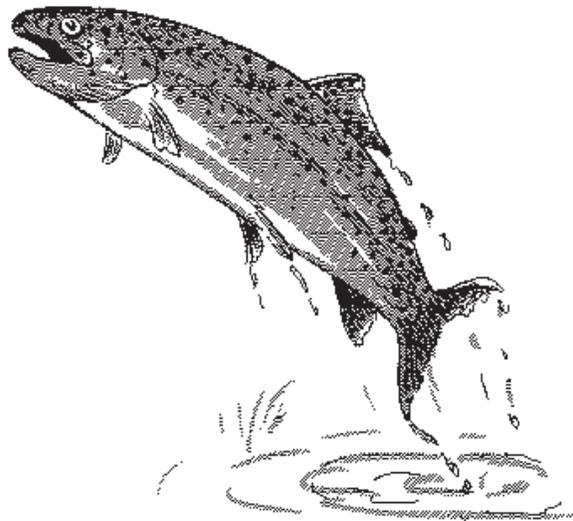


Electric

The Evergreen Trout



August 2002 The Newsletter of the Evergreen Chapter of Trout Unlimited Vol. 20 No. 8

From The Prez,

It seems like ages since my last newsletter column after missing a month for our big Trapper's Lake trip. Speaking of that, the weather was spectacular, the mosquitoes were nonexistent, and the beer was great; but the fishing was somewhat slow....again... We appear to have been a little late, as usual, this year. Some of the guys did fish various stretches of the White River with good success though. Hopefully next year we'll hit the 'peak' of the hatch.

ETU has been quite busy the last two months, so I'll bring you up to date. For starters, we had the **4th of July Fishing Clinic at Evergreen Lake**, which was a huge success. This year approximately 3500 rainbows were stocked (inside the netted area, for a change) instead of the usual 1000, which greatly improved the catch rate. **Nearly every kid landed a fish** (or at least hooked one), with many catching five or more. The biggest was an **18"+ behemoth**, landed by a **two-year-old**, who was pretty scared to stand anywhere near it for the ceremonial pics. Ducks were feeding aggressively this year -- we landed and released three (**unharmed**) who had actually taken the bait in their bills. We usually manage to foul hook one each year. **Thanks to all of you (too many to name here) who helped this year.**

We also spent two weekends up at **Camp Santa Maria** near Shawnee. Mount Evans Hospice invited us up to teach 30-40 **Camp Comfort** kids how to catch trout in one of Santa Maria's private ponds. This was about the most rewarding activity we've ever done, as these kids are emotionally scarred children who have lost one or both parents, a sibling, or experienced other significant emotional trauma. Most of the kids enthusiastically came out of their shells, and we've received many complements on our efforts. Look for an article in the Courier. On a similar note, we spent three evenings teaching fishing to ~12 kids at Buchanan Ponds -- the Rec. District's summer fishing program. Thanks to all of you who helped with both

events.

In addition to hosting the **CTU Board Meeting** last Saturday, as well as numerous other, smaller activities, **Bear Creek has been our main focus** this Summer. We finally kicked off the stream improvements, after dealing with an incredible amount of paperwork and approvals. To date we've removed a log jam and sediment at the upper end of Lair-O-The-Bear Park, deepened areas below the EMD wastewater treatment plant, and at Bear Creek Cabins, and started work in Idledale. We're currently on hold awaiting equipment availability. We're also hoping for a little more water in the stream, so that our efforts don't do more harm than good by muddying up what little water is flowing.

Additionally, we've pressed EMD to go to **'Level 4'** drought restrictions, which **ban all outside watering**. They finally did this as of 7/22/02 -- five days after they should have, based on their own policies. Then, surprisingly, they rescinded the ban last week, but it had been reinstated at the time of this writing. It's important to note that Upper Bear Creek got so low, that **water stopped flowing over the dam** -- probably for the first time in its history. This resulted in virtually zero flow through Evergreen, and significant fish mortality. We sent a strong letter to EMD, voicing our concerns. Hopefully, it will rain periodically the rest of the summer up towards Mt. Evans, and keep some water in the stream in downtown Evergreen. For your information, approximately one cfs (cubic foot per second) is returned to Bear Creek by the wastewater treatment plant in lower Evergreen, and about another one cfs -- largely composed of run-off from the Hiwan golf course -- comes in via Troublesome Creek at Kittredge. With this in mind, it isn't hard to imagine what happens to the fish in downtown Evergreen, when nothing is coming over the dam. These are dire times and anything you can think of to **help us conserve and keep water in Bear Creek** will help.

In a related item, we petitioned Russell George,
Continued on page 3

The Evergreen Chapter of Trout Unlimited meets the third Wednesday of the month at Evergreen's Sports Grill in the Tanoa Center. Join us for Dinner/Chapter Business at 6:30pm followed by the program at ~7:30pm.

