

THE WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT

By Richard Walker

FISHTALES

GRAPHICALLY SHOWING THE DECLINE OF THE WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT PROVED DIFFICULT

The westslope cutthroat trout (WCT — *Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*) is widely acknowledged to be in severe decline in the United States. In the upper Missouri River basin in southwest Montana, for example, fisheries biologists estimate that genetically pure populations occupy less than 1 percent of their original range. Yet it has proven to be a formidable challenge to graphically show the decline of this species over time, in the form of range maps. Below is a short account of some of the difficulties we encountered while creating maps for the WCT.

To show the plight of the WCT in graphical format, American Wildlands (AWL) assembled the best available scientific information to create historic and current range maps for the cutthroats. Old range maps from scientific publications were put into digital format. We also obtained digital databases on streams (Montana and Idaho Rivers Information Systems), which have coded stream reaches with accompanying information on fish species recorded as present.

In the process of creating WCT distribution maps, a seemingly straightforward task, several cartographic challenges emerged. (In fact, when posed with the same task, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks could not agree on an appropriate means of mapping this very same species). The most daunting problem was the difficulty of creating maps which adequately reflected the severity of the situation for WCT. Most attempts to render the decline of the WCT made the situation appear much less alarming than the known facts. Several factors contributed to this problem.

The main hurdles to rendering an accurate map related to the trout being an aquatic animal. Most species range maps depict "areas" a given species (usually an upland animal) inhabits. Fish, however, are confined to aquatic habitats — thus a depiction of streams with fish populations seems more appropriate. But when showing discrete small streams inhabited by a fish species over a large area (i.e., western Montana and central and northern Idaho), it appeared nearly ubiquitous. This belied the underlying reality of the many small stream reaches in the very same localities where the species has been extirpated.

A related problem stems from the Montana and Idaho databases on fish (MRIS and IRIS, respectively). WCT populations are recorded on the basis of an entire stream reach, but there is no indication of how much of the reach is occupied habi-

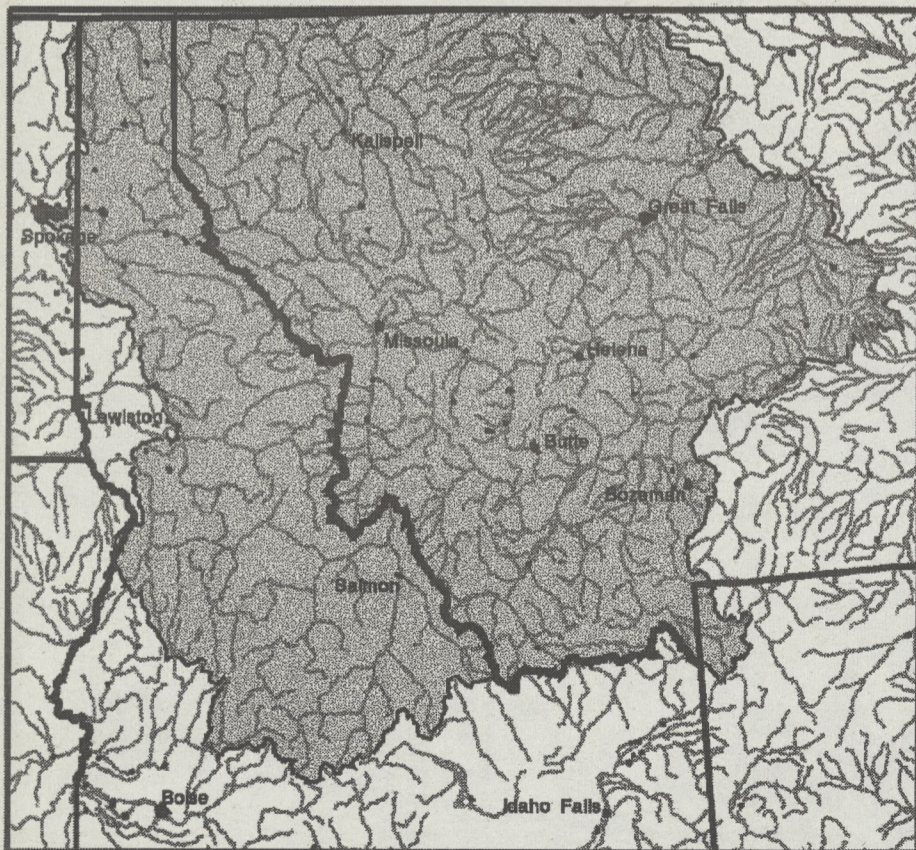
tat. For example, a reach recorded as having WCT can be several miles long, yet only a few hundred yards of it may actually be inhabited by the fish. When rendered cartographically the stretch of stream portrayed as having WCT can be many times longer than in actuality. With this problem repeated many times over in the region, the number of stream miles showing healthy populations is greatly exaggerated.

Additionally, while fish species are recorded as present for a certain year, there is no means of recording the same species as "absent" or not found in subsequent surveys. Thus the WCT may be missing from many stream reaches for which there are historic records, but we have no way of determining the streams from which they have disappeared. In the process of creating the current range map, then, we certainly included numerous streams which in actuality no longer contain WCT. This problem was compounded by the fact that many stream reaches in the region have no recorded information of any kind, including fish.

Even given all of the above, AWL forged ahead and created two different renderings of the WCT distribution. For the smaller formats (8.5 x 11) I used specific criteria to delineate boundaries of both the former (historic) range and current range. The criteria for the current range were that 50 percent or more of the total stream length with recorded data (i.e. not including streams with no records) had 95 percent or better genetically pure populations of WCT. For the poster format I showed all streams recorded as having 95 percent pure or more WCT overlaying all stream reaches with recorded data of any kind. Visually, the maps resulting from using these methods were satisfactory, despite the many shortcomings of the source information.

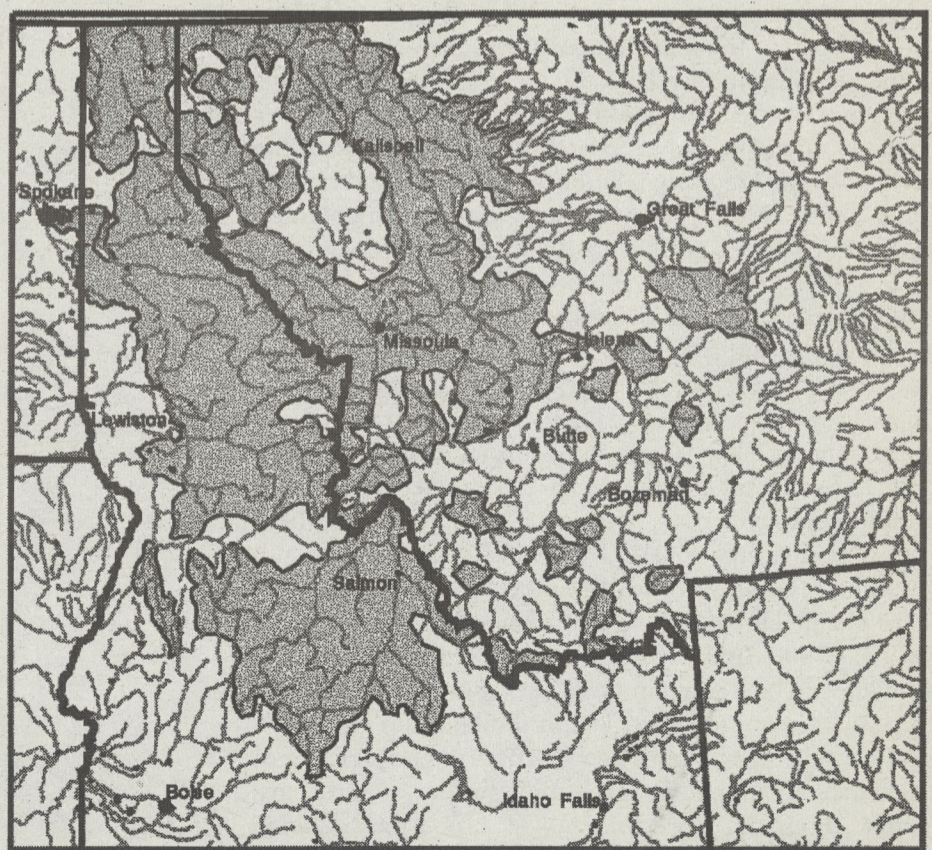
In the process of creating these WCT maps, we learned much about the strengths and shortcomings of the River Information Systems being used by biologists and governmental agencies to track the health of our streams. With this understanding, we can now make very specific recommendations to the states of Idaho and Montana on how to improve the quality of these databases. Improved databases will give us a much better handle on the status of our native fisheries, and provide organizations such as AWL with invaluable sources of information to be used to protect and restore the health of aquatic ecosystems in the Northern Rockies.

Former Core U.S. Range



MAPS BY RICH WALKER

Current Core U.S. Range



THE WESTSLOPE CUTTHROAT

"Cutthroat Deserves Protection," Continued from Page 4
ment activities.

WCT prefer cold, nutrient poor waters in higher elevation streams with lower gradients and velocities. Habitat requirements include adequate amounts of pools and cover. Porous substrate is important to the survival of the WCT. Fine sediments, which clog the substrate, affect food and space for rearing juveniles, which enter the substrate for cover in the winter. Porous substrate is important for embryo survival because it allows water, and therefore dissolved oxygen, to flow through the redd (the egg nest). Sedimentation also negatively impacts WCT by filling pools, which are important for over-winter, spawning and rearing habitat. Land management activities, such as logging, road-building and grazing, increase the amount of sediments delivered to the stream, and often reduces the amount of large woody debris available for cover. This in turn raises the water temperature. WCT are sensitive to changes in habitat conditions.

There is evidence that land management activities exacerbate the problem of competition and hybridization of introduced exotic species. In degraded streams conditions are better suited for these introduced species, which are not as sensitive to changes in water quality. WCT, weakened by degraded habitat conditions, are less likely to survive intrusions of introduced rainbow, brook, brown or Yellowstone cutthroat trout. Rainbow and Yellowstone cutthroat trout interbreed with WCT, while brook and brown trout outcompete WCT for food and space.

WCT are presently considered a sensitive species and a management indicator species. This means that they are indicators of forest and ecosystem health. If WCT populations are in a state of decline, it is a sign that the forest and/or watershed is in a degraded or deteriorating condition. Despite these "signs," habitat reducing activities and exotic species introductions continue.

Conditions east of the Continental Divide in Montana are worse than on the west side. Historically, there were approximately 3600 streams that supported WCT populations on the east-side. By the late 1980s, this number had dropped to approximately 80 streams. Presently it is estimated that WCT occupy about 7 percent of their historic range while pure populations exist in about 1 percent of their historic range. As a general rule, populations are isolated into small, fragmented headwater streams.

The situation on the east-side has become so alarming that in 1995 Montana's Governor established an Upper Missouri River Westslope Cutthroat Trout Technical Committee made up of fishery scientists, managers and geneticists from state and federal agencies. The Committee recommended changing fishing regulations to catch-and-release in streams and rivers within WCT's historic range in the upper Missouri River Basin. The Committee has also made recommendations for a short-term management strategy for conserving and restoring WCT populations in the Upper Missouri basin. A long-term conservation strategy for the Upper Missouri basin is being developed.

Despite the dire condition of the WCT east of the Divide and the efforts of the Committee to develop management recommendations, abusive land-use activities and non-native introductions continue in WCT habitat. Numerous timber sales are occurring or are proposed in WCT habitat on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge, Lewis and Clark, Gallatin and Helena National Forests. These projects include road-building, timber harvesting and prescribed burning that will increase sedimentation in WCT streams. Some of the projects involve incursions into roadless areas, known sanctuaries for WCT.

Competition and hybridization with non-native species is one of the greatest threats to WCT east of the Divide. Rainbow, brown, brook, and Yellowstone cutthroat trouts, and kokanee salmon have been stocked throughout the range of the WCT. While there have been positive steps taken to reduce the stocking of these non-native species in areas where they may gain access to WCT streams, such stocking still occurs. Small mouth bass, walleye, and rainbow and brown trout are planned to be stocked in the Missouri River from the years 1996 - 2000. In the Missouri River basin, rainbow trout are scheduled to be stocked in Belt Creek and the Judith River, and brown trout are to be stocked in the Jefferson River. On the positive side, there is an ongoing effort to end stocking of exotic species in mountain lakes until further studies have been done. Presently, a west-side WCT broodstock is being used in some mountain lakes. In addition, stocking of rainbow

trout on the Big hole River has halted.

West of the Divide WCT are faring slightly better. Northwest Montana is considered the stronghold for genetically pure and strong populations. This includes the South Fork Flathead River drainage above Hungry Horse Dam. However, most populations are not protected from future hybridization and the population status is declining. In Montana as a whole, WCT occupy approximately 19 percent of their historic range of 57,184 miles and are genetically pure in about 2.5 percent of historic range and 9 percent of current range.

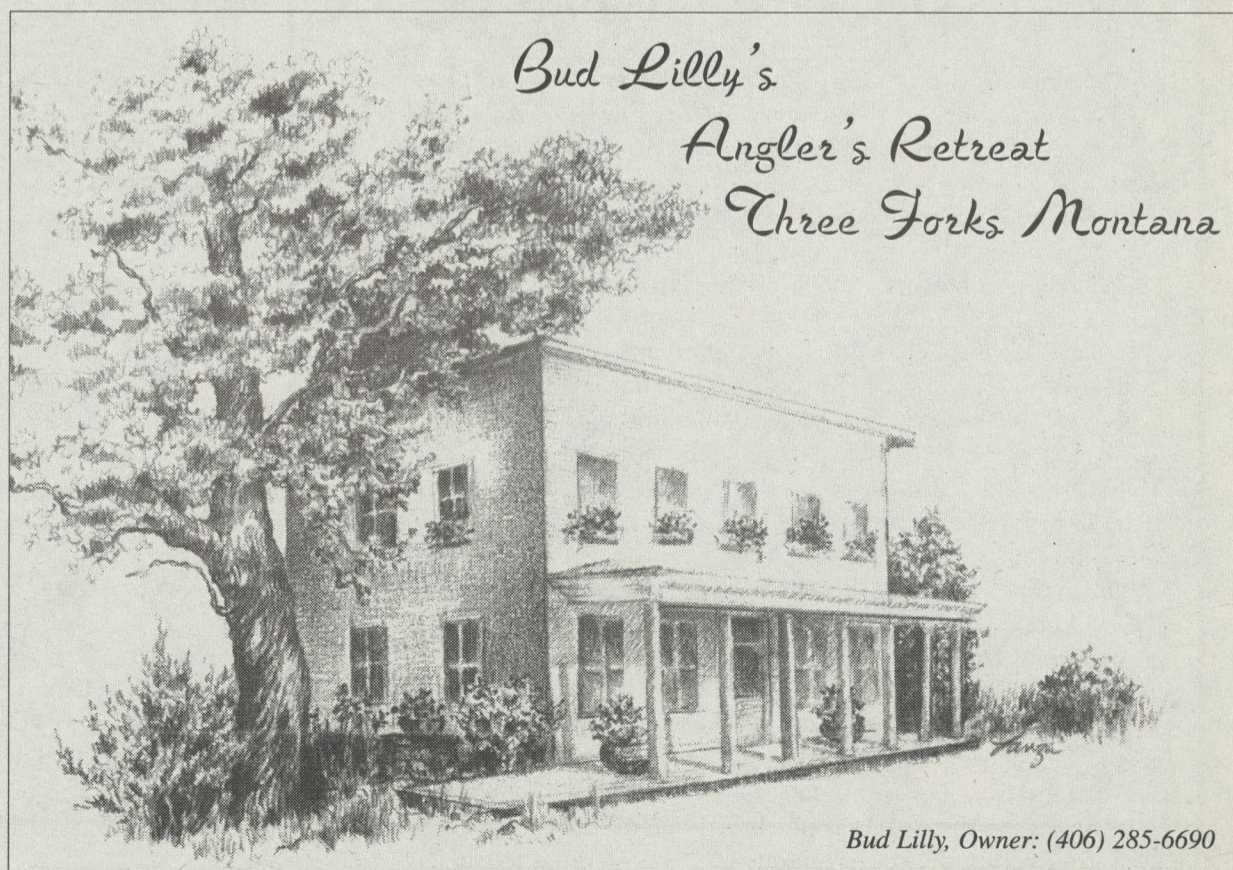
In Idaho, habitat loss and overfishing are the main reasons for population declines, although competition and introgression are still problems. WCT declines were attributed to habitat loss in 87 percent of the streams. Most populations are located in roadless and wilderness areas, where their habitat is better protected. Idaho biologists believe that less than 4 percent of the historic range supports strong populations not threatened by hybridization.

In Oregon, there are 23 populations confined to the headwaters in the upper John Day River drainage. They are believed to have occupied 179 miles in the North Fork and upper mainstem John Day drainages. They currently occupy 73 miles, or 41 percent of their historic range. Historically, WCT occupied about 10 percent of the North Fork John Day River drainage. Currently, they occupy 1 percent. They are considered at risk and declining due to the vulnerability of their shrinking habitat. In the upper mainstem John Day River basin, WCT historically occupied 25 percent of the drainage and currently occupy 5 percent. They are also considered at risk here for the same reasons. Land management activities such as grazing, timber harvest and irrigation diversions have degraded habitat and isolated populations in small headwaters. These activities continue to impact WCT populations. However, it is hoped that populations may stabilize due to new forest management and habitat and ecosystem restoration.

In Washington, several disjunct populations historically occupied the Yakima, Methow, Lake Chelan, Entiat and Wenatchee rivers. It is presently unknown how many native populations remain due to extensive stocking of WCT since the early 1900s. In the early 1990s 84 sites were sampled within the Methow, Wenatchee and Entiat river watersheds. Only 20 sites contained pure populations. The remaining sites contained hybridized populations. Angling is estimated to be the greatest threat, while declines are also attributed to habitat loss, competition and hybridization.

