

mathews-craig-and-jackie-2016-02-18.mp4

[00:00:10] I have one. We have a customer. She was probably I'd say in her early 70s. Her name is Alvey and she had and it was a pretty new fly fisher person. And she came to Yellowstone early on the opening probably 10 years and went into the fire hall with her husband and they split up and they were you know she was way back off the road and there was nobody around and she was you know just watching the buffalo and enjoying the whole thing and all of a sudden this grizzly bear comes right up to the square of the fire hall and crosses the river right next to her gets out on the other side shakes the water off and wanders off into that into the woods.

[00:00:57] And she was just like totally. And I mean she came in the shop afterwards and so so excited so scared you know but that was it for her.

[00:01:07] She was totally cut military as she was talking about the rising fish and how the gazers and the wildlife and all of a sudden here's this grizzly bear.

[00:01:17] Yeah that was pretty cool.

[00:01:18] Yeah that's that's great story I have was a couple years ago we were working on perfecting a couple models of Tinker rods and fishing the firewall.

[00:01:30] It's early in the season and as I'm working with this writer I'm also trying out a new leader a new line leader situation that they had sent us was kind of an indicator nympho indicator when I was literally detecting a fish a cast I mean I was hooking fish left and right not paying much attention just having a ball to the fishing part of it and also I hear a noise behind me and I turn around and there's 11 people standing there with their mouths hanging and open going Holy moly. And it was so cool because I had this food young lad who was 9 years old freckle faced redheaded kid and he is just you know in off. It turned out that his mother was a single parent mother and she said he would kill turtle to learn how to fly fish. And I said we're gonna take care of that right now. And here they are there's bison and there guys was going off and we're having a great time and everybody's getting into it and this little guy walked on a little tennis shoes on and he wades into his knees muck and everything all over. And he caught four or five fish in about 10 cars and I said buddy that Roger's into me. That's what fly fishing is all about.

[00:02:45] Hi. I mean it's extremely important. I mean we're all in trouble Mecca if you know if you want to call it that and it's so important that for that that is available for anyone here and future generations coming up and I think it's super great.

[00:03:04] I wished that there was ways that you know maybe more people knew I mean that we could get the word out even better so more people could have access to it.

[00:03:14] No special world the troll heart of the world. I mean this is it right here. And what has taken place in terms of well trial management conservation conservation easements the history and law of fly fishing is so much of it is steep right here and it's so rich right here in southwestern Montana Yellowstone National Park. And what better place to have it than MSU libraries. And what better place to educate people.

[00:03:42] And people can come from around the world and to an open venue and read about it and experience the history and all that is fly fishing. I think it's very important.

[00:03:58] I would say slow Creek I love slow Creek in the fall and I don't know what I'm in for high.

[00:04:06] I'm not exactly sure. I just love it when there's the little beanie babies and you and it's really clear and the fish are tough to catch and I just fascinated me and will always drown me.

[00:04:18] What a beautiful venue. But I like the fireball and even though living the mess we're in 150 yards from where we're sitting right now and I fished 130 days a year. But still there's nothing like the fireball because work can you go and have the wildlife and the wild trout and the gazers and everything that is Yellowstone. That's the fight over. And that's why I love it. If they're caught.

[00:04:50] If they offer encouragement in Ohio and there and they're quiet and they share.

[00:04:57] Yeah I think that's key sharing in an appreciation and love for the sport. And while rivers and wild places and environmental quality all goes it all goes together. Certainly an appreciation of the history of the sport. I think that's where the collection is really coming in strong but that to me you know when you drive along with someone that just goes you even have to catch a fish today. And that's what's that's what's an important quality. Just being out there and experiencing all of it is in this area.

[00:05:33] Patients lots of patients. And look at everything and be observant and don't just run out there and jump in the water. I mean it's in get it. Get a feel for the whole everything that's going on around you and start out with 10 Kyra. I mean. That that's the best way to lead to success when they're beginners especially.

[00:05:59] I think it's important to really concentrate concentrate on the sport concentrate on learning. I like that. I like what you sort of ought to encourage because it's so simple and you can simply master catching a few fish. Master line control very easily and once you get into Tinker once you catch a few fish once a beginner doesn't care if they're eight years old or 80 they are hooked and you got him for life. I think that's so important. I think that's what's so attractive about the sport. We teach 130 kids a year down here at Bear Creek through the U.S. Forest Service program how to fly fish every year and you put a tanker a rod in their hand and there's no there's no real it's a rotten lying tire flying form and walk away. It's strictly intuitive and you watch a youngster and they look. What do I do and I said well figure figured out. And then they go Oh my God I got a fish. It's that quick and it's that easy and then then they're into not only the sport fly fishing but it teaches them to get into the environment and appreciate everything that we all love and appreciate.

[00:07:09] And it isn't expensive.

[00:07:11] I mean it's but they know for a hundred dollars you can get into a rod and reel. I'm sorry Rod and line. There is no real. And you're fishing for under a hundred bucks and you're gonna catch fish. I've never had anyone that has tried Tinker that hasn't caught fish like immediately that quick and that's that connection.

