



Dear Bud,

I recently read about you in an article from the St. Louis Post Dispatch. I also formed a lasting bond with the Missouri though I first fell in love with it here in Missouri. After my first time on the river in my jon boat I was hooked. Camping, fishing, exploring and sometimes doing nothing more than just being out there. Though I grew up farming and marvel at tow boats I still believe that we must conserve this great resource. Enclosed are a few poems that I wrote a few years ago. I hope enjoy and appreciate them.

Bruce Palmer

Bruce



An Original
Palmark
Creation

The Beast

The Missouri river speeds along
In it's travels it does so wrong
It floods and washes everywhere
To ride it's waters few will dare
Why is it so terrible to all?
To ruin our creations, it has the gall
It was just a gentle beast you see
To wander and trickle with so much glee
Only with spring rains it would roar
But now this is true no more
It growls and screams on every turn
Man has caged it, won't he ever learn
He can't be happy 'til he rules the land
Yet the beast rises and bites his hand
He tries to tame it with levee and dike
Much to the beast's strong dislike
It tries to be itself once more
But man has other plans in store
He will suck it dry by pump and ditch
Well hell, who's going to bitch
It's blood feeds mans farms and mines
Flowing though so many lines
Never again to return to the beast
No because man has had his feast
When it is dead man will cry
O' why, why, why did it die
Then to late he will know
To whom he had laid the deadly blow
It is man who pays the price
Terminal snake eyes are on the dice
Without the beast he will perish
And leave not one to be so selfish
The pumps will rust and the ditches silt
Down will fall all man has built
Alive the beast rises again
With new life it will begin
Though the valleys it will flow
From it's banks new life grow
Things will return as they should
And to the beast all is good

Bruce Palmer
July 1992

The Omen of the Beast

The mighty beast couldn't bear any more
And man didn't dream of what was in store
He had shoved and pushed the beast once to often
What he had really done is seal his coffin
Though the dikes and levees the beast flexed his muscle
At first man thought it was just another tussle
Disaster struck man far and wide
Yet not one would be on the beast's side
Though out they would cry
Damn the beast, why, why
But then reality began to sink in
And man began to understand his deadly sin
The beast was much stronger than man had known
He should learn to work and live with what it would condone
Together with the beast, man would prosper and thrive
Against him only the beast will be left alive
The beast had given man another chance
What now will be man's stance?
I hope for his sake man now knows
For the next time might be the beast's finishing blows

Bruce Palmer

started 1993

finished 4/98

The Missouri river has told man over and over again not to close him in, yet man has continued not to listen. 1973 brought the most destructive flood in history as a warning. Did man listen? No! 1985, a reminder with some of highest crest in history. Did man listen? No! Finally in 1993 there were crest and destruction that surmounted the imagination of most men. Did man listen? I hope!

Bruce Palmer

The Beast 2

I've missed the beast these last few years
Seldom his waters I have steered
A serene life along his shores
Is a dream this one adores
Together we use to visit and ignore the time
For life to us was nothing but rhyme
He always helped me think you see
And there for me he'd always be
I'd watch his moods come and go
Sometimes he'd want his force to show
I've seen him raise across the land
I've seen him sink below the sand
Giving up some life of past
But these times never last
I hope things are going well for him
With new life his waters stem
Perhaps someday I'll return that way
And on his waters I will stay

To my friend the beast may you live
forever a healthy life.

Bruce Palmer

Oct. 18, 1996



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May 20, 1975

Mr. Bud Lilly
Bud Lilly's Trout Shop
West Yellowstone
Montana 59758

Dear Bud:

Under separate cover, we're sending you an experimental System 6,
5-piece rod for your evaluation.

We'd appreciate it if you'd fish it hard and give us your comments.
You might also pass it along to other fishermen who can give it
stream time, and let us know their findings, too.

Thanks, and

Best regards,

SCIENTIFIC ANGLERS/3M

Robert F. Philip
Plant Supervisor

RFP/cjs

Sunset
MAGAZINE

JEFF PHILLIPS
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

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12/5/02

Thanks Bud!

I think it's a good message, and a credit, I hope, to all your efforts over the years. I look forward to staying in touch. Best wishes to you and Ester.

Will

Patric
Box 1332
Bozeman

59771

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MUSEUM OF THE ROCKIES

June 28, 1999

Mr. Bud Lilly
2007 Sourdough Road
Bozeman, MT 59715

Dear Bud,

It was great to see you Thursday at the Malones'—what a nice sendoff for Paula!

Thanks for letting me take a few minutes to update you on our progress with Anglers All. We did have a few bugs (not the aquatic kind) to work out in terms of the exhibit, but are now on track. I forgot, however, to tell you about my experiences in DC, where I tried twice without success to meet with Mike Hayden. Nevertheless, I got some good information from the American Sportfishing Association.