In Wyoming, WCT occupied approximately 12-15 streams in the headwaters of the Madison and Gallatin Rivers within Yellowstone National Park. Presently there are no pure populations.

It is clear that the status of this native trout is in serious decline. Despite the knowledge concerning the causes of this decline, many of these activities continue. Inland native trout are part of our natural heritage, are prized by anglers, and are indicators of the health of our ecosystems. It is essential to preserve and rehabilitate our inland native trout for future generations.



*Bud Lilly's
Angler's Retreat
Three Forks Montana*

Bud Lilly, Owner: (406) 285-6690

AN EVENING OF ART & ENTERTAINMENT ON BEHALF OF WESTSLOPE CUTTHROATS

November 19, 1996, was a special evening. Approximately 100 conservationists and lovers of wild trout and the places they live in, gathered at The Gallatin Gateway Inn, outside of Bozeman, Montana, for an evening of fine dining, art and entertainment as invited guests of American Wildlands (AWL). The event was the kick-off to the public portion of AWL's campaign to save Montana's state fish: the westslope cutthroat trout.

Dining at The Gallatin Gateway Inn is always a superb experience and that evening proved no exception. The Inn, a national historic site and former railroad depot, sits near the Gallatin River and provided an elegant setting for a stellar program line-up.

Joining in joint sponsorship of the evening were The Big Sky Journal of Bozeman, Montana; the R. L. Winston Rod Company of Twin Bridges, Montana; and Big Sky Carvers of Manhattan, Montana; plus numerous private donors. A special note of appreciation is extended to Jeff Wetmore, David Ondaatje, and Marc Pierce, respectively, for their wonderful involvement, and to The Gallatin Gateway Inn and its staff.

The program portion began with remarks by Jeff Larmer, executive director of AWL, on behalf of AWL president, Sally Ranney (Sally was temporarily grounded in Denver with a broken foot). Reading from a note from Sally, Jeff quoted: "The westslope cutthroat trout is a humble species in the eyes of some, compared to the grizzly or wolf, but deserves no less of our attention and is perhaps, an even more important barometer in many ways for the ecological health and social consciousness of the entire Northern Rockies."

Bud Lilly, legendary conservationist, fly fisher, and native Montanan, followed Jeff and spoke strongly and eloquently on behalf of all native fishes and especially so with regard to the value of the westslope cutthroat trout. Quoting Bud: "I can still remember my first cutthroat. I don't remember my first rainbow or brook trout or brown, but I do remember that first cutthroat. It was on the Taylor's Fork, a tributary of the Gallatin. My father had taken me fishing on the Gallatin where there were rainbows and we had caught some using mostly bait. But I remember that first cutthroat on the Taylor's Fork most. It was probably August because there were grasshoppers about. So, I put on a fly of some sort, and I can still see that cutthroat rising, its colorization was so beautiful. It was my first trout on a fly . . . So, the cutthroat—its colorization and wildness—directly reflects the environment of the West. It's a native part of all that is here and that's why I strongly support American Wildlands' efforts to help save Montana's state fish... I hope you all will join in the campaign."

The evening was further musically highlighted by the performances of Stuart Weber and later Greg Keeler. Stuart, a fourth-generation Montanan and great classical guitarist, entertained the attendees with his acoustical arrangements vividly portraying the Yellowstone River and wild places of the Northern

Rockies. Greg, a Montana State University, English department professor, noted humorist, playwright, and trout lover brought the house down with his "cutthroat buffoonery."

A special treat for all were the comments of M. R. "Monty" Montgomery (native Montanan, author and Boston Globe journalist). Monty, author of *Many Rivers to Cross* (a portion of which is reprinted elsewhere in this edition), traveled from Boston to share with the gathering his insights into the history of the westslope cutthroat with the Lewis & Clark Expedition. Monty's literary advocacy pulls few punches and his presentation was especially well received.

The entertainment portion of the program concluded, following Jeff Larmer's overview of the campaign: "Still Alive in 2005" (reported elsewhere in this edition), with a moving original multi-media presentation: "A Simple Story." "A Simple Story," was written by Jeff and tells the saga of the westslope cutthroat trout. It was delivered in spellbinding narration to the gathering by Michael Sexson (Montana State University, English department professor and ardent conservationist). Original music was created and

performed by Ron Newman (of Bozeman, Montana) to underscore the narration, and the stunning, sometimes alarming set of slides provided by the region's top photographers: Denver Bryan (of Bozeman,

Montana), Lance Craighead (of AWL), Don Nell (Lewis & Clark historian of Bozeman, Montana), Michael Sample (of Billings, Montana), Michael Simon (of Livingston, Montana), and the Museum of the Rockies (Bozeman, Montana). This thirteen minute presentation is now on video and is available for purchase through AWL.

Also, enlivening the evening was a live auction. Winston Rods provided a 4-weight, 8 foot IM6 graphite rod—known as "Tom Morgan's favorite"—as a fundraiser. The winning bidder was Joe Urbani (of Joseph Urbani & Associates; Bozeman, Montana). Joe's winning bid was sweetened by the donation of two specially autographed books by Monty Montgomery and a Michael Simon WCT drawing autographed by Tom Morgan, himself.

Michael Simon created a special watercolor of two westslope cutthroat trout especially for AWL's campaign and it was unveiled to the public for the first time. The Lewis & Clark connection and campaign theme is carried on in the title to Michael's work: "Will They Proceed On?" Lewis & Clark historians will recall that journal entries were often highlighted by the frequently repeated phrase "We proceeded on." So, in Michael's art he is asking the salient question: Will they (WCT) proceed on?

For those who are not yet familiar with Michael's artistic abilities, he is one of only a very few artists who

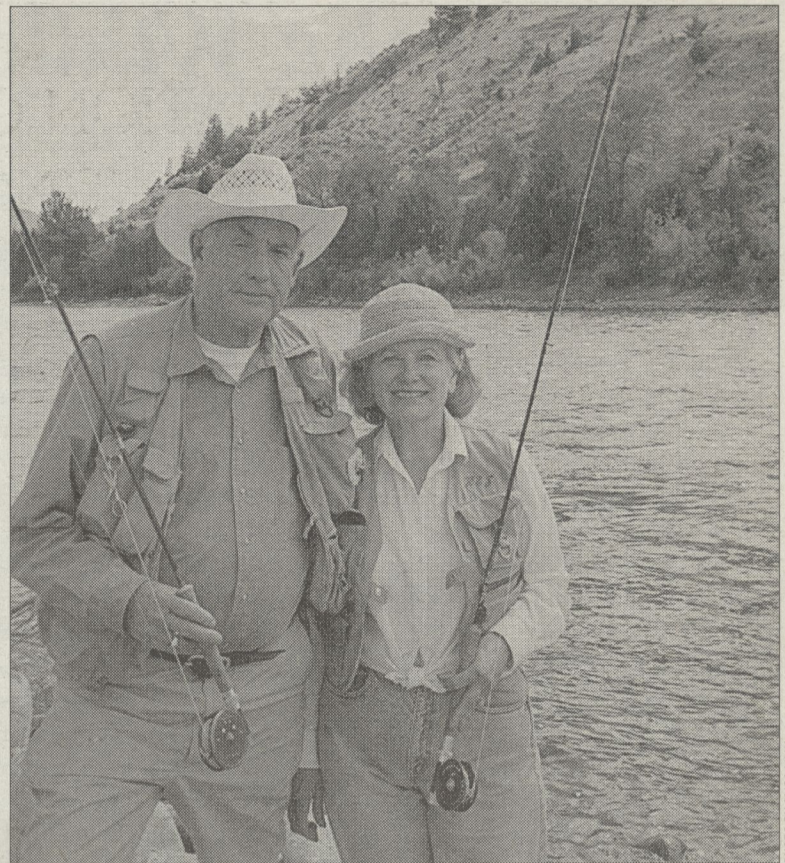


PHOTO BY ALISA LILLY

Bud and Esther Lilly fishing their favorite Montana waters.

can be both anatomically correct and exact, yet artistic with his work. (Note the article on page 14 by Bozeman Daily Chronicle environmental writer, Scott McMillion). A limited edition 500 print run of "Will They Proceed On?" has been completed. Those desiring to obtain one of these great collector's quality prints, and in so doing make a direct contribution to the saving of the westslope cutthroat trout, may order directly from AWL (note ordering instructions and information in this edition).

Also, during the auction portion of the evening, one of Michael's first twenty-five, remarked prints was purchased by Bozeman resident and ardent lover of the Northern Rockies, Harry Piper. (Harry has also been significantly involved in establishing the Whirling Disease Foundation in Bozeman to help battle that epidemic afflicting rainbows and cutthroats). Harry's support is wonderful. We thank him.

Yet another inspiring artistic contribution to the campaign has come from Big Sky Carvers and Marc Pierce of Manhattan, Montana. Big Sky Carvers, as many know, creates those wonderful wildlife carvings now found throughout the nation. And, Marc, co-owner with his father, Eric Pierce, is a devoted hunter, fly fisher and conservationist. Marc's crew created a superb westslope cutthroat carving especially for AWL's campaign, and it was on display that evening. One of the hallmarks of a Big Sky Carvers' sculpture is the aliveness they exhibit. Their WCT was no exception as more than one guest that evening exclaimed "it looks alive enough to swim right off that table." Conservationists and art collectors desiring to purchase one of these carvings and, thereby, supporting the AWL campaign, may order directly through AWL (note ordering instructions in this edition).

Finally, a random drawing during the evening resulted in one of the replica carvings going to Ms. Frances Stewart (of Bozeman) and one of Michael Simon's prints going to Chuck Johnson (of Wilderness Adventures Press of Gallatin Gateway, Montana). All agreed the evening was a great kick-off and awareness-raising event for AWL's campaign to save the westslope cutthroat trout: "Still Alive in 2005."

"I strongly support American Wildlands' efforts to help save Montana's state fish ... I hope you all will join in this campaign."

— Bud Lilly

Drilling the Wildlands

Oil & gas development threatens Northern Rocky Mountains

Oil, gas, roads, drilling rigs, and pipelines. FOOGLRA, NSO, CSU, RFD. Many conservationists are learning a new language, as they fight a major new threat to forests in the Northern Rockies: proposed oil and gas leasing development. The Federal Onshore Oil and Gas Leasing Reform Act (FOOGLRA) of 1987 outlined a new permitting process for federal agencies. Many of the permits are coming due, and oil and gas exploration and development plans are being written for the Beaverhead, Shoshone, Helena, Targhee, and Lewis and Clark National Forests. These plans release a huge chunk of the Northern Rocky Mountains for oil and gas development.

On all of these forests, the issue of site specificity is the major contention between conservationists and forest managers. The Forest Service maintains that the impacts of oil and gas exploration and development can be assessed on a forest-wide basis. Conservation groups argue that leasing needs to be done site-specifically. If the Forest Service prevails, the leasing process would be akin to a Forest Plan evaluating all timber sales for the next ten years without assessing the impacts to the



Watering seedlings last August on the Hebgen District.

area where the timber sales would occur. The road densities, habitat threats to threatened and endangered species, and the impacts to water quality in specific watersheds would never be addressed in an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement. It would be impossible to measure the impacts of timber sales without looking at the site-specific factors; there is no reason that it would work for oil and gas exploration and development, as well.

The Forest Service has tried to address generalized impacts by creating Reasonably Foreseeable Development (RFD) scenarios. A scenario may choose one site-specific area and then address the impacts of oil and gas exploration on big game security and goshawk nesting trees. The RFDs, however, do not address impacts on many of the important resources of these forests. Impacts to water quality impaired streams or grizzly bear habitat, for example, may not be addressed in any RFD scenario. Each exploration or development site will have complex, inter-related environmental conditions. An RFD scenario is inadequate for addressing site-specific impacts.

Except where it is legally unavailable, such as in Wilderness and government facility areas, oil and gas exploration and development will be allowed nearly everywhere on our public lands. On the Beaverhead NF, 99.95 percent of the legally available lands in this wildlife-rich forest will be opened up for development. The Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit on the Helena NF is not adequately protected. There is no special consideration given to most roadless areas, important core areas of ecological integrity, on all of the forests. Grizzly habitat isn't even protected on the Shoshone NF.

American Wildlands has appealed or intervened in the decisions made for the Helena, Beaverhead, and Shoshone National Forests. The Targhee and Lewis and Clark National Forests accepted comments on their Draft EISs until early December. What you can do: Please write to Jerry Reese, Forest Supervisor of the Targhee NF (P.O. Box 208; St. Anthony, ID 83445) and Gloria Flora, Forest Supervisor of the Lewis and Clark National Forests (1101 15th St. N; P.O. Box 869; Great Falls, MT 59403) to get a copy of their draft plans. Contact American Wildlands for more specific concerns and comments.

AWL staff lends hand on Hebgen Ranger District

American Wildland's staff spent a beautiful day late last summer on the Hebgen Ranger District of the Gallatin National Forest helping the Forest Service accomplish several tasks that are chronically underfunded. Working side by side with Forest Service personnel helped to strengthen avenues of communication and allow everyone to see the more human side of each other's organization.

In the morning, we hand-pulled spotted knapweed, a noxious weed, in sensitive areas adjacent to water that could not be mechanically treated or sprayed with herbicides. The areas have been targeted by the Forest Service over the years and continual attention is paying dividends in reduced populations.

In the afternoon, we hauled buckets of water to

moisten individual lodgepole pine seedlings in the droughty, porous obsidian soils near Hebgen Lake. The seedlings had been planted in old roads that have been reclaimed to improve grizzly bear habitat. We felt that District personnel should be supported in their efforts to obliterate the many excessive roads built on the west side of Yellowstone National Park. AWL was one of the plaintiffs in a lawsuit against the Gallatin NF for their excessive road densities in grizzly country. As a result of a settlement agreement, the Forest has embarked on a road obliteration and closure program. One of the best ways of effectively making the road corridors unavailable to motorized vehicles is to re-establish trees to impede travel. AWL did its small part in support of this program and had a wonderful day in the woods.

Timber sales assault wild Centennial Mountains

With its scheduled Camas Creek and Miner's Creek timber sales, the Targhee National Forest has begun a strategized assault on the wild Centennial Mountains.

American Wildlands is appealing and litigating the two timber sales with other conservation groups.

The Centennials form a vital migration corridor along the Continental Divide for the threatened grizzly bear and other wide-ranging wildlife. Grizzly bears leave Yellowstone National Park and head west for the Centennial Mountain range to reach the Salmon-Selway Ecosystem.

On the way, they find little protection until they reach the largely undisturbed Centennials. The overcut Targhee National Forest offers little safety for bears leaving the park. The bears encounter security threats

when passing roads, searching for cover in clearcut units and meeting up with humans. Forest managers have greatly reduced and fragmented bear habitat through an excessive logging program. One of the last and most important refuges left in the area is the wildlife-rich Centennials.

The timber sales threaten wildlife and water quality in this vital wildlife corridor. The Miner's Creek sale would log timber in a 5,865-acre project within the Miner's Creek and Camas Creek drainages. Besides violating water quality and species viability environmental laws, the sale does not address the cumulative effects of the Camas Creek project within the analysis area.

Camas Creek is a Douglas fir timber sale disguised as an aspen regeneration project. The project area lies

only one mile south and west of the Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone. Not only will the sale greatly impact wildlife habitat, but it will also further degrade a stream already identified by the State of Idaho as impaired.

The Miner's Creek timber sale would have direct, indirect and cumulative adverse effects in the West Camas Creek drainage. The Camas aspen reestablishment project will also impact the same drainage. In neither of the Environmental Assessments prepared by the Targhee National Forest for these ill-advised projects were the cumulative impacts evaluated or disclosed.

The Targhee National Forest's assault on the Centennials is without adherence to good science and environmental laws. American Wildlands is determined to help bring it to a halt.

INDEPENDENT RECORD

317 Cruise Ave. • P.O. Box 4249 • Helena, Montana 59604 • 406-447-4032

Bud Lilly, others sue feds over westslope cutthroat protection

1998

By ERIN P. BILLINGS
IR State Bureau

A Montana angler and five environmental groups sued the federal government Tuesday, charging it hasn't been protecting westslope cutthroat trout from extinction.

American Wildlands, Madison-Gallatin Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Idaho Watersheds Project, Montana Environmental Information Center, Idaho-based Clearwater Biodiversity Project and fisherman Bud Lilly of Bozeman sued U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Jamie Clark in federal district court in Washington, D.C.

The groups allege the federal officials have failed to consider listing the endangered trout species as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

The groups petitioned the Fish and Wildlife Service in May, 1997,

Lawmakers demand Babbitt reveal details of Yellowstone microbe deal

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The chairmen of two congressional subcommittees have demanded Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt reveal financial details of a deal between Yellowstone National Park and a California firm that is harvesting microbes from park geysers.

In a March 3 letter to Babbitt, Republican Reps. Jim Hansen of Utah and Ralph Regula of Ohio question the Interior Department's recent refusal under the Freedom of Information Act to make public the amount of money the park will receive from Diversa Inc. of San Diego in return for commercializing park resources.

Yellowstone and the Interior Department last month denied requests by The Salt Lake Tribune and other organizations to make public the amount of money the park will receive under the deal.

Interior officials claimed the information must remain secret because its release would harm Diversa's financial position.

asking it to list the westslope cutthroat trout as a threatened species. They said the federal agency, obligated to review the petition within 90 days, has yet to consider the petition as required under the federal Endangered Species Act.

In the lawsuit, the groups argue the trout population has diminished considerably in Montana and Idaho. For example, they said pure populations of westslope cutthroat trout are only found in 2.5 percent of their historic range in Montana.

MATERIALS PROVIDED BY
MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL
INFORMATION CENTER
P O BOX 1184
HELENA, MONTANA 59624



Photo courtesy of Bud Lilly

Bud Lilly carved out a reputation as one of the most respected fly-fishing guides in the Rockies. Now he's opened a rustic retreat and returned to his family's roots.

**Story by
Todd Wilkinson**

An Old-Fashioned ANGLER

Behind an old white-washed hotel in Three Forks, Mont., not far from the birthplace of the Missouri River, sits a clubhouse that on certain days turns fervid in the hours around dawn and dusk. You might say the atmosphere here is comparable to a college locker room at halftime where an aging, silver-haired coach draws his players near to talk a little strategy.

