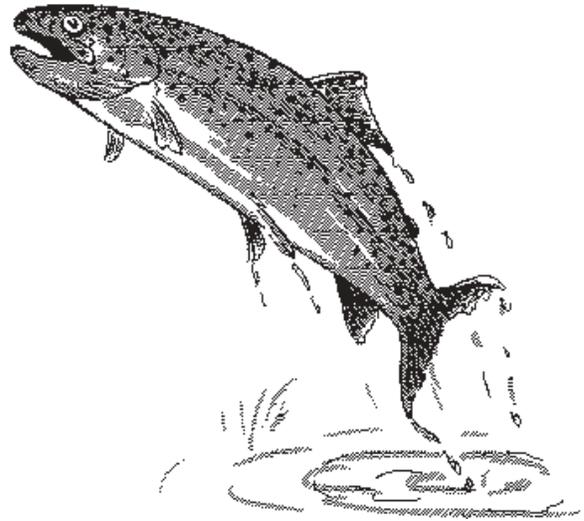


Electric

The Evergreen Trout



September 2003 The Newsletter of the Evergreen Chapter of Trout Unlimited Vol. 21 No. 9

From The Prez,

The long awaited letter arrived the other day. We finally received our "Conditional Approval" notice for funding of our Fishing Is Fun Grant for the Bear Creek/O'Fallon Park project. This will be followed up (in a few months) with a "Notice to Proceed" after development of documents necessary to secure Federal approval of our project. That approval is supposed to be fairly easy, now that we have the conditional go ahead. We've been awarded the full amount that we requested, which is \$119,390. That amount doesn't include a cash contribution of \$10,000 that we have agreed to raise, and another ~\$50,000 worth of in-kind donations that we need to come up with. Troy Thompson will put together a much more detailed write-up of the project for the next newsletter and will give us a presentation on the project at the November meeting. Needless to say the board is ecstatic -- we finally have a project.

In other news we're planning a "willow planting" day for Saturday, October 18th (tentatively), to help stabilize some eroding banks of Bear Creek. We'll combine that work with a members appreciation picnic in O'Fallon park that afternoon. Details at the next meeting and in next months newsletter.

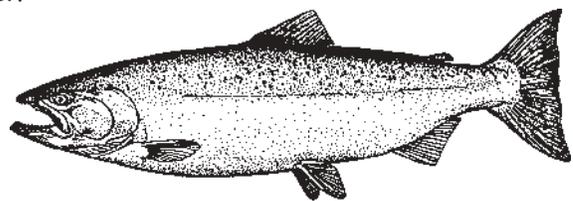
By that time we should have raffle tickets printed for our fall raffle. Prizes will include a

complete custom rod outfit, a guided fishing trip, and a gift certificate. We need your support to help raise the money we need for the project. Speaking of fund-raising, we recently received a check for \$245 from the Community Support Initiative, formed and run by Capital Lending-Evergreen. This is our second donation received in the past year and we'd really like to say "Thank You" to the kind folks at Capital Lending. They've never asked us for anything, but I feel obligated to suggest you give them a call for any of your mortgage needs.

As usual, I'm in a bit of a rush -- this time packing for an Alaska fishing trip. Several of us are flying to Anchorage and then renting an RV to cruise the Kenai Peninsula and nearby rivers for a week. We'll let you know how we did at the next meeting on September 17th, at 6:30p, in the Evergreen Hotel. The program features our own Dick Wheeler, who will share slides of his Amazon trip.

Until then, I'll probably not be thinking so much of you, as of bears...

Rich



The Evergreen Chapter of Trout Unlimited meets the third Wednesday of the month at the Evergreen Hotel in downtown Evergreen (next to the Little Bear). Join us for Dinner/Chapter Business at 6:30pm followed by the program at ~7:30pm. We look forward to seeing YOU there!

Statewide Water Supply Initiative Begins

Earlier this year, the General Assembly approved \$3 million to fund a "Statewide Water Supply Initiative" (the SWSI) through the Colorado Water Conservation Board. Its stated goal is "to help Colorado maintain an adequate water supply for its citizens and the environment." The CWCB emphasizes that the SWSI is not intended to replace local water planning efforts, but rather to provide a forum to develop a common understanding of existing water supplies, future water needs, and possible means of meeting those needs.