Thursday afternoon, I shared the enclosed draft prospectus with the museum's executive committee. I'd love to get your feedback on it. I'd like to use this piece to accompany letters from you, Mike Owen and others to the individuals and businesses on our list. In the prospectus, I've spelled out our long-range plan to try to bring people together to focus attention on issues related to trout, in which *Anglers All* figures as the first step. It's important to get *Anglers* off to a good start, since the museum board will be looking at our fundraising success as an indicator of community interest in taking the next steps toward the full strategic agenda.

When you've had a chance to look over the prospectus, please give me a call and we'll take the next steps. If you have time for a brief meeting, it would be great to review the list of prospective donors with you and finalize our strategy for approaching each individual. I'm glad to draft letters from you—but they'll be better if you can give me an opening line for each one.

Thanks for all your help, Bud. With you in our court, I'm confident we'll make our goal! Please give my very best to Esther.

Sincerely,

Mary E. Peterson
Development Director

enclosure



The Museum of the Rockies
Prospectus
Anglers All 2000: *Humanity in Midstream*
 to be on exhibit
June 3, 2000 - January 7, 2001

Fly fishing is inextricably woven into the fabric of Montana life. With blue ribbon trout streams under the Big Sky, Montana beckons to fishermen from across the nation and around the world. It is no wonder that the culture of fly fishing has an estimated annual impact of nearly \$450 million on Montana's economy.

Many of Western fly fishing's greatest heroes reside right here, and some of the world's finest fishing gear is produced locally. At the same time, the sport and the state face potentially catastrophic issues of whirling disease, degradation of habitat and environmental threats.

The Museum of the Rockies tells Montana's story to the world. While educating and entertaining people of all ages, the museum seeks to understand, preserve and interpret the natural and cultural history of the Northern Rocky Mountain region. Through original research, collections, exhibits and educational programs, the museum addresses the theme, *One Place Through All Time*. More than 115,000 people visit the museum each year, with one-third coming from the Gallatin Valley, one-third from elsewhere in Montana, and one-third from outside the state. Five percent are international visitors.

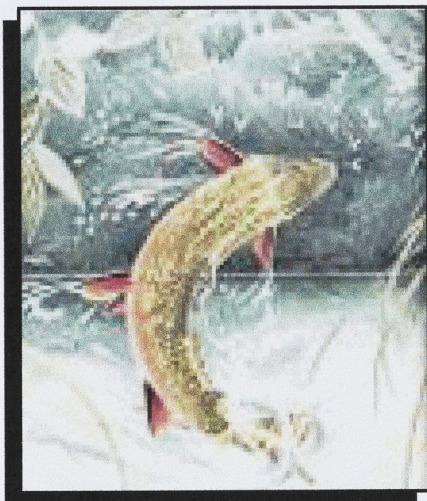
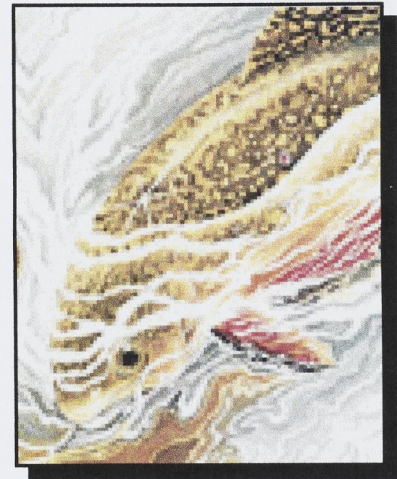
Over the next decade, the Museum of the Rockies will focus increasing attention on trout and trout fishing in the Northern Rocky Mountain region. Through exhibits and community engagement activities, the museum will honor the history of fly fishing, celebrate its heroes and bring the community together to explore the issues that will affect the future of fish and fishing in Montana.

Anglers All 2000: Humanity in Midstream

For six months starting in June 2000, the Museum of the Rockies will host *Anglers All 2000: Humanity in Midstream*, a traveling exhibit prepared by the American Museum of Fly Fishing.

Anglers All 2000 captures the age-old, "simple" human/nature experience of fly fishing with angling artifacts, text, photos, video, eye-catching graphics and a variety of interactive elements. The exhibit documents, interprets and exhibits the history of fly fishing as art, science and sport worldwide with emphasis on the 19th and 20th centuries in pursuit of educating all visitors about fly fishing and its relationship with the natural environment.

Anglers All 2000 explores the complex blend of stream and weather conditions, time of day, entomology and ichthyology, and technique that occasionally enables a human being to fool a fish. The exhibit



takes a look at the technology of rods and reels, gadgets and gear. Fish biology and fish behavior are the subjects of displays explaining why certain flies can incite fish to aggression or predation. Insect morphology and behavior are explained in conjunction with exhibits on fly-tying. Finally, anglers and aquatic habitats are looked at in section on "Where Fish Live." The efforts of anglers to conserve fish habitats and populations are highlighted as visitors' attention is drawn to pollution and other threats to water quality. The exhibit ends with an examination of the relationship between fly-fishers and the environment, and suggests ways visitors can reverse negative changes.

To *Anglers All 2000*, the Museum of the Rockies will add special interpretive elements to highlight fly fishing in the Northern Rocky Mountain region and to document legendary Montana anglers and the role they have played in the history of fly fishing. Educational programs will be staged both inside and outside the museum to engage visitors--young and old, male and female--who want to learn more about casting, fly-tying, stream craft and fishing opportunities.

