

hankinson-monty-2017-04-05.mp4

[00:00:13] And not really I guess. I fish and this means the opportunity to get out enjoy Mother Nature and for the most part for a lot of people it's to get away in and enjoy something that they can kind of forget about the rest of what's going on and concentrate on on fish. And I know people relax and and seem to really enjoy it. Or had been my dad. Yeah he. He cannot be everywhere. Who has real level would you guys fish farm would be efficient. I would. I was born and raised in Kalispell up in the northwest corner of the state and we would fish for Brookings we'd fish for rainbows. We didn't have the brown trout up there but we had cutthroat and weak trout fished all over Flathead County in the northwest part of the state. And then I came down to Dillon here to go to college in 1965. And of course dad had taught me how to fish taught me how to roll but so I bought a boat and got to rowing. But it seemed like I was I was always the one rowing and not the one fish in. And so that's how I ended up getting into guidance I guess. So. Oh yeah. They. They were the old glass fiberglass rods. We didn't have the graphite or or any of the fancy new rods now. And now it was. Actually. Those polls seem great at that time it's just through the years things just kept kept getting better and better and better and of course they the. Five companies they have to get better if they're going to sell their new product.

[00:02:37] But they have improved a lot through the years and made the fly cast an easier for especially for the beginners I think. They take an old hand it's fly fish for a long time and he can he can take about any Rod and get my fiddle but. The newer technology and the rides has really helped the beginners I think.

[00:03:12] Oh I. I haven't used a lot of bamboo I. I fish. Graphite. The majority of the time. And most any of the good companies out there. That guarantee their rods. I mean they make good rods. And of course there's. A big variety of types of rods and fins on what kind of fish and you're going to be doing. As to what way to ride you would prefer to throw all that. Oh. I really enjoy people learning you know I guess if you give me a choice of having a new client that A. Very experienced fly fisherman or you give me a 10 to 12 year old kid. I'll take the kid just just because I like to see them learn and the excitement of it you know. There's a lot to that I think and I think that's the thing I enjoy more than anything is seeing them advance and get and getting them hooked. That's that's a big thing. And as far as things that irritate me there's not a lot of I guess cell phones bugged me. I'm old school and when you go fishin I think you can leave some of the technology things behind. But I guess that it doesn't really bother me. But when fishing's good and you're really into it. And phone rings and you've got to stop everything. Answer the phone. Better to leave the phone in the truck. That's just the way I see it. Those. I'll have I'm interested interested to hear what you say the other guy would say. Sad but I think the ladies are easier to teach men seem to want to. Try and power the ride and put everything into the force of the ride rather than letting the ride in the line do the job for them. And I've I've got several ladies that would put. Most my men clients to shame the way they cast and and the success they have. I get a kick out I have one couple from Pennsylvania and he he tries it out Fish's wife every year when they come but he never does that. It's just I don't know women seem to have that that softer touch and and and. They they listen. I guess that gets down to the basics. All the biggest change has been the increase in the numbers of fishermen. You know.

[00:07:03] When I started guiding here on the beaver head and the big hole there was hardly anyone doing it. But every year a few more a few more in on. And then it got to the point that the beaver had got so crowded that. That they had to put the restrictions on it. And you had to have prior use that when they came down with the beaver head and big

hole both being restricted to guides that had been using it before and that's been going since. Oh gosh I don't remember when that started. But it's it's level out now for the amount of use other than the. Than the residents and nonresidents the unguided. There's just more fishermen you know and. And there's nothing we could do about that. It's a sport that's. Fly fishing. It seemed to really caught on and and oh the River Runs Through It. I think that when that movie went out that got a lot of people thinking about it and trying it. And it's it's a great sport. I'm I. I see changes because of the increase of people. But that's something we just got to deal with and that's being dealt with by places that gets too crowded it gets restricted. And so I guess that's that's a good thing.