The SWSI will be organized by major basins (South Platte, North Platte, Yampa/White, Colorado, Gunnison, San Juan/Dolores, Rio Grande, Arkansas) around the state. For each basin, the SWSI will summarize at an overview level existing supplies and demands, projected demands up to 30 years into the future, and a range of potential options, including environmental mitigation, to meet those demands. The basin plans will be developed through "Basin Roundtables" with representatives of a range of interests, including water users, local governments, environmentalists, recreationalists, and others. CTU is committed to participating in this important process and has nominated several individuals for the roundtables, though the CWCB has not yet announced which nominees have been selected to the roundtables.

The SWSI will also feature public meetings around the state. The first round of meetings in August and September were recently announced -- unfortunately, with very little advance notice. The basin roundtables will also have a series of meetings starting in September, and at each of those meetings a period for public comment will be provided from 6:30 to 8:00pm. A schedule of the upcoming meetings (September and October) appears below, for those who are interested in attending a meeting in their basin.

While the specifics for each basin will be different, CTU's initial emphasis will be on three key messages:

The SWSI must not simply be a "wish list" for new dams; it needs to fully consider the range of options for addressing water supply including agricultural and municipal water conservation, rehabilitation of existing reservoirs, operating changes at existing water projects to increase their efficiency, conjunctive use projects to coordinate ground water and surface water use, enlargement of existing reservoirs, and water reuse projects.

Water projects of whatever kind need to be designed to minimize their environmental impacts and to fully mitigate their effects on the environment, economy, and local communities. This is especially critical for trans-basin projects where water is diverted from one watershed into another, often with disastrous effects on the watershed from which water is taken (for example, the dry-up of Rocky Ford agricultural lands, or the severe depletion of flows in the Fraser River).

The water needs assessment must consider not only out-of-stream needs such as agriculture and domestic use, but also instream needs for fisheries, recreation, maintenance of water quality, and preservation of riparian habitat.

If you are interested in getting more involved with the SWSI efforts in your area, please contact Colorado Water Project outreach coordinator Sam Davidson at the CTU

office, 303-440-2937, or sdavidson@tu.org.

Upcoming meetings:

Public Information Meetings: 9/3 Bayfield (San Juan/Dolores), 9/3 Alamosa (Rio Grande), 9/4 Dolores (San Juan/Dolores), 9/4 Greeley (South Platte), 9/8 Denver (South Platte).

Basin Roundtable Meetings: 9/10 Pueblo (Arkansas), 9/17 Montrose (Gunnison), 9/24 Grand Junction (Colorado), 10/1 Greeley (South Platte), 10/7 Walden (North Platte), 10/9 Steamboat Springs (Yampa/White), 10/14 Durango (San Juan/Dolores), 10/16 Alamosa (Rio Grande).

CTU Currents - August 2003

Weminuche Wilderness Dam Threatens Wild Trout Water

Emerald Lake, designated as Wild Trout water by the Colorado Division of Wildlife, lies on Lake Creek within the Weminuche Wilderness. The Southern Ute Indian Tribe and the Pine River Irrigation District would like to build a dam at the outlet of the lake, disrupting flows in the creek below and burying hybrid rainbow-cutthroat trout spawning grounds behind a thirty foot dam. Trout Unlimited, represented by Colorado Water Project staff attorney Drew Peterzell, is opposing the project sponsors' water rights application in water court.

The United States Congress first created the Weminuche Wilderness, the largest designated wilderness area in the state, out of the San Juan National Forest in 1975; additional parcels of the forest were added to the wilderness area in 1980 and again in 1993. No category of public lands in the federal system is protected to a higher degree than wilderness areas -- not even the national parks. Trucks and machines, roads and cement, dams and reservoirs are all prohibited in designated wilderness. According to the Wilderness Act of 1964, wilderness is "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Not only is Emerald Lake protected by virtue of its location within the Weminuche Wilderness, but the Colorado Water Conservation Board also holds a natural lake level water right for Emerald Lake. Like an instream flow right, CWCB natural lake level rights are intended to preserve the environment, normally by preventing the protected lake from being drawn down below a specified level. If it elects to do so, the CWCB can also protect a natural lake level water right against inundation by dam construction.