Future Fish- and Fishing-Related Developments at the Museum of the Rockies

Anglers All 2000 represents the first of four strategic elements in the museum's plan to bring people together to focus attention on the trout of the Northern Rockies. The second phase involves the planned restoration of a stream that runs through the museum's eleven acre property. The third step will be the development of an original exhibit specifically on trout, which will be shown at the museum in 2005 and offered subsequently for travel to other venues. Finally, throughout this process the museum will be assessing the feasibility of developing a fresh water aquarium through a major expansion of its current facility.

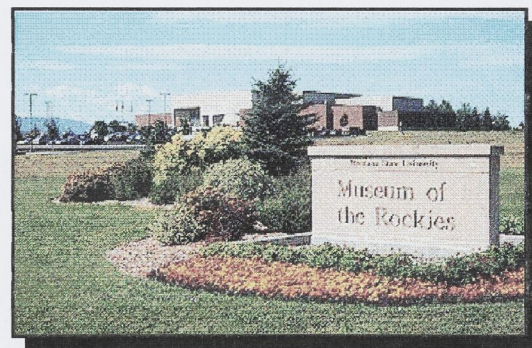
Why the Museum Needs Your Help

As a non-profit institution, the museum relies on the generosity of individual, corporate and foundation donors to accomplish its mission. To mount *Anglers All 2000* with a full complement of educational programming, the Museum of the Rockies needs to raise \$60,000. The museum is seeking sponsorships for this wonderful exhibit and invites the participation of those with an active interest in fish, sport fishing and the quality of fish habitat in the Northern Rocky Mountains.

Support will be gratefully acknowledged in advertising related to the exhibit, in print within the exhibit itself and in person at events related to the exhibit. Gifts in any amount are appreciated. For purposes of recognition, major giving levels have been established as follows:

- * Major sponsor of the exhibit: \$25,000
- * Pacesetter: \$10,000
- * Leadership/Corporate Partner: \$ 5,000
- * Business Sponsor: \$ 2,000
- * Contributor: \$ 1,000
- * Underwriter: \$ 500

Each level carries a unique set of benefits. For further information, please contact Mary Peterson at the Museum of the Rockies, 600 West Kagy, Bozeman, Montana 59717-2730, telephone (406) 994-4973, e-mail maryp@montana.edu.



8/22/98

Dear Bud, I regret to say

that I am unable to

come out on Thurs. anymore
to do the ground maint. at
your retreat. I am having problems
w/ my son + it needs my attention.

also Mom + Greg have gotten very busy
and have become short staffed.

Although, if you need me a little
later to clean up for winter
preparation I could come out for
a few days. Norma + Judy have done
a good job w/ the watering + weeds so
I'm sure things will be okay till
this fall. Again, I am sorry. Please
call if you get desperate. I'll try to
work something out. If you could please
send me a check for past days I
worked it would be appreciated. These
are the days →



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June 18 - 60⁰⁰
July 2 - 60⁰⁰
July 23 - 60⁰⁰

225⁰⁰
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(Pd)

Please send TO.

K. Preis
P.O. Box 532
Sheridan, MT 59749

Thank - you.

Kathy Preis

M. Pogreba
1245 So. Monaco Pkwy
Denver, Co. 80334



Bud Lilly
Angler's Retreat
Three Forks
Montana



Hi Bud

stories to tell. He
said he'd love to go
fishing on the Madison
with you. . . as I'm
sure hundreds would
like to do. Bill's daughter
is married to the "Horse
Whisper" ^(mop) Branaman from
Harrison. They now live in
Sheridan, Wyo. on a ranch.

Surely was great to
see you this summer.
You're the best.

Always
Mafine

Dear Bud -

I want you to know
I delivered ^{your} the book
to Bill Bowers and he
was thrilled to get it.
He was also impressed
to know you & I were
& have been friends for
a long time. I have
known Bill & Loraine
ever since moving to
Colorado. He flew with
Doolittle over Tokyo,
so he, too, has some



July 5, 1998

Dear Bud,

Here wa a check for a 2-bedroom accommodations for Doug for Aug. 17 and 18. He will enjoy the fishing and seeing you, I know.

Thanks again,
Frank Peterson

Apr 8 '98

Dear Bud -

Enclosed is a check for \$100⁰⁰ (one hundred dollars only) as a down payment on "the Cottage" for May 8 & 9th. I think Bev & Alex will be with me. How many will it accommodate? I am thrilled about the chance to stay there. How I loved your mom & I still miss that glorious laugh of hers. What a lady.

Please let me know if the place is available at that time.

As always,
Marilyn [POGREBA]
1245 So. Monaco Pkwy
Denver Co 80224

**Montana Department
of
Fish, Wildlife & Parks**



MEMORANDUM

To: Ron Aasheim, Larry Peterman, Dick Vincent, Bud Lilly

From: Tom Palmer

Date: April 24, 1996

Re: *Montana Outdoors* story review

Enclosed is a draft story on the Madison River, wild trout, whirling disease. It's scheduled to appear in the July/August edition of *Montana Outdoors*.