[00:07:31] You know you you take young straightening out lying all over the place you've got a real and the real and backwards and pretty soon they're frustrated and you lose them. And it just amazes me how easy and simple to encourage fishing using how quickly and intuitive they pick it up is is the muscle memory and things like that involved in it.

[00:07:50] Does that lend itself well then to learning how to cast and learning how to fly fish.

[00:07:54] Well and that's another beauty though because you can teach disabled of who have atrophied muscles or you know have real problems physical limitations. And again I it's hard to explain how intuitive it is but that they see you pick it up and kept it is a simple pick it up and put it back out there. It's like a fly swatter. I mean people just know how to use it and it just amazes me. If you don't even say anything particular ladies and youngsters just walk away.

[00:08:25] They look at you boom and I think I think it does because initially when people take a fly rod out when they're beginners the idea is is you're going to whip the water to the froth 10 Kyra actually teaches you that you don't have to cast from here to the other side of the river and you don't have to false cast a million times. So I think it does get you ready for fly casting a lot easier than you know just trying to do it on your own with that set set length of line.

[00:08:59] You know people just that's a short line. They learn how to cast that short line. They learn how to read water. They can keep line control immediately and defeat drag whether they're fishing dry flies or news and that's their biggest enemy. Fly fishing must drag and bingo they're defeating drag and have total line control they're in touch with their fly. Bang they catch fish.

[00:09:27] Yes. Yes there is. There is no right age.

[00:09:31] You know I have worked with three year old children right here and they've got fish they've hooked fish. Some have put some big fish in the hang on and anyway they catch fish. Three years old and ninety three. I mean I guess you could you're never too young or too old to learn the sport.

[00:09:49] Men tend to be I think harder because they're into this module. We got to cast the whole line thing. Teacher guy with a razor. The first thing he does strip off all the right and you go you're not even care you can catch 10 feet deep. What are you doing. Well I watched it somewhere where women are more into finance and they just they just pick it up they listen better and it's not about power because casting isn't about power.

[00:10:17] Global warming I think is huge. I think we really have to do everything we can to preserve water quality and and. Quality. And I think that that global warming is finally going to be our biggest challenge going forward.

[00:10:35] Climate change is certainly a right on top of the list of threats I think and that's the beauty of living up to salvation where we where we live. Maybe we can mitigate some of the effects of climate change by these high elevation fisheries that we have a native fish reproducing West Slope cutthroat up higher in their native habitat and we're seeing we're seeing the effect of climate change daily. I mean you look around us here mid-February the snows growing like crazy. More wind a lot more rain less snowpack. We're having problems with the Wolverines they can't even dead anymore because the snow fields the Dunning sites are no longer there. So I think we really have to tackle climate change what was the other. I'm sorry the other part of the question.

[00:11:22] No they're just threats or opportunities.

[00:11:25] Well the opportunity exists because English can lead by example and I think we should and I think we do. We did a film called cold water I'm really proud of it. Yet two days ago on the mountain film of the year award for environmental quality and it's all on climate change and we put a link to it in our website. And our weekly newsletter and boom right off the bat you get deniers calling you screaming and yelling and going What are you talking about. Most of them are petroleum engineers but they're good friends and customers and I think that that's we have to work on those kind of people because the science is there and we can no longer deny it. We see it we see the effects of it. We have to lead by example like you.

[00:12:10] I mean just in the 30 some odd years we have lived here. The temperature difference the coldest temperatures and the warmest.

[00:12:17] I mean that's so noticeable and yet they say a blip in time. But by the same token a blip in time isn't the warmest year on record ever ever consistent why we're seeing it consistently out now.

[00:12:28] Yeah. When I was growing up in Wisconsin I cannot say it was hit or miss whether we trick or treat in this. Yeah and now we're lucky if we get a white Christmas. Is that amazing. Yeah yeah yeah. And I'd agree with you it seems like the vast majority of science and scientists agree that this this is real this is happening this is manmade. It's an issue. You get a couple outliers out there but not many.

[00:12:51] And you know I wish we were. I wish we were wrong.

[00:12:53] God it would be great if all of a sudden yeah but sciences the sciences and there is it's happening and we have to do something about it. Yeah and we have to work in education and I think angling is a perfect way to educate youngsters on the effects of climate change because we can see it directly we can see the effect of drought. We can see the effect of wildlife right here so easily. Right here in southwestern mountain in Yellowstone.

[00:13:26] Fishing regulations. When we first started in business the movement was towards preservation of spawning habitat. Closing the rivers during spawning season starting more catch and release limited a number of fish per angler that they could keep an eye. We've now what progressed and that was in southwest Montana. The park has been pretty staunch conservatives. Yeah very progressive through the whole way but now we see the lessening of regulations from our from our fish wildlife and parks.

[00:14:09] And that concerns me. Going forward I think that that's you know it's now it's let's simplify regulations by opening up our waters around and no protection for spawning season fed fisheries that used to have a limit there now you know five fish and I think I think that I I see our fish wildlife and parks turning into more of a political based organization and less of a biological based organization. And I think that is.