Huddled around a lean, stone-faced septuagenarian, guests at Violet and Bud

Lilly's Anglers Retreat gather over coffee to compare notes on patterns of fake dry bugs and, of a more curious note, to meet the man who shares equal billing with his late mother on the sign out front.

In the minds of his contemporaries, it makes perfect sense that Walen "Buddy" Lilly Jr., whose name is synonymous with fly fishing in the Rockies, would choose to park himself in semiretirement at the head of

Montana's mightiest river. His hotel, converted in



Special to The Denver Post / Anne Sherwood

Legendary fishing guide Bud Lilly, above, has opened a hotel in Three Forks, Mont., right. At left, Lilly, at right in photo, does some casting with former television sports commentator Curt Gowdy.



Photo by Paul Schullery

1995 from a lodging house operated by the family matriarch for 50 years, signals a twilight return to the same waters that gave his life meaning. "The hotel is a vehicle for reaching people and giving them a sense of what it was like in the golden era of fly fishing," he says. "I want to give people a context for their experience. The accommodations are rustic, but we're letting our patrons rough it with ease."

When Violet and Bud Lilly's Anglers Retreat opened for business, the reaction was

instantaneous. The novel lodge, run with the same personal flair that characterized Lilly's famous tackle shop in West Yellowstone, attracts an enthusiastic clientele of anglers, novices and veterans alike. In order to get a room, though, you have to fish.

Quaint and custom-made for a sporting vacation, the hotel can sleep 10 to 14 people, but its hallmark is the personal interaction with Lilly. As soon as reservations are made over the phone, patrons receive a letter and personal itinerary in

the mail from him that offers suggestions for which riffles to fish and lures to buy.

"Fly fishing has given me so much over the years that my main purpose is trying to bestow an ethic among visitors to Montana as well as a healthy respect for our wild trout streams. I love the hands-on interaction the hotel provides," Lilly says. "When my mother passed away after spending 50 years here, my wife, Esther, and I decided to combine all of her collectibles and turn-of-the-century furnishings with my fly-

fishing books and paraphernalia."

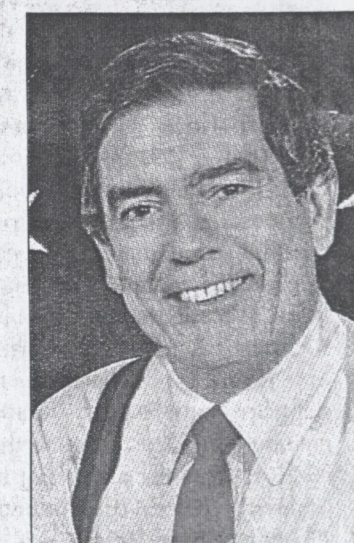
The quiet, unassuming 70-year-old has been mobbed during his career by Japanese tourists passing through Yellowstone in tour buses, featured on Dutch television stations, and profiled in the documentary film "Three Men, Three Rivers" along with the late Dan Bailey and legendary Butte fly-tier George Grant. "Bud's kind of a low-key guy," Grant says of his friend. "People respect him because he commits himself to getting things done."

Last year, Lilly did something that his friends thought was unfathomable. He retired his hallowed commercial guiding license and gave up a "job" that had brought him \$350 a day teaching people how to fish for almost half a century.

Author Paul Schullery, who profiled Lilly in his book "A Trout's Best Friend" and collaborated with the trailblazer on "Bud Lilly's Guide to Western Fly Fishing," says it is Lilly's home-grown authenticity that leaves a lasting impression.

"What you have is a handful of really senior figures in fishing lore who laid the groundwork for what you see today in terms of Montana's fly-fishing allure: George Grant, Dan Bailey and Bud Lilly, but especially Dan and Bud because they had their own fly shops and reached greater numbers of people," Schullery says. "Dan came from the old, stuffy school of New England high-brow fishing and had a strong clientele of Easterners. Bud arrived a generation later. He was the local kid who pioneered the modern tackle shop. His store still is an institution, and I would guess his hotel will be, too."

Bud Lilly's Trout Shop at 39

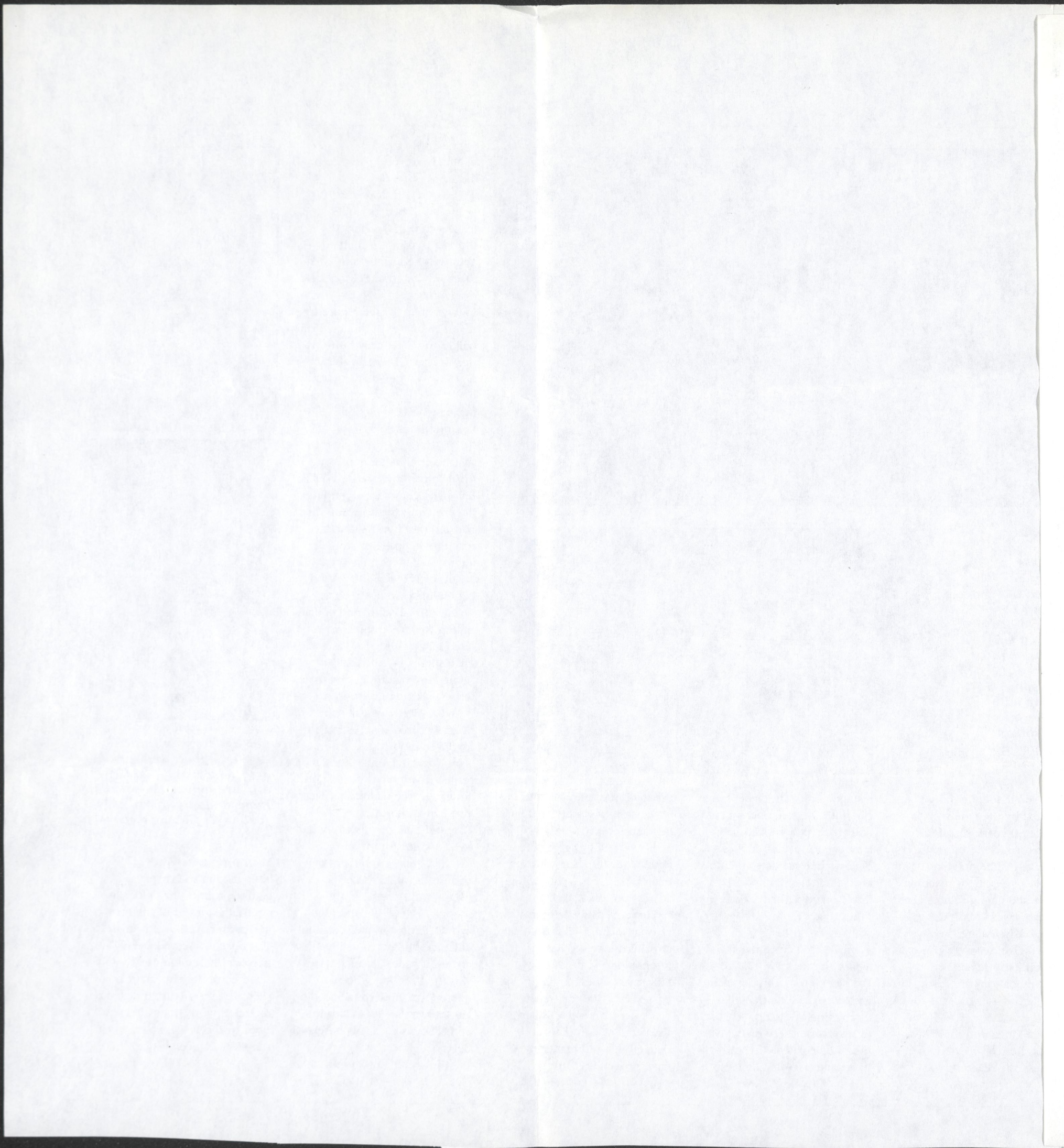


Denver Post file photos

CBS anchorman Dan Rather, above, and former President Jimmy Carter, top, are among those who have sought out Bud Lilly for his fly-fishing expertise.

Madison Ave. in West Yellowstone still reigns as a landmark more than a decade after Lilly got out of the business and moved to Bozeman. The business served as Lilly's personal statement. He hand-selected proficient lure-makers, recruited top-flight guides, and modeled workshops after the popular Orvis fishing camps in the East. He even broke

See **Lilly** on page 23



The article in the
Denver post was
in color & it was
a very impressive
picture of our friend
Bud Lilly. I love
that man.

Bud -

Marine Pogreba sent
me this from Colorado.

The article was in
the Denver Post and I
thoroughly enjoyed reading
it.

I'm sending the
article along to you in
the event that you
might have missed it.

Best Regards

Bill Turburt

The article in the
Denver post was
in color & it was
a very impressive
picture of our friend
Bud Lilly. I love
that man.

Continued story

Lilly

From Page 1D

a tippet to fly fishing in Montana.

Son Mike was a West Yellowstone guide but "did not take up the profession." He branched off to become a Bozeman lawyer instead, Bud said. Daughter Annette, now a CPA in Chico, Calif., still guides and gives fly fishing lessons. Son Greg is renowned as a guide, a fisherman and a fly fishing expert.

Bud's first wife, Pat, died of lung cancer in 1984. He remarried in 1985 and lives with his wife, Esther, in Bozeman.

Before Bud's mother, Violet, died last year at the age of 92, she asked him not to sell the old two-story, salt-box style hotel that she lived in and operated as a hotel for railroaders for a half century.

In recent years, since the railroad pulled up track through Three Forks, Violet

kept only two boarders — both old, close friends — and devoted her life to her community, her church and the Headwaters Museum in Three Forks.

Her hotel had changed very little over the decades, with rooms filled with antique furniture which, in truth, was relatively new when Violet took over the hotel.

The old floors were still covered with the original linoleum, and there was but a single bathroom for the entire second floor.

Bud kept his word, but with the help of Three Forks residents Dave and Norma Miller, plumbers, electricians and others, he rebuilt and refurbished the building, turning it into a sparkling clean, cozy and comfortable haven for anglers.

"I wish I had thought of it while my mother was still alive," Lilly said of the renovation. "But she probably wouldn't have let me do it."

The first floor consists of a spacious, two-bedroom suite with large kitchen and living room.

Across the hall is "Violet's room" which will be

kept nearly the way it was when Bud's mother lived there.

Some of the family's history remains, including an ancient old kitchen stove where Violet cooked "the best fudge in Three Forks."

A 100-year-old cathedral organ which has been on display at the Three Forks museum will soon be moved back into the hotel.

The second floor holds a slightly smaller but extremely comfortable two-bedroom suite with bathroom and shower, living room and kitchen.

There are also three individual bedrooms, a central bathroom, utility room with washer and dryer and a room that is being designed as the Bud Lilly library of fishing memorabilia.

Lilly plans to cater to groups of fishermen and offer "the total experience."

He has become as avid a Three Forks booster as his mother was, touting the small community as a tourist destination.

It boasts of a golf course, the nearby Madison Buffalo Jump historic site and, also nearby, Lewis and Clark Caverns.

And, for the ravaging hunger that always follows a day on the river, there is Three Forks' famous Sacajawea Inn, the Land of Magic restaurant in nearby Logan, or Sir Scott's Oasis in Manhattan which gained national fame in commercials for the beef industry.

Anglers can head for the streams with breakfasts from the Headwaters Cafe and sack lunches prepared by Wheat Montana which is just up the road at Interstate 90 and the Townsend turnoff.

For more information on the Anglers Retreat, the address is P.O. Box 983, Three Forks, MT, 59752. The phone number is 406-285-6690.

The rates are \$45 a night for single bedrooms, \$125 for the second-floor suite, and \$145 for the first-floor suite. The Anglers Retreat can accommodate groups of up to 10 people.

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WALLY PIKE'S OUTDOOR WORLD

By Tim Koziol



Hard luck has kept shooter from Olympics

BUENOS AIRES (AP) — World-class bad luck has kept Terry Anderson from competing in an Olympics, even though he has been one of the best rapid fire shooters in the United States for 20 years.

Anderson has tried five times and all he has to show is five heart-breaking stories, each told with a wide smile, a laugh and a shrug of his shoulders.

The 49-year-old marksman is still firing at his goal and a victory this weekend at the Pan Am Games would help him finally hit the target.

"It's all been a stumble," Anderson said. "It has to be, because you make your own luck."

Anderson's quest began when he moved to the United States in

1975 and won the gold by one point. He also set a Pan Am record that can't be broken because the scoring system has changed.

That victory would've been a nice springboard into the 1984 Olympics, but at the trials, a quirky malfunction of his 10-year-old pistol kept him from making the team. His slide jammed three times and Anderson was forced to withdraw from the first day of competition. Even though he finished first the next two days, he still wound up third.

His 1988 chances were wiped out in 1987 in a car crash while at a competition in Havana, Cuba, that cost the life of his passenger and just as easily could have killed Anderson.

Anderson won a gold earlier this week, and he's excited about the rapid-fire competition that begins Saturday. The finals are Sunday.

A victory here is important because it would give the United States two spots in the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta. The host country already is guaranteed one spot.

Who fills those spots won't be determined until April 1996. Anderson is sure he'll be among the final few challengers.

If he makes it, the last two decades of trying will be worthwhile. If not, it'll just mean four more years of trying and maybe even a sweeter ending to his saga — the 2000 Olympics are in Sydney.

Lilly turns old hotel into retreat for anglers

Bud Lilly, literally a Montana fishing legend in his own time, is embarking on a new venture that just might be your ticket to an enjoyable few days or few weeks of fishing in some of the better trout water of Montana.

Lilly is developing the historic hotel in Three Forks into "Bud Lilly's Angler's Retreat."

The old hotel had been in his mother Violet's family for more than 80 years. With her death at the age of 90 in the past year, the hotel has been passed on to him.

He plans to keep the old furnishings, some of which have been in the hotel since it first opened in 1908 and to add some other touches to make the experience of staying there a bit more unique.

In addition to two apartment suites and the sleeping rooms, there will be a tree-shaded courtyard with decks, a barbecue and a vegetable garden for the guests' salads.

The location is a natural.

It's about five minutes driving time to the Gallatin, Jefferson and Madison rivers. It's just an hour or so to the Ruby, Big Hole, Beaverhead or Yellowstone. The area also has some smaller creeks and lakes.

Bud plans to offer his own expertise in choosing a fishing spot and telling guests how to fish it. He can also arrange guide services and secure access to private waters.

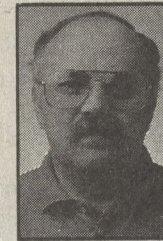
For more information on the Angler's Retreat, contact Lilly at 406-285-6690 or stop by in Three Forks at 16 West Birch.

Wyoming youth camp

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department is once again sponsoring its annual Youth Conservation Camp in the Wind River Mountains.

The free camp is for Wyoming youngsters between the ages of 15 and 18. They will spend the week of Aug. 13-19 learning outdoor survival skills, wildlife management techniques and shooting proficiency.

OUTDOOR EDITOR



Mark Henckel

Gazette staff

Enrollment is limited to 50 participants and selection is based on the interests of the applicant and a recommendation from a teacher or youth leader.

Applications must be submitted by May 15. They can be obtained from Game and Fish offices, at high schools or by calling 1-800-842-1934.

Yannone at MRPA

Montana wildlife expert Vince Yannone will be one of the guest speakers at the banquet and meeting of the Montana Rifle and Pistol Association in Big Timber on May 6-7.

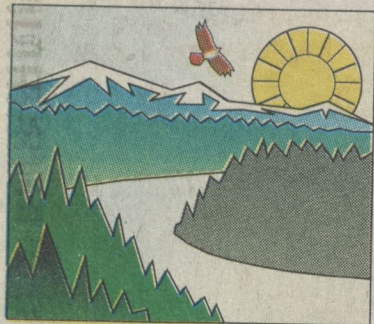
Yannone, the assistant administrator of the Conservation-Education Division of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, will be joined at the May 6 banquet by another speaker, local rancher Norm Starr.

Bill Pryor, information officer for Fish, Wildlife and Parks in Billings, will be master of ceremonies for the event at the American Legion Club.

In addition to the banquet and meeting, there will be a Spring Arts and Crafts Show at the Civic Center, an open trap shoot and tours of the C Sharps Arms Company and the Shiloh Rifle Company.

Tickets to the banquet cost \$13.50 for individuals and \$25 per couple.

For more information, contact Ron Carlson at 406-932-4815 or Julie Lovell at 406-932-4937 after 1 p.m. on weekdays.



Out 'n' About

Montana hunting deadline is near

Applications for antelope hunting licenses and special deer and special elk permits in Montana must be postmarked by June 1.

Application forms and regulations are available at Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks offices and at license agents across the state.

The annual drawings for antelope, deer and elk will be held in early August and hunters will be mailed licenses by the middle of that month.

Mountain lion hearing scheduled

A public hearing on the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks' draft environmental impact statement on mountain lion management will be held at 7 p.m. on June 1 at Columbus High School.

Short versions or complete copies of the draft EIS are available by contacting the department in Helena at 406-444-2612. Written comments can be mailed to: Wildlife Division, Fish, Wildlife and Parks, P.O. Box 200702, Helena, MONT. 59620-0701.

Wyoming hunting deadline is near

Wyoming residents who want to apply for limited quota elk, deer or antelope hunting licenses must have their applications in to the Cheyenne headquarters of the Game and Fish Department by June 12.

All applications must be in the morning mail at Cheyenne by that date. Postmark dates are not valid as proof of making the deadline.

Summary maps and applications are available at Game and Fish offices or at license agents in Wyoming.

Clinic, fish tank set for Roundup

Enjoy Sports, of Roundup, will offer a free fishing seminar and a fish tank for kids as part of its fourth anniversary celebration.

Wade Fleming, of the Billings Fishing Club, will present a walleye fishing seminar on the evening of June 2. On June 3, a stock tank filled with 180 trout will be set up to provide free fishing for kids under the age of 12.