The editor of Montana Outdoors stands over my desk with his hand guns in plain sight. So, could you please review this mss. and get back to me with your comments and corrections by Tuesday, April 30.

You can FAX me your marked up pages at 406-444-4952. Or, for minor comments, you can phone me at 406-444-3051. I'll be out of the office April 25-29, but you can leave messages on my voice mail concerning your review and comments.

Or you can mail the mss. back to me: Tom Palmer; FWP, P.O. Box 200701, Helena, MT 59620-200701.

I hope it's an easy and enjoyable read.

Thanks

This was a fun article
for me... I ran across
some interesting history.
I hope you enjoy it.

*Deep down we all doubt the illusion of control we
pretend in our lives.*

--Andrei Codrescu, from "Down in the Flood"

Possibility is the oldest American story.

--William Kittredge, from "Home"

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that there was a time when the Madison River wasn't the Madison River we now know. And it wasn't so long ago. Madison River trout were wild *and* native then. For two decades beyond the turn of the twentieth century it seemed as if that's how Montanans thought it would always remain.

And then we just forgot what we thought we wanted for the Madison River. We once owned an understanding of nature and the wild that said it was good to keep a native home for at least some of our native trout--an idea we're beginning to mine again--but that earlier and innocent wisdom somehow slipped from our memory as naturally as a perfect dream drifts from wakeful consciousness.

In the early days of the new century and through at least 1920, there existed in the minds of people who paid attention to such things a noble yearning to keep grayling and "black-spotted trout"--the cutthroat--in the Madison River. It is an odd thing

to imagine that the Madison River, the muscle fish river of our time, was admired for its ability to nurture native cutthroat and Arctic grayling, fish that came to gain an unfortunate reputation for being handsome, delicate, and dumb.

The Madison River is our mesmeric water. We try to learn something about our national selves along its banks and depending on our times and our view of the world we have acquired different things from it. Because it flows on a northing course from Yellowstone, the nation's first national park, and gathers the geyser-fed waters of the Gibbon and Firehole rivers in National Park Meadow, the Madison has become a crucible of mystical nature, a world-famous river draining a landscape where the national idea of a naturally scared place has never grown weary.

In its first Biennial Report for the years 1913-14, the Montana Game and Fish Commission praised the Madison River because in it were found "the trout and grayling." The Commission said the Madison was "par excellence the grayling stream of Montana."

By this time, rainbow trout had been introduced to the Madison River. One is left with the notion, however, that this introduction was not widely embraced. As late as 1910 California's rainbow trout were said to mount carnivorous attacks on other fish, so their official plantings were limited to "isolated reservoirs only." By 1915, the Montana Fish and Game Commission acknowledged that the low public opinion of rainbow trout generated "considerable prejudice against [it] on account

of his cannibalistic nature." But the commission was unwilling, or more likely powerless to stop the exotic rainbow's gone wild colonization of the Madison River. In its 1918 report, the Montana Fish and Game Commission tried to repair the bad name of the malleable rainbow by suggesting that it would likely lead a peaceable existence in the Madison.

Careful observation has convinced your Commission, and we so report that the native black-spotted trout or cut-throat trout, the grayling and the rainbow trout are the three varieties best suited to our lakes and streams. While it is claimed by some that the rainbow trout is destructive to the other species mentioned... we are not yet convinced that the rainbow trout are destructive to grayling because of conditions in the Madison River.

There were no similarly kind words for Europe's brown trout. In the same 1918 report, the Montana Fish and Game Commission chastised federal authorities for apparently foisting brown trout on Montana.

Another instance of unwise planting of a new variety is found in the Madison River where Lock Leven or brown trout have been planted by the United States authorities and are very numerous...It is particularly unfortunate that plantings of this variety have been made in the Madison River, for this is one of the Montana homes of the Grayling. The more aggressive habits of the Lock Leven trout, its undoubted cannibalistic tendencies coupled with an activity and swiftness hardly equalled in other fishes makes it a dangerous denizen.

By 1930 the largest brown trout spawning station in the United States was located on the Madison River at Meadow Creek, near Ennis. The Madison River drifted through time to emerge in a new world with shifting possibilities. In the March 1930 issue of *Montana Wildlife*, an early and often environmentally progressive

Montana Fish and Game Commission publication, editor Floyd L. Smith wrote, "Montana is credited with attracting the third largest tourist expenditure in the United States and Canada [so] Montana's streams must be kept stocked with fish if the state prestige as a tourist goal is to be maintained."

On the Madison the prestige was no longer balanced on the rare native home of cutthroat trout and grayling. The river was put to work to provide the state with trout. The early 1930s marked a period in fisheries work intensively focused on improving the state's hatcheries. The demand for brown trout had exploded and spawning traps the size of military forts were constructed on the South Fork and on the main stem of the Madison River. In the autumn of 1933, workers collected about 5 million brown trout eggs from Madison River fish. In the spring, 5 million rainbow trout eggs were taken from fish caught in the same Madison River spawning traps. Within a human generation the Madison River was transformed from a native fishery to a manufactured one. And it is the manufactured one gone wild that we so love today.