[00:14:41] I think that's a serious concern going forward.

[00:14:43] You know Montana was always at the forefront of world crop management in a lot of it was born right here on this river in terms of progressive regulations catch and release time off. They used to limit sections of this river to fishing floating fishing they'd very year to year. It was closed during spawning season and for just the case of simplifying that. That's not how this river got to be in our fisheries got to be world class

fisheries by simple regulations and really what they're doing is that they forget about the. Case in point they were going to up from the half they've opened this river dangling all year round and being in the business people say oh god you're nuts. Isn't that great to have more fishermen. No. We're gonna potentially kill the goose that lays the golden egg every year. Why not let these poor fish out of 60 days off a year to spawn in particularly the Rainbows who have gone through the ravages of world and disease given time off to spawn and they said what a great tradeoff would be we'd reduce the limit kill him between have been in quake lake on the Madison River we'd reduce it from five fish to one fish. In the end they said Well that's we're going to adopt the regulations we're going to leave the river open year round. Well they forgot to do away with the five fishing limit. So continues to be five fish and it was all in their orgasmic delight to keep the river open for a few people and I say it's commercial interests and I may be all wrong but it's a backhanded way we're dealing with crowding issue a social issue. And they cite site science and they say well the Rainbows lay 40 million eggs in the stretch river it doesn't hurt to lose 10 million eggs you don't want to lose one it bothers me. We need every doggone rainbow egg in this river. And I've never in almost 40 years of being in the fly fishing business in well over 40 fishing this river had a customer or a friend complaining about catching too many fish. And guys like Bluey and Dick McGuire and Dick Vincent worked so hard on this river to instill these regulations and now to move backwards. And I look at it as taking a step backwards in we're losing those regulations now we've lost them we fought so hard to keep them. I think it's a big mistake and it's after you piece back handed way of dealing with a social issue down the line. I'm sorry for saying that but that's my view it's fair.

[00:17:16] Oh much more common. I think so too. But there are certain areas that get heavily fished by people that are there to can't catch and kill fish. They are coming to fill their freezers and I you know I mean in this day and age I don't see people having to live on the land that much anymore. I think it's more important to work towards a native fisheries that are well on a self-sustaining fishery versus providing you know food for another case in point.

[00:17:53] They did away this year they're not going to plant having late no longer plant have been linked with rainbow is great because they found it had been as kind of a self-sustaining rainbow population. That's wonderful news but now they live the tributary streams to happy Lake opening when you're around five. So it's five rainbows can be killed and you're going to see people come up and target those spawning rainbows. So why would you on one hand you know raise the flag and say boy we've got a self-sustaining fishery now let's open it up for killing five fish and it creates a terrible enforcement problem I mean let's face it we need more law enforcement all the way around from whether it be angling or hunting and with these budgetary constraints that they tell us. But the state has a surplus. I think we need more game wardens. I'm talking specifically in the state of Montana. You know you go over the hill into Yellowstone Park and it's a whole different program and they have that fishery I think pretty well figured out. But we're looking at some potential enforcement issues right now. I drive back and forth to West Yellowstone every day.

[00:18:58] I see the same vehicles parked between helping in quake lake and I see him harvesting fish every day five fish the lake you can't tell me they're eating those five fish every day but they're taking home and putting them in their freezer.

[00:19:12] And our our local game warden doesn't have the time to patrol the huge land area. He has to. And here we sit with a world class fishery that we're compromising. And I

wish that wasn't the case but it is. Yeah. I honestly don't know. I think it's fishing. Yeah I don't think there's a lot of politics involved with that decision.

[00:19:37] I know under the previous governor Governor Schweitzer he did a heck of a job and in overseeing what happened on our wild fisheries I think we're slipping a little bit and it's the same the same party.

[00:19:53] I just I just hate to see that. I really do because it's been so good to me and it means so much.

[00:19:59] I know it hurts so much to that. It's a wrinkle county by the Fisheries going forward too. I mean if you're going to have a premier fishery don't don't deregulate.

[00:20:11] Keep good solid regulations and keep it there. I think Montana to you is doing a phenomenal job. They really are trying very very hard to keep tabs on everything that's going on and all the watersheds all across the and all across the state and I think they're doing a really good job. In that aspect right.

[00:20:39] I also think that they're their biggest challenge going forward is keeping the momentum keeping the environmental community with them and keeping anglers interested and in keeping them online and then in part of the organization.

[00:21:00] Here's an organization that Montana to you and there's a big difference between Montana to you and national to Montana. You will not accept dark money and they will fight the good fight with a bare bones budget and a bare bones staff. And look what they've done in terms of fighting mining and the negative impacts of mining to the stream access bill. They're always there and they need more and more support. 5000 members can't do it. And I try to get everybody the fish this river to join Montana to you because it's a real positive organization. NFF is more concerned with not advocacy with education. So consequently Montana. To you I think is Keystone for us here in the southwest Montana in terms of Montana fisheries and of course Yellowstone Park Foundation and Yellowstone Park. And we are on the board actually both for stewardship directors how Montana to you and we just got off the board the Ozone Park Foundation but the money that they raised to protect and preserve and enhance the Yellowstone fishery is amazing. And I know they raised seventy five million dollars in a short time that we have been associated with it and they fight the good fight to.