For information, contact Enjoy Sports at 406-323-1977.

Help prevent whirling disease

With the parasitic infection whirling disease killing trout in more and more of Montana's waters, here's what you can do to help prevent its spread:

- Thoroughly clean your vehicle, boat, anchor, trailer, waders, boots and gear of mud that could hold tubifex worms or whirling disease spores;
- Drain your boat of all water and do not transport any river or lake water in coolers, buckets or live wells;
- Do not dispose of fish entrails, heads or other by-products in any body of water;
- Do not transport live fish from one place to another;
- Do not transport aquatic plants and remove them from your fishing equipment.



Gazette photos by Richard J. Wesnick

Famed fly fisherman Bud Lilly stands in front of his late mother Violet's old railroad hotel that has become the new Anglers Retreat in Three Forks.

Anglers Retreat

Bud Lilly creates a perfect haven for fly fishermen

By RICHARD J. WESNICK
Editor of The Gazette

THREE FORKS — Mix nearly 90 years of history with a living legend, stir in some of the finest trout fishing in the world and the result is the new Anglers Retreat in Three Forks.

Bud Lilly, whose name is synonymous with Montana trout fishing, has transformed the old railroad hotel which his mother, Violet, ran for more than 50 years into a well-outfitted haven for anglers.

"Violet's — also Bud Lilly's — Anglers Retreat" (as the temporary sign reads) sits in the hub of the Headwaters area with spokes branching out to a half-dozen major rivers and a score of smaller nearby streams.

"We're in the shake-down cruise for the hotel right now," Lilly said.

"I want to develop a clientele of fishermen and provide a place where they can meet other fishermen and learn about fly fishing. We're going to promote the off-season fishing — in September, October and November — because this area is known as a banana belt" where late fall fishing is unbeatable and where spring and summer fishing is as good as it gets anywhere in Montana.

"I'm not going to do any outfitting at all but I'll work with local outfitters and guides. We will use the whole area: the Madison, the Gallatin, the Jefferson, the Yellowstone and the Missouri," he said. "My son, Greg, will cover the Ruby, the Beaverhead and the Big Hole so within an hour to two hours of the Anglers Retreat, we can cover the finest trout steams in the country."

Lilly has fished Montana's waters since he was old enough to walk, but he earned an international reputation as an outfitter and guide while operating his Trout Shop in West Yellowstone from 1950 until 1981.

The Trout Shop sold tackle and matched guides with clients. But calling it a tackle shop is like calling a Ferrari a family car.

The Trout Shop was an institution where two generations of Lillys provided a gathering place for fly fishermen from around the world, and for some of the nation's most famous anglers, fly casters and fly tying experts including Lefty Kreh, Dave Whitlock, Doug Swisher, Ernie Schwiebert, Lee Wulff, Carl Richards, Ed Koch, Ed Shenk, Charlie Brooks, Jimmie Green and a boat full of others.

For 30 years, Bud, his late wife Pat, daughter Annette, and sons Greg and Mike grew with the business and became tied tighter than

(More on Lilly, Page 6D)



Bud Lilly is a living fishing legend.



An antique stove was used for decades by Violet Lilly.



"Violet's Room" holds mementos from the Lilly family.

REEL

M O N T A N A

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ABOVE: *Rainy Lake in the Seeley-Swan Valley* LARRY JAVORSKY PHOTO
COVER PHOTO: *Ninepipe National Wildlife Refuge* DONALD M. JONES PHOTO



Fishy BUSINESS

Pat Barnes, Dan Bailey, Bud Lilly

BY BRAD HURD

HISTORICAL PHOTOS COURTESY OF BUD LILLY AND PAT BARNES

Pat Barnes had the corner on the fly fishing guiding business in West Yellowstone after World War II. Among his more affluent customers was a group of Texas oil men who traveled with servants to drive the cars and run the errands.

"Those Texans were pretty cocky," recalled Barnes. "They had big bass rods...cast sloppily...fell in the river, lost their glasses." And they couldn't begin to understand how to catch fish with the small flies Barnes gave them.

Their Texan host came to Barnes: "Pat, these guys can't catch fish. If you could tie a fly that would attract the fish, you'd have customers for life."

Barnes tied a big, salmon-fly-sized pattern, using the material sitting on his bench. "Make it bigger," said the Texan. Using a long-shanked size 4 hook, Pat tied a red-bodied, big-winged, squirrel-tailed monstrosity with several hackles.

"By god, that's a sofa pillow," bellowed the Texan.

"You named it," answered Barnes, and recollected that they came back with big smiles and a bunch of fish.

Thus was born the fly, Barnes said with a mix of pride and remorse, "that took the fish out of the Madison, Yellowstone, and Big Hole."

The Texans? "They kept coming back as long as I was in business."

Pat had a lot of practice tying flies

back then. Winter evenings, as soon as he and his wife, Sig, fed their children, they'd go downstairs and tie, usually from 7 to 9. Night after night they churned out the variations of their renowned Waterborn Flies: among them the H&L Variet, the Green Back Nymph, the Pat Hopper, and the famed Super Sofa Pillow.

"Sig, what's the most flies we ever tied in the winter?" asked Pat. "Six thousand?"

Sigrid Barnes, wife and fly-shop partner for nearly half a century, returned a concurring nod. "By the end of the season, we'd tied 10,000...in some years," she added.



ABOVE: Lefty Kreh teaching at a fly fishing school in West Yellowstone
LEFT: Pat Barnes and Don Martinez with a customer, at Martinez's shop in West Yellowstone, late 1930s



It surely must not have occurred to them then that just a sampling of those basement-tied flies, nicely framed, would boost the coffers of many a Trout Unlimited auction in the 1990s. Or that decades after its creation, the Sofa Pillow would remain the fly of choice during the salmon-fly hatch.

The Barnes fishing legacy spans nearly six decades. Pat guided out of West Yellowstone for Don Martinez in the late 1930s. Martinez is recognized as West Yellowstone's first fly fishing guru, a purist catering to only the fly fisher. Respected for his fly-tying innovations and knowledge of insect life, Martinez has a legacy that includes the creation of the Woolly Worm.

In 1946, Barnes opened his own shop across from the train depot in West Yellowstone. He rented the shop space for \$500 "from snow to snow," and taught school ("fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, all subjects") in the winter. He and his wife now live in Helena.

DAN BAILEY

Barnes said that Dan Bailey schooled him in fly tying by handing him the materials to tie ten Royal Wulffs, then critiquing the work until it was perfected. Bailey had a national reputation for the flies created in his shop in Livingston.

Bailey had come to Montana on his honeymoon in the '30s. Leaving

behind a college professorship in New York City, he set up shop in Livingston in 1938. Bailey's business was three-pronged then as today: retail, mail order, and wholesale.

In fact, he sold flies by mail order even before settling in Livingston. His son John Bailey recalled: "After my father died, someone sent me an *Outdoor Life* classified ad from 1936 that showed you could buy flies from my father in New York in the winter, and from General Delivery, Ennis, in the summer."

While the best trout fishing may have been in Montana, most of the fly fishers were back East, a point well understood by Dan Bailey in the '30s. "When he first moved here, there wasn't enough business," John recalled. "You had to do mail order."

In the early years Bailey also started a wholesale business, which today helps stock fly shops throughout Montana, Europe, and Japan.

Today, when John Bailey talks about selling fishing products worldwide, he speaks of reduced trade barriers and a burgeoning number of international customers. The barriers his dad faced when he began wholesaling fishing tackle likely consisted more of long drives on rough Montana roads. "In those days," according to John, "your fishing tackle was sold through bars. That's where the men went. Some towns had sporting goods stores. Some just bars."

BUD LILLY

Bud Lilly, like Barnes a school teacher, came with a buddy to West Yellowstone in 1950 to operate a makeshift car wash. After discovering that washing cars was a slow way to make money, Lilly took some money he'd saved for a car, and a loan from his mother, and bought a fly shop that had been started by Martinez. It cost \$4,500.

Bailey, Martinez, Barnes, and Lilly were among Montana's pioneers in recognizing fly fishing as a distinct sport. Their clientele would be an inspiration to today's fly fishing sophisticate. "West Yellowstone in the thirties and forties attracted the dilettante angler," said Lilly. "They were pretty exclusive in the way they handled their tackle and the people they wanted to associate with and fish with." They included "Hollywood types and fishermen from the Anglers Club

*In those days your
fishing tackle was sold
through bars. That's
where the men went.
Some towns had
sporting goods stores.
Some just bars.*



Sheep Lake, Bitterroot Mountains



BILL BROCKETT PHOTO

of Chicago, which is an old, prestigious club."

Lilly didn't, however, attempt to survive on fly fishing trade alone. "We took care of the spin fishermen," he recalled. "We sold night crawlers."

While Dan Bailey is regarded as the matchmaker between fly fishing tackle and mail order, Lilly is recognized for his merchandising and marketing vision. Through the years he brought the country's biggest names in fly fishing to West Yellowstone to conduct fly fishing schools. "I thought, hell, if it [fly fishing school] works so well in the East for Orvis, why doesn't it work out West?" With sponsorship from Scientific Anglers and Fenwick, "We brought in personalities like Lefty Kreh, Jimmy Green, Dave Whitlock, Doug Swisher and Carl Richards...all of them."

Today, some of those same instructors command \$1,000 a day. In contrast, Lilly's first school in the Sixties, a three-day affair, went for \$75, including a dinner at the end.

Lilly organized what he described as a "fly tying cadre" of "wonderful custom fly tiers," and rattled off the names: Whitlock, Troth, Gartside, Atkins, Grant, and Harrop. "When you bought a fly, you got a custom, quality fly, not only in the way it was designed but in the materials, the creativity.

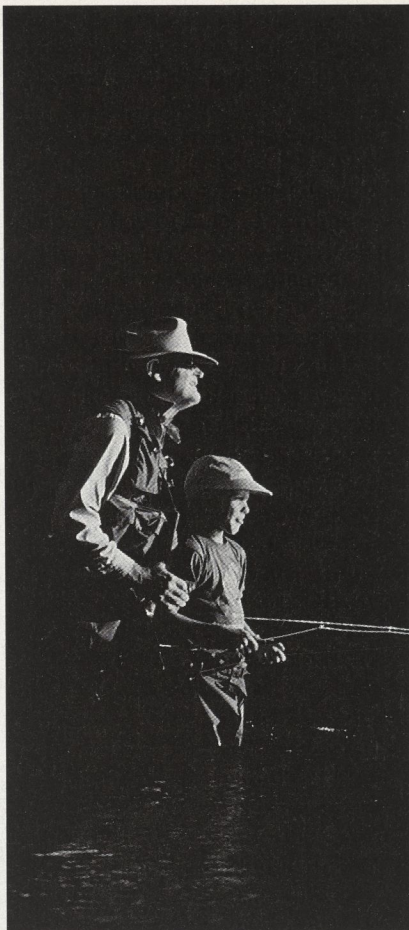
"Then in the late Seventies they started bringing in the imported flies...The present-day fishermen, that's all a lot of them have ever seen. You get a streamer that after it gets wet, you can hardly see the feathers.

"Now flies are coming in from Columbia. I had guys calling on me that were setting up stables in India, Africa, and now it's being done in Mexico. The quality is there enough that they're usable. But when you come from an era when you're dealing with the finest custom flies, there's a very obvious difference."

Custom tiers today often sell through the shops, but directly "to their very affluent customers," said Lilly. "Jack Gartside can tie one of his lovely pheasant hoppers and get three dollars and fifty cents a copy. You toss one of those into the trees and you think twice."

LEARNING TO LET GO

Pat Barnes said West Yellowstone visitors in the '30s and '40s "fished right out of town. Nobody bothered to go any further."



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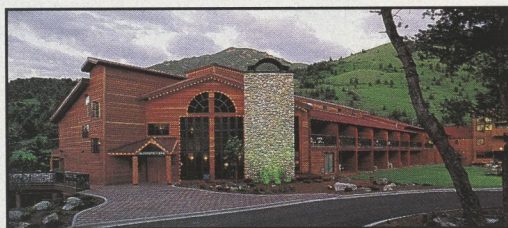


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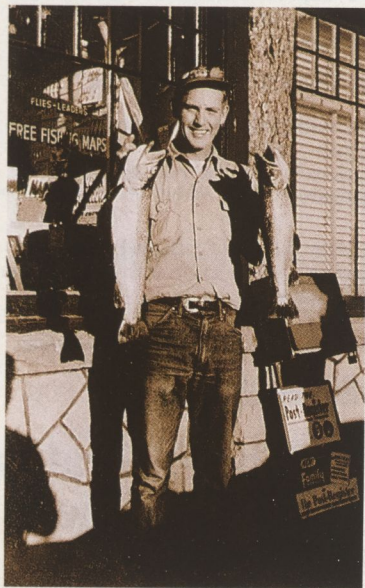
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BELOW RIGHT: Swan River
BELOW: Bud Lilly outside his
shop in West Yellowstone.



Over time, that changed. Martinez first offered fly fishing customers maps of the region. Barnes, Lilly, and others followed suit. Lilly estimated that by 1970 his shop gave out 10,000 fishing maps a year.

In 1948, Barnes introduced another dimension to Montana fly fishing: the McKenzie boat. He had seen an Oregon family visiting West Yellowstone with their drift boat, and he ordered one. "I was the first boat on the river for ten years," he said.

Although the names Bailey, Barnes, and Lilly are synonymous today with all that's correct in fishing ethics, they came from a fishing culture where fish we caught to be kept.

Bailey's Livingston store has its Wall of Fame, where customers marvel at silhouettes of four-, five-, and six-pound rainbows and browns, labeled with the names of those who landed them and where.

Bud Lilly's Trout Shop had its Lunker Club. Membership required landing a three-pounder, or more. Lilly encouraged anglers to join, recording the date, species, location, and what had been used to catch it. Each new Lunker Club member was awarded a little pennant, which helped advertise the Trout Shop.

Later, Lilly used club members' names to launch his catalog business that eventually reached 30,000 fly fishers.

In time, Lilly had second thoughts about the Lunker Club. In the late '60s he ended it, realizing that "the last thing I should be doing was encouraging people to kill fish and bring them in just to get their name in the book."

Barnes had his own methods of managing the resource. "Fishing was excellent on the Madison when I first started." He describes the "shame" of greedy sportsmen, whom he described as "game hogs." Barnes used pebbles in the floor of his boat to keep track of his customers' take, and he cut them off when he thought they'd kept their share. "All you're doing is hurting yourself," he'd advise.

These same shop owners who popularized fly fishing in Montana lead the fight to protect it. "Sportsmen went through a lot of changes in the 1960s," Lilly wrote in his autobiography, *A Trout's Best Friend*. "A few farsighted anglers in Michigan created Trout Unlimited (TU) in 1959, and a couple years later Pat Halterman got Dan Bailey, me, and a few other well-known Montana fishermen together to form the Montana chapter of Trout Unlimited."

Lilly and Bailey were president and vice president of the state's first

TU chapter. The Federation of Fly Fishermen was created soon thereafter. The Missouri River chapter of TU recently renamed itself the Pat Barnes Missouri River Chapter, honoring his contributions.

The "trout wars" described by Lilly in his book, were waged to "drag Montana fishing into the twentieth century." The battles centered on the harmful effects of hatchery trout and over harvest.

At the Trout Shop, Bud Lilly's Lunker Club was replaced in 1974 by a new badge of honor, the Catch-and-Release Club, which drew national attention.

In 1982, Barnes and Lilly both sold their West Yellowstone shops. At home now in Helena, Pat and Sig Barnes reminisced recently about their 36 summers in West Yellowstone: Pat opened the shop at 7 o'clock, tied flies or repaired rods until his clients showed up; Sig arrived at 8 a.m. with Pat's lunch and Pat went out on the river; Sig minded the shop, not closing until 10 p.m. They recently visited a new Helena fly fishing shop owned by Paul Roos, "one of the best guides we ever had."

What do they make of their friend's finely appointed, fashion-laden shop? Very nice, they both agreed. "But," Sig said quietly, "we had our day."



WAYNE MUMFORD PHOTO

1990s: IN THE CURRENT

When you walk into a Montana fly fishing shop today you can still buy your license, get the lowdown on what insects are hatching on what streams, and buy a handful of your favorite flies.

You might also be able to book a trip to go bone fishing in Belize, maybe buy a complete set of trout-embossed china, outfit the most style-conscious member of your family, or pick up a \$4,000 hand-carved coffee table featuring inlaid trout.

Just past the fly bins in many of Montana's contemporary fly shops are the equivalent of exquisite gift stores, exotic-vacation travel agencies, and fashion boutiques.

How did we get to today's store from Don Martinez's simple, summertime shop with its fly-tying bench, countertop of assorted flies, handful of rods and reels and maybe a creel or two?

It's a topic that the '90s proprietors articulate as thoughtfully and completely as they would if describing the intricacies of a customer-tied hopper.

The short answer, however, is: It's a whole new ball game, driven by the changing needs and interests—and numbers—of customers who have unprecedented options when it comes to spending money. "There's so much more competition than there used to be," said Livingston's John Bailey. "If you don't have new stuff, you're going to die."

Montana's fly fishing visitors may already have spent many a lunch hour at their own downtown Orvis shop, or have been ordering from a variety of mail order catalogs all winter long.

Fly fishing apparel occupies a third or more of the floor space of many shops today. "Ten years ago nobody worried about what they wore," said Bailey.

"It used to be, as far as clothing went, a tackle shop needed a rain jacket, a vest, waders, maybe a heavy wool shirt...long underwear...that was it," said Dave Corcoran, owner of The River's Edge in Bozeman. Today, he continued, "The person who is buying the rain jacket is just as likely to buy something fun to go underneath it. Something he can't find at home." Fly fishing attire "becomes a memento to their trip to Montana."

