion relating to oil and gas leases, and the ongoing activities regarding water rights and water uses. A healthy exchange of ideas ensued with a recognition of the importance of open dialogue on these, and other, issues which are essential to MTU's mission. A 2009 operating budget of \$324,800 for MTU was approved. A field trip of the German Gulch restoration project just west of Fairmont was presented by the George Grant Chapter. For further details of the activities of this meeting, please contact Lisa Verzani or Tony Herbert.

Help Wanted!

The PBMR TU banquet committee needs your help—as much or as little as you wish. Remember all efforts go toward preserving our local waters and habitat!

Please contact banquet chair, Nola Freestone, at nolafreestone@yahoo.com to find out the next meeting date (Subject: TU Banquet), or call 406 495 2675.

Advertise in PBMR News

To request advertising guidelines, call 406/495 2309 or email info@patbarnestu.org



Register for your free fly fishing trip to
The Ranches at Belt Creek at
www.theranchesatbeltcreek.com
Contact Michelle Wine for more details.
Phone: 406-750-2361
We look forward to your visit!

Publication production by
Melissa Brown Consulting & Design
www.melissabrownconsulting.com