[00:22:27] I've got to him Go ahead.

[00:22:32] Well the first one I think myself and Yvonne Sheridan and Patagonia co-founded one percent for the planet and to watch the world we passed a hundred and fifty million dollars in member donations recently and I think that's been huge for environmental projects. And it's strictly environmental and conservation projects member businesses donate 1 percent of their gross not net profit hocus pocus while we didn't make a profit to share so 1 percent of the go sale to conservation environmental projects. They're basically audited volunteer or by their by their bookkeeper every year that sends in a form that says they're doing it so it's a serious serious program but it is a serious program and taking one percent of your gross sale and putting it towards a conservation program.

[00:23:25] And I think when you use particularly fly fishing businesses when you use public resources to make a living you have to give back more than a taxicab driver from New

York. I'll never forget when we won an award. Get the protector of Yellowstone Park Board and we'll never win any higher award than that. That was such a tremendous honor.

[00:23:50] And the then secretary I'm sorry the then director and project what do you call the E.D. of national parks and can't think what you call it but he oh he was the head of a Senate Appropriations Committee National Parks and he happened to be at the awards banquet at an old faithful when we received the word and he walked up to me he said What is it that you do. And I said well we give one percent. He said Yeah yeah but he said Why do you do that. He said because you pay income taxes to do that. And I said time out. Soda is a cab driver from New York City. He pays the same income tax I do but I make a good living because of a public resource such as Yellowstone parks rivers and streams and Montana. I have to tax myself a little bit and give back more because I utilize public resources. And he shook us and he walked away and I kind of disappointed me because I thought here's a guy that's the head of the Appropriations Committee well a few months later he stopped and he said I get it. And he finally got it. And that's that's kind of cool. But I think more and more businesses have to step up because our government can't do it. Our religious leaders can't do it. Our politicians certainly won't do it. So it's up to us to help fund and protect and preserve what we what we all love.

[00:25:11] Very simple that's great.

[00:25:16] Okay so my mind isn't really about rivers and streams directly but I worked with I was on the board. I'm sorry excuse me. I was on the board of G I see greater Yellowstone Coalition and spent the first four years on that board going back and forth to Washington D.C. trying to get the snowmobiles and the park either under control or removed. Initially Mike Finley was the superintendent of the park and there was going to be a total removal and there was going to be a mass transit over snow coach over the you know over the snow vehicle set up through the park which fell apart after after he after he left and and we got a different president in the White House. But I feel really good about being able to go in the park now in the wintertime and it's nice.

[00:26:23] It's bad it's not you're not going through the cloud of smoke and the snowmobilers are controlled. Everybody's enjoying themselves. The park is quiet really welcome to stroke disorderly stroke right. And we did it again. We lost the master hands which is sad but what we gained I think is huge. So my other one if it ever happens is we're working now trying to get this river as designated as a wild and scenic quarter river. Whether it happens or not is we're in the emphases stage right now and hopefully it will it will move forward and go quickly and and we'll get it done.

[00:27:11] But get that.

[00:27:12] That would be my other one then I'd be like yes if we can do it to be great men controlling some of the tractor trailer hazardous materials that are hauled through this balance whether we should go to river valley. These are always more designed to handle that kind of truck traffic. And they should be on a 15 which was designed and that's that's a huge flight that you've been working on and it just keeps keeps going along. But if you can't stand up and fight for what you think is right and for wild places and wild trout and clean water you fold your tent and forget about it and go work for Wal-Mart. I mean.

[00:27:53] Most of your big game animals that are in the park tend to migrate out of the park during the fall and into the winter months when it is hunting season. They are shot

and they are you know they are hunted. And I just don't I don't think that that's what the park was set aside for. I honestly don't feel that I know.

[00:28:23] I don't think there would be a good situation to see dangling was mandated in an area which is kind of nice. Certainly science is there. Lot of science in terms of character and recent history.

[00:28:37] Why. Because they just they were just killing fish.

[00:28:40] Pointing black bass right perch.

[00:28:43] Right. And now there is a fisheries program that does that. I just I would feel really sad if I thought that they were going to open up a hunting season in Yellowstone.

[00:29:02] Well my dad started when I was a kid.

[00:29:05] He would take us into the woods he was not a fisherman but he taught me to go to be.

[00:29:12] And I mean I enjoyed nature and I loved it. And he taught me about all that you know the plants and the trees and all that kind of stuff. And then I met him.

[00:29:20] When I was a swimmer. He President.

[00:29:23] I'll I grew up and then I met Craig and he took me fishing and he showed me the bugs which fascinated me to to start with I just love the insects. And then I decided that if he could catch fish I could catch fish. So there it went from there.

[00:29:40] My my parents both encouraged me to get into it into into fishing. We had a summer home in northern Michigan and that's where I learned how to fish my grandfather and my my uncle's fish. My father did not.