Despite the wilderness classification and the CWCB water right, the tribe and irrigation district are claiming the right to enter the wilderness area and to store 7,000 acre-feet of water above the wild trout habitat in Emerald Lake and Lake Creek. "It's hard for me to believe that the project sponsors would even consider building a large water storage facility in a wilderness area on wild trout water," said Peterzell. "The proposal really illustrates the divergence in values between water developers and those of us who care about wild places and wild fish." Trout Unlimited hopes to put an end to this proposal through the water court proceedings.

CTU Currents - August 2003

Referendum A Is A Bad Idea

\$4 billion dollars for what?

This November voters will be asked, "shall the state of Colorado debt be increased \$2,000,000,000 with a repayment cost of \$4,000,000,000 for the purpose of addressing the water infrastructure needs of the state through the issuance of revenue bonds?" Projects less than \$5 million are not eligible for funding. A state agency will recommend projects to the governor who must choose at least one project with a start date of 2005.

Although a small portion of the dollars may, ostensibly, be spent for species protection or conservation measures, Referendum A is not about conservation. It is about building dams. Revenue bonds are based on the premise that when you loan me dollars for a new project, I will make money, new dollars, and pay you back from the money I make. Species protection projects do not create a revenue stream. Conservation saves money, but it does not generate dollars that can be pledged against revenue bonds. For example, pricing that reflects usage is widely recognized as one of the most effective ways to conserve existing developed supplies. If it costs more, people use less. Rebates for water efficient landscapes and appliances are also commonly accepted and sound urban conservation practices. We know these measures work to save water, but they do not make money. Revenue bonds simply won't work to independently fund conservation or species protection programs.

A major problem with the proposal is that the voters are being asked in essence to approve a blank check. We do not know what will be built or where. Consequently the impacts, whether ecological or economic, are impossible to assess.

All dams have environmental impacts. Streams are the building blocks of riparian ecosystems. Less water in a stream changes the stream. Assimilative capacity is reduced, affecting water quality. The flow is altered. Temperature may change. Fish and wildlife habitats are often harmed. When the natural cycles are altered by diversions, the change in river habitat may be dramatic. We need to know what will be built before we agree to sign the check.

As the state deliberates over water policy options to address the drought and long-run need for water, it is essential that it take into account the impacts of its choices on the ecological health of our rivers and streams. Water conservation and other efficiency improvements are environmentally sound ways of meeting our urban water needs, but is it realistic? In a word, Yes. A recent report by the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies estimated that potential efficiency improvements could save 390,000 to 730,000 acre-feet of water per year, well in excess of the current projected need. The report noted that we could meet Denver Metro water needs several times over through improved efficiency.

Referendum A is not risk free economically. Proponents argue that there is no liability for the taxpayers, because the bonds will be repaid from the revenue the projects generate. What if the project is never finished? Dollars are spent but there is nothing to sell? Some years ago a series of nuclear power plants were proposed in the state of Washington with a similar funding mechanism. After the Three Mile Island fiasco occurred, nuclear power plants were

not favored and the projects were never completed. When the dust cleared and the judgements were issued, everyone lost money, including the taxpayers. Additionally, for the first time, Referendum A would allow the state itself to be a project proponent. If the state partners with private project proponents there is clearly a state taxpayer liability.

The ultimate irony is that we do not need this measure. Referendum A is based on the premise that funding is the central issue in water policy. It is not. Other funding mechanisms exist. Cities and other public water providers may issue general obligation bonds already. In addition 2 state agencies already provide funding for water projects. No credible project in Colorado has failed due to lack of funding. Two Forks was not built because it failed to get a federal permit. Homestake II was not built because it failed to meet the local mitigation requirements. Narrows never got off the ground because of engineering problems. The courts dismissed Union Park because they ruled that there was not sufficient water available to build it. In Colorado, for many years, the project beneficiaries funded their own projects. Windy Gap, Wolford Mountain, Dillon, and Spinney Mountain were all paid for by the project proponents. Money is not the issue.