[00:08:51] You know other changes on the beaver head in the last few years three years or so we've. The reservoir has been pretty low and beaver tail water and the biologists are trying to figure out what's going on. But the water has turned coming out of the reservoir it turns almost to a pea soup. Color and. And basically shuts the fish and down. Quite a bit. So that's something that I hope we get figured out the biologists figured out and. That's my sample but I hope they get that figured out and and we can get it. So it doesn't do that. It looks like this year we're going to have more water in in the reservoir. We've had a little better snowfall this winter. And so that may help but we get we get more water in the reservoir. It may not. It's a bottom release dam and there's several theories as to what's causing it but no answer right now. There's still study in that and hopefully they'll come up with. A solution for it. So we'll see. I think you've hit on several of them right there you know. I don't know why you have all your streams are different but pollution is is a thing that's that's got to be it's it's it's can't. Can't go on and still have you have your good streams you know I mean I know when they're one of the theories. Of what is going on up here and the reservoir is nitrates and. But then I've read heard both ways on that. I mean there's so many different things that can cause it but and then your your water inspection boat inspections I think are important so you don't transfer these these mussels and different things from other water and then bring them in. You know I mean that's that's real important and you know with all the. All the float fishing that's going on right now and and guys maybe fish in the Beaver head today might be on the big old model might be over on the Missouri the next day. So we're you know you have boats covering a lot of water and if they're not cleaned properly and those that can lead to real problems all over. So. I don't know. Other problems like I mentioned you got when you get a lot of people you have to regulate some way. The number of people that are going to be on each reach of the river. And we are regulated as guides and outfitters. Like on the big hole. One day. Of the week every every day of the week. Where there's a different stretch of the river that we cannot be on. And so. That's just. So the. Residents can have a day or a sprite stretch that they're not going to run into a lot of other guides and then outfitters and I have I'm totally in favor of that.

[00:12:57] You know when we're going to have more and more people fish in every year and I just think we're going to run into that more and more. I mean it's just showing up now. Well that's been in effect on the beaver head in the. And the big hole for several years and and the Madison's getting to that point. But there's going to be other rivers that are that are just going to see the crowds and do the same. I don't remember. The dam was filled like Canyon Reservoir was filled in 1964. And I came to Dillon in 1965 and of course been fish and it ever since. But I don't remember the real dry years the real low. Years that the dam the reservoir got. Real low. To where they went. Really had to. Worry about the. The water. And for next year. And so I think we saw a lot more more flow back then. We saw higher water conditions and you know like in it in the spring and runoff when when the reservoir was filling up. Then when they start calling for water out on these bench and start releasing more water into the into the river we would have good high water in the river.

Most most of the way through the summer through mid August anyhow and we haven't had that the last well for several years now.

[00:15:00] I mean it's I think we're dealing with the warmer conditions. From what I've seen and I keep thinking it's a it's a cycling thing but I don't know it hasn't gone to that real wet and for a while and I'd like to see it do that. I think that would solve a lot of problems. Well the reason the Montana stream access law come around was was because of the Hildreth bridge on the big varied River and and yard. The sheriff at that time was raked later and when the river got real real high up to the reservoir before and they had to release water or it would start over the spillway. And so we had real high flows back then. And and it got to the point where I just told the Rick the sheriff that something's got to be done. I said we can't we can't. Somebody is going to drowned at that bridge and Hildreth. He refused to raise the bridge. So. We got the Montana stream access law. Formed up in Butte Tom only Tony Sheldon and now and then we hired. Jim I got the lawyer out of Bozeman. You're on a plane can't get. Yes. And as our as our lawyer and he needs quite a water lawyer and and went into court with Hildreth over in Bozeman and he ended up being forced to raise this bridge. And. And then the Montana stream access law went into effect and been there ever since. Well.

[00:17:26] The only way you really get over it is right on the right hand side of the river coming to the bridge that you could get. There was a little. Gate there where you could. Get into a little corral the water would be in that part of the corral there and you could maybe get a boat through and packet out through there but. Hildreth didn't want you walking on his ground. So he would raise cain with anybody doing that. So you had to float right up to the bridge get a hold of the bottom of the bag guy in the back of the boat get a hold of the. The. Bottom of the crowd pull while.

[00:18:12] The person next to the bridge would get out on the bridge and then the rower would get out on the bridge and they and the rower and that guy would get a hold of the boat and then let the guy that on the far end come through and get out on the bridge and you'd lift that end up on the bridge pull it over the bridge let it back down in the water and then everybody get back in and away you go. If you were real good at rowing and then when I ended up getting hold of the sheriff and having him come down there and look at it there was quite a bit of. Of limbs and logs and stuff had drifted up into the bridge but hadn't gone under it and so then you couldn't get to the bridge without walking on.

[00:19:11] On logs. Very dangerous. So that's when he came down there and told Lowe that he thought he better raise the bridge. And Campbell said no one doing it. So that's when it went to court. You know. Lol was not easy to get along with cause he he didn't like he felt he owned that water and he didn't think we should be able to float down through his land because he owned both sides of the river and he didn't think we should be able to float through his land so he was not happy with any any floaters it wasn't just guides it was anybody. So other landowners. Got along with fine. That was the only real. Problem area. You know. Well Getty he subpoenaed me and just two and asked me questions pinpointing towards what I just. Told you about. How what we would have to go through just to try and get. On down the river over the bridge and that was the main thing. He asked me about and and then he asked me if fit if I thought it was dangerous you know for somebody possibly grounding I totally made a very good chance which it was I mean in high water and you know in those conditions it something had to change. It just did. And while he wasn't happy with what happened he it cost him money. Before that happened we were willing to go down there and help him provide labor and help him. Raise the bridge but he didn't want to do that. He wanted to let it go to court which it did. So.