July Board Meeting

Attendees: Rich Reynolds, Ron Belak, Tim Haller, Steve Murray, Len Wheaton, Wayne Kosloske, Hugh Gardner, Rich Domingue (visiting Hugh from Portland, OR).

Bear Creek - Bear Creek is now listed on the Colorado Water Quality Control Division's 'Monitor and Evaluate List' of impaired streams. This means that the stream will be monitored and evaluated for environmental degradation. Board members talked about the back-and-forth nature of Evergreen Metro's declaration of Level 4 and Level 3 drought restrictions. They also noted that at times no water flows over the dam, that contributions to stream flows consist largely of treated waste water discharges, and numerous dead fish have been spotted from the streambank. Rich Domingue stressed the need to monitor dissolved oxygen levels, as well as temperature. The Board then set Saturday, September 21st as Bear Creek Clean-up Day."

Fund-raising - No, you won't have to buy more raffle tickets. Yes, you should attend our next fund-raiser which will consist of a presentation by John Fielder on Tuesday evening, November 19th. John will talk about his latest book -- *The Best of Colorado* -- a guide to camping and hiking in Colorado. As usual, John will donate a portion of book sales to ETU, and we will charge a modest admission fee. The Board is currently researching a venue for this event.

Camp Comfort - Board members reported several successful trips to this facility, near Santa Maria on Hwy. 285. "Camp Comfort," sponsored by Mount Evans Hospice, addresses the needs of children who have recently suffered the loss of a relative. Part of their program is fishing their private ponds, which board members described as containing many trout up to 17 inches. Seems like "Camp Comfort" was therapy for the volunteers, as well as the children.

Buchanan Ponds - The next freebie fishing day is Friday, August 30th. We also discussed plans to repaint the signs and restock the ETU informational brochures.

CTU Business - ETU hosted the quarterly CTU Board meeting on Saturday, July 27th, at the Evergreen Hotel. On a sad note, CTU's longtime Legislative Liaison, Jo Evans, announced that she is retiring at the end of this year. She will be sorely missed. Also, the Gunnison Angling Society has cancelled the Superfly contest, due to low stream flows and high water temperatures in that area.

Ron Belak

Fall Programs!

Well, I'm not sure if August qualifies as "Fall," but it will for these purposes! We have a very exciting lineup of speakers for the remaining part of the year, providing information on flyfishing and water conditions for the west slope area of Summit County. Additionally, we have several speakers presenting on international destinations -- both freshwater and saltwater.

August's meeting will feature the latest update on flyfishing the western slope: the Roaring Fork, Frying Pan, and Crystal rivers. **A trio of guides, Rick Lofaro, Mike Shook and Tony Fotopulos**, from Alpine Angling and Roaring Fork Anglers flyshops, will also discuss their highly successful **Saltwater Flyfishing Schools**. These schools, held in some of the premier saltwater flyfishing locations in the world, start with two days of saltwater flyfishing instruction, followed by four days immersed in spectacular saltwater flyfishing for bonefish, tarpon, snook,

The Evergreen Trout

and permit. Check out www.rfanglers.com for more information.

September, brings Bill Peisner of Patago, who hosts unique and personal **flyfishing journeys to the Patagonian region** of South America. Expect tales of incomparable flyfishing in the trout-filled rivers and lakes of **Chile and Argentina**, and hunts for the aggressive **golden freashwater dorado** in northern Argentina. Bill will discuss when to go, what to expect, what equipment you will need, and typical costs. His web site is www.patago.com.

October's program is tentative, depending on scheduling of various activities, however, we are anticipating guide **Ryan Smith of North Park Anglers** in Walden, CO, to bring us a plethora of information on **flyfishing Colorado's North Park area**. Rivers include the North Platte, Illinois, North Fork of the North Platte, and Roaring Fork, and lakes include 3 Delaney Buttes lakes, Lake John, Cowdry Lake and numerous other high mountain lakes. Ryan will discuss the seasons and hatches of this flyfishing mecca.

Randy Huiting

Drought, Fire, And Fish

Colorado has been suffering through one of the worst drought and fire seasons in memory and it has effected all of us, whether you are a homeowner in or near a burn zone, a metro-area resident facing mandatory water restrictions, or a farmer seeing your irrigation water dwindle away. At the CTU office, we have gotten many questions about **how the fires and drought effect trout and what CTU is doing to help**.

Fires have already had an effect on TU projects. Most notably, the ambitious **Cheesman Canyon Restoration Project**, to rebuild the Gill Trail, has been postponed due to the Hayman fire (but is resuming [in August]). Publicity about the fires, coupled with low flows due to drought, are also creating major challenges for fishing outfitters around the state. We encourage TU members to **book a day with their local guides** -- they will help you find good fishing in these adverse water conditions, and it is an important way of helping those businesses that help CTU and trout conservation.