We jump from rock to stone to boulder and back. We throw a line from the bank into a river of perpetual hope. In the pool rises an image of our forebears' interpretive response to their world. When we mourn a Madison River rainbow-trout fishery ravaged by whirling disease, the fish we mourn are the rainbows our great grandparents argued against planting in the river in 1900. We mourn fish that are the progeny of rainbows captured in

the spawning traps our grandparents built in 1930 to maintain a continental prestige that suggested an illusion of abundance. These are the rainbows our parents began to quarrel over in 1960--some wanted to continue the illusion, to forever ply the river with hatchery trout, but those who eventually won the day argued that the trout be permitted to go wild to the Madison. And as these few remaining years of this final decade of the century spill away, these are the wild rainbow trout we believe are as connected to the Madison River as our soul is to our lives.

* * *

I was talking in April to Bud Lilly about this watery history during a visit to his Angler's Retreat. It was the first genuinely fine day of spring after a particularly difficult winter. Lilly was out back enjoying the morning sun and admiring a beautiful black and yellow wet-fly streamer a caretaker had tied from the wings of a passerine.

Bud Lilly's Angler's Retreat is the refurbished boardinghouse that originally opened in 1915. His mother took over the business in 1945. In those days the old Milwaukee Railroad line terminated nearly at the courtyard of Violet Lilly's Three Forks, Mont. establishment, and the clean clapboard building with symmetrical rows of double-hung windows served as a kind of hostel for war-time railroaders. These days, the building's Gunsmoke architecture, boardwalk, and its location just off Main Street makes the place a kind of archetypal Old West roadhouse, a throwback refuge that seems in tune with an

experience a fly-fishing wayfarer longs to find.

For Bud Lilly everything is tied to the experience. In the late 1950s Madison River outfitters would often take Brownie box-camera photographs of their clients posing with the day's plentiful catch spread on the lawn before them. "They were all hatchery trout," Lilly says with lingering incredulity. "The idea was to bring in the dudes, give them a sack of fish and send them home."

At 70, Bud Lilly is an American fly-fishing icon and sage. He has fished the Madison River for more than 50 years, and even in retirement he remains one of the most famous trout-fishing guides in the world. He's a strong, broad shouldered man who carries his frame like an aged athlete who took care of his body when it counted. He still wades some of the Madison's more challenging waters, but what he sees on the Madison doesn't always please him. "How many angler days can the Madison River really support?" he asks. The river presently endures more than 100,000 such days a year. "I see the number of people out there, the number of outfitters, the number of boats and I see that it's not consistent with the proper experience. And I promoted this all my life, so I'm somewhat to blame, but I think we have some responsibility to pursue the idea that this is not a social experience. It's not an athletic event." Lilly's face speaks to a life on rivers. Behind the deep folds of weathered skin is an always calm expression. His eyes are lakewater blue with golden flecks of minute, ghosting brown trout surfacing in the center of

a dark, flat pool. "Sometimes I think that all of the things I've helped to promote have evolved to the point where the fishery has become overused and maybe even abused," he says. "We may be reaching that point."

Through the Depressssion and up until the end of World War II, little annual stocking of hatchery-raised trout occurred in the Madison River because the previously planted brown and rainbow trout had gone wild to become free-living, wild fish hatched and reared in the stream. From 1948 to 1954, thumb- to finger-sized trout were planted, then in 1955 a near 20-year campaign to supply the Madison River with "catchable trout" commenced. By 1969, hatchery trucks would lumber to the river once a month from April through August and each fishing season Madison River anglers would compete for 100,000 hatchery trout delivered for the taking.

In 1955, four years after he opened his Trout Shop in West Yellowstone, Lilly started to think about what hatchery trout lent to the Madison River experience. "As an old worm fisherman," he says, "I saw that for the fly fisherman the experience had to do with space. More than catching fish, the experience had to do with space on the water."

Somehow what Lilly reckoned to be essential to the fishing experience, he began to relate to Madison River trout. He envisioned the tonnage of hatchery trout annually dumped into the river crowding the wild rainbow and brown trout and imagined that wild trout needed space too. Over the next two decades Lilly was

one of the major contra forces in a fight that would eventually provide the river's trout with the sanctity of unjostled space.

For many rank-and-file anglers of the day these were counterfeit ideas hardly worthy of comment, yet these ideas are source of a wider movement that would eventually shake the popular dogma that produced the notion of the well-stocked stream and would result in a full-scale revision of how Montana managed its trout streams. But, as Lilly remembers, "Montana fishermen were addicted to hatchery trout." It would take 20 years to rehabilitate them.

Jerry Wells, now the administrator of FWP's Field Services Division, wrote in the July/August 1985 edition of *Montana Outdoors*, "that the wild trout concept...polarized both department personnel and the fishing public, and resulted in several of the wildest public meeting this department has ever conducted."