Referendum A is simply a bad idea. It tries to solve issues of water policy with a blank check creating some level of liability for us all. Unless we know what is proposed we can not possibly identify the merits and risks either to us or to the cold water resources we treasure.

Jo Evans - CTU Director-At-Large

MT Studies Possible WD-Resistant Fish

Biologists in Montana recently found a strain of rainbow trout that may be much more resistant to whirling disease, the parasitic infection that attacks fish cartilage and has decimated wild trout stocks in some of the western United States' greatest trout rivers. When some other strains of rainbow that were crossed with the DeSmet strain showed signs of resistance, biologists were sent scrambling to Diaphanous Lake, at 9,800 feet in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, to find the original DeSmet strain fish and take eggs for whirling disease research. Scientists are now preparing to test the fish for whirling disease exposure to see if the resistance does prove out, and if the gene conferring resistance can be isolated.

"It's very promising to find a fish that is resistant," said Dick Vincent of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks who is heading the research project. "It's still at the research level, but it looks like it could hold some promise." Vincent also emphasizes that the DeSmet is a lake fish, so aside from whirling disease it may not thrive in western rivers. "These are lake rainbow," Vincent said. "It (sic) may not do well in a river."

CTU Currents - August 2003

Kudos...

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

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

Ed.

Senate Approves Harmful Hydro Bill

Deliberations on the Senate energy bill were cut short by a vote of 84-14 to approve last year's omnibus energy bill (S517 in the 107th Congress). This stunning action sets up a critical House-Senate conference committee on energy this fall. Although the bill is improved, S517 contains hydropower provisions opposed by Trout Unlimited and other conservationists, because they could weaken key fish conservation standards and public participation procedures in current law.

However, discussions on the hydropower section of the bill held just prior to its passage may foreshadow promise for a more fish-friendly outcome in the upcoming Conference committee deliberations. These discussions, led by the bill's sponsor, Senator Pete Domenici (R-NM), and other senators, sought improvements for fish and public participation.

If they are not changed, the hydropower provisions contained in both the Senate and House energy bills could directly undercut the work that TU volunteers and staff are undertaking to restore rivers via the hydropower dam relicensing process right now. From Maine, to North Carolina, to California, these bills would make hydropower licensing slower and more complex, cut the public out of the process, and undermine the most valuable fish-restoring parts of current law. In sum, the House bill, and to a lesser extent the new Senate bill, shift the balance of power in hydropower relicensing heavily in favor of dam owners and against the health of our rivers.

Senators Jeff Bingaman (D-NM) and Daniel Inouye (D-HI) led efforts to improve the hydro language to establish a fair, balanced alternative process for determining fish and wildlife conservation provisions at hydro dams. Unfortunately, these efforts were cut short by the Senate's bill-switching maneuver.

TU would like to commend the strong efforts of support for fisheries conservation demonstrated by Senator Mike DeWine (R-OH), Lincoln Chafee (R-RI), and John McCain (R-AZ). All three worked hard in recent weeks to seek amendments to help fish and stakeholders seeking to retain adequate standing in the hydro relicensing process. TU also appreciates Senator Domenici's willingness to consider amending the hydro provisions.

TU Lines to Leaders - August 2003

Western Water Initiative

Water 2025 is a Department of Interior initiative to "Prevent Crises and Conflict in the West" over water issues. Water 2025 is a recognition that action must be taken to prevent crises over water scarcity, in order to avoid future conflicts like those occurring in the Klamath Basin and on the Rio Grande River. Trout Unlimited's Western Water Project staff have spoken as panelists at the series of western conferences that the Bureau of Reclamation has held to launch the program. Water 2025 identifies water conservation, irrigation efficiency investments, water markets, and increased collaboration as the tools for preventing water crises.