Fire and drought will both have significant effects on the trout themselves. Drought conditions throughout the state -- coupled with diversions for a host of human uses -- will leave many key Colorado streams at **extremely low flows**, and may allow water temperatures to climb dangerously close to lethal levels for trout. Extreme low flows in the Dolores River tailwater are **expected to kill virtually all the remaining trout**. While prospects for this year are dim, CTU and other environmental groups like The Nature Conservancy are working with water right owners to see whether some are willing to **donate or lease water for instream flows** under the newly passed SB 156.

The effects of fires on trout are less widespread but just as troubling. Post-fire rainstorms have led to **serious erosion** on the unstable soils left behind in burned areas, **causing major sediment problems** for rivers including the South Platte (where the Hayman fire burned along gold-medal stream reaches) and Mitchell Creek (a native cutthroat trout stream jeopardized by the Coal Seam fire). Buffalo Creek experienced a worst-case scenario of that kind a few years ago, with sediment flows several feet deep rushing down unstable slopes and into the stream. **CTU has offered volunteer support to the Forest Service for soil stabilization and rehabilitation in the aftermath of fires**. We are currently working with our chapters to line up volunteer days for fire rehabilitation work. **If you are interested in helping, please call me at the CTU office. (303) 441-1111**

David Nickum - CTU E

The Prez Speaks On...

Continued from page 1

Director of the Colorado Division of Wildlife, to **close Bear Creek to fishing**, until stream temps decrease, flow rates and dissolved oxygen increase, and stress on the trout is reduced. He hasn't responded yet. **You can help by only fishing very early in the day, late in the evening, or not all. Spread the word!**

In other Bear Creek bad news, there was a **significant fish kill** between Evergreen and Kittredge three weeks ago. Though it was initially blamed on a car crash, we suspect that it probably was caused by an **'ammonia spike'** in EMD's wastewater discharge. On the plus side, we successfully got Bear Creek placed on the Colorado Water Quality Control Division's 'M & E' list for impaired streams, based on our temperature data, and other factors. This 'monitor and evaluate' categorization might eventually lead to Bear Creek's listing as a truly "impaired" stream, which would necessitate significant corrective measures by the "offenders." As usual, we have **Hugh Gardner, Karen Christopherson, and Mike Goldblatt** to thank for a lot of our Bear Creek accomplishments.

We also received a response to our letter writing campaign to the Colorado Wildlife Commission regarding restocking Clear Creek after the gas spill and resultant fish kill. They want to **monitor the stream for a few years** before making a decision on restocking, so don't look for real good fishing there for a while. In other rather disappointing news, **Antero Reservoir is being drained** (again) due to the drought, just after we got the regs favorably changed. Oh well...

Sorry this is rather wordy, but it's all stuff that you, as **an interested and active TU member**, should be aware of and maybe **HELPING** with. We've scheduled a **Bear Creek Cleanup/Improvement Day on Saturday, September 21st**. Meet in the big parking lot downtown at 9:00a, with a rake or cultivator, and your waders (I hope you'll need them by then!) Also, we have another **Kids Fishing Clinic** (with the US Forest Service) at Georgetown Lake on Saturday, August 24th, the **Mount Evans Outdoor Lab Open House** on September 14th (and other activities TBA), and a **John Fielder program and silent auction** on November 19th.

See you Wednesday, August 21st 6:30p, at the Sports Grill for our next general meeting. Also, please come to the board meeting Wednesday, August 28th 6:30p, at the Rib Crib Other Side. **We could really use your support during these tough times!**

Love and kisses,

Rich 7/31/02

Kudos... And A Correction...

...to **Jill Haller, Ron Belak, Randy Huiting, and Rich Reynolds** for their help with the newsletter.

...to **Master Printers Inc. of Evergreen** for copying and folding.

...last month, I mistakenly credited **Ron Belak** with the fine photo of a feeding cutt in Trappers. It was actually taken by ETU's one-and-only member in Alaska - **Chris Weymouth**. **Oops! Sorry, Chris!**

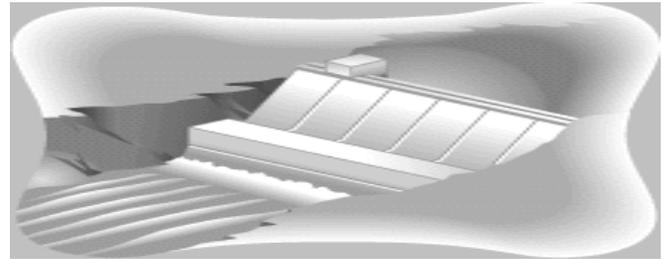
Ed.