To once and for all resolve the issue, an official research project was initiated on the Madison River in 1967. FWP Fisheries Biologist Dick Vincent set out to evaluate if and how the planting of catchable-sized hatchery trout affected the Madison River's wild trout populations. Results came rapidly. In its report to the Governor in 1971, the Montana Fish and Game Commission quietly announced that Vincent's work suggested

that substantial plants of catchable size trout cause summer mortalities in wild trout. Some few planted fish survive over winter, [but] the net result is a measurable reduction in the trout population. The implication, if these results are borne out in other studies, is that "put and take" planting should be

restricted to waters with insignificant wild trout populations.

* * *

Many remember the 1970s as the golden era of Madison River fly fishing. Bud Lilly's Trout Shop became a favorite seasonal haunt of literary fly fishermen like Arnold Gingrich, the founding publisher of *Esquire*, humorist Ed Zern, and writer and publisher Nick Lyons. Gingrich immortalized Lilly in his book *The Joys of Trout*, with the line, "Bud Lilly is a trout's best friend." The praise was primarily aimed at Lilly's Catch and Release Club, which Gingrich called "fly-fishing's legion of honor." Lilly started the club in 1974 to get fisherman familiar with the idea of releasing trout. The membership fee was a dollar.

In the '70s, it was of no concern that the fish that made the Madison River famous resulted in the extirpation of native trout that an earlier generation thought should always define the Madison. There existed in the minds of people who paid attention to such things a noble yearning to provide fish and wildlife with a healthful environment, to maintain the quality of our resources, particularly our water resources. But, even in the early 1950s the Montana Fish & Game Commission cautiously tried to explain the trouble with brown trout.

While it would be a very bold statement to say the brown trout was a completely unwise introduction; nevertheless, it has caused trouble. It was not even native to the United States, but was brought here from Europe...Native species have declined in abundance wherever it has been established. It is a good fish but the average fisherman is not skilled enough to catch

him.

"We did like the brown trout," Lilly says. "We recognized the brown trout as a great sport fish."

For Lilly, and a vocal confederacy of like-minded anglers in the 1960s and 1970s, the important thing was to allow the trout that had successfully colonized the Madison to go wild and to teach anglers that the joys were centered on the pursuit of wild trout in a natural environment. "I've tried to think in terms of what was best for the resource," Lilly says, "and then to compete for the segment of the fishermen who recognized that approach."

The approach wasn't simply recognized, it actually defined the new fly-fishing culture. The North American Fly Tackle Association recently put number to the fly fishing boom. More than 7 million people in the lower 48 states fished with a fly rod at least once in 1993. Conventional wisdom suggests that the hard core specialists who traditionally defined the catch-and-release sport practiced out of places like Bud Lilly's Trout Shop in the '70s are now out numbered 6 to 1. Flyfishing sells cars. Sells books. Sells movies. Sells dreams.

While the ideas weren't his alone, Bud Lilly stood in the middle of a time and place that typified poet W.H. Auden's notion of a "whole climate of opinion." In due time, Dick Vincent's research data showed that indeed wild trout were unable to compete with the hatchery variety. Upon the cessation of hatchery-fish planting, Vincent documented that the fall production of the Madison's adult brown trout more than doubled

and the river's rainbow trout numbers increased eight-fold. Beginning in 1975, there would be no more planting of catchable-sized trout in the Madison River, nor in any other Montana trout stream. Lilly's 20-year-old vision that connected the fly fisher's search for space on the water with the need for space in the water for wild trout was essentially correct.

* * *

It seems appropriate that Bud Lilly now has a presence at Three Forks, at the confluence of the Madison, Gallatin, and Jefferson rivers. The Missouri River headwaters. The town is named for the nexus of three great wild trout fishing rivers named for eighteenth century men of American Revolutionary honor. In modern fly fishing lore, Bud Lilly will long be revered far more for his stature as an enlightened gentleman angler than for his common-sense fight to stop the planting of hatchery trout in the Madison River. He lacks the arrogance to be remembered for a fight, even if it was the quintessentially good one.

In Montana, the Madison River now rightly has Bud Lilly bookends. The Trout Shop in West Yellowstone, which he sold in 1982, still bears his name, as does his new Angler's Retreat, at the river's end in Three Forks. Bud Lilly always seems to find his way to the cusp of another cultural embrace of fly fishing and now Three Forks appears to be a town on the verge of something too. The railroaders are long gone, but at noon the Headwaters Cafe was full of construction crews chowing down on platefuls of enormous beef ribs and mounds of mashed potatoes.

Already in town is a fabulously refurbished inn with a San Francisco chef. On a Main Street that bends like a meandering river, among the storefronts are a neat fly-fishing shop, an upscale architectural firm, and an old Roxy-like theater under new construction. The attraction? Wild trout and great water. An experience.