[00:29:54] But he always encouraged me to and with with the love of the sport that my my grandparents my grandfather and my uncles had I just naturally just became involved in fishing. And then one thing led to another and I tied my first fly. I think when I was five or six years old out of a skip seagull feather and I caught a fish and I was hooked on fly fishing. And after that you know an old friend who first brought me to Montana I think in 1970 Larry Dick from Michigan we travel ordered his old Chevy Chevy van and we spent a month out here ran around fly fishing and then Jackie and I came out in the mid 70s and it was your idea to move here. She said let's move to Yellowstone and 1979 and here we are.

[00:30:43] I would police say the relic River which is where you and I used to go downtown goes to Rockford into into the Grand River and just upstream Grand Rapids. I'm certainly one of my favorites and we fished mall Muskegon Pier Marquette the great Sabo here a lot of Baltimore saga we fish the great South a lot of pent water and a lot of small streams and skied all favorites.

[00:31:10] The Yellowstone cutthroat. And it's because it's beautiful. Officials just really outstanding. All right. So that would be my favorite.

[00:31:21] That's a native species. I'm right with you on that. Yells from cut through. Nothing. No other species of trout comes up and takes a fly like yellow cutthroat. Or not impartially both the rise is just an outstanding example of cutthroat and they take a take a fly they're so they're so visual or they're you know they're native fish they're native species they're gorgeous they live in all the right places all the most beautiful wild places in the park they're just a wonderful species. Yeah I love brown trout I love Rainbow trout I love more but it's Yellowstone cutthroat.

[00:32:01] Well I like to read fishing stories so mine would be. NICK LYONS Howard back and Paul Solari and I like some of the stuff.

[00:32:17] So those are my favorites.

[00:32:19] Well and beyond that you know certainly Nic Lyons and Paul have added so much to our to our sport. But I really appreciate the work that Vince Marinello did in the ring of the rising because one of the greatest things ever written as is the modern drive fly code. And you know you look at at Mottram and C.F. Walker they're just they're just wonderful to read.

[00:32:45] Unfortunately it was kind of hard to find their stuff floating around nowadays. Gary La Fontaine I think his book Qantas flies of course Shwe sweeper his work that he's done. Berlin Klink and Berg all overall no longer writes about her hasn't written about fly fishing in quite some time. I really liked his work and still enjoyed reading him so gather. Those are some of my favorite authors. I can't pick one. I had to pick one I'd say say client certain.

[00:33:16] The people are the best places we got to go the people we met. The I mean if that shop opened up the world. For. For me. I'm sorry for both of us and I really I really like that. I enjoyed it. That's part of the. Kindness now being in it involved in it anymore.

[00:33:40] Certainly the people the people we met whether it was okay the first lighters we had we had handicapped fly tires and that's how we get involved in fly fishing business in the reward. See how that provided them with with employment. But then going forward the guides the shop people that we've had watching youngsters walk in snot nosed little kids that are catching their first fish in Montana all of sudden they're there. The reason they're here it's prestigious attorneys that sort of thing and it's all them. Just what a great ride. Who would have thought you know I had the greatest life we.

[00:34:18] We had some employees that have you know they just keep coming back as not employees but you know now they're their accountants and lawyers and you know it's just fun.

[00:34:30] It's just a I family you know it's like a fan kids.

[00:34:33] We had to kick him a but I really wanted to get a real job. Don't don't get trapped into this mess into the seasonal fly fishing. And I think they saw a to state but we just said no you've got to go on and you know they can come in and hire guides and that's great.

[00:34:48] And so is your current consultants. Is that what you would consider yourselves now with that with the shop. I'm I'm totally out of it OK. Lately I'm I've been used to still do

some advising my kids wise from the far away. I guess I still think I gotcha right. I couldn't walk away from. Yeah. And are you happy with the direction that it's going now.

[00:35:09] Yeah. All right. Well that got pretty he got pretty expensive and pretty technical for a lot of people keeping up with the newest fly rod and in the newest reel became I think that might have been what may have started pushing the common person out of the sport a little bit. I see ten Kyra as the kind of the human cost of the Savior and I think he's he's right to call it that has been.

[00:35:49] It opens the door back up to anybody at any economic level and any age to be able to come back into the sport and and learn how to fight this guy.

[00:36:01] It's kind of fun to come fruitful circle. You know certainly waiters I think waiters have fire lines are huge improvements but when you go back to tinker you know here partially pointed out it was you know in the year 60 or 600A.D. I think we're fishing with a pole in a string and a piece of feather catching fish. And I love it when people walk in the shop. And I see this almost daily a guy walk in the shop and he'll walk right over to the fly rods and he owns every fly rod known to man he's going to buy a new one he walks and he talks about the new rods and he's wagging an eight hundred dollar nine hundred dollar flyer up when his wife and two kids have been coming in for years and they're bored to tears. They're standing over by the counter looking around God we've got to get to the grocery store. Anyway I'll take out a tinker Rod and I'll start extending it. He doesn't see it but the kids and the wife do start talking about Tinker and I'll wink at him. Here they come every time. Here they come and they show what the heck is ahead. This is a tinker ride. You just put one handed catch fish. Invariably the youngsters and wife will say to the old boy hey we'd fly fish if we could have one of these. So out the door they go in the old man's got his 900 dollar new fire Rod and the kid's got a hundred dollar fly rod Tinker. The next day the old man comes back and goes I gotta have one of those.