Compromise Energy Bill Imperfect, But Improved

A controversial measure that would have caused **enormous harm to fish and wildlife resources** in the West has been dropped from the federal energy bill currently being considered by a Congressional conference committee. Dropping the provision (Section 6403 of the House version of HR4) was announced in a meeting of House and Senate members on the conference committee at the end of July.

The measure would have required that major western federal dams be operated to **maximize the hydropower they produce** at times of peak demand. Maximizing peak electric power requires **flooding rivers** at certain times of the day and **drying rivers to a trickle** at night when electricity demand is low. Doing so would produce no new power, but would shift power production to the times of day when power is most expensive. However, because fish and aquatic life need water all day long, **the provision would have devastated fisheries** below Bureau of Reclamation dams.

Some of the rivers that would have been affected draw trout anglers from around the country. Six of the rivers are in **TU's Guide to America's 100 Best Trout Streams**, published in 1999. Had the hydro provision become law, it would have harmed the largely rural communities that now depend on the economic benefit of those fisheries. Also, it would have **created safety problems** for recreational users, as river levels unexpectedly and suddenly rose or fell in response to power needs.



Still pending before the conference committee is a measure in the Senate's version of the energy bill that would **weaken current environmental requirements** for non-federal hydropower facilities. Non-federal facilities go through a comprehensive review and obtain new licenses every 30 to 50 years. When they are relicensed, the facilities are required to meet modern environmental standards, including improving fisheries, wildlife habitat, water quality, and recreation.

TU, along with other organizations, will work actively over the next few weeks to get conferees to remove or improve the Senate provision.

"Hydropower projects produce needed electricity, but like all forms of energy generation, appropriate environmental protection is required. Many hydro projects can achieve a **reasonable balance between energy production and fish and wildlife protection**. We think that Congress should not use the electricity crises of last year to upset that balance, and favor power at the expense of fish and wildlife and the local, rural economies that have come to rely on those resources," said Steve Malloch, TU Counsel who has been working on this issue.

TU Lines to Leaders - August 2002

??? What's Happening ???

August 2002

- 21st (W) ETU Chapter Meeting
Evergreen's Sports Grill - 6:30p
Rick Lofaro, Mike Shook and Tony Fotopulos
Saltwater Flyfishing School
- 24th (Sa) US Forest Service Kids Fishing Clinic
Georgetown Lake, 8:30a - 1:00p
Contact Tim or Rich if you can help.
- 28th (W) ETU Board Meeting
Rib Crib (Other Side) - 6:30p
- 30th (F) FREE fishing day at Buchanan Ponds
ETU members only
Contact John or Tim for details.

September 2002

- 14th (Sa) Mount Evans Outdoor Lab Open House
Contact Rich if you can help.
- 18th (W) ETU Chapter Meeting
Evergreen's Sports Grill - 6:30p
Bill Peisner on flyfishing in Patagonia
- 21st (Sa) Bear Creek Cleanup
Meet in the downtown parking lot at 9:00a
- 25th (W) ETU Board Meeting
Rib Crib (Other Side) - 6:30p

New Members

Please join me in wondering why TU no longer tells us who our new members are. But, you know who you are...

WELCOME to EVERGREEN TU!!!

If you need help with a membership problem of any kind, call me and I'll do my best to get it straightened out.

Creel count: ???

Randy Huiting

The Evergreen Trout

Chapter Contacts

President	Rich Reynolds <joansew@aol.com>	674-4861
Vice President	John Ellis <cutthroattrout47@aol.com>	674-1017
Treasurer	Steve Murray <murray_sp@msn.com>	670-7942
Secretary	Ron Belak <rbelak@e-mailathome.net>	674-2239
Programs	Randy Huiting <rhuiting@att.net>	670-5083
Membership	Randy Huiting <rhuiting@att.net>	670-5083
Special Projects	Hugh Gardner <hgardner@dimensional.com>	697-5876
Trips	Mike Uhes <fthillsm@aol.com>	697-9142
Newsletter	Tim Haller <thaller@pcisys.net>	674-5426
Youth Education	Shari McMahon <smc@m2ie.com>	674-1099
At Large	Wayne Kosloske	674-4092
At Large	Mike Goldblatt <mglambo@att.net>	674-7122
At Large	Len Wheaton	674-4243
Webmaster	Karen Christopherson <kc@coloradofishing.net>	674-0252
CTU Office	Various nice folks	440-2937

On the web - www.tu.org; www.cotrout.org; www.evergreentroutrout.org
Contact any of us with questions, suggestions, or spare time.

Editorial Policy

All submissions to the newsletter must be received by the Editor by the 1st Friday of the month. Submissions may be on 3 1/2" disc or e-mailed. All items are subject to editing/space limitations. Articles are copyrighted by the author unless otherwise noted. All phone numbers are Area Code 303 unless otherwise noted. Call me for additional information.

Evergreen Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 1974
Evergreen, CO 80437-1974



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