The irony is that Lilly opened his Trout Shop in West Yellowstone about the time the earnest fish planting of the Madison River got underway. He opened his Angler's Retreat in 1995, the first year anglers understood that a drastic decline in the river's rainbow trout was the result of whirling disease, a once little known fish ailment that acquired household status when it hit the Madison River. As he was drawn into the hatchery/wild trout discussion, Lilly has been similarly summoned to ponder the significance of whirling disease. When it was announced that whirling disease had struck the Madison River, Lilly was immediately tapped to become a founding member of the Montana Whirling Disease Foundation and then Montana Governor Marc Racicot asked him serve on the state's Whirling Disease Task Force.

"The only thing that can compare with the public attention drawn to whirling disease, is the public attention that was drawn to the hatchery issue 25 years ago," Lilly says. "Whirling disease is going to create a new look at fly fishing and fishing period. Everyone you talk to knows about whirling disease, it has created an awareness of fishing all over the country, and as a

result, it is going to create a demand for things to be done. Because it has struck the Madison River, I'm convinced that the river itself triggered the response."

Even Dick Vincent is back in the middle of the Madison fuss. In April he was appointed to coordinate the state's efforts to combat whirling disease. It's as if the river is an oracle calling back the old guard to reveal some hidden knowledge. "I think about that a lot." Vincent says. "The Madison River is special to people, and it hooks them. It hooked me. If the river is telling us anything, its telling us there are some end points. What I'm afraid of is we'll keep fooling with it and end up with nothing of any quality. The fish will adapt, the problem for man is adaptation is too slow. We're too impatient."

Up to now the river has accepted our impatience. It has waited while we experimented with planting the river with new fish. It waited while we erected huge spawning traps to milk the new fish and it waited as we admired these constructions as something extraordinary. Did we touch the face of God, or simply scratch it?

What we know is that the Madison River has tended to accept our tinkering, and as we tinkered the river's wild rainbow and brown trout have gone native to the Madison to become part of the river. While most spawning rainbow trout search for the calm of a small tributary stream, Madison rainbows spawn in the river's voluminous main channel. Brown trout usually seek water that flows like syrup where a long-lived wild fish could be said to be

adapted to a rather bodacious but sedentary life under a log, beneath the low-hanging branches of a summer shade tree. Madison River brown trout, forced to struggle for a lifetime in the river's powerful current, have developed into a particularly muscular fish. Their muscularity is demonstrated to anglers who witness athletic vaults from the water in a manner common to the Madison but rare in other streams where the most one can count on seeing is the buttery slabside of a brown trout's belly as it darts back to cover. "It's a different fish," Lilly says. "They've adapted well and they've become so strong in that environment."

As we confront whirling disease, our hope for the Madison River will define its future. As scientists try to unravel the mystery of whirling disease, we should begin now to ask ourselves what we want for the river. Our best naturalists are mediators. They wait for understanding, they read the wild and while waiting for a flash of insight they approach a kind of genius that comes down a Thoreauvian notion: like it or not, we obey the same laws as all of nature.

Bud Lilly says it takes time to understand the nature of the Madison River, something he believes whirling disease will not change. "It takes a lot of observation to really figure out that river," he says. "You need patience, because patience alters your perception. These are the things that are important to the whole experience. There is no formula. There is only observation."

For Lilly the best way to observe the river is to climb into

it. "When you wade the river, you are involved with the river," he says. "I guess you could say that I've been involved with this river for a long time. That's why I'm going to continue to push for wild trout. Wild trout are really apart of our heritage and I don't think we want that to destroy what we have created."

###

William C. Patric
P.O. Box 1332
Bozeman, MT 59771
(406) 585-0138

December 11, 2002

Bud Lilly
13013 Frontage Road
Manhattan, MT 59741

Dear Bud:

By your recent phone message, I'm pleased to hear you were satisfied with the way the fishing access op-ed came out in the *Chronicle* and that it's generated some positive comments. Again, The Wilderness Society and Greater Yellowstone Coalition really appreciate your help.

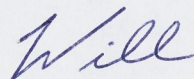
Should we try submitting the same column to the Helena *Independent Record*? I think it's a strong piece and it deserves broader coverage than Gallatin Valley. Would you be willing to call **Dave Shors**, the Editor, at 447-4072? I expect, like the *Chronicle*, the Helena paper would say yes also when you introduce yourself. If it does, you can send another copy of our piece, which I've enclosed. You'll note I altered the beginning a little (as it's not going to the *Chronicle*) and added a bit to the end of our draft reflecting what you had in the *Chronicle*.

If they do accept this piece, please also ask them to let you know when they're going to run it so we can keep track of it. The *Independent Record's* address is:
P. O. Box 4249 Helena, MT 59604

Thanks again very much Bud. After one favor, it seems a bit quick for me to be asking another, but we may as well try to get the word out as much as possible. Please do keep me posted on what you hear from Dave Shors. And let's talk dewatering sometime too.

Best wishes to you and Ester.

Sincerely,



William C. Patric

In recent months a rumor has circulated in angling circles that some public fishing access sites may soon be eliminated. My local paper, the Bozeman *Chronicle*, ran a story headlined "State looks at closing, selling off access sites." Montana's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks is evaluating hundreds of them, it noted, to determine if some should be sold to help alleviate budgetary woes. As I personally worked for the establishment of many of these sites years ago, I was prompted to make inquiries to the Department. The evaluation is simply part of a routine inventory, friends at Fish, Wildlife and Parks said. The State of Montana has no intention of closing or selling any popular access sites, I was assured.