[00:21:37] Well the. The fishing game purchased access as you know. Different spots on the rivers. And. There. They were eliminated some of the. Accesses. Or some of the access were eliminated that were. On private ground that we would have to go in just a little ways to get our votes in the river. There was several of them on the big hole. And with the Fish and Game acquiring access that made it so you could do a reach a river and be comfortable you know and still be using Fish and Game access is. Made it made it nice. You know I mean everybody that we had had access to the whole river really you know. So I was. I'd been happy with the fish and game with the access as they put in and and the improvements they've done to him you know when most of those in. Well actually it's it's an ongoing thing. And well now it's it's mostly improving. You know we're putting in new cement ramps or whatever or live more camping area or parking area or whatever that way but. But. They. They've made it. So we. We can get to most of the river. You know. The. On the beaver head I like that upper river on any tail water. Your upper part of your river is going to have your big fish in. And so yeah on the beaver had anywhere from the dam on down to Barrett's or or pipe organ or Barrett's but that upper part of the beaver head and on the big hole I gosh they hold such a pretty river scenery wise too but. I probably fished the. O from divide to two gland. That part of the big hole more than any other part although bends on what time of the year it is and what's going on with the water but I get up as high as Claire up to what a squat brick and then that. Upper Big hole. And then I oh. At times I'll go down as low as to where it hits the Jefferson. That's probably my two favorite parts of the river so. Very important very important.

[00:24:44] I have a real good friend that's a senator in the Senate from Dillon here and I'm constantly on the phone with him or or e-mailing or texting and you know the if you don't if we don't protect what we got we're going to be overrun you know and you know I. I'm not against mining. I'm not against a lot of using resources but do it properly and don't pollute. And you know. There's ways to do it. And and. And not mess up our water you know. I guess that's. The basics of how I feel about it. There are some things you know. Probably come into the picture more than others but just protect our resource. That's all I can say is. And stayed involved politically that's where it all happened so yeah we've got to be active. And whether you're you go to like hell or not to hear a bill or or to. But don't be afraid to go in there and stand up for it and let. Let our politicians know how you feel. You know you have to have to stay active. I think that my wife does all of our computer work and I've got her text and e-mail and all the died you know. But there's issues you got to stay up on. And they're not going to go away. They're going to be there forever so yeah it's important. Yeah you bet. Because those those organizations will keep you aware of what's coming at us. Yeah yeah. Numbers talk you know. Yes I'm very much in favor of that. Oh yeah. Yeah. I'm not I'm not against the natives at all. In fact it's not just in the past. We have native trout out here to our cutthroat and and and those streams be very much watched and protected. I'm all in favor of also you know I mean the way we fish the rainbows and the Browns Beaver head and bagel mainly look we have got your peas in your Grayling and on the big hole but the rainbows and browns course they were playing at although they're naturally reproduce now but yeah anything that's a native species I'm in favor of keeping them protected. Yeah. I like seeing that happen. You know I guess I just like seeing them there. And for our clients are it's really a big thing to them you know. I mean it's not as much to me big design. We have a beer and Mac that. I can do that at a time. But but for our fishermen. Yeah it's. They love a big hole if they can go catch a Grayling Brucie rainbow and a brown in one day. I mean that's that's pretty neat. You know. That request deserve you know quite often. Yeah. And of course I'm a big hole to get in the better Grayling fish and the higher you go the better. Better your odds are so. And that requires. That flow water you know to be able to float it up there. But know.