"Most everybody's already got a fly rod and a fly reel," explained Dale Sexton of Bailey's Fly Shop. "Clothing is no longer 'extras.' The Patagonia SST (fishing jacket) is

a classic example of a piece of *equipment* that's pretty hard core that most fishermen own. Clothing is being sold as equipment. Take the Henry's Fork on opening day. If it's raining and there are 50 guys out there, 39 of them will be wearing that jacket. And it's not cheap."

Along with defining clothing as "equipment," many of today's customers want to make a fashion statement described by some as the "A River Runs Through It" look.

"A lot of people who enjoy the sport want to carry the essence of the sport with them through their clothes, the luggage they carry, the T-shirts they wear," said Jim Toth, owner of Missoula's Grizzly Hackle. "That's added to how we've been successful. Fly fishing is part of an everyday mindset. They see a guide wearing a pair of khaki chinos, a plaid shirt, and a heavy belt, that's something they want to wear, even if they happen to live in Cincinnati."

"You can't imagine what that movie did" for the fly shop business, Bailey stated. "Scary. It broadened the scope tremendously." In fact, Bailey said the fly fishing business tumbled along with the stock market crash in 1988 and didn't fully recover until the movie was released.

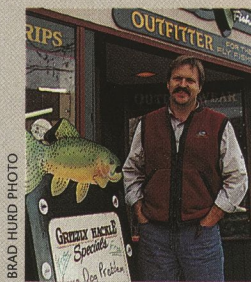
Old-timers like Pat Barnes and Bud Lilly closed up shop and taught school in the winter. Many of today's shops, at least the ones in bigger towns, are

open 12 months a year. "In the past, a sportsman would hunt in the fall, hole up in the winter, maybe tie a few flies," explained Toth. "Fishing season didn't even really open until May. Now, with the regulations that allow catch and release, fishing is year-round. We've had guided trips every month of the year and that's added a lot to being a year-round business."

Part of that change includes fishing expeditions that Montana shop owners arrange and host for their Montana clients.

"I'm leaving Friday for Belize," Corcoran said last November as snow fell outside his Bozeman shop. "During the off season I market via my mailing lists. These are usually hosted trips, either myself or my wife and I. We usually pick a location that has a lot of activities

[continued on next page]



BRAD HURD PHOTO


Jim Toth



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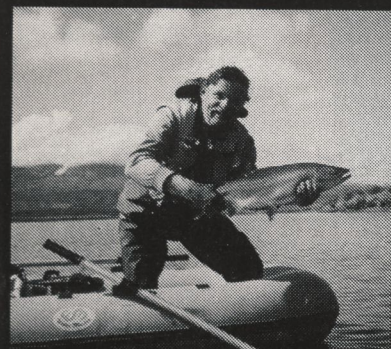
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other than fly fishing. It's a good way to fill in the winter time. It gives us some nice vacations and we make a little money."

Corcoran, Bailey, Toth and others are also ready to outfit the saltwater fisher. "I'm in the process now of changing my flies that I have on display from almost all trout flies to a pretty good percentage of saltwater flies," Corcoran continued. "I'm getting, now, into my saltwater reels."

The demographics of fly fishers has changed as well. "Nine or ten years ago it was a specific clique," said John Herzer, manager of Miller Barber's Stream-side Anglers in Missoula. "Now, we have young kids, eight and nine years old, who know how to tie flies. I took two guys, eighty-four and eighty-eight, up on the Black-foot last summer."

Women comprise a sizable percentage of the sport's newcomers, the shop owners said. "Fly fisherman" has become "flyfisher." "For good reason," said Corcoran. "A lot of the tackle manufacturers have realized this and they've started to make gear specifically designed for the lady. And the gals are very good at fly fishing. As a matter of fact, it's easier to teach a woman to fly fish many times than it is a man. They're better listeners. They can equate what they hear to what they're going to do very quickly. They are used to doing things that require finesse and not physical strength. We like to foster that, too... bringing women into the sport. It's a great thing for a fella to do with his girlfriend or his wife. If you share the same hobby, you get to do it more."

"Women appreciate more of the overall [guided] trip," said Toth, adding that 40 percent of his clients on guided trips are women. "Men tend to focus on just the number of fish caught and the biggest fish. It's nice to have people who actually notice the bald eagles and the ospreys and the wildlife along the shore as well as being able to catch fish."

In turn, many of Toth's fishing classes are taught by women. "Not

because we're trying to address just the women's market," Toth related. "Because they're good teachers and learners."


Herzer believes the diversity of age, abilities, and interests is such that, "You can open up a different fly shop. You can cater to those different interests, there's such a variety of people buying. Everybody can do it. It can be as difficult or as easy, as technical or simple as you want it to be. That's why it's so popular."

Appetites for gear and gadgets can seem insatiable. Technological advancements alone have fostered a new consumerism. "Years ago, it was a cane rod, a silk fly line, a Pflueger Medalist or Orvis reel and that was it," said Toth.

Fly fishing enthusiasts are "tech heads," said Herzer. Some require the latest gear and are becoming as compulsive about new technology as golfers, said Herzer's boss, golf pro Miller Barber. "You'll see the same thing happen in fly fishing as happened in golf," Barber predicted.

And, oh, the gadgets. Herzer told of clients whose vests bulge with 10 to 12 pounds of stuff. "The more gadgets you can put out, the more they'll buy."

Although today's shop owners may study a data base on a computer behind the counter or book air travel to go fish in the Caribbean, they haven't turned their backs on the fly-shop image and ambiance their predecessors helped create—what Toth described as "the idyllic vision of sitting around the pot-bellied stove and tying flies and having your fishing buddies drop in."

The buddies still drop in to kill time and swap stories. Dogs, usually aging retrievers, still are fixtures, snoozing under the counter or sniffing customers. The owners and clerks are friendly and accommodating, and probably just as anxious to get back on the river as were Martinez, Bailey, Barnes, or Lilly. 



Brook trout PAUL UPDIKE PHOTO

Selection of tied flies JOHN REDDY PHOTO



BRAD HURD was the editor of the Missoulian for 12 years. He is now the general manager of Montana Magazine.

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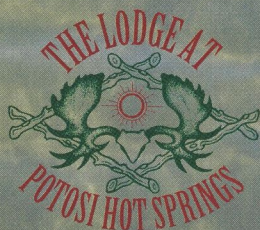
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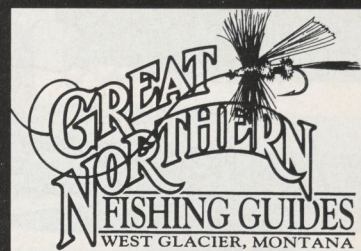
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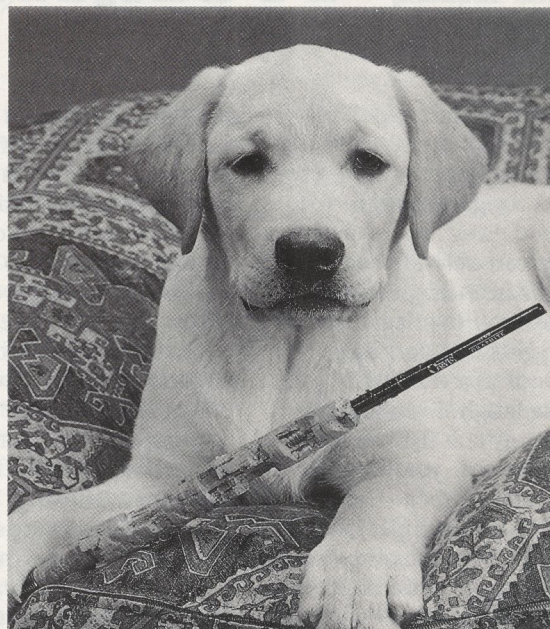
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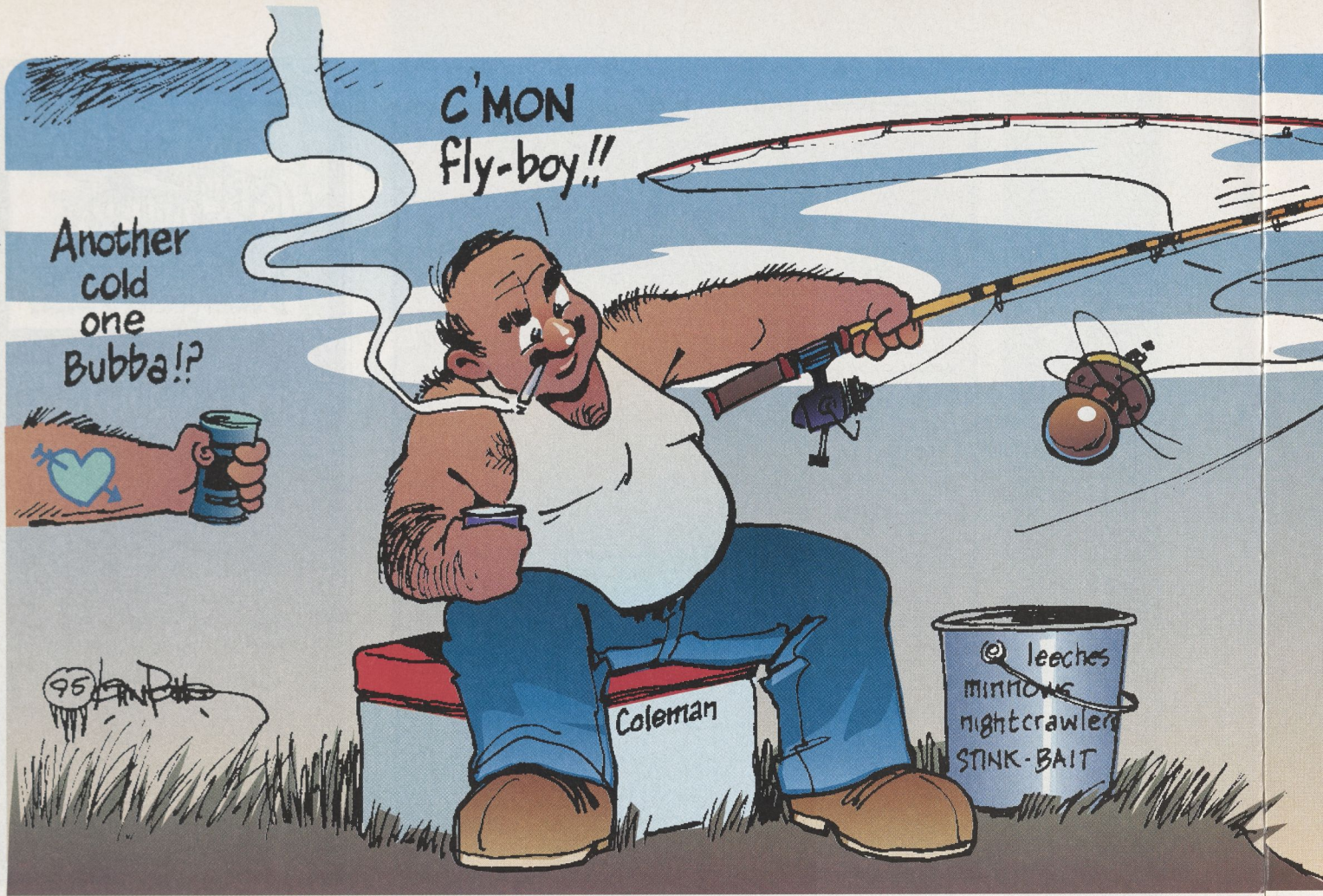
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Warm, Weighty, & Wonderful

BY MARK HENCKEL

Real fish have teeth.
Real fish have scales.
Real fish have spines.
Real fish are rough & tough.

They can defend themselves from anglers and hold their own against muggers in a dark alley. Trout as a real fish?

Don't make me laugh. Even a genuine, bonafide Montana fisheries biologist confided to me years ago that trout are not real fish—they are legless lizards. They're slippery and slimy. They don't have spikes or much in the way of scales or teeth to protect themselves. They live in some transparent, filmy stuff that western Montanans call water. And if that water gets too muddy or warm or anything else, the legless lizards die. How could anyone take creatures like that seriously?

The fisheries biologist, Al Elser,

maintained that you had to go to eastern Montana to find real fish in real water, because it was the only water in the state that had some substance to it. In fact, there was enough substance to the water that you could actually watch coon tracks float downstream.

I asked Elser, an expert on the subjects of fish and real water, "What are real fish?"

"Sharp-toothed walleyes and sauger are real fish," he answered. I knew that. Bruising, big-muscled largemouth bass are real fish. Nasty, alligator-jawed northern pike are real fish. And who would dare try to tell a 20-pound catfish or 120-pound paddlefish that they were anything but real fish?

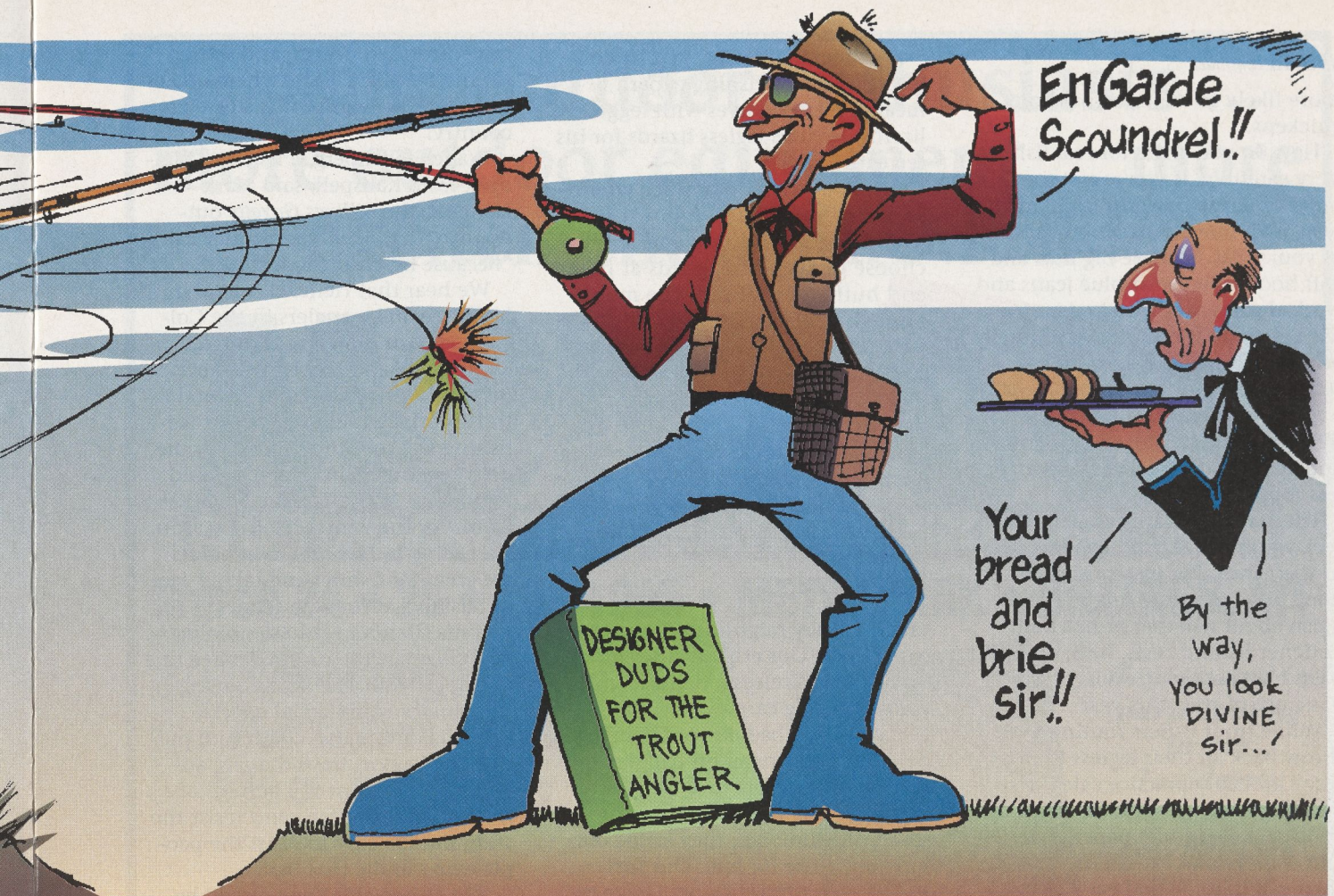
In short, warm-water fish are real fish. They are rough and tough. They eat real meat. They even taste good. How tough are these fish? Elser told the story of a big female

northern pike he was trying to weigh that turned on him and tried to snap his arm off with her big teeth and jaws. That pike wasn't just defending herself—she figured she knew what her weight was and it was none of his business.

Or how about the news story from a couple of years back about the two fishermen who caught a five-pound catfish? One of the guys tossed it to his partner, probably to beat the fish into submission. But instead, the fish hit him in the chest and punctured his partner's lung with the spike of its dorsal fin. That fish literally put the fisherman in the hospital.

Is it any wonder that these fish chew down real meat such as nightcrawlers, leeches, minnows, suckers, and rotten chicken livers? They'd laugh at those dainty trout flies tied with chicken feathers. They'd be far

[continued on page 14]



Cold, Clever, & Comestible

BY JEFF HERMAN

Cold-water fish are the fairest of them all. Fishing for them is the sport of civilized, intelligent, cultured people.

As most Montana natives know, it's a Commandment that cold-water fish represent everything that's pure, chaste, and wholesome. Trout are the fish of poets, romantic and sensuous. They are hardy, in harmony with Nature, admired and revered by legions of fresh-water, fly fishing purists.

It has been whispered by Forces Beyond Our Comprehension that warm-water fishers represent everything that's immoral, decadent, and just plain disgusting. In the vast reaches of eastern Montana, they dredge snoose-colored rivers and ditches, and scum-covered reservoirs and ponds, for all manner of ugly, easy-to-catch, scaly, thorny crea-

tures with guttural-sounding names.

Consider just a few of the Dark Side's crude warm-water denizens: bigmouth buffalo (mother-in-law stature), crappie (need I say more?), peamouth and pumpkinseed (compost starters), river carp and sucker (two degenerates in one), or walleye (easy to catch with a doorknob).