I have no doubt Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel share my own conviction that maintaining access to Montana's rivers and streams is vital. With 320 access sites serving 350,000 anglers, not to mention any number of others who enjoy picnicking, boating, hunting, wildlife viewing, birding, you name it, Montanans should be rightly proud to have one of America's best public fishing access systems. But the very idea that some access sites could be considered surplus spurred me to think about foresight.

Back in the 1960s and 70s, when the state was acquiring many of our fishing access sites, paid for with sportsmens' dollars, we were able to purchase them for next to nothing. This was before *The Last Best Place* and *A River Runs Through It*. If we were to try to buy those same sites today, it would be an extremely expensive proposition. Indeed, the state would only be able to acquire a fraction of what we have now; given our current financial crunch, perhaps none of the sites. With ever more people coming to Montana to enjoy its natural offerings, imagine pressures on the Gallatin, Madison, Yellowstone, Big Hole, Blackfoot, or any other popular river if just a few places were open to anglers instead of our numerous dispersed fishing access opportunities.

So I'm grateful Montanans were looking ahead back then. I recall claims that we were wasting money, that the state had no business acquiring properties for sportsmen. I doubt anyone would say that today. Anywhere you see those distinctive brown and white signs with the fish and hook symbol along Montana's highways and back roads, you'll see a well used, often full parking area (sometimes abused too, as litter occasionally attests – let's keep them clean). Last year alone, anglers and hunters spent more than \$550 million to pursue their sports in our state, according to a Fish, Wildlife and Park's analysis. A little money, and foresight, in other words, has gone a long way, benefiting all of us.

The same thought carries far beyond fishing. As long as I've been promoting angling, I've tried to remind fellow Montanans about the importance of clean water and open space too. Fishing isn't much without those attributes. And we should be grateful for foresight embodied in federal legislation like the Clean Water Act, our state constitution's call for a clean and healthful environment, or the Montana Environmental Policy Act. Even as some advocate weakening those standards, consider where we'd be without them today. And if we cherish good fishing in a setting that's the envy of the nation, if not the world, think of how important those laws will be for generations to come.

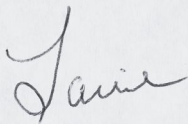
Access to public fishing and recreational use of Montana's fabulous rivers, creeks, and lakes has been my life-long pursuit. The Fish, Wildlife and Parks' program to acquire these valuable sites should continue for all to enjoy. And with regard to public access and environmental regulations alike, if we hope for a future with trout rising on clear sparkling waters amidst the natural splendor of big sky country, some things just shouldn't be for sale.

George L. Payne
103 Crestview Terrace
Lansing, Kansas 66043-1206
(913) 727-1229

July 12, 1999

Hi Bud,

This article was in the Sunday Kansas City Star and really made my day. I thought you might be interested to know that I was reading about you. On searching for your address on the Internet there were two "Bud Lilly"s. The other one lives in Bozeman. Is this your son? It was sure great to read about you and hope you are well. We are fine and enjoying life.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Louie".

Louie

JAMES B. PETER, M.D., Ph.D.
PRESIDENT



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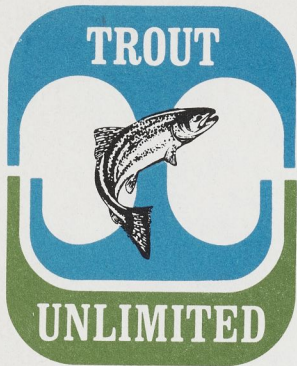
Dear Bud,

Enclosed is my copy
of today's Dinner Post
in case an extra is needed
for the "Archives of the Lilly
Family".

Hope all is well.

Regards,

Jim



TROUT

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF TROUT UNLIMITED

(617) 822-4609

Thomas R. Pero/Editor
Post Office Box 992
Taunton, Massachusetts 02780
USA

September 1, 1978

Mr. Bud Lilly
Bud Lilly's Trout Shop
West Yellowstone, Montana 59758

Dear Bud:

Just a brief note to let you know that Trout Unlimited is deeply appreciative of your advertising support during the past year. Your support has helped us make TROUT a better magazine.

We hope you will continue using the pages of TROUT to reach our growing audience of dedicated trout, salmon and steelhead fishermen.

TROUT Magazine is an integral part of TU's conservation work. Four out of five members find their only contact with our national organization is through TROUT. But each year it becomes increasingly expensive to produce a quality publication. The small portion of membership dues allocated to the magazine covers only part of the cost. The rest must come from advertisers, from concerned firms like yours whose support Trout Unlimited needs and depends on.

I'm sending you a copy of our current issue of TROUT and our current advertising rate schedule. Protecting our nation's coldwater fisheries is a year-round job...please give TROUT a full year's worth of support during 1979. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom".

Tom R. Pero
Editor