On July 29th, Laura Ziemer, the Montana Water Project Director, spoke at the Great Plains regional conference. While Laura commended the Bureau for being willing to

Continued on page 5

The Board of Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees held their meeting in Denver from September 6-7, 2003. The Board of Trustees held the first meeting with the Grassroots Trustees nominated from the National Leadership Council. John F. Maher from Avon, Colorado was nominated as the Chairman of the Board of Trustees. The new Grassroots Trustees are: Garland Stewart (Georgia), Rick Murphee (Tennessee), Jan Allardt (Connecticut), Squeak Smith (North Carolina), Duke Welter (Wisconsin), Loren Albright (Idaho), Paul Maciejewski (New York), and Wes Johnson (Utah).

TU Lines to Leaders - September 2003

National Leadership Council

The National Leadership Council (NLC) held its first meeting at the Annual Meeting in Denver. The National Leadership Council's new chairman is Kirk Otey from Charlotte, North Carolina. The secretary of the NLC is Fred Rasmussen from Colorado. Your NLC member will be your state's representative that will shape TU's national conservation and organizational agenda. This new body will replace the National Resource Board (NRB) in accordance with the structural changes proposed by the NRB Futures Committee over the last few years.

TU Lines to Leaders - September 2003

Annual Awards Luncheon

TU hosted the annual National Conservation Awards ceremony luncheon on September 5th at the Annual Meeting in Denver.

The following councils, chapters and individuals were recognized for their outstanding service to Trout Unlimited. Two individuals from Colorado were among those honored at the luncheon -- Dr. Robert Behnke (he really DID write the book(s) on trout); and Andy Gentry of the Gore Range Anglers chapter for his work on the Blue River. To read the full details of each of these awards, point your browser to http://www.tu.org/volunteers/lines_to_leaders.asp and check out the September 2003 issue of *Lines to Leaders*.

Tomorrow's Trout Award: North Carolina Council

Gold Trout Award: North Bay Chapter

Silver Trout Award: Fred Waara Chapter

Bollinger Newsletter Award: State Council Michigan Trout

Bollinger Newsletter Award: Oconee River Chapter's Flypaper

Best Website Award: Central Jersey Chapter - www.cjtu.org

Conservation Communications Award: Monte Dolack

Conservation Professional Award: Dr. Robert J. Behnke

Distinguished Service Award: Andy Gentry of the Gore Range Chapter

Ray Mortenson Award for Volunteer Leadership: John Sabina

Meanwhile, I will try to distill my four pages of notes from the Annual Meeting -- I attended the Colorado Instream Flow Program 30th Anniversary Banquet, the NLC meeting, and a couple of workshops -- into a coherent article for next month.

Tim Haller

The Evergreen Trout

September Program

The mighty Amazon is home to one of the most fascinating ecosystems in the world. Many people dream of visiting the Amazon, a few actually do -- and fewer still, have the opportunity to fly fish in this ecological wonderland. Join us for an evening of adventure as noted local fly fisherman and ETU member, Richard Wheeler, shares his experiences fly fishing for Peacock Bass in the Amazon drainages. The remote experience is enhanced by sleeping and eating on pontoon boats on the Unini River, isolated from contact with other people for the duration of the trip. With good weather and no mosquitoes to deal with, you can fly fish ten hours per day, concentrating on other more important things, like the piranhas, caimans, anacondas, and yes, the glorious Peacock Bass.

Please join us in the Evergreen Hotel, at 6:30p, on September 17th, for what promises to be a great program.

Randy Huiting

Home Rivers

TU's large-scale watershed conservation program is the Home Rivers Initiative. Home Rivers is based on the premise that everything in a watershed is related and connected, and that watershed restoration requires far more than site-specific treatments. Scientists now recognize it does little good to fix a stream reach when upstream some disturbance is occurring that will compromise downstream improvements. Moreover, without using watershed-based science to determine what really needs to be done, volunteers risk spending considerable time and money addressing the symptoms and not the causes of the problems.