[00:37:30] And we lived through the neoprene era of the neoprene waders. Oh my God I'm so glad that was over.

[00:37:37] Yeah I was.

[00:37:41] So it's not that you want to talk to and Corrigan here you ahead here he had a husband and a father who fly fish and a wife and two kids who didn't and were bored tears and was only there because he dragged them in and the next thing you know you got two kids and a wife fly fish right. And I think that's really cool. And I've seen it happen not once but a hundred times and it's all because of ten curl in. Don't give me wrong here. But he says Why do you want to sell one hundred dollar or two hundred dollar Rod when you could be selling eight hundred dollar right. Well you know what. You're never gonna sell the wife and kids and 800 LRAD. But. You did with ten Curragh in the next year. They're going to come in to buy an island. All right.

[00:38:26] So you get people into the sport and that's how you get them into the sport.

[00:38:29] The simplest way I know the simplest way of fly fishing on I've certainly I've heard people say the fish don't know whether you have a 60 all around or 6000 athletes. They don't care. I don't care first personally when you hook a fish with a tinker Rod.

[00:38:43] The first thing and I'm Tony. 10 years later you hook him. You're laughing like a little kid. What did you just start laughing. We're going by yourself or staying in a three hour bridge. It's really cool.

[00:39:00] Yes. No doubt. I think it is. I think that there is a big challenge for the angling community to go into the inner city and get the kids out of schools and into the woods. You know they talked up there was a big push for that probably 15 20 years ago did kids get the kids back to the woods in there so there's they just don't go outdoors and play anymore.

[00:39:25] And you know I think the angling community has a good purpose there to try to get them reconnected back into nature and into fishing and surviving the sport and keeping the sport alive.

[00:39:42] I loved it. To go back to love to Craig who is part of the total for golf for the program the team and which makes our hour Tinker. And it was really cool because six years ago when lefty turned up about to encourage all that he said it was a passing fad. You know who you can last April Yvonne and I and Mark ha ha bonds and gold from Patagonia picked lefty Cray up at the airport and left he said I want to start right now I was wrong. He said no let's get to work let's get some kids into this sport and is right. And here you have a nine year old man saying we got to get kids into the sport and we do and that's our mission right now.

[00:40:27] Well I think the women are coming. I see more and more.

[00:40:31] I mean I walked the the river pretty much every single day you know down through here all summer long and there are at least one woman in every drift boat that goes by and if not more so I think the women have caught on and they are getting engaged and being part of the sport. When we see more female guides minorities again I think we need to go into the inner cities and work on getting people get back into nature. I think we forget about people there. You know it's too easy to ignore that they're around. And I think it's important that you know maybe that that's f goal going forward or should be their goal because they are and. Education is to get more more people that don't have an opportunity to go fishing and get him and get him started because I think they would enjoy it.

[00:41:29] Do you give anything to not only enjoy it but that's what connection that's the connector right there. And once once you have him connecting with wild places once they see him. Case in point the kids that we take for minutes in Harrison and whatnot the youngsters that we take in the springtime introduced to fly fishing all those kids Marine balloon Woods. Have lived here their whole life. They sit there who's got off a little things like that we're walking our shop it's a first year we can I see that the parents always go thank you so will you have it when you leave. They said Thank you. And I want to say why didn't you take that. You know we have to make that connection.

[00:42:06] I mean look at the environmental community as a whole. I mean it's shrinking because again because there's so many people that don't ever have an opportunity or maybe they don't take the opportunity. But education is going to be you know 100 percent of getting them away from the city and out into the woods even if it's a little park that's close to their home. It's important for humans to know to interact or feel what it's like.

[00:42:40] Look our traditional public land. You talk about great organization own parks that they're building in the inner city and connecting well with the organized Trust for Public Land. We've done a lot of work with them. That landscape you see across the road 20000 acres protected by Trust for Public Lands forever looking like that. That's wonderful. And as an organization you often hear about but there's a really a world class operation in there.

[00:43:02] They're nationwide I guess.

[00:43:04] Yes you're out of San Francisco but we have a local office in Bozeman. And you've done a lot of positive work right here in southwestern Montana in the Gallatin they protected the Taylor fork. My good friend Alex Beekman unfortunately passed away a couple weeks ago. But Alex did that project when everybody gave up on it for service and everybody said we can't get it done and Alex did it TPL Trust for Public Lands is world class that way.

[00:43:30] What's your end. Are they they buy land and then keep it in public trust as I say they will arrange for purchase as they do land swaps.

[00:43:38] They do all kind of whatever it takes and they get it done. And Alex broker deals again people start to waste your time.

[00:43:46] You are not on saxophone. That's an excellent.

[00:43:55] The places themselves just I don't want to see this change.

[00:44:02] You know so that's what it would be. What inspires me is like you don't want to see the degradation that could take you I can't say extreme quality you don't want to see that.