[00:28:45] No. Same thing. No it's just the area where there's more of them. Oh it's a big sky country. It's and we've got you know we've got a ton of different water. It's. Gosh from my younger days up in flathead and and the water and the types of streams and that they're all have fish in them and and and you can do pretty well if a person just took the summer and just just stayed in western Montana you could be fish in a different stream everyday and and probably doing OK. Here though I'm being sure some are going to be a lot better than others but. Yeah it's it's it's not just the fish it's either it's the same Ray and the people and you know I have a lot of clients tell me that gosh what a friendly town you know everybody waves ahead and says hello and holds a door open for you if you're going into the store or something then and there. They're not used to the kind of aggro kickback way of life that we have here. And I think I think people enjoy that. Well Alaska's naturally. Good. I've been there several times. Never been to New Zealand. And I know it's real good too but I wish it would be probably one of those too. Yeah Alaska's hard to beat because. You can you go up there and just about at any skill level and do real well you know. And I don't know. I understand New Zealand it's a lot more spot and start type of fish in. And that might require a little more skill as compared to Alaska. But there's a I have friends that a guide here now they have the fly shop out here and. And they free several years. They in the wintertime they would guide in Chile. Then they had a deal least down there where they would go down spend two and a half months guiding down there. And I never did make it down to fish with them I wish I would have but they they don't have the lease anymore but they've showed me a lot of pictures and you know really. The the size of the fish isn't much different though what we got right here you know and so if it even if I went to New Zealand or wherever I'm still gonna be thinking about what's going on right there. So we're pretty fortunate to have this you know. In fact that's probably the reason I live here is because how good the fish it is everything in terms of trout it's tough to beat Monterey. It really is. Yeah yeah. And I've guided people from Tash all over the world. And they all. Seem to really enjoy it and about oil now. Well I've been guy and got my first licence in 1975 and. I've been guiding all those years and. I probably got. Oh 90 percent of my businesses return. So it's old friends getting together it's it's it's not clients coming in. I'm wondering. What they're gonna be like or how well they'll fish or any of that. It's this just all friends getting together and that's when it really gets special you know. Yeah. You look forward to seeing each other and being together for a few days. So. I have I had a. Elderly couple from Ogden Utah. Adam and the wife's didn't want to fish but she wanted to just go on and see the scenery. And so we put it at the dam just. On the beaver head. And. And my truck was sitting up on the bank as we. Started down the river and she noticed that. And we went down the river and it was a pretty interesting day we had a pretty decent fish and her husband fished pretty well. And we stopped and had a good lunch and any heavily we got down to where we were going to take out the pipe organ. And my wife shuttles my truck. Well while we're on the river and she had moved it down there and it happened to be sitting right on the bank. As you pull in the pipe organ access on the river. The wife in the back it's my truck.

[00:34:18] And she said oh my Homer you didn't tell me but this this river goes in a circle we're back to the truck. And he looked at me. He looked at her. He says Oh yeah ice is if you stay on it long enough well we'll get dizzy. So I didn't say anything but oh there's a lot of funny things that go on on the river. Gosh I was fishing with one of my guides one night. This has been oh gosh 15 years ago probably. And some friends of ours were down the river ahead of us and they had pulled out. They were out wading and fish and and and just as we come around the bend. There was US junk on the bank and I happen that I cast it. It caught him and and I pulled him to the river to cut the line. We got it. He got in the water and I looked down the river well here's these friends of mine. He's gone. So I would I pull

on them on the line. He would go under. And so when we got down there close to this bill he looked up reveries I had Rod bet pretty good and he goes oh jeez you need me a natty when I go Yeah.

[00:35:51] Was he heads to the boat grab their debt. And so I kept him under the helmet putting it. He made this how they would got it. How do you mean don't keep up in bed. Of course it must be pretty bad but we've got a good laugh out of it in here. But I don't have any good ones like Bud had. Gosh blind guy guide them into a face that would've been fun. But those were pretty great some good stories. They all I think when to give guidance. Once again it goes back to to teach in and and kids and we need to get more kids into the sport.

[00:36:42] It seems to be gaining in popularity but it seems to be more in the adults. And I'd like to see more more young kids involved. We have a kid today coming up on the Beagle. Gets may 2nd. Where are they. They have different stations. Kids learn entomology they learn to tie fly they and and then we take them down a little stretch of the river but just need to get more of the young people involved. So I just hope that we see a big increase there. All right. Get him away from the. Running there. There are gadgets all the time. Get out. Enjoy the enjoy the water. I'd agree with you there when I go to work that 5 5 conclave or other fly fishing events around. I'm often one of the younger guys there and I'm in my 40s now. Yeah yeah yeah. Hopefully it'll it'll really become a fad. It's got to become a fad with these kids and then they'll all be wanting to do it. I know my grandkids. I don't force them but it's been available to them and now they all my grandkids loved this. And I get a kick out when they come over to visit. First thing they'll do is they'll look for my my datebook and I'll get it. They'll go through it until they find a blank page. No you're not going to die. Matt Baker we don't fit you. That makes me feel good. Good day. Let's try and talk me into that. So.

[00:38:33] Oh just stay involved. You know Paul politics wise you're probably going to get more done leaning that way. And and if it's just knowing your local representative or senator you know don't be afraid to email him or text him and tell him how you feel about different bills going through that involve water because they don't know they don't know how you feel you got gotta you gotta let him know. And I think that with looking at what the future is going to be I think that's going to be more important than anything. And plus keeping an eye on keeping our water clean.