Recognizing that watershed scale restoration is often expensive and time consuming, in 1996 TU created the Home Rivers Initiative to perform comprehensive, science-based watershed-scale restoration on important coldwater rivers in the US. Home Rivers projects are multi-year efforts that combine:

- Scientific and economic research
- Community outreach
- On-the-ground restoration
- The development of long-term conservation and management strategies and tools

The first two Home Rivers projects were located in New York's Beaverkill River watershed and Wisconsin's Kickapoo River watershed, and the third project is underway on Pennsylvania's Kettle Creek. In 2001, Home Rivers launched projects on Montana's Jefferson River and Idaho's South Fork of the Snake River.

The Coldwater Conservation Fund, TU's scientific and economic research arm, evaluates, selects and oversees Home Rivers projects. There are three primary criteria for establishing a Home Rivers project:

- The significance of the coldwater resource in question
 - The availability of dedicated funding to accomplish the project (each project costs an average of \$150,000 per year for at least three years)
 - Local citizen support for the project

TU web site

Water 2025 - Continued from page 4

embrace proactive thinking on water issues, she warned that there was still a missing principle in Water 2025. She challenged the Bureau to "explicitly incorporate environmental restoration into every western water management action." She also stumped for the Sun River, a river that joins the upper Missouri River near Great Falls, Montana. Chronically dewatered below a Bureau dam, Laura asked the Bureau to apply Water 2025 principles to this project and restore the Sun River, in order to realize the Sun River's potential as a preeminent western trout fishery.

If there are Bureau of Reclamation water projects in your area, they may be ripe for application of Water 2025 principles, too. Visit www.usbr.gov/water2025 to find out more about Water 2025. Submit comments to the Bureau at <http://www.usbr.gov/water2025/feedback.cfm> if you think that a Bureau project in your home river area is a candidate for conservation efforts, irrigation efficiencies, or more fish-friendly reservoir management.

TU Lines to Leaders - August 2003

CSI Nets \$\$\$ For ETU

Refinancing or taking out a new mortgage? Your transaction could help ETU!

Through the Community Support Initiativesm, Evergreen TU is eligible for a donation virtually every time a supporter uses a CSI Partner for a new or refinanced mortgage.

Select mortgage lenders who participate in the program have dedicated a small percentage of the transaction amount to local nonprofit organizations. The consumer gets to choose which one (and take the tax deduction, if applicable)! A small percentage of a large transaction such as a \$300,000 loan could mean a donation of \$250 or more ETU. This is not an add-on cost to the consumer!

So far, we have received about \$500 through this program. If you're considering refinancing or taking out a new mortgage, give CSI a call, and remember ETU if you should choose to do business with one of the CSI partners.

Check out www.communitysupportinitiative.com online or call CSI at (303) 679-1912 for more information.



New Members

Please join me in welcoming **Tom Wyman, Jason Nishimoto, Scott Hughes, Terry Walters, Scott Allen, Ron Walton, Tom Shofner, John Haile, Brian Bott, and Jim Hastedt** to ETU.

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: **301**

Randy Huiting

??? What's Happening ???

September 2003

- 17th (W) ETU Chapter Meeting
Evergreen Hotel - 6:30p
Richard Wheeler - Flyfishing the Amazon
- 24th (W) ETU Board Meeting
Rib Crib (Other Side) - 6:30p
- 26th (F) ETU members FREE FISHING DAY
Buchanan Ponds - Sign in at the new Rec. Center (bring your TU membership card)
- 30th (Tu) Mt. Evans Outdoor Lab Fly Tying
Volunteers needed!!!
Call Len Wheaton if you can help - the kids will love you for it!

October 2003

- 1st(W) Mt. Evans Outdoor Lab Fly Tying
Volunteers needed!!!
Call Len Wheaton if you can help - the kids will love you for it!
- 15th (W) ETU Chapter Meeting
Evergreen Hotel - 6:30p
Program TBA
- 18th (Sa) Bear Creek willow planting and picnic
O'Fallon Park - details at the September meeting and in the October newsletter
- 22nd (W) ETU Board Meeting
Rib Crib (Other Side) - 6:30p
- 31st (F) ETU members FREE FISHING DAY
Buchanan Ponds - Sign in at the new Rec. Center (be sure to bring your TU membership card)

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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.

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