[00:44:14] And I want to see mining and in some of the wild places and life in the mountains and there's only so much of this left in the end this country.

[00:44:25] And I think we need to protect it.

[00:44:28] Leroy and I like to think that most anglers recognize that the preciousness of fly fishing in solitude in of the wild places in the wild trout and the wildlife the wild rivers all is an anecdote to the over overwhelming dominance of man. I mean it is so special.

[00:44:52] To have these landscapes when you look at the Madison valley of Montana which is the most intact Valley from wild Georgia aspect to a wildlife aspect. In Montana it's protected by its over 55 percent now protected by conservation easements. And that's why if that doesn't inspire you to get involved to protect what we're here for the wildlife and the wild trout. And again you can even fold your tent and go somewhere else. The New York City I guess I mean this is why we're here. This is why our phone rings at the shop a couple times every dance. I just need to talk to somebody in Yellowstone.

[00:45:31] That's great. I think I can and maybe he has a degree that part of it comes to it with longevity. The longer you live the more you can see especially growing up in the Midwest seeing what happened to the rivers to the Great Lakes there and that things can change for the worse.

[00:45:47] It seems like it just snowball. I mean it's like we can do this now. I mean in all of a sudden it's like hey I'm an old man and I had to do a few more projects and just when you think by that okay we've got this pretty well taken care of. Now if there's something else that comes along and we have to be ever vigilant you got to watch some of this stuff because you see some politics get involved with little parcels here and there and you got to watch the whole picture and you have to look at the whole picture. And we had we have over 6000 head elk in this valley wild elk that migrate the second longest pronghorn animal migration route in the country is right here in the Madison Valley. And the reason being is because they're not impacted by a non wildlife friendly fences. And it takes a lot of money and it takes a lot of arm twisting and it takes a lot of education and new look at now a lot of traditional ranchers that have jumped on board and said Holy crap. Ever thought of that. Nobody ever explained that to another part of the excitement and part of the movement to protect this because they see it as their legacy to.

[00:47:02] It's just it's cool. It's the part I guess that's kind of the same answer that part makes the park special it's just me to be able to go in there.

[00:47:10] There's there's not strip malls there's not prehistoric times as well bison population.

[00:47:22] You have the world's largest collection of geothermal features. You have native species you have the largest concentration of grizzly bears in the lower 48 as in the area.

[00:47:32] You walk along and there's some places where you're walking through you know the old prehistoric Indian trails you know and it's just really neat you know you never know when you go around a corner what you might be in that and the trail or in the river or is it's just it kind of makes you wake up and pay attention and really be observant and soak it all in.

[00:47:56] Let's.

[00:47:57] A look at the diversity in the park.

[00:48:01] Look at that like precipitation. The southwest portion of the park it's 18 inches of rain. The northeast section gets 16.

[00:48:09] I mean do you have tropical rainforests.

[00:48:11] What does its purpose is so so rich and it's right here. And that's that's what makes it so special. The fact that it has so many miles more public trout water than anywhere else in the world right here. I mean that's what's really special about it as well as the animal populations. It has a full complement of predator population all the reintroduction of the wolves. So it's an amazing place.

[00:48:42] Well they're actually in the waters on the west side of the park. They are browns and rainbows because when they first when the park did like the fire hall never had any fish species at all.

[00:48:59] So they've not made an attempt to go after the native species and they're often and where there is you know the Yellowstone cuts should be in the Yellowstone River. It should be above the lake it should be below the lake slope critical mind. All those drainage is up there are all native drainage is and they're working towards keeping that. I'm not

exactly sure without dams are winners how they're ever going to start totally successfully do it but they you know there are there is actually stipulations and areas that are kind of a dividing line that they are allowed to exist and other places where they would just assume that they were gone.

[00:49:46] So we have a native and wild trout management area right. And certainly don't get me wrong. There was one project that they okayed that I had a really hard time with the geography of the river which holds the largest brown trout in the park and really it Oh we're going to turn it back into a native fishery I thought Oh my God. And I for a while I couldn't support it. And then finally you know what when you have a chance to do what's right you've got to see you've got to swallow it and say you know what we've got to go with science here and we've got it we've got a chance to do what's right let's support it and we have supported it and of course you take a hit from that. Quite a few hits because a lot of people they want to give that up. But again when you're talking these short little drainage is an able to go back to a native fishery. I think that is so special particularly in these times of climate change and in restoration of native species I think it's huge. And I think the park is on the right track. And you know and I know they have a hard time with it too because there's politics involved there's all kinds of stuff that's involved. But I think they're doing the right job. And certainly Superintendent Wink and Tom Cool in that whole group is on the right track and we fully support. You know a year ago somebody had told me that I was going to co-author or author fly fishing books I would've said no. But certainly probably the biggest influence was it was Nick Lyons who encouraged it encouraged our first book flight patterns Yellowstone when when John Jurassic my partner and I first wrote that I think in 1986 and then he encouraged me to do a few on my own which I've done. And he was a big inspiration. And certainly when people came in and they say you know I picked up something and especially a guy fish for 60 years and egos I picked up the thing in one of your chapters on fly fish and got it so rewarding. You said you're so proud of that and what was the second question I'm sorry.