Although largemouth bass and smallmouth bass are technically classified as warm-water fish, they have a couple of redeeming qualities that make them candidates for the middle-of-the-road tepid-water category. Besides, bass merit special attention because Walter Brennan once recorded a song about an elusive bigmouth bass called "Houdini."

Preparing warm-water fish for your table is risky because of their sharp spines, teeth, and bones. Sometimes the fleshiest and tastiest part of a warm-water fillet is the preparer's slice of finger.

Ed Zern, a legendary outdoors columnist, once wrote that the flavor of a warm-water fish is "vastly improved by popping it into the garbage can and going out for dinner." I believe he also was responsible for this acclaimed catfish recipe: Slather cleaned fish with butter, wrap in foil, place on top of hot coals inside clay oven, bake for several hours. When done, throw away catfish and foil, eat clay.

In Montana, it's very easy to distinguish between *us*—cold-water anglers (fly fishers)—and *them*—warm-water anglers (a.k.a. bait casters). Our idols are fellows like Dan Bailey, Bud Lilly, and George Grant. Theirs are Uncle Josh, Zebco, and Silver Buddy. We prefer to discuss fishing experiences, insect hatches, and float tubes. They like to talk ammo, and they boast about horsepower and catching nightcrawlers

[continued on page 14]

Warm *continued*

more likely to wolf down whole chickens.

How do you angle for real fish? Very carefully. If you're not too brave, you use powerful rods and reels with line almost as big around as your wrist. You use big nets and gaff hooks. You wear blue jeans and work clothes. And you had better use big boats and motors and fortify yourself with plenty of liquid refreshment and large lunches. If you are very brave, you can use lightweight spinning equipment and get by with smaller boats and less food and drink.

The brave and hardy anglers who seek warm-water fish have less stress in their lives. For instance, they don't have the trout angler's anguish about whether or not their designer fishing vests, hats, and baby blue neoprene waders have gone out of style this year.


While trout fishers routinely throw back all their legless lizards (they probably practice catch and release because trout taste about as good as boiled toilet paper), bass and walleye and catfish fishers take their catch home and eat it because warm-water fish are excellent eating.

When you think about it, Elser was right: warm-water fish are real fish that make their homes in the real water of Montana. Anglers who go after warm-water fish are real fishermen, real fisherwomen, and real fish-eaters—not the properly togged and fitted dandies who treat success in their sport by throwing back their catch.

Who are these fishers of legless lizards? Suffice it to say that they are a truly odd bunch, typified by Missoula's Jeff Herman, editor of the *Montana Fly Line* magazine and *Fishing Fax* newsletter, two publications dedicated to feeding dyed chicken feathers to legless lizards.

Most people don't know this, but Herman has had an affection for reptiles throughout his life. In the past, he kept a collection of snakes at home. He's currently the proud owner of two real live lizards that his daughter left in his care. There's little doubt in anyone's mind that he's using those lizards to hone his casting skills in the off-season. It's also a sure bet that he's feeding them flies.

It's shocking, really, that he considers himself a fishing expert. I mean, really. He lives with legged lizards. He uses legless lizards for his recreation.

It's all a matter of choice whether or not you care to follow his lead. In Montana, you could choose to keep real lizards at home and huff and puff into the mountains to fish for legless lizards. But why not be a real angler? I say we load the cooler, get on the boat and go after real fish. 

MARK HENCKEL is the outdoors writer for the *Billings Gazette*.

Cold *continued*

much as they might describe a sexual experience. Our ethic focuses more on catch and release; theirs leans toward plugging carp with a .30-06. For us, even a bad day of fishing is dynamite; for them, on bad day of fishing, they resort to dynamite. We're fond of bread and brie for streamside lunches; they swipe our lunches to use for bait. Our first names lean toward Daryl, Gregory, and Jon. They have names like Junior, Bubba, and Al.

Of course the governor's on our side. He's from Libby, near the refreshing, cool waters of the Kootenai River, a haven for huge trout. Their side's got a non-native U.S. Senator from Pluto, and saline seep.

When it comes to tough and macho, warm-water fish are vastly inferior to cold-water species accustomed to surviving in harsh environments. For instance, the toughest trout in the country exist in the upper Clark Fork River basin, where they've adapted to the nation's largest Superfund toxic waste site. With genetics that confound experts, these monsters have endured every environmental insult imaginable for more than a century. Robert Redford may feature them in an upcoming film titled *A Liver Glows Through It*.

The origins of the eastern Montanan's culturally deprived fishing experience are places like Minnesota and Wisconsin, where corn- and cheese-honed anglers tried to migrate upstream to get to the pure, cold waters of the mountains. They barely made it through North Dako-


ta's culverts, however, and settled for the Last East Place, where one of their closest neighbors is a foreign country.

Wade Fredenberg, a fisheries biologist from Kalispell, said Mark Henckel, the *Billings Gazette* outdoors writer, likes warm-water fish, "Because he can't catch trout."

We hear that Henckel is held in high esteem by anglers in the Colstrip area for directing the Great Outhouse Harvest each November. Because there isn't enough wood in those parts to build temporary ice-fishing shelters, they collect all the used two-holers in the region and haul them to the Tongue River Reservoir for the winter fishing season. According to Henckel, two-holers are great for fishing and taking care of business at the same time.

Chris Clancy, a fisheries biologist, said cheese is the most effective lure to trap catfish. The key is buying the rankest commercial cheese around, stuffing it in bags, and putting the bags in traps that are anchored in muck at the bottom of a river or lake. Catfish can't resist the stuff, but it's easy to resist the people who handle that bait.

"No respectable trout would be caught eating commercial cheese baits," Clancy added, noting that trout "at least have a little bit of dignity."

Here's a sure-fire way to identify western Montana's cold-water, fly-casting trout anglers from those warm-water, cheese-chuckin' catfish casters from eastern Montana: attitude. For instance, trout fishers never get lost—they just don't care where they are as long as it's along a river. Trash fishers never get lost, either—Search and Rescue teams just use their noses to find 'em. 

JEFF HERMAN is the outdoors writer for the *Missoulian*.

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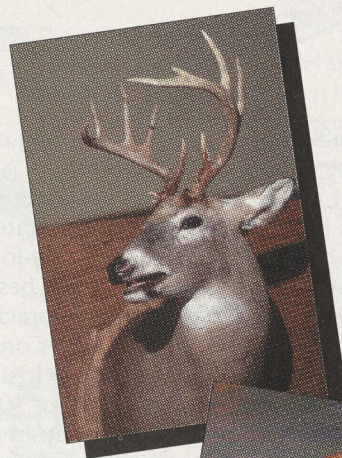
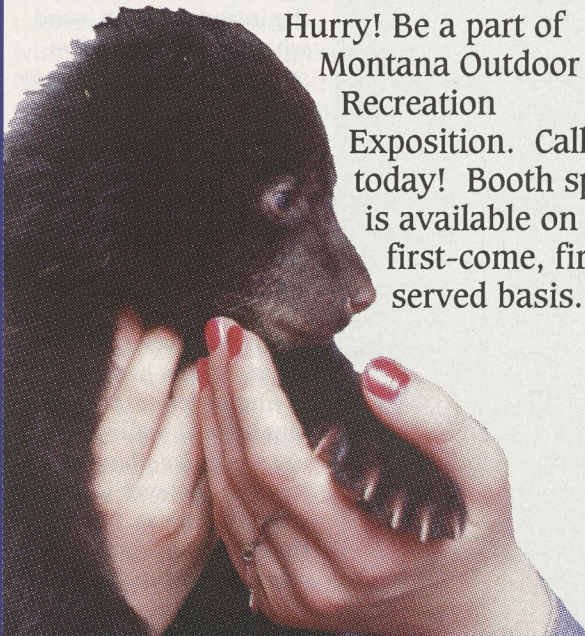
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BUCKET BIOLOGY

Destroying Our *Freshwater* Heritage

BY PERRY BACKUS

Maybe Ron Spoon should be a happy man, but he's not. Spoon is the state fisheries biologist charged with managing Montana's favorite fishery, Canyon Ferry Lake near Helena. This year biologists recorded the highest number of rainbow trout they have ever seen in their fall netting operations. With a change to stocking the longer-lived Desmet and Eagle Lake rainbow trout, Spoon was sure Canyon Ferry was on its way to becoming a more stable fishery, without the peaks and valleys experienced previously when stocking the domestic Arlee strain of rainbows.

Angler numbers were also up. Fishing pressure estimates produced by the state showed Canyon Ferry was the most popular fishery in the state in 1993, rising from sixth in the late 1980s during a bust cycle for the lake's rainbow population. Considering that news, you might expect Spoon to be dancing jubilantly. Instead, he is living under a black cloud produced by the illegal

introduction of walleyes into Canyon Ferry.

A population of walleyes could usurp the state's efforts to develop the 30-mile-long reservoir into Montana's best trout fishery. Walleyes are voracious eaters and gorge themselves on any fish species up to half their size. With increasing numbers of 10- to 14-inch walleyes turning up in the biologists' monitoring nets, Spoon is bracing for the

havoc that could result to the state's rainbow trout in Canyon Ferry.

Spoon's dilemma is shared by fisheries biologists across Montana. Brigades of amateur "bucket biologists" are illegally planting perch, walleye, sunfish, and a wide variety of bait fish in some of our premier lakes and rivers. This clandestine stocking costs hundreds of thousands of dollars in reclamation costs and lost fishing opportunities. For instance,

when dealing with the illegally-introduced species in smaller lakes, biologists are often forced to poison the introduced fish—and what's left of the native species. They then have to start from scratch, and it can take years for a fishery to rebuild.

In huge lakes such as Canyon Ferry, biologists have to resort to unorthodox methods to attempt control of the illegally-introduced species. In one effort, Spoon has surgically implanted ultrasonic tags into 24 walleyes. Using sonar, he plans to follow the walleyes to their spawning areas. "We feel that if we have any chance at all to control

WAYNE MUMFORD PHOTO



Flathead Lake

their numbers, it will be at their spawning areas," Spoon said. He acknowledged that the options being discussed, such as using electricity to kill the walleye eggs, "is all pretty new stuff." But these are desperate times for the biologists.

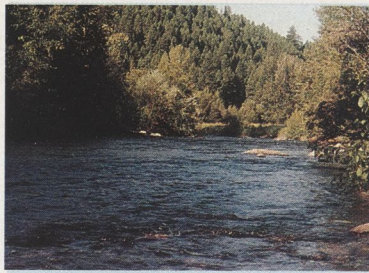
Spoon said Yellowstone National Park fisheries biologists have even consulted the U.S. Department of Defense in their effort to control illegally-introduced lake trout in Yellowstone Lake. "We haven't gone that far yet, but I wouldn't rule it out," he added.

It often doesn't take long for an introduced species to take hold and challenge the fish already in Montana's lakes and rivers. The first walleyes in Canyon Ferry turned up in the biologists' monitoring nets in 1989—just six years ago. Walleye numbers continued to grow each year. "It didn't take us too many years to find out that we had a problem," he said. "Last year we made a few specific net sets for walleyes and found we could catch them quite easily."

Walleyes are a popular game fish throughout the United States. In areas where the walleye is native, there is normally an abundance of smaller prey fish, such as minnows. In Montana, Spoon said, there typically isn't the diversity of prey for walleyes. Here, "they have a way of eating themselves out of house and home," he said. "The challenge of walleye management is finding a way to adequately feed them."

So far the walleyes have keyed in on Canyon Ferry's perch population. Perch once provided a popular winter fishery at Canyon Ferry, but this year biologists found their nets filled with the lowest number of perch they've seen since 1955 (one year after the reservoir was filled). With the growing number of walleyes, the perch are unlikely to recover. Spoon predicted that the lake's rainbow trout will be next. The small trout the department plants each year will be especially vulnerable to walleye predation.

Walleyes in Canyon Ferry also have put the downstream Hauser and Holter lakes at risk. Spoon said a recent eagle viewing trip to Hauser Lake made him wonder if the people responsible for planting walleyes in Canyon Ferry took the time to think about the extensive ramifications of their actions. For example, the



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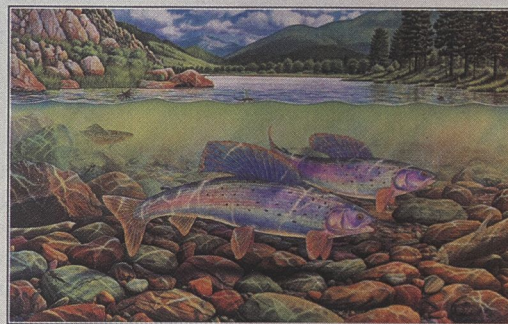
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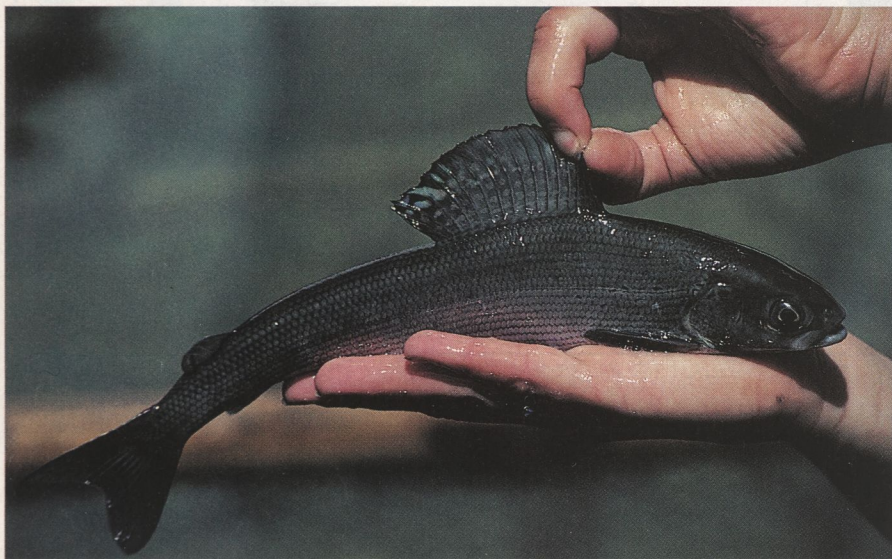
The grayling were so thick that it seemed you could almost walk across the stream on their backs. With the eagles circling overhead...it produced an almost surreal picture.



kokanee salmon that the eagles depend on may not survive if walleyes make their way downstream from Canyon Ferry. "I don't think these people really are thinking this through," he said. "They've pretty much put the entire system in jeopardy."

Howard Johnson, bureau chief of fisheries management for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), was quick to point out that the department is not anti-walleye. The state has introduced walleyes into a number of lakes around the state, which have developed into excellent walleye fisheries.

Brian Marotz, FWP fisheries program officer in Kalispell, knows about the problems created by illegal introductions of fish. The greatest concentrations of known illegal introductions of fish in the state have occurred in the Kalispell area, according to a map developed by the department. One of the most poignant examples of what can go wrong when fish are illegally introduced into a lake occurred at Rodgers



Fluvial grayling at Bozeman Fish Hatchery

PHIL FARNES PHOTO

Lake, west of Kalispell, Marotz said. The lake was once filled with Arctic grayling that provided the state with a valuable source of eggs. Marotz remembers watching the grayling struggle upstream to their spawning area: "They were so thick that it seemed you could almost walk across the stream on their backs. With the eagles circling overhead...it produced an almost surreal picture." In the late 1980s someone introduced yellow perch into the lake. Within three years, the grayling were gone and the perch population was stunted and worthless as a fishery.

Last year, the state worked with the U.S. Forest Service to poison the lake and replant it with cutthroat trout and Arctic grayling—at a cost of at least \$25,000, which will come from anglers' license fees. Marotz said, "The ramifications are so great and it's so difficult to get rid of these things. It takes a lot of money and a lot of effort to rehab a lake...money and time that could have been spent in much better ways."

Today's fish managers are sensitive about moving different species of fish from one body of water to another. Even legal introductions have backfired, Marotz said. A good example is the mysis shrimp that were deliberately introduced into Whitefish Lake. The shrimp were planted to be food for the lake's kokanee, but instead they turned out to be competitors for the zooplankton both species depend on.

Montanans stand to lose a part of their natural heritage if the trend toward bucket biology continues, Marotz warned. Native species often do not compete very well with exotic fish. "We have a hard enough time maintaining the genetic health of our native populations without the introduction of other species," he lamented.

EASTERN LAMENT

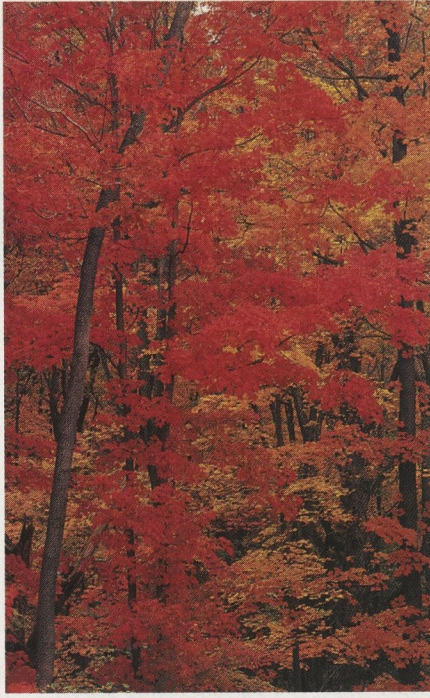
The problem is not confined to the western half of the state. Eastern Montana has its share of problems with illegal introductions. Broadview Pond in Yellowstone County was once a clear pond known for its large crappies.

Illegally-introduced carp muddied the pond and productivity declined. A rehabilitation effort in 1983 failed. Illegal yellow perch have ruined a good trout fishery in the Dredge Cut Trout Pond in Valley County. The reservoir was converted to a warm-water fishery composed of northern pike, walleye, and largemouth bass. In an ironic twist, an illegal introduction of bluegill has severely impacted the size of the pond's yellow perch, which were also illegally planted.

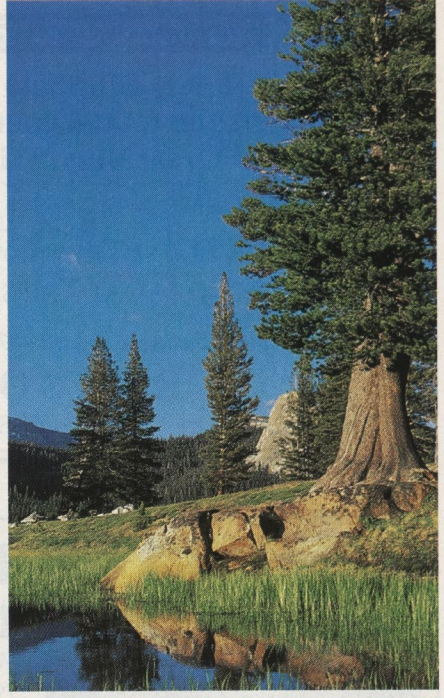
Gartside Reservoir near Sidney has been rehabilitated three times over the past 25 years to remove black bullheads, yellow perch, carp, suckers, and pumpkinseed sunfish. Still more illegal species show up after each rehabilitation effort. The appearance of northern pike in Beaver



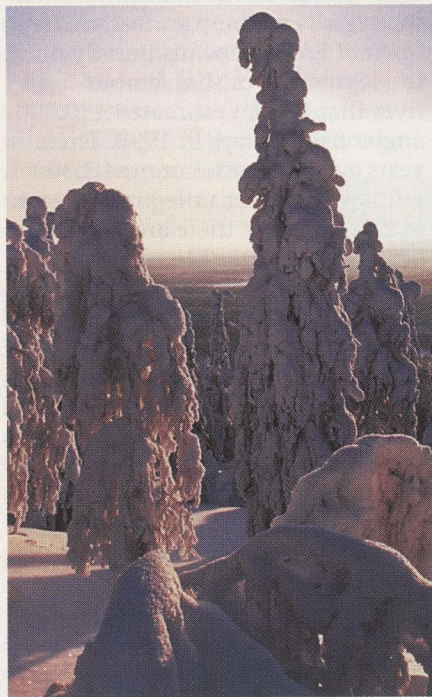
Glacier Bay



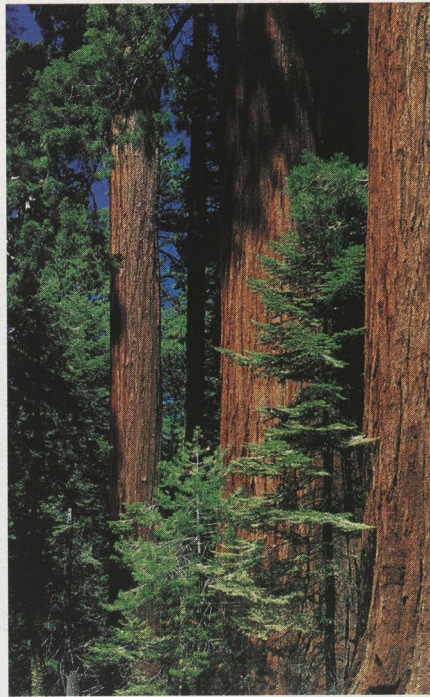
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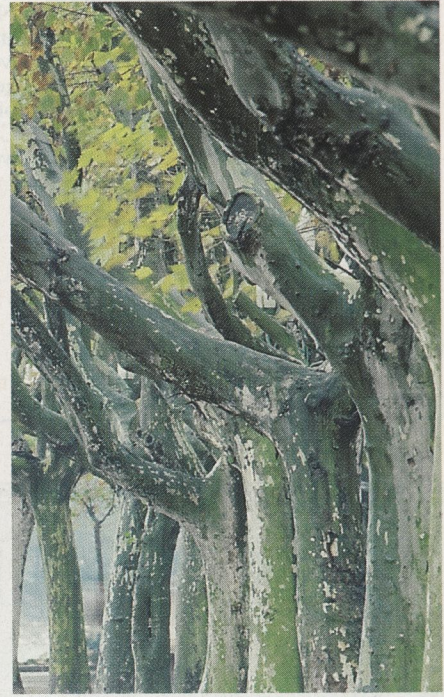
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Creek Reservoir in Hill County has required a change in management strategies that includes planting larger, more expensive trout. The appearance of yellow perch may further increase the cost of management.

As long as bucket biologists continue to believe they know what is best for the state's fisheries, Montana's heritage of wild fish will be in jeopardy.

Recently, biologists discovered the first-ever outbreak of whirling disease in the rainbow trout of the upper Madison River. The incurable disease could eventually destroy the flourishing rainbow fishery that now exists throughout the Missouri River system. State biologists think the disease got its foothold from an illegal plant of infected rainbow trout into the Madison River. That mistake will most likely cost the state millions of dollars.

It's estimated that the Madison River pumps about \$31 million into the state's economy annually. The town of Ennis depends heavily on the reputation of that famous trout river that had an estimated 140,000 angler fishing days in 1992. Three years ago biologists counted 3,300 rainbow trout per mile in the upper Madison. Today there are only 300 per mile.

The Madison River is a prime example of what can happen when bucket biology goes wrong, said Dick Oswald, state fisheries biologist. Disease outbreaks are a constant fear among fish biologists, especially those working on rivers at the headwaters of the Missouri River. "The scenario being played out on the upper Madison is a nightmare," Oswald said. "The speed at which the tremendous fishery on that river crashed...it's like nothing you would ever see in terms of a normal fish kill from drought. A disease is explosive. Fish can't hide from it."

Montana's fish populations can't escape the problems that a growing number of bucket biologists continue to create. It may take a disaster, like the one brewing on the upper Madison, to make people finally understand that a bucket of fish dumped in the wrong place can destroy Montana's natural heritage. 

PERRY BACKUS is a reporter for the Montana Standard.



PAYING RESPECT

BY ALAN C. CAMPBELL

A couple of horses stood on her front walk, looking in the windows. The horses didn't pay us a wink. But the litter of knee-high shepherd puppies, yelping with youth and curiosity, jumped all over us. They spread the farm on our pants, two paws at a time, demanding more and more attention until their individual bodies were lost in a furry whirl of high-pitched barks and dainty, nipping bites.

The porch was dark with shadows. I didn't see her open the door, but suddenly she was there. The horses showed her just enough respect to step off the walkway.

She wore an old cotton dress, and a wrap and a bonnet to shade the sun she'd prayed for so desperately all summer. She looked like she'd just come in from the fields, but it was hard to picture her out there throwing hay on a wagon. Easier to picture her cooking a Sunday pot roast.

A short time before, we had driven into a familiar out-of-the-way pasture with plans of hopping out of the car and into the water, following the usual ritual of pulling on waders, checking the flashlight, and ultimately forgetting some minute but essential part of our garb. That night my buddy would forget his bug juice, a critical mistake during the rainiest summer Montana had seen since 1915.

The daily afternoon downpours had forced the dam operators on the Missouri River to raise the river

a couple of feet. Those who lived here felt varying degrees of discomfort with the wetness, ranging from their psyches to their pocketbooks. Since we came from a wetter climate a thousand miles to the east, the only inconvenience we saw was finding a place to wade where the water didn't swirl too rampantly for good dry fly fishing.

We had been coming here for many years. The parking sign was still up. But this time, crudely painted in barn red on a splintered piece of slab wood tacked directly above the parking sign, was the word "PAY."

caught, judged the time left before the caddis hatch, and in a split vote agreed to trudge up to the house and find out how much this new obstacle would cost in time and money.

This was the Layter Ranch. Only Mrs. Layter was still alive. At the cafe in town, someone had said Mrs. Layter is beginning to realize that she has a valuable piece of property, and is trying to make some extra money. As though that was a relatively new concept for a rancher around here.

Maybe it was.

RON SNOW PHOTO



Plying the riffles

There are few totally honest people in the world, far fewer than those who would claim that virtue. We weighed our chances of being

But when she came outdoors to greet us, it seemed to us that all Mrs. Layter wanted to do was talk, which was fine for the first few min-

utes while the sun was still brightening the landscape. After we'd each switched leaning legs upwards of a couple of dozen times, however, the breeze abruptly quit and the swallows started their roof-high dance. It was time to close the deal.

"How much do we owe you, ma'am?" I asked, trying to sound as local as possible.

"Well," she considered, spreading out her thoughts deliberately, "It is getting dark. And you boys were nice enough to come up here and ask. Usually I charge five dollars, but to-

night how about three dollars?"

Three dollars. A buck and a half apiece. Less than a dinner tip.

We paid happily, and nearly skipped down the railroad tracks leading to the river.

It doesn't take much to create an adventure when you're a thousand miles from home, and Mrs. Layter had become the centerpiece of our wondrousness in *just being here*.

The next night she wasn't home, so we left five bucks hanging in the front screen, hoping the horses wouldn't consider the bill an

evening snack. By the third night Mrs. Layter seemed to feel a touch of guilt for charging anything, and she nearly begged us to drive through the field right to the edge of the river. We obliged, and skipped the bumpy walk down the tracks.

I can still hear her talk about running the ranch. She trampled the edges of how hard it was ranching alone, but stopped short of outright complaining. The weather was wet, the hay was rotting in the field, the baler was broke. All the while telling us—no, demanding—that we knock down those rambunctious puppies and teach them some manners.

The more I think about it, the more I believe the folks in the coffee shop were wrong. Sure, maybe one day when the cussed rain wouldn't stop and she was stuck inside watching her fields fill with water, she pondered having some easy money.

Yet she hasn't sold the ranch, and with all the river frontage she owns, it would be worth a bundle.


She lives on a gold mine.

Fly fishers know the extremes they'll go to for their sport. The amount of money spent in pursuit of trout is solely governed by the size of a bank account. There are days on the river when, quite frankly, nothing else matters. It's a drug by which all other diversions are judged.

No, Mrs. Layter isn't concerned about getting rich at the expense of someone else. If she were, she'd tap into that vein of Eastern flyfishers whose pocketbooks far outweigh the trout they catch. It's more like she would like some company to talk to, especially in the evenings when the chores are done. And she'd like someone with a forceful hand to teach the puppies to stay down.

And a few more sunny days.

Thank God for people like Mrs.

Layter. 



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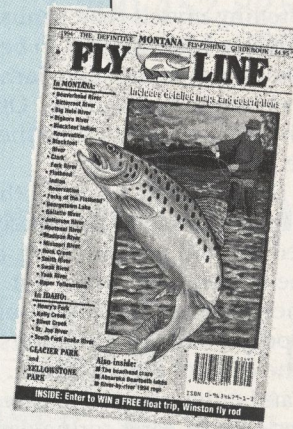
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A LOBOTOMY

Isn't Required to Take Kids Fishing

But It Helps

BY MARK HENCKEL

Bad dad! Bad dad!

I kept telling myself that. I must be one helluva rotten father to be doing what I was doing. Bob Barnes must have been a bad dad too. Off in the distance, we could hear the plaintive cries of young boys: "Daaad! Daaad! Come baaack," they pleaded from the shore. Resolutely we drifted onward in Bob's boat, on down the shoreline, averting our ears, concentrating instead on our fishing rods and the placid waters and serene cliffs of Bighorn Lake.

Peace and quiet, that's what we were after on that early spring day just a few years ago. Solitude, and a return to our pre-children days, those were our goals. Just a little fishing, please. Please, please, please!

We had formulated the ill-fated decision that the perfect way to spend one of the first days of spring was to take our boys out on

Bighorn Lake for a day of fishing. Male bonding. Quality time for fathers and sons. Passing on the rich traditions of the outdoors.

Noble causes, all of them. And what a perfect place to do it. Bighorn Lake, the 70-mile stretch of reservoir behind Yellowtail Dam at Fort Smith, is the spring home of walleyes. Big walleyes.

Its clean waters and tall canyon walls are spectacular. Atop the canyon walls are enough trees and grass to support populations of mule deer and black bears. Overhead, golden eagles and turkey vultures ride the

wind. In its waters swim walleyes, crappies, bass, and a smattering of trout.

We had loaded up Bob's Suburban with my sons Andy and Matt, and Bob's sons Chad, Dana, Micah, and Blake. They ranged in age from early grade schoolers to high schoolers, and in appetite from starving pack rat to *Tyrannosaurus rex*. Even now, I think I can hear the echoes of the laughter that must have emanated from our wives when we made the fateful decision to take the boys for the day.

Peace? Quiet? Fishing? With those

kids? How naive these husbands can be.

I know Bighorn Lake annually produces walleyes from four to 12 pounds during the early weeks of spring, but they were napping that



JOHN LAMBING PHOTO

Bighorn Canyon viewed through a natural arch



Yellowstone River

JEFF & ALEXA HENRY PHOTO

day. The fish-catching techniques that successful anglers assured me would catch walleyes were far beyond the reach of our boys. Just use a jig and minnow combination, the successful ones said. Cast toward the bank and bounce them down the steep underwater walls of the canyon. Keep them just up off the rocks and be prepared for a strike.

That was the plan. The end result was something else. And it wasn't just because the fish weren't biting. We had starving boys to the right of us, tangled rods and reels to the left. One boy in the front needed a can of pop, one in the back needed a new minnow and jig. Yet another had cast his line into rocks on the shore. Still another had stuck his lure into boulders on the bottom. Smack in the middle of this bedlam were Captain Bob and me, the last mate.

The scene was ugly. Bags of pretzels and candy bars were decimated. Pop flowed like water. Doughnuts and, perish the thought, healthful sandwiches disappeared down young throats. Our expensive jig and minnow supplies evaporated before our eyes and I saw knots that day that no sailor ever imagined tying. So when the boys said they wanted to head for shore and do a little hiking and exploring, we said, "Yes, yes, go! Go and have fun. We'll stay and watch the boat. We'll just push off shore a bit so we don't bang on the rocks. We'll even fish so we can tell you when they start biting."

We dropped them ashore and shoved off and started drifting, farther and farther from the boys. Ahead was peace and beauty. Behind were those voices. For 30 minutes, we fished. That we didn't catch any walleyes didn't much matter.

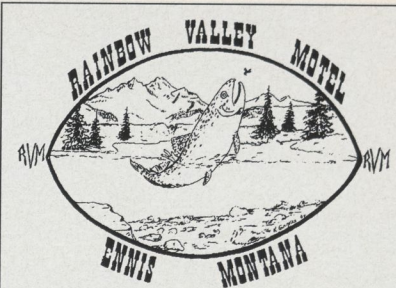
It was only after stern words to each other about our fitness as fathers that we decided to go back and pick up the boys and take them home.

We would have to do this again, Bob and I told ourselves, just as soon as the kids reached the tender age of 30.

But time clouds memories, especially when the minds are seared by too much time spent in the company of children. It was poor fishing that day on Bighorn Lake, I told Bob. If the fish had been biting, the boys would have been just fine. Right, our wives assured us, amid veiled snickers and outright guffaws.

So we did it all again, this time on the waters of the Tongue River Reservoir in late May. On that reservoir, at that time of year, anybody can catch crappies. It's the time of year when an abundant crappie population moves close to shore for spawning. In those shallows, the fish are within easy reach of even shore fishers. And we had the advantage of Bob's boat so we could really find the hot spots.

The experts had once again dictated the strategy: just use tiny yellow, white, or black jig heads with



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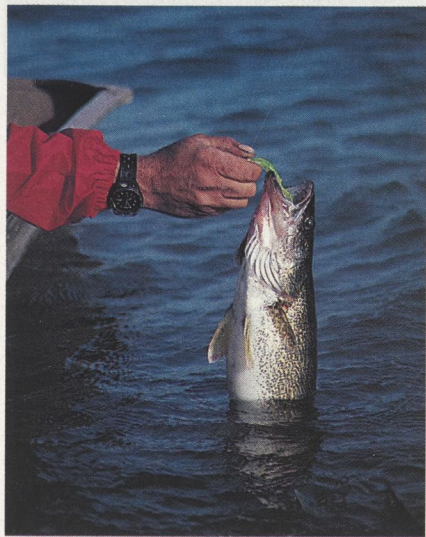
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JEFF NELSON PHOTO

ABOVE: Lake McDonald,
Glacier National Park
RIGHT: Walleye




PAUL LUPDIKE PHOTO

little Twister tails. Cast them out and retrieve them slowly back along the bottom. When the fishing is hot, you catch crappies by the bucketloads. When the fishing is lukewarm, you still catch all the fish you could ever want. All it took was a little practice, a little sense of feel for the light-biting crappies and you just couldn't miss.

Bob caught on right away. I caught on, too. We caught fish. But we couldn't fish much. There was pop-passing and pretzel-pushing, snags and knots, tangled rods and troubled reels. There were some boys suffering from a fear of starvation and other boys trying their best to destroy what I always thought was a pretty peaceful sport.

That's a real fascinating shoreline over there, I mentioned casually to the boys. Yeah, plenty of room to run, and rocks to throw, Bob added pleasantly. Your moms wouldn't even mind if you soaked your clothes and shoes, we both gushed.

"Daaad! Daaad! Come baaack!"

Bad dad. Bad dad. Way to go, bad dads! 

MARK HENCKEL is the outdoors writer for the Billings Gazette.

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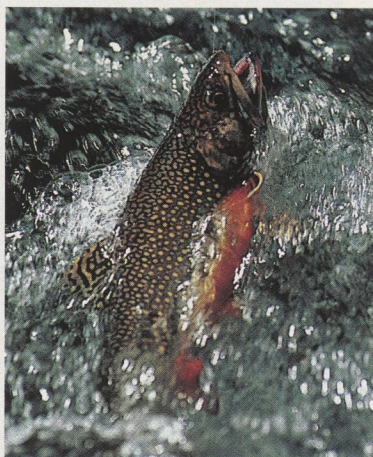
King of the Hill!

Coldwater Fisheries in HOT WATER

BY HAL HARPER

Serious Montana trout fishers have a right to be nervous. For years they have battled habitat loss and fought to get rivers cleaned up. They have made major advances by establishing programs for restoring rivers, enhancing water quality, and ensuring adequate quantity. Thanks to these efforts, wild trout again populate many waters, and a limited water leasing program adds crucial spawning stretches to river systems.

Anglers and ranchers are finding they have much in common as Montana begins to feel the development pressures that have already transformed other Western states. As we work to find solutions to the myriad problems of water supply and demand, however, subdivision development gobbles riverbanks



Brook trout

PAUL UPDIKE PHOTO


and habitat. Native species decline as illegally-transplanted fish compound the problems and threaten entire fisheries.

Traditional policy challenges seem small compared to the latest problem—discovery of whirling disease in the upper Madison River. This highly contagious parasitic disease attacks trout, especially rainbows and cutthroats, with the

deadliness of Michael Crichton's alien Andromeda Strain. Unlike more traditional problems, this one won't wait for session after session of legislative debate and compromise.

Trout fishing is of incalculable value to Montana, its image, and its economy. All concerned interests must move together now on this and other critical issues that threaten our trout heritage.

Sustaining the resource—clean water—is essential to Montana's quality of life. The next few years are critical to our "fish future." The big debates—Row vs. Wade, Bait vs. Flies, and Holier-than-Thou Purists vs. Bait Plunkers—are only diversions from the pressing issues at hand.

Our generation must do its best to pick up the tab left from our boom and bust days. Pick up your pen or your telephone, and contact your legislators. Urge them to support strong water quality laws and enforcement. Let's hand our kids a state we're proud of, where courteous anglers cast for healthy fish. 

HAL HARPER is an avid angler and a legislator in the Montana House of Representatives.

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KARIN RONNOW PHOTO

BY KARIN RONNOW

It's just three blocks from the Yellowstone River, a rollcast from the Paradise Valley's renowned spring creeks, and less than an hour from Yellowstone National Park's world-famous fisheries. It is an imposing red brick schoolhouse that now houses the Federation of Fly Fishers—the only organization dedicated specifically to fly fishing. Conservation, Casting, and Cutthroats have replaced Reading, 'Riting, and 'Rithmetic in the old Lincoln Elementary School; instructors teach the science of fish habitat, the history of fly fishing, the literature of the legends, and the art of tying flies.

"We wanted a spot where the practice of fly fishing can be plied, and Livingston sits in a very good place for that," said Jim Watkins, president of the Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF). "When I first started fly fishing, many discussions consisted of coming to Montana. People planned those trips and took them as often as they possibly could. The state of Montana is a fly fishing destination for many people all over the world."

The FFF represents more than 200,000 fly fishers. The FFF center had been in West Yellowstone, an-

other popular fly fishing destination near the Madison River and the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. But the operation was housed in a seasonal building with limited space, in a town with notoriously cold, snowy winters.

The new center will officially be called the FFF Education and Conservation Center. The federation's mission is education, conservation, and restoration of habitat through the sport of fly fishing in fresh, warm, and salt water. "What we're really about is preservation, and educating people about the history and artistry of fly tying, rod building, fly casting, and all other aspects of the sport of fly fishing," Watson said. "While we have a strong conservation focus, ours is entirely fly fishing and is strictly focused on things that affect the sport of fly fishing."

LIVINGSTON'S ALLURE

Encouraged by Livingston's friendly outreach, lured by a winterized building with more space, and the success of two recent International Fly Fishing Conclaves that the FFF held in Livingston, the FFF decided to move its public operations 100 miles northeast to Livingston. Its

administrative offices remain in Bozeman.

"One of the reasons we chose Livingston was the outstanding reception we got at our shows. The town did a good job; they really welcomed us," Watkins said. In addition to board of directors meetings, the FFF's annual show includes float fishing, and seminars and classes in such activities as fly tying and casting.

Another factor was, of course, easy access to good fly fishing. "We can stay in the vicinity of Yellowstone [National Park], which is important, because it is a central location for fly fishing in North America," said FFF operations manager Larry Watson.

The man most responsible for luring the FFF to Livingston was John Bailey, owner of Dan Bailey's Fly Shop. He and other city leaders tried unsuccessfully in the mid-1980s to get the federation to move to Livingston's old railroad depot, which had been vacated by Burlington Northern. In 1993, the massive, three-story school was put on the market and Bailey formed the

ABOVE: Livingston's Lincoln School, home of the Federation of Fly Fishers' new Education and Conservation Center

Lincoln School Foundation to raise money to buy the building. "We would have lost the federation from Montana," Bailey said. "I've known the problems, the limitations that they had in West Yellowstone. But Montana is a fishing state and people come here and they want to go and see that center."

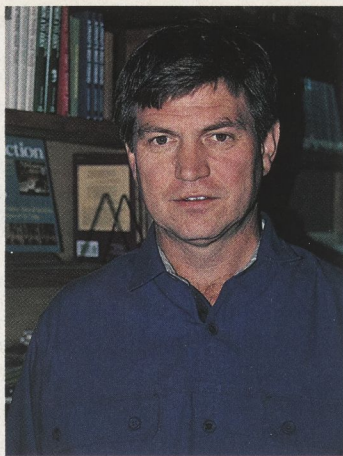
"So when I first saw that building go up for sale, I saw it as an asset to downtown. And at that same time, the federation board had agreed to look for new locations for the museum and education center so I told them, 'I have this wild idea.' Within a few months they had agreed to the concept," Bailey said.

Livingston has a lot to offer the Federation of Fly Fishers. It's an old railroad and ranching town with a population of about 7,000. There are six fly shops, dozens of fly-fishing guides and outfitters, and McKenzie drift boats in countless driveways. Robert Redford's critically-acclaimed movie *A River Runs Through It*, based on Norman Maclean's novella, was filmed in and around Livingston and has brought the city acclaim.

Writers, artists, movie stars, and wealthy city-dwellers have been relocating to the area. Art galleries, espresso shops, boutiques, and gour-

met restaurants line Main Street to cater to the growing number of tourists.

Nature has been good to Livingston. Pouring out of the mountains and flowing down the spectacular Paradise Valley and through the heart of Livingston is the renowned—and undammed—Yellowstone River. Its cutthroat, brown, and rainbow trout are the stuff of legend. The surrounding mountains host bears, elk, mountain lions, and two species of deer. To the east, the



KARIN RONNOW PHOTO

Livingston businessman John Bailey helped recruit the Federation of Fly Fishers to Livingston.

BELOW: Bighorn River

grassy plains and river bottoms nurture herds of antelope.

The city's location at the intersection of I-90 and U.S. 89 helped hook the FFF, who wanted to tap a longer tourist season and be able to get people in and out easily during the snowy winter months. "We were looking for a location that had more access to the freeway," Watkins said.

TWO-WAY STREET

Bailey and others believe the FFF will enhance the Livingston community. The FFF's West Yellowstone visitor center attracted more than 10,000 visitors each year—its current location will help put Livingston and south-central Montana on the map as an international fly-fishing destination.

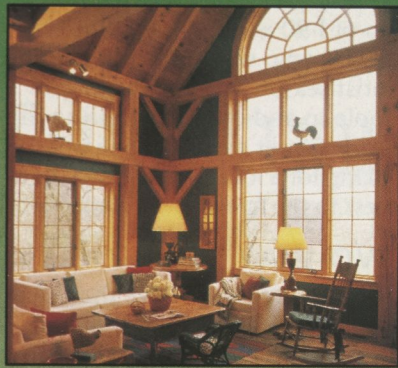
"For communities to do well, they need diversity," Bailey said. "We have the Depot Center, a lot of art galleries. But the federation is going to provide another reason for someone to want to stay here. It will bring in a different crowd."

The number of people entering the sport of fly-fishing is increasing by 30 percent each year—the FFF plans to emphasize education and conservation. "We won't have a sport" unless people are educated about how to interact with the habitat, Watson said. "In the Bozeman



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area, each year more and more of the [riverfront] area is purchased as private property. And, because most people will not walk far from an access site, we are concentrating all of our fly fishers on smaller and smaller sections of our streams. Imagine one hundred people in a limited section of the river in one day. There are sections of streams where there are no insects for the fish to live on. And people are doing that unknowingly because they're not properly educated.

"Not only do we teach people how to tie flies, cast and catch fish, but [also] to understand stream, warm or salt water entomology," Watson continued. "Then you understand that damage is done by wading on a stream bottom, what that means to habitat and the destruction of the fisheries. It is more important now than ever that we all go about our sport in the most environmentally-correct way possible."


This year, the FFF's annual show coincides with the grand opening of the new FFF Education and Conservation Center. Again this summer, legendary anglers such as Stu Apt, Joan Wulff, and Lefty Kreh will share their knowledge, years of experience, and unique personalities with the hundreds who gather for the week-long event.

The show will feature classes taught by world-famous fly fishers. There will also be programs geared to young anglers: "We want to put as much emphasis as possible on

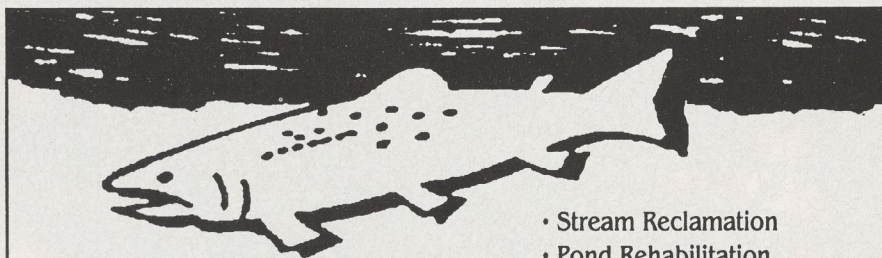
youth, because they are the ones that are going to be taking care of this resource when we are gone," Watson said. "We also want to teach them about the fun of fly fishing."

STILL TOPS

Even though other points on the globe now lay claim to fabulous fly fishing—the former Soviet Union, the Patagonia Mountains in South America, Australia, New Zealand—the federation's center in Livingston is a clear message that the hearts of anglers everywhere lie in the heart of America's best fly fishing—Montana.

The grand opening and annual show will be held August 7 through 12, 1995. The Federation of Fly Fishers center is located at 215 E. Lewis, Livingston, MT 59047. The administrative offices are located at 502 South 19th Avenue in Bozeman, phone (406) 585-7592. The mailing address is: P.O. Box 1595, Bozeman, MT 59771. 

KARIN RONNOW is a freelance writer in Livingston.



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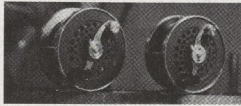
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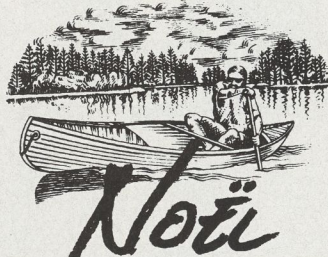
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Bud Lilly has made a career out of fly fishing. On the forefront of the sport, Lilly started fly fishing Montana waters at the age of 10.

A satisfying life

Bud Lilly can't go many places that he isn't recognized as one of the most famous fly fishermen alive.

But few know that Lilly introduced the famous Mepps spinning lure to Montana anglers.

"That was back when spinning lures were just emerging in the U.S.," says Lilly, 70. The Mitchell reel was the hottest thing and Lilly had read about a new French lure.

They were so new, Mepps didn't even have distributors yet. But Lilly ordered two cards worth. They sold for a buck.

"I went down to the Gallatin River to try it," Lilly says. "I was amazed."

When it comes to fishing, Lilly was there from the beginning.

For 31 years he handed out the latest lures, flies and fishing advice from his shop, the Bud Lilly Trout Shop in West Yellowstone. He's been a fishing ambassador to Montana; he's fought battles for fish through conservation.

While he's hung up his guide's license, he still acts as fishing director of his latest venture, the Bud Lilly Angler's Retreat in Three Forks.

"I've been very lucky," Lilly says. "My roots were strong enough here that it never occurred to me to leave."

His roots *do* run deep. As deep as Montana's history. His great grandmother, Granny Yates was a wagon master. She brought 13 wagon trains from Missouri to Montana and settled in Montana after her last trip. One of her sons is buried at the Little Big Horn.

His grandfather was a horse trader and auctioneer who cowboied over on the Judith with Charlie Russell. His grandfather was fond of saying "As long as he could talk he wouldn't have to work." Lilly says that he took after his grandpa.

He jokes that he's related to everyone in the valley — and just happens to know the rest. That's not far from the truth. Lilly's profession has made it possible for him to meet anglers from around the world. It's given him celebrity status.

"I can stand in almost any airport and in due time I'll find someone I know," says Lilly and adds with a laugh, "It's that old story: the farther from home you are, the easier it is to be an expert."

But Lilly has never gotten far from home. Born Walen Francis Lilly in Manhattan, Buddy (as his mother called him) grew up across the alley from what is now Monkey Don's Rib Joint. The river was close and he spent many

hours fishing.

Lilly comes from a long line of hunters and fishermen. His dad, a professional hunter, passed his love of the outdoors on to Bud at an early age. By 10, he was fly fishing. Lilly's two uncles were both professional guides.

Lilly recalls one Boy Scout campout at Greek Creek up the Gallatin Canyon, back when the road was still gravel.

"I caught the fish for the other Boy Scouts to eat," he says.

That was 1935.

After graduating from high school in Manhattan, Lilly got his pre-med degree at Montana State University. During World War II, he joined the Navy and spent a lot of time dreaming about moving to Alaska and being a sourdough. But after the service, he was given the opportunity to go to college; he chose a teaching option.

He ended up teaching math and science for 22 years from Roundup, where he made \$2,600 a year, to Deer Lodge to Bozeman. Later he would get his masters degree in secondary school administration but life had a different destiny planned for him.

When Lilly wasn't teaching in the summers, he fished. And looked for some way to make money.

In 1951 he heard about a business opportunity in West Yellowstone. Equipped with nothing but a garden hose and tents, he went into business washing cars.

When summer ended, he heard about a small tackle shop that was for sale. He bought it and named it Bud Lilly's Trout Shop.

Little did he know that not only was he on the cutting edge of a growing sport called fly fishing, but he would become one of the pioneers.

"The shop was a fun part of my life," Lilly recalls fondly. He spent hours talking fishing — the shop was open from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week and Lilly often worked 12 to 14 hours a day.

"I was in a good spot," he says. "I think the Lord has been kind of brushing his hand over my shoulder."

Lilly was one of the first to offer fly fishing schools. His fishing catalog in 1969 was one of only four in the country at the time.

"I was there at the beginning," Lilly says. "I brought the idea

of fly fishing schools to the state." His daughter Annette was the first licensed woman fly fishing guide in Montana.

All three of his children worked their way through college as fishing guides. Today Annette is a certified public accountant and a professional fly fisher; Greg is a professional fly fishing guide on the Ruby River and Michael is an attorney and a fly fishing guide.

Lilly was one of the first to incorporate an art gallery with a tackle shop. He still puts fishing and art together at his Retreat, hosting both artists and writers in residence.

While life has been good to Lilly, it's also taken its toll with the loss of his wife, Pat.

But through it all he fished.

Ten years ago he married Esther and began another phase of his life with a whole new family. Esther had a son, 1½ and a daughter, 3. Today Christopher is 12, Lisa is 15.

Lilly is retired now. He still works with conservation groups. Recently he fished the Ruby River for a Prime Sports channel show that will air this summer.

He's co-authored two books, "The Bud Lilly Guide to Western Fly Fishing" and "Bud Lilly: A Trout's Best Friend" with Paul Schullery, and he has been memorialized in a video, "Three Men, Three Rivers."

He's working on a third book.

"I try to fish when the conditions are right — at least two to three days a week," says Lilly. "I still have the same anticipation that I always had." But he no longer has to fish from daylight until dark. Nor does he have to catch really big fish; he's done that.

Now he has a new appreciation for the sport. "Just to think I can go fishing is thrilling."

His future? "I'm going to become a little more selfish and spend more time with my family." His wife Esther complains he never takes *her* fishing. Well, he's going to take her, he adds with a laugh.

"This has suited my life and my lifestyle," Lilly says of his fishing career. "I feel very satisfied."



Lilly retires his old flies to the fleece on his fishing vest.

By **BARB SMITH** Chronicle Staff Writer

Photography by **DEIRDRE EITEL**

Retreat to remember

Historic hotel offers comforts of home

When Bud Lilly's mother passed on and left him a small historical hotel in Three Forks, he finally had to grow up, he jokes.

At first he didn't know what to do with the old railroad rooming house at 16 West Birch Street. It had been in the family for 80 years; run first by his aunt for 30 and then by his mother for another 50.

Bud Lilly's Angler's Retreat was born out of a desire to honor his mother, Violet Lilly, and also stay involved in the fishing world.

Now in its second year, the two-story old hotel is part museum, part fishing lodge. A section of the bottom floor is just like his mother left it, still filled with his mother's things, including Bud's first toys. "Mother never threw anything away or wore anything out," he says.

The rest of the hotel offers a private place for fly fishers to stay with all the comforts of home and then some. The rooms are furnished with antiques and collectibles, many belonging to his mother. On the walls are mementos Bud has col-

lected over his 60 years of fly fishing.

"We wanted to keep an ambiance of comfort but keep the early days," Lilly says. "That's what I remember and appreciate."

Sleeping rooms run \$55 plus tax per day. They include a bathroom down the hall, bathrobes, face bowls and a clubhouse lounge with TV and VCR.

The housekeeping suites are \$125 to \$145 plus tax per day. There are both weekly and monthly rates. The suits include two bedrooms, sitting room, kitchen and bath with all housekeeping amenities.

Outside, decks and a wide-pillared front porch let guests enjoy Three Forks's quiet pace. Along with a laundry center, guests can barbecue and pick vegetables, strawberries and raspberries from the garden out back. Room service is available from the Sacajawea Inn up the block.

Lilly provides fishing itineraries and fishing information.

"I fished the whole area as a boy," he says. "Coming back here is a new phase in my fishing life." For more information, call 285-6690.



Lilly kept the things his mother had collected during her 50 years at the old Three Forks railroad rooming house, making Bud Lilly's Angler's Retreat both a museum and a fishing lodge.