[00:51:55] Is there anything about being a researcher that has made you a better.

[00:51:58] Oh no doubt you observe more you spend more time kickback on the bank watch and the whole picture rather than numbers. And what goes with that. You spend a lot of time observing insects really shall come up and rise to an insect. You spend a lot of time tipping over rocks and and trying to come up with new fly patterns has certainly been a big impetus and in the fly patterns that we developed over years so yeah it's all part of the whole picture.

[00:52:30] Once again the people the people you meet the education you know showing someone what what you know and but learning from them too. It's amazing. And I again hate to come back to tinker with you give a ride to a five year old kid you watching me though. Well what did he just do. You learn a little kink Louis Castor. We learn from each other just by watching other anglers. And it's so cool. Certainly education and it's just so rewarding the people you meet. The conservation projects that you get involved with just by just by talking to people and you find common ground. Even though a guy might be way out in a different ballgame politically you can sit down and troll.

[00:53:17] You can't lie and cheat and buy with the trout and you sit down and you figure out trout problems together and you become lifelong friends because of it. And certainly our customers have become our best friends over time.

[00:53:30] Willie Perkins told me a story about fisherman Jimmy Carter and he said he started out by saying I'd never vote for him but after I finished with him I really respected him as an angler. He said he knew the river you knew the species he knew so much about the water that he know out of respect for him as an angler as Jimmy Carter was the last great president we had for Yellowstone Park.

[00:53:51] And at that time I probably wouldn't vote for him either but you know what I would today they call him our greatest ex-president. Yeah. You know I got a letter from him a couple of weeks ago and he's just a great guy. How's he doing. He's doing OK.

[00:54:05] Yeah. He's doing OK. You know let's face it he's. He's up there and he's battling a heck of an issue. Yeah. But he's always positive about it never wants to talk really about his. He's always talking about the positive things.

[00:54:16] He's certainly led a full life. Yes yes. And so is his wife. Yeah. Rosalyn.

[00:54:27] I'm going to go back to Jimmy Carter. All right. I'll never forget I was a police chief of West Yellowstone and Jimmy came here. On an invitation I think from the FFA from the IFC when they're going to build the International Federation fly fishers convention center in West Yellowstone.

[00:54:43] That would've been I think 1980 or maybe 81 and we basically were charged with teaching the Secret Service how to fly fish. I'll never forget one dinner we're at. And Jimmy walked in and he had a beautiful trout that had been the shepherd prepared and he was kind of showing off a little bit for the table. And I happened to be there with the Secret Service and that's cool. But Rick Seiko who was in charge of the Secret Service I believe at that time you hear Roger Oda. Anyway Rick had never fly fish. But Rick had caught a bigger fish.

[00:55:16] But Jimmy didn't know that. So Jimmy Walker made a big deal of it. And then Rick just kind of walked in and said Well here's what I got today. I'll never forget it. Well I had a very good laugh about it.

[00:55:27] And I think the guy that laughed the hardest with Jimmy Carter. Yeah. That's my story and we've certainly have fished with some of it great. I mean the greatest people in the world and on the stream they're not a celebrity. They're they're a fly fishing. They all approve whether it's Ted Turner or Tom Brokaw or Michael Keaton or Tom or going all just down to earth. Fly fishing for common muck and they're laughing like crazy.

[00:55:56] I agree with you. I guess my story would probably be Herb Wellington. Yeah he is a great guy. He went on Odell Creek at the old Longhorn ranch.

[00:56:06] Linda wrote the book Spring Creek.

[00:56:09] And he he would call us and you know if you got an invitation from her to come down the creek keep it. You didn't say well I can't do it today. I mean you went and we went down there one time and we all would ride with him and they would just that one time was just you and I and her we went to this big huge it's almost like a big pond in the middle of the creek just soft real slow moving water and you can see these fish are just feeding like crazy and we're all looking out the window.

[00:56:42] And her access to Craig where they had this amount of great modern. What do you think they're feeding on cases. I think they're nothing.

[00:56:53] Go catch one. You have to clarify this because there was no one else being allowed.

[00:56:58] So Herb and I had to sit in my car and I'm sitting in the car with all. Going to be good. So Craig goes out there and he tells them No no I'm fine cast and he catches this fish and her goes. All right take the name Fox.

[00:57:14] Let's check it.

[00:57:15] I mean I started as a lava and I ended up being we'd go fish together all the time and we dropped Craig off someplace and then I'd go fish and we had so much fun. I think he was just he was a gruff old guy.

[00:57:29] I got to go find you did first conservation easement in this area on the long run and he protected our creek. He was an amazing amazing individual. We're really fortunate to know that yeah I was.

[00:57:41] I'm very glad that we got to know he's a great guy.

[00:57:46] Armstrong is a celebrity as Vern Gallop Yeah. And he never gets credit.

[00:57:52] But look what Vern has done for our sport. It's it's amazing. And you say that in going gallop and people who never heard of that me and burns a special person and he's done so much good for the history and in all the literature what not a